

AN ADDRESS

TO THE

PEOPLE OF THE AMERICAN STATES

WHO CHOOSE ELECTORS...TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATES

WHO CHOOSE THE LEGISLATORS WHO APPOINT ELEC-

TORS...TO THE LEGISLATORS WHO APPOINT ELEC-

TORS...AND TO THE ELECTORS OF

PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

*To which is added,*

A SHORT SKETCH OF THE BIOGRAPHY

OF

Gen. George Clinton,

AND

SEVERAL ESSAYS,

WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN THE WASHINGTON EXPOSITOR

AND OTHER PAPERS, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE ENSUING

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT.

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WASHINGTON CITY, APRIL.....1808.

## TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES,

WHO CHOOSE ELECTORS....TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATES  
WHO CHOOSE THE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURES WHO  
APPOINT ELECTORS....TO THE LEGISLATORS WHO APPOINT  
ELECTORS....AND TO THE ELECTORS OF PRESIDENT AND  
VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

AN old man, somewhat acquainted with the history of our government, and possessing some knowledge of the characters of those who have managed that government, presumes to address you in the simple language of plain truth.—He presumes to address you in the several capacities in which the trust is directly or indirectly confided to you, of selecting the men to whom the destinies of our nation are for the four ensuing years about to be committed.—The selection of men who are to rule over us—the man, who as President (or as Vice-President, as the thing may happen) is to direct and give tone to the principal concerns of the nation—who is to give sanction to our laws—preside over their execution, and to recommend such measures to the other branches of the national legislature as to him may appear to be most conducive to the public good.—To the President when he is capable of attending to the functions of his office, and to the Vice-President when he is not, attaches the important duty of directing the operations of our armies and our navies (when we have any) the nominating directly or indirectly all the officers of the general government, civil or military, from the supreme judge or the ambassador who receives eighteen thousand dollars for his first year's service, to the post-master of the smallest village—from the lieutenant-general to the youngest ensign—from the admiral or the commodore to the midshipman, and it is considered that he has a right to displace every one of those officers at his will, the judiciary excepted.—To him it belongs to dictate to, and to instruct our ambassadors at foreign courts—to receive or reject foreign ministers, and to direct all the negotiations with them.—The power of rejecting treaties without consulting the Senate, seems also to rest with the President: so that notwithstanding the constitutional powers, of declaring war and supporting armies, lodged in Congress, the President has it always in his power to provoke and enter into a war when he pleases—with him lie the disbursement and expenditure also of all monies which are appropriated where the object is not specifically pointed out, and many millions annually,

the specific objects of which are pointed out. Indeed almost every day exposes to our view powers newly invested in the President by legislative authority, as well as powers which either naturally or latent, consistent with the constitution, lodge in the hands of the President. With great caution therefore ought you to enter upon this duty, of selecting the man or men who are to wield them.

It is not a matter of wonder that these great and important powers (powers according to the magnitude of the concerns of the two nations far surpassing those possessed at this day by the monarch of the British isles,) should be grasped after. Powers and patronage so flattering, while the hearts of men are like those with whom we are acquainted, cannot fail to excite ambition, ready to pay court to them in different shapes and forms. No passion can assume a greater variety of shapes than ambition: it can be modest or bold—reserved or open—candid or wise—religious or political: besides which, the heart of man is so formed, that it can flatter itself; and the most modest man can be persuaded that he accepts power merely to promote the good of his country. With these considerations before you, how important is it that you perform well, the duty you owe to yourselves, to your contemporaries and to posterity. How important is it that you probe to the bottom the probability or possibility of an exercise of selfish ambition, which has for its object the enjoyment of those immense powers for self gratification; and the being able to bestow the *peculiar benefits* obtained by management, on friends and connexions—men unacquainted with public life; and those whose hearts are not contaminated with ambition are apt to say—“for a world I would not take the charge of those presidential cares and powers, what could I do with them?” and they seem to be so glad that any body else will, that they are but too indifferent as to their choice of who shall possess those powers. Such men ought to take the trouble to make themselves understand, that as men become accustomed to public life they lose that diffidence of themselves—they see that those presidential powers, or the benefits flowing from them, are somehow magically divided, and they are but too apt to look for their portion: sensible of all this, the wise men who formed that Constitution, to which we are all bound by our solemn oaths, as well as the regard we have for our republican institutions, for posterity, our own interest and safety; have fixed upon, and we have constitutionally established a

specific mode of selecting men to those important offices. In your hands is that power placed, and whatever attempts have been made to usurp from you this power, to anticipate the sentence you are to pronounce—whatever means have been used to mislead the public will, to be expressed thro' you—every appeal is to be made to your sound judgment and discretion. Notwithstanding all that has been said or done by Caucus meetings, or by newspaper publications—with you rests the decision to be announced, as to the qualifications and the merits of the candidates. I say merits, for let scribblers, who have no merit of their own, talk as they please about former merit—merit is one of the best sureties mankind can have for future well doing. The habit of doing well, and the number of good deeds a person has done, are the best assurances that he will continue to do well. Not one of those who insinuate that merit ought to be out of the question, in the selection of the persons who are to be President and Vice-President, believe a word they themselves say on the subject.

To you also it belongs to determine, whether conciliatory concessions, such as will best promote national harmony and guard against local prejudices, shall have weight in this important election—and how much.

With you it also rests to decide, whether the pretensions of any state, to the perpetual presidency—supported by the ascendancy the great men of that state have gained over the little great men of other states, shall be indulged. With you it rests to consider and determine, whether it will or will not be for the best good of the nation, to indulge that appetite which, by indulgence, has ready become voracious. The state of Virginia has produced a Washington, a wise, a prudent and successful general, in a war for life, liberty, independence, and all that is dear to man. To him the great powers of President were entrusted by unanimous consent for eight years. That state has also produced a Jefferson, famed for his attachment to republicanism, who has possessed those important powers eight years more, out of the twenty our government has existed, and the Vice-Presidency the other four years. These circumstances with others too lengthy to detail in this address, have fanned into a flame a spark of that local pride which, although it may be latent with some, there is a specimen of it in the heart of every people. This pride has stimulated the people of that state to believe that Virginia geese are all swans. Virginia

gentlemen have a peculiar knack at making others believe them—they have a happy facility of complimenting each other for their talents. In their schools their youth are taught, (and very properly too) to revere the characters of the departed heroes, philosophers and orators of Virginia: a very wise and patriotic course for that state. It is highly commendable to excite an honest and virtuous emulation: yet so far as these things go to rivet on the minds of the people of that state an opinion or belief that, in a confederative government, composed of seventeen states, things can never be right, save when the president is a native of that state; they have a tendency to create jealousy, discord, and disunion, which ought, by every possible means, to be avoided.

In the course of the reflections which must occupy your minds on entering upon the duty before you, one of the first questions you will naturally put to yourselves will be—Why not appoint the man to be successor of Mr. Jefferson who has stood next to him the last four years? The man selected four years ago by the nation, as the most proper person, in case of Mr. Jefferson's resignation or inability to perform these highly important duties and functions: for it is evident that the nation, four years ago, looked upon George Clinton to be the fittest man to entrust these duties to, in case Mr. Jefferson should resign them, or not be able to perform them. Mr. Jefferson does now resign them. Was the nation then in jest? Is there any evidence that they were? Is there any evidence that the mind of the nation is changed, or did they not then know what they were doing? Or, has George Clinton done any thing to compromit his character within these four years past? Has any thing happened to derogate from the lustre of that character which has shone most pre-eminently since the dawn of that revolution which has given liberty to our country? When you put this first question to your consciences, and it cannot be avoided, the others follow of course: the latter questions must all be answered in the negative: and if to the first question you do not answer, by saying to yourselves there is no reason, you are bound by your duty to yourselves, to your coadjutors, and to posterity, to find a good one. Predeliction of itself, is no reason at all; when predeliction is likely to operate, the causes of that predeliction ought to be thoroughly examined. For myself I have listened with all my ears—I have read with patience whatever has, for many months, been published on this subject: I see three reasons only pretended to be

offered, why those powers which were by the nation, four years ago, in case Mr. Jefferson resigned, decreed to be lodged in the hands of George Clinton, ought not now to be intrusted to the same Clinton, when Mr. Jefferson is about to resign them.

The weight and application of what are called reasons for this withdrawal of confidence, I will here take the liberty to examine. The *first* is, that he is four years older than he was four years ago: this, although it is really a mortifying reflection to all who have passed the grand climacteric, can have but little weight with us: although we perceive that we cannot run so fast, or leap so high as we could five, ten, or twenty years ago, we are generally allowed in point of judgment and knowledge of men and things, to excel our youthful acquaintance. Modesty for the most part, compels younger men to keep back insinuations they are prone to with regard to our mental faculties being impaired—yet when a favorite object is to be effected, those insinuations will come out which often provoke the repetition of the proverb which says, “young folks think old folks to be fools, but old folks know young folks to be fools.” To be serious, however, as to this charge of superannuation, a charge *which the young and middle aged politicians*, who are the many and interested, seem very ready to admit, on any, and even the slightest opportunity, and without evidence; a charge which there are few, those only who are advanced in life feel any interest in repelling—I ask whether the steady, unremitted attention which Mr. Clinton has paid to the duties of President of the Senate proved any thing like superannuation? Not a day has he lost in the three years he has presided in that Senate, save those few in the last end of a session which have by all its Presidents been thought necessary in order to give that body an opportunity to choose a Vice-President pro tem. and thereby leave such an officer in office during the vacation of Congress, to whom in case of the death of both President and Vice-President, the administration of the government would fall.—Does the unanimous voice of the Senators, expressing their wish that he should continue their President four years longer, prove any thing thing like superannuation?—Does the caucus nomination, however little it ought to be regarded, where an almost unanimous wish was expressed that he should continue his station as Vice-President of the United States and President of the Senate for four years longer, prove any thing like superannuation?—Does the charge come

from those who are acquainted with him?—Does it come from his friends? From those who know him? It does not—*They* (his friends) are all satisfied that his mental faculties are unimpaired—that his mind is as bright, and as energetic as at thirty; that it is a repository of experimental knowledge—of a knowledge of causes and events as they operate on nations, on mankind in their smaller associations, or as individuals; and that his judgment matured and ripened by this knowledge and experience, is prompt and decisive. No!—The charge comes from his opponents, who view him at a distance only, who consider him as the obstacle to their ambitious views, the realization of their dreams of promotion—Among them may be found those who considered the mind of Franklin in its zenith at eighty, and him the ornament of society. The second reason I have heard mentioned is, that a better writer and negotiator than Clinton, is named: and is this by any means proved to be the case? Have not Governor Clinton's public writings and negotiations always done him the greatest honor? and he has had a great deal to do in both. Is there any specimen of his writing which will not bear a comparison with those of Mr. Monroe or Mr. Madison on equal subjects? I say there is not. As to negotiation, although I mean not to speak to the disparagement of either of the gentlemen negotiators who are mentioned, if success is to be considered as a criterion of merit we have nothing yet to boast of for them. Let him that putteth off the harness in the event of the battle, boast if he can, not him that is putting it on. But suppose we were to grant that Mr. Madison and Mr. Monroe are greater writers, or more acquainted with negotiation than Mr. Clinton, is there any reason why he should be deprived of their aid during his Presidency? Why not serve their country under President Clinton, as well as under President Jefferson?

The *third* reason given why George Clinton should not be the next President is, that a majority of the republican members of Congress nominated Mr. Madison to that station.—There has been so much said and written for and against that caucus, and its unconstitutionality and anti-republican tendency so fully proved, that I shall touch the subject but lightly, in hopes to avoid a volley of the same kind of filth and nonsensical abuse that the members of Congress have received who protested against that caucus. That anonymous writers and newspaper editors should abuse and dirtify one another, is not strange; it is laboring in their avocations—But

when gentlemen, public functionaries, conscientiously, believing it their duty to publish their protest against the exercise real or pretended, by their coadjutors of power not only not delegated to them, but forbidden by the compact under which they conjointly act, are for this manly conduct abused, insulted; their characters, and their motives traduced, and their patriotism denounced by hireling editors; it augurs ill for the cause those creatures would fain defend—such conduct goes far to evince the prudence of men of tender feelings, in withholding their names from sanctioning opposition to measures which are known to be supported by virulence and scurrility. It does much toward justifying an unjustifiable apathy. Does it not argue that many of those who joined in the Caucus measures, did so rather than subject themselves to insult, to news-paper abuse and virulence? That those who have kept neutral and silent, have done so for the same reasons there can be no doubt? Waving the unconstitutionality of the Caucus I will in this address, take the liberty to consider what weight it ought to bear on the minds of the people of the nation, or the electors. Twenty-two republican senators, two delegates from territories, one federal Senator, sixty-three republican, and one federal representative met; besides a few other gentlemen who accidentally stepped in to see the farce. Fifty-seven republican members and all the senators voted for Mr. Madison to be the next President. What is to be inferred from all this, notwithstanding all the pompous publications on the subject—publications, in which to swell the list and importance of the thing, one gentleman is named twice over, who did not vote nor ever approved their nomination. The names of others who were sick in bed or a hundred miles from the scene of action, are added for the same purpose; the names of others are also added who now say that they went and joined merely to see what the state of the mind of members was on the subject; who did not think of a publication or attaching any kind of consequence to the thing; nor even binding themselves, and are now decidedly in favor of Mr. Clinton's election—some of whom have found it necessary to publish their recantation. Twenty three senators attended, for what? surely not to express the wishes of the people of their state. Two Senators representing a state whose extremes are three, four or five hundred miles apart, can know but little of the opinions of the people of such a state. They are chosen by the Legis-

latures to represent the sovereignty of the states, independent of, and unconvertant with the great body of the people.

To be sure there was a quorum of that body, but no one will say it was a subject they were authorised to act upon, they said otherwise themselves. The members of the other house, who attended at that caucus to screen themselves from blame and responsibility, say that they were not authorised by the constitution or their constituents, to express any opinion on the subject. Ask them if they could express other people's opinions. They will answer, no! considerably short of one half the republican members of the house of representatives voted for Mr. Madison, of whom, as I said before, many have since changed their minds, notwithstanding the reproachful behavior of the advocates of Mr. Madison toward them.

What then I say does all this amount to? It is evident that in 1804 the nation had, in a Constitutional way selected George Clinton as the man who should, in case of the resignation, death or inability of Mr. Jefferson succeed to the exercise of the powers of President. All that this famous Caucus in 1808, to which so much consequence seems to be attached proves, is, that 23 Senators out of 34—57 Representatives out of 142 and one Delegate disavowing any power to act for others have changed their minds without vouchsafing to give the nation a single reason why they have done so. Vain men! they seemed to think that 176 electors, without *feeling* the reasons they felt, and *were ashamed to express*, would blindly follow their dictum. But alas! many of these 23 and 57, have changed back again.—No doubt, many more will change. When the nominations for the officers to be appointed this year appear, all will not be gratified.—I must drop it—I am inadvertently running into the subject of the Caucus again, or I shall surely provoke its scribbling hireling supporters. I only wish that all my countrymen would have as fair a view of the intrigues and intriguers at Washington City as the writer of this. They would then sufficiently appreciate the wisdom of the framers of the Constitution, in withholding from the members of Congress all agency in President making. They would say with me, that of all places on the continent none is so unfit as the Seat of Government, for commencing the election.—They would duly appreciate the volunteer, the forbidden services, of those Representatives. They would duly *reward* those *services*.

The object of this address is, to stimulate you to enquiry, and to the obtainment of a perfect knowledge of the subject before you act. After all the manœuvres to carry a favorite point, it will be allowed on all hands, that a respectful harmony among the states, and the keeping down dangerous jealousies, ought to have great weight in your decision. Read Mr. Clinton's modest replies to his friends on the occasion. He prefers no claim, he has thrown himself on the American people. The friends of harmony and union, claim for him.

That this business which causes some anxiety, and much feeling, may be concluded in a manner promotive of the peace and tranquillity of the nation, is the sincere prayer of

NESTOR.

## FROM THE WASHINGTON EXPOSITION.

MAN rarely has a fixed character, till he has descended to the grave: yet there are some who, from the uniform deportment of their lives—the manly dignity with which they support their sentiments, and the very action which they are called on to perform, seem to set this rule of reason and nature at defiance.

Amongst those, George Clinton is eminently conspicuous. At this time when the world is convulsed to its centre—when the American fabric totters to its base, when aspiring ambition wills its self-importance; when mistaken and ill-judged distinctions are drawn relative to the interests of the different parts of the nation; when efforts are made to return to the rule of federalism both potent and alarming; and when the true and only question appears to be whether we shall remain an happy, or become a divided and distracted people, it may not be useless to speak of this illustrious character.

In speaking of him, it is not meant, to derogate from the worth and importance of others.

He is descended from a respectable and worthy family which belonged to the County of Orange and State of New-York. His father was a judge and commanded a regiment.

In early youth he was put to the law, and long before he became a man, he rallied under the standard of his country and assisted Amherst in the reduction of Montreal. In this campaign, he nobly distinguished himself in a conflict on the northern waters, where with four gun boats, after a severe engagement, he captured a French brig of eighteen guns.

This war being ended, he returned again to his favorite pursuit the science of the law, and placed himself under the tuition of chief justice Smith, where he became a student with Gouverneur Morris, between whom and himself, a difference of political opinion, has since wrought a separation.

He had scarcely commenced as a practitioner, when in 1765, the storm appeared to gather round his native land, and the tyrannic disposition of the mother-country was manifested—Foreseeing the evil at hand, with a mind glowing with patriotism, correct and quick like lightning in its perceptions; and, like time, steady and fixed to the achievement of its object, he abandoned the advantages of the profession to which he had been educated, and became a member of the Colonial legislature; where, he ever displayed a love of liberty, an inflexible attachment to the rights of his country, and that undaunted firmness and integrity, without which *this nation never would have been*

free: and which has ever formed the most brilliant, though by no means the most useful trait of his character.

In this situation he remained, contending against the doctrines of British supremacy; and, with great strength of argument, and force of popularity supporting the rights of America till the crisis arrived; when in 1775 he was returned a member of that patriotic Congress, who laid the foundation of our independence.

While in that venerable body, which is never to be forgotten, and can never be sufficiently admired, it may be said of him with truth, that *“he strengthened the feeble knees and the hands that hung down.”*

In 1776 he was appointed Brigadier General of the troops of his native state, and in the same year received from Congress, an appointment of the same rank, in the national service, which he held during the war.

In 1777 he was appointed by Congress to command the posts of the Highlands, a most important and arduous duty. The design of the enemy was to separate New-England from the rest of the nation, and by preventing the succor of the east, to lay waste the middle and southern country. Had this plan been carried into effect, American liberty would probably have expired in its cradle.

It was then that his vast and comprehensive genius viewed in its true light the magnitude of the evil contemplated: and he roused to a degree of energy unknown and unexpected. It was then that Burgoyne was, with the best appointed army ever seen in America, attempting to force his way to Albany, and Howe was endeavoring to effect a connexion with him at that important place.

The crisis was all-important and awful—Clinton by being elected governor, had just become the father of that people—the only alternative left him, was, to preserve those committed to his care, or at their sacrifice to prevent this junction and save the nation.

He did not hesitate.—In an instant he resolved, and his resolutions were as firm as the decrees of heaven. He determined at all hazards to save the country.

With this view, when Howe attempted to ascend the river—Clinton from every height and angle assailed him. Howe driven by madness and a temper of revenge, inconsiderately landed and marched into the country, and immortalized his name by burning Kingston and other villages. The hardy sons of the north assembled under the immortal Gates—the junction

was prevented—Burgoyne and his army were taken—AMERICA WAS FREE.

From this moment for eighteen years in succession he remained the Governor of New-York; elected to that important station by a generous and wise people, who knew how to appreciate his wisdom and virtue, and their own blessings.

During this period he was President of the convention of that State which ratified the national constitution; where, as in all other situations, he undeviatingly manifested an ardent attachment to civil liberty.

For the benefit of posterity, it may be well to descend to a few strong characteristics of his administration of the State Government.

A riot as violent and extensive in proportion as that of Lord George Gordon in London, broke out in New-York. The untarnished hero mingled with the mob to prevent excess, and allay the passions of the multitude. Tender of the lives of a misguided populace, for two days he submitted himself to this all-important service, and prevented the subversion of private as well as public rights, and the destruction of private property. Perceiving that the passions of the people were not to be allayed, the tenderness of a father yielded to the duties of a magistrate, and those who by his remonstrances he could not soften, by his energy and power, he instantly subdued.

In 1786, a rebellion which threatened a revolution broke out in Massachusetts—the rebels were discomfited, and in large bodies fled to Lebanon, New-York; a place distant 150 miles from the city which was then the seat of government, and where then was Governor Clinton. Of this event he was informed—not foreseeing the evil, the legislature (which was then in session) had not provided for the emergency, and the Executive was without power—yet so great was the confidence of the legislature, and so powerful his energy, that in less than three days he appeared on the spot with two regiments of troops, and a competent court of justice and all proper and necessary characters attendant; and in less than twelve hours, the rebel army was dispersed, the faulty magistrates dismissed, and the offenders brought to punishment.

When he assumed the reins of government in New-York, the State was infested with many wealthy and potent tories.—Few (if not he alone) were brave enough to assume the responsibility:—the State had but a sparse and meagre population, on the North river, with some trifling settlements on the Mohawk. It ranked below the mediocrity, while it may now justly rank

among the first States in the Union. In this situation he undertook to discharge the duties of the Executive; and it may justly, in a great measure be attributed to the bold, persevering, liberal, and dignified policy of this enlightened and able statesman, that this State has risen to so much importance.

To him it was owing, that in the revolution the tory party did not prevail in New-York.

It was his noble and dignified policy that furnished the hardy yeomanry of the east, not only with farms on a ten years credit, but a money capital to bring them to a state of cultivation. An act which does equal justice to his head and his heart.

It was he who devised the plans of finance which have placed the citizens beyond the calls of the tax-gatherer; and furnished for them an actual fund of near four millions. He may justly be called the father of that people.

It was he, who after having strove, in obedience to the law of his State to unite Vermont with New-York; generously controlled his resentment, and effected her admission as a State into the Union.

After the life of labor and usefulness faintly portrayed; worn with the fatigues of duty, with disease which then afflicted him, but which has happily been removed for the last eight years; and with those calamities which are too commonly incident to life—having led his state to eminent, if not unrivalled importance and prosperity, he retired from public life, with a mind resolved not to mingle again unnecessarily with governmental concerns, and to taste those sweets which result from reflecting on a life well spent.

From this state he was roused by a sense of duty, when the struggle came on between the political parties of the nation. He had suffered too much for liberty and *freedom of opinion*, to see them expire without an effort on his part. He loved retirement—but he loved his country more.

Those called federalists, contended for rules and maxims of civil government, believed by the republicans (among whom is Governor Clinton) to be dangerous to civil liberty—at the head of the former was President Adams, who from a series of public service had justly acquired a high character.—At the head of the latter was the illustrious Jefferson, whose name is the watch word of liberty, and whose memory will be dear to every lover of America.

It was impossible for the great Father of New-York to remain an idle spectator of these contests: the republican party

wanted his aid—his country, which has always been dearer to him than every thing else, demanded his services, and he listened to her voice.

It was the wish of the republicans to place him by the side of Jefferson: and accordingly a deputation was sent to him at New-York. He highly prized the honors of his country, but believing that in a humble station he could then render her more important services, than in one lofty and elevated; with that dignity and love of country which has governed all his actions, he generously declined the offer.

The republican candidates were selected. It was known that they could not succeed without the aid of the State of New-York—the republicans of New-York could not succeed without success to the republican ticket in the city—and that ticket could not succeed without the name and influence of George Clinton. Of course, the elevation of Thomas Jefferson, which every republican so ardently desired, and which has proved so eminently useful, could not take place, unless the patriotic Clinton who had refused the Vice-presidency, would accept of the station of a Representative in the State Legislature.

Again the patriot did not hesitate—he sacrificed his domestic quiet to the sense of duty, and the wishes of his country. He became a member of the legislature—with him were carried the other members of the ticket, and Thomas Jefferson was made President.

When he entered the threshold of the legislature, he found, that *in his absence* federal principles had gained a dangerous influence in the State government, and upon the solicitation of his republican friends, he consented once more to discharge the duties of Chief Magistrate.

Accordingly, in 1801, he was again elected Governor, and completed the reformation of politics in his native state.

In 1804, the people having lost their confidence in Col. Burr, the Vice-president—to produce unanimity and restore harmony to the republic, Governor Clinton was elected Vice-president, by the same number of votes that elevated Mr. Jefferson to the Presidency: in which station he has discharged its duties with unremitting attention and universal satisfaction.

A dangerous schism took place among the people of New-York in the spring of 1807 as to their gubernatorial election, and Governor Clinton's name was brought into the contest. He was then attending a sick daughter in Washington. He spoke to the people of New-York—they recollected the voice of their beloved chief, and the murmur of discontent was silenced.

Of all the revolutionary heroes and worthies, to him alone was entrusted the government of a state, and a command in the regular army. Nature gave him a clear and strong mind, which has been highly cultivated. Whilst he is wise from experience, age has not impaired his intellect. He is now, what he was in the revolution, an ardent friend of liberty, attached to the rights of the American people in all their various classifications; quick to perceive—prompt to execute—devoted only to his country's good, invariable, and inflexible.

His fame will be immortal—posterity will wreath the laurel to his brow. May the present generation have wisdom enough to appreciate his eminent services!

EPAMINONDAS.

FROM THE WASHINGTON EXPOSITOR OF JANUARY 2.

AMERICANUS. No. I.

*Who is to be the next President?*

THIS is a question that concerns every free man in the nation. It is a question that ought to be met with candor, and discussed with open and unreserved liberality.

Who are to be the next president and vice-president, is a question in the mouth of almost every man; yet, about the seat of government, there seems to be an awful, mysterious taciturnity, in those to whom the question is put. The subject has in some few instances been started in the newspapers, and some names have been mentioned, without provoking discussion of any kind.

The writer of this article is not one of those who think the nation is to be ruined by losing the services of any one individual citizen, let his fame or his talents be in ever so high estimation. He felicitates himself in constituting a part of a nation which abounds with men of native powers and acquirements, sufficient to qualify them for managing the business of the government of any nation, that had adopted, and become acquainted with our form of government—he believes there are hundreds in the nation, who had they sufficient weight of character to be supported and elected, are in all respects well calculated to do the duties attached to the high offices of President or Vice-president. The nation has progressed for ten years, in power—in commerce—in wealth—in sciences, and in all the attributes of civilization, without her favorite President, Washington—and for six years, without his favorite coadjutor, Mr. Adams; and, the world has been astonished at the facility—the quiet,—and the safety, with which we have (in a constitu-

tional way peculiar to ourselves,) transferred the government from the hands of one set of men to those of another, as well as put down those demagogues, who have aimed at, or attempted, to usurp powers, forbidden them by the laws and the constitution.

It is understood that our present President, cannot, consistently with his own opinion of the necessity of rotation in office of the chief magistrate of a republic, stand a candidate for the Presidency, the next election. Taking this for granted, it does appear to the writer to be proper, that the opinions and the wishes of the freemen of the nation, with respect to the candidates, should be known to each other.

If there have been times when it was necessary, in order to insure the election of republicans to the high offices of President and Vice-president, to resort to caucuses, where every man was to be pledged to support the candidates agreed upon by the majority, although he might himself prefer others—there can be no need of such a measure now, when no other than republican candidates are named: the principle on which caucusing rests, always smells too strong of aristocracy of the government, and control of the few over the many—the measure never fails to operate like packing the cards, and then calling on your neighbor to play.

At a time when we have nothing to fear from any attempt to foist upon us a federal President or Vice-president, let the republicans without fear or trembling approach the altar of publicity, and talk over the merits and qualifications of the candidates, and let the fitness and propriety of preferring one to the other, be considered with becoming candour, temper and moderation.

I will set an example, by naming all those I have heard spoken of—and I will point out the man I would wish should be our next President. In the first place, I have heard the name of James Madison mentioned, as a proper candidate for the next President—he is the present secretary of state—he is famous for the bold stand he made against funding the certificates, which had by extraordinary circumstances been wrested from the war-worn soldier, for little or nothing, without paying due regard to the equitable claim of the original holder—he is famous also for being the mover of certain patriotic resolutions, which if adopted, would have given a deadly blow to the influence of the court of London in this country.

I have heard the name of James Monroe mentioned, as a proper candidate for the next Presidency. He was a faithful and honest ambassador to the French republic, and met with

persecution from the friends of the former administration, on account of the correct course he had pursued, to keep up a good understanding between the two governments—he has since been a much beloved and applauded governor of Virginia, and our first minister at the court of London.

With either of these gentlemen for President, I have heard the names of Henry Dearborne, John Langdon, and Levi Lincoln mentioned for Vice-president. The first was an officer of great merit in the revolutionary war—he was under the present constitution, early a member of Congress, and in the fourth Congress, of British treaty memory, he stood like mount Atlas, on the republican side—he has been more than six years secretary of the war department, without the least reproach being attached to his name, even by his political enemies.—The second gentleman was a member of the old congress, and served long as a senator under the present constitution—he has ever since been faithful to the cause of liberty, and is now the republican governor of New-Hampshire. The last named gentleman has long been known to be an honest well-informed republican, of the greatest goodness of heart—he has been attorney general of the United States, and is now the republican lieutenant governor of the truly respectable state of Massachusetts.

The writer has also heard and seen the name of George Clinton, mentioned as a candidate for the Presidency—this man has merit also—he has signalized himself both as a statesman and a soldier. The old colony, now the state of New-York in which he lived, contained Tories of more talents and property than either half of British America without it—and when that colony hesitated on which side to bend her force, the energy of the Clintons gave the preponderance. The venerable patriot I have just now named, dared to administer the government on revolutionary principles, at a time when most of those who wished to be considered whigs, chose a safer situation. No man in America has had so much experience in the science of government, as George Clinton. No state has risen from so humble to so exalted a station as New-York, and that has happened principally under the administration of George Clinton.

With governor Clinton for President, besides the name of James Madison, I have frequently heard those of general Samuel Smith, of Baltimore; Nathaniel Macon, of North-Carolina, and governor Milledge of Georgia, for Vice-president; all men of distinguished talents and great revolutionary merit; men who have stood true to the cause of

liberty and their country—but as it is universally understood that those who wish for a President from Virginia, are willing to accept a Vice-president from the northern part of the union; and those who wish for a President from the state of New-York, are willing to accept a Vice-president from the southern or western section of the union, it will be no more than proper to settle the question (if possible) who is to be the next President first. Therefore, the writer resumes that subject, and gives his opinion, that under every view of it, the peace, harmony and interest of the nation will be best promoted, by placing the great, the good George Clinton, in the Presidential chair.—Having named that meritorious patriot, the writer takes the liberty to observe, that although he entertains the highest respect for the talents and qualifications of the other candidates, either of whom he believes would perform the duties of President to the acceptance of the great body of the nation: there is a kind of fitness in the Vice-president's stepping to the Presidential chair, which so highly harmonises with the feelings of the American mind, that it is not easily cancelled. There is another kind of fitness in the case before us. The venerable Jefferson does himself honor by resigning the Presidential chair on the principle of rotation:—if rotation with regard to men is so important, how much more so must it be with regard to states. The constitutions of almost every state south and west of the Hudson, recognize the principle of rotation in their high offices; and it is regretted by republicans that the constitution of the United States has not adopted the principle; as the sure way to perpetuate harmony and good understanding is, to distribute the honors and emoluments of the government (where there are any emoluments)—for although certain parts of the nation may for a time bear with good humor any deprivations that circumstances may have seemingly forced upon them, they are certain to break out with rancor and animosity at some time, and that time may be when it will be most injurious to the nation. There is a course of rectitude with respect to these things which may be hit upon and pursued, which will always keep the nation easy and happy; if it is obviously avoided to gratify the ambition of any man, set of men, or any section of the union—jealousy, disquiet, and animosity will inevitably ensue. This course of rectitude in the present case, the writer conceives, perfectly coincides with taking the next President from the northern portion of the union, if that suitable person is to be found there, and the writer thinks that the venerable

ble George Clinton is that suitable person—this may be the subject of some future observations.

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No. II.

MY first number after having expressed an opinion that George Clinton, our present Vice-president, is a suitable person for our next President, concluded with an intimation, that that suitability would be the subject of future observations; those observations were intended to be reserved in answer to what should be said against the propriety or the fitness of calling that venerable citizen to the Presidential chair. Whether from a determination to keep up that awful kind of taciturnity before noticed, or from a conviction of the propriety of the opinion expressed in the first number; nothing on the subject has appeared in any of the papers the writer has seen, except a bare republication of *Americanus* in several republican papers; some notice taken of that essay by the enlightened editor of the *Richmond Enquirer*, and a candid disavowal of coincidence of opinion inserted in the introduction to the republication of that essay in the *Petersburg Intelligencer*; in which the editor declares “that any ideas which may be advanced on the subject cannot but tend to assist the public enquiry and make clear the way to a judicious choice”—and the advice of a federal paper to elect Charles Cotsworth Pinckney, for President. As the republicans of this nation have no inclination for a President of the federal cast, nor necessity to look for talents nor qualifications without the pale of their own profession, and as it is to republicans the writer directs the question, who is to be the next President, he will take no notice of the nomination of Mr. Pinckney.

The eloquent editor of the *Enquirer*, whose paper is often considered semi-official; after informing the public that our present President cannot, nor ought to be a candidate at the next election, tells us “that it is perhaps fortunate so little discussion has taken place; for discussion might produce contrariety of opinion.” He seems to felicitate himself in the belief that the public mind has been diverted from this peculiarly delicate and interesting subject; this dignified editor says, the republican papers have *hitherto* preserved a marked and *dignified* silence; this is the first time I have seen silence on a subject acknowledged to be extremely interesting, made a merit of. The learned editor is quite right when he tells us, that discussion might produce contrariety of opinion.

Why is this wise editor so much afraid of discussion, so

much concerned about the expression of contrary opinions.

This dignified silence, so emphatically recommended, the writer calls awful taciturnity! Does the editor think the question, who is to be the next president, a subject above the comprehension or beyond the discussion of the American people? Does he think the subject cannot be discussed with candor, or does he wish to keep up this dignified silence, until the republican members of Congress are hurried into a caucus in which a pre-caucused majority shall be able to force the nomination of a candidate of his own choice on the nation?

Although the writer of *Americanus* differs in opinion from the editor of the *Enquirer* as to the propriety of the American people discussing the question; of who is to be the next President—although he does not approve of the *dignified* silence so highly recommended by that editor—he perfectly coincides with him in the importance of limiting in a constitutional way the term for which a President can serve; he believes with the venerable Pendleton, that the danger “is not over until the Presidency is cut down to a term of four years;” he has often wondered that this subject has not engaged the attention of a republican Congress within the last six years; he thinks that some part of the first five weeks of the present session might have been better employed on this subject than on building a bridge over the Potomack; in disputing about the Baltimore contested election; and the extension of the right of suffrage to the people of the Mississippi territory. Until the term for which a President can serve is limited by the constitution; the writer of this article will be opposed to the election of any person, to the Presidency, who has not arrived at the age of sixty five; he views with an eye of republican jealousy the great power vested in the President of the United States; he sees no probability of reducing those powers, and he is at a loss where many of them could be deposed with more safety; he has been acquainted with a state of things where the power of appointment to all offices was lodged with a popular assembly; he has seen the man whose art and address gave him an ascendancy in the business of appointments courted; his opinions yielded to, and himself fawned upon, for no other reason than this ascendancy. He has seen the powers of appointment in a popular assembly create party animosity, dissension, and turmoil, and in this way, unworthy characters too often promoted to office, and at the same time the promoters of such appointments entirely clear from responsibility.

The power of nominating all the officers of the federal go-

ernment, wielded by a man of art and intrigue, is sufficient of itself to enable the President to ensure his re-election as often as he pleases. The writer asks, is there not danger then, that a young or middle-aged man, taking advantage of repeated elections, may, when using the other means in his power, get himself elected for life and the nation in that way become saddled with a monarchy? Had John Adams avoided persecution, and used the power of appointment to the best advantage, for his own interest, he would have been President of the United States at this day, in spite of all his follies and madness.

One of the reasons which inclines the writer to favor the election of Governor Clinton, to the next Presidency, is, his advanced age: he has arrived at that time of life when ambition loses its appetite for every thing, save the consciousness of having done his country service, and the gratification of hearing in his last moments the pleasing sound of "farewell thou good and faithful servant:" he will enter on the duties of the office, with all the experience of a great statesman, and the energy of a war-worn general; with a head stored full of the knowledge of past events, their causes, and their consequences; with mental faculties as bright as at thirty; without a thought of perpetuating the powers and the emoluments of office, and with a knowledge that to the rotation principle he is measurably beholden for his elevation; he will therefore be most likely to foster that principle, until we may happily get it ingrafted into our constitution. To see this effected, will give pleasure to no one more than to Americanus.

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### No. III.

*Who is to be the next President?*

THIS question still retains at the seat of the General Government, the magic power of rendering speechless almost every person to whom it is addressed. There are however, a few, who dare to reply, that "the subject is a very delicate one; that the republican members of Congress are to have a *caucus* to decide it!" According to them, the characters and qualifications of those who are to preside over the American people, are subjects too delicate for the deliberation of those very people—too sublime for their contemplation or comprehension!! Are the citizens of the United States to be silent respecting this important question, until *certain gentlemen* have had a caucus, in which all shall be bound to support the opinion

of the majority? until this band, operating through the medium of its influence, shall call a second and a larger caucus, binding those whom they have thus initiated, to support the opinion of that majority, and so proceed till they are strong enough and are ready to invite the body of the republican members to assist them in performing a solemn pantomime, the plot of which has, perhaps, been long concerted, and the parts assigned to every player in their own Green Room? And are the American people to stand mute until the oracle shall announce from the Capitol, a name selected in this way, corresponding with the ambitious views of those who mean to give us a caucus president? I hope not.

Supposing pre-concert and pre-caucussing out of the question, does it comport with the ideas often expressed of the dignity of the American people, and of their competency to choose for themselves—to mock them with a candidate for their Presidency, designated by a majority of a caucus, composed of the whole delegation of some of the states, and but one half of the others, with the total exclusion of the representation of two of them? How can one half the representatives of a state justify themselves in joining an association in which they deprive the other half of the influence they are entitled to, on the score of population—of actual pecuniary contributions and military strength? How can they be justified in making an election of a President and Vice-president, (for however such a measure may be disguised, it is intended as an election) without a single voice from two important states?—Are the republicans of these states, because they do not constitute a majority, to have no voice in the election, notwithstanding the constitution has secured to the freemen of all the states a vote on this all-important question?—This right is guaranteed to them to be exercised directly or indirectly, agreeably to the mode pointed out by their state legislatures. If there were not many other weighty reasons against making a caucus President; modesty, if consulted, would tell those gentlemen who can carry the whole delegation from their state into caucus, that it is too bare-faced to invite those republican members who can carry but half their representation with them, to join in their decision, merely to obtain a sanction to the doings of some previous caucus.

When there was danger of an aristocratic President or Vice-president, this usurpation of the rights of the people and of their constitutional agents, however unjustifiable, might

have had some apology—it can have none now, as no division of the republicans can inspire the most remote hope in their opponents, that they can influence the choice of a President.

One of the maxims of republicanism, is, that the will of the majority shall govern—that will can never fail to be respected when fairly and honestly ascertained—it is only when a nominal majority is obtained by chicanery and indirect means that republicans can disagree or contend. Such artifices as enable partizans to induce the belief of a majority which does not exist, will ever be causes of dissention and division; they ought to be detected, that the snare may be avoided. In the present case, let the will of the nation be constitutionally declared, without any attempts to corrupt and forestall that will, and all will be satisfied—all will be quiet—all will be safe. On the other hand, let a President be nominated by any other method, with whatever cunning, management, or address it may be done, it will not, it cannot be forgotten: republican vigilance will detect, and republican vengeance, (slow but sure) will not fail to overtake those, with whom the improper impulse originated.

In nominating for President the venerable George Clinton, who stands in the view of the American people on the next step to that station; the writer intended to draw forth the opinions of other republicans, with a determination, although local considerations are favorable to his election, yet if any other person should appear to stand higher in point of correct patriotic principles; of meritorious actions; of knowledge of the human heart, and of those means by which the national honor may best be defended, and the individual rights of its citizens maintained; he would cheerfully support that man.—No attempt has yet been made to shew the public that such a one exists, yet he is convinced that a *coup de main* is intended—that the republicans are by and by to be called, in the name of unanimity, and every thing that is sacred, to rally round a candidate named by a majority obtained in the most anti-republican way imaginable. The writer is the more convinced of this, on reading what he calls an attack on James Monroe, in the *Inquirer*, published in Richmond, which, although very plausible, and extremely complimentary, is evidently intended to drive that gentleman to decline a competition for the Presidency, notwithstanding those who think him well qualified for that important trust should desire it.—I hope that essayist will be disappointed. Is it congenial with the spirit of republicanism, thus artfully to endeavor to destroy the hopes of those who think him best calcu-

lated for the chief magistracy?—Monroe stands high in the estimation of his country, and should it indeed be found necessary to take our Presidents from Virginia for twenty years out of twenty-four, and probably for twenty-four out of twenty-eight years, I would wish him to be the man, and it is the desire of many others beside those few the Richmond writer talks of. And shall they be deprived of an opportunity of attempting to support their *second* choice, if they should find it proper to yield their *first*—certainly not.

FROM THE WASHINGTON EXPOSITOR OF JANUARY 23.

No. IV.

*Who is to be the next President?*

IT has given the author no small pleasure to see the mystic veil removed, which has hitherto enshrouded this important question.

It is the duty of republicans to investigate the merits and qualifications of the respective candidates for the national choice, and to abide by the decision when constitutionally declared. Such discussion, when conducted with decency and candor, cannot fail to have its due weight on the minds of those who choose the electors, as well as on the electors themselves.

I have also been gratified to see so many republican papers opposed to a caucus President—this measure, with which we are every day threatened, is so dishonest, and so incompatible with the duties of the members of Congress, that it could not be believed, but from the reiterated assurances of the best informed men that such a thing would be attempted.

The constitution of the United States, which the members have sworn to support, expressly says, that, “No Senator, or Representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an elector of President or Vice-president.” Can any of the members of Congress, notwithstanding this solemn injunction, assemble in the Capitol, in the dead hour of the night, and there ballot for those who are to be announced to the nation as the future President and Vice-president?

Who among them will be bold enough to call their fellow members to such a meeting? Who among them will dare to order the door-keepers to make preparations for this unlawful assemblage?

The constitutional injunction was evidently founded on

the impropriety of their interfering in the nomination: it was founded on a conviction in the minds of the framers of that sacred book, that members of Congress, as well as placemen, were subject to an improper bias—a very rational conviction indeed!

Personal favors and attentions go as far with members of Congress in forming predilections, as with other men; and it is because they are more in the way of receiving them, that they are forbidden to interfere in the election. It is because the framers of the constitution knew that they would be in the habit of associating with men in power, and men seeking for power; of feasting at their tables, and participating in their banquets—that the constitutional provision was thought necessary to keep them out of the electoral colleges. Hardly indeed must those men be, who after this injunction shall attempt to usurp by anticipation, the very powers they are so strictly forbidden to aspire to, and then publish to the world their manifesto in favor of a candidate, on whose bounty they have so often regaled.

No! it is impossible—it is as offensive to the laws of decency, as it is contrary to the constitution.

It is enough for the members of Congress, to carry home their own prejudices and prepossessions, and to be able to exercise their influence in the appointment of electors,—and with those electors, in favor of those friendships, which were commenced in their moments of conviviality, and riveted in their nightly revels.

At home, they have time to reflect on the subject: they mix with a well informed yeomanry, jealous of their rights; the basis of those friendships is examined, and their influence has its due weight and not much more.

It may however be said, that the constitution has allowed the members of Congress under certain circumstances, to elect the President and Vice-president—it is true that after directing the nomination to be made by persons elected in such manner as the legislatures of the states may prescribe, it has provided, that in case the electors have not given a majority of all their votes for one man; the house of representatives is then to decide which of the highest candidates shall be President: and in like manner, the Senate is authorised to select the Vice-president when no choice is made by the electors.

This selection is made in behalf of the states; each state

reserving to itself an equal voice, the great state of Virginia, in having no more power, than the little state of Delaware. Will the advocates for a caucus President attempt to justify themselves in assuming the nomination by virtue of this provision, which is only intended to operate under the circumstances referred to? I believe not. The nomination is the object of the caucus—this is what the constitution expressly forbids the members of Congress to meddle with: when they are permitted to interfere, they are to range themselves in states, giving seventeen votes. The object of the caucus is to act without two states totally, and with no more than about half of some others, to obtain twenty four votes from one state and but three or four from others.

Perhaps it may be said, that Thomas Jefferson was nominated by a republican caucus, and that the citizens of the United States were satisfied with the proceeding. The times then required unanimity, there was then danger that federalism would take advantage of a division. The usurpation was noticed, it was reprehended, but it was pardoned.

The case is now very different; three republican candidates are advocated; no national calamity is apprehended from the success of either. The friends of each contend for the superior merits of their favorite, the principle of rotation by states is involved in the amicable contest; for amicable must it prove, if fairly and constitutionally conducted: but if unfair and anti-constitutional measures are resorted to, they will rouse the people whose rights are thus invaded; and create animosities which will require all the moderation and wisdom of the nation to allay.

What has been written, will occupy too large a share of this week's Expositor, to allow me within the prescribed limits to take that notice I had intended of the ingenious production of a master painter, who assumes the name of Franklin in the last Expositor; the avowed object of which is to exalt Mr. Madison, and to depress the veteran George Clinton. Here we are at issue.

Although I do not wish Mr. Madison to be President until he shall arrive at the age of sixty-five, or till the constitution shall have recognised the rotation principle; I am willing to allow him all the merit that writer assigns him: but suppose he had selected Mr. Monroe for his candidate, might he not have said the same in his favor, with this addition—that Mr. Monroe, in the Senate of the United States acted at least as bold a part in favor of republicanism—that he never of his

own will, abdicated his station—that after having provoked the wrath of the monarchico-aristocratic faction in this country, by ingratiating himself with the government of republican France, whose friendship he had been expressly ordered to cultivate; he scorned to withdraw from the conflict, and suffered the cloud of their undeserved wrath to break upon his head; while Mr. Madison was quietly enjoying a snug domestic retreat, in view of the passing storm?

Certainly that writer, if so disposed, might have said as much in favor of Mr. Monroe's knowledge and opportunity of acquiring information of the relations of this nation with others, as of Mr. Madison's.

As neither of those gentlemen is my first choice, for reasons heretofore given and for many others which may be advanced; I will proceed to notice the great objection against George Clinton.

It seems he is too old for Franklin. When we are disposed to find fault, we are seldom at a loss for objections. In this case the writer was unfortunate in stumbling on the name of Franklin to write down George Clinton on account of his years, who is but a middle aged man compared with Franklin when he died.

We have the testimony of the illustrious Jefferson, corroborating that of many other of Franklin's acquaintance, that at eighty, his mind was as clear and as strong as at any former period. This is twelve years more than George Clinton has seen: true, his constitution has been much injured by the fatigues and deprivations necessarily attendant on the arduous duties which fell to his lot, during that war which gave liberty to our country: duties, which he performed with a zeal and alacrity which have justly endeared him to all who knew him.

In the most perilous moments of distress, when our independence was most jeopardized; Washington relied on the aid and counsel of Clinton. He proved himself worthy of that confidence.

Mr Clinton has latterly enjoyed an uniformity of good health, which is more common to elderly men who have obtained a habit of being careful of that inestimable jewel, than to younger men who have been less attentive thereto. As one evidence thereof, let it be remembered that he has absented himself from the arduous duties of his station, as president of the senate, less than any of his predecessors; and the dignified manner in which he has fulfilled those duties, must

convince every unprejudiced man who sees him, that his mind remains unimpaired: let it be understood, that the duties of speaker or president of a legislative body were new to him—these duties are as arduous as can be conceived, they have been satisfactorily performed by him, and the urbanity and good humor with which he has frequently checked the members of the Senate in their wanderings, and called them to the consideration of the subject before them, has gained him no small eclat. I do not hesitate to say, that the duties of the speaker of the House of Representatives, *while in the chair*, are more arduous and fatiguing than those of the President of the United States; for this reason, that the latter has an opportunity of varying at pleasure his local position, and the subject of his thoughts; while the former is bound to keep his station, and listen attentively to every suggestion that may be offered, however accompanied by impertinence or folly.

This comparison applies much more forcibly in the case of the president of the Senate; it being customary for the Speaker to be relieved by calling another to the chair, when the house go into committee of the whole.

Yet persons coinciding with the ambitious views of Virginia, have attempted to depreciate the meritorious patriot who was brought forward by the Virginians, whom the almost unanimous voice of the American people placed in the second office of government, and on whom would constitutionally devolve the duties of President of the United States, in case of the death or resignation of the venerable Jefferson.

To the allegation of unfitness, resulting from his age, adduced by this juvenile Franklin, I reply; it looks too much like an unfair attempt to sweep off from the political stage, a man of sterling worth, eminently qualified to serve his country, in the perilous times which threaten it.

The importance of the subject has led me far to exceed my intended limits. I am therefore obliged to defer many of the observations which might be made on Mr Madison's pretensions to the Presidency, as well as on the last paragraph of Franklin's essay, where he says, "there is the rub," and in the true fashionable, sycophantic style, tells his readers that he looks upon the objection made to Mr. Madison, "as one of those office-hunting, disorganizing, and factious *oppositions*, which can only disgrace those who make them."

In my next I will endeavor to show substantial reasons, why, in a government like ours, composed of states, there

ought to be something like state rotation in the election of President, and to exculpate President Jefferson from the charge of conspiring against the right of his coadjutor Clinton, to be a candidate for the Presidency, and to succeed him in the usual course, to the highest honors and confidence his country can bestow.

FROM THE WASHINGTON EXPOSITOR OF JANUARY 30.  
No. V.

*Who is to be the next President?*

THE Constitution of the United States, in the second paragraph, second section, first article, says, that "No Senator or Representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector," (to nominate or appoint a President or Vice-president)—notwithstanding which, a newspaper, printed in this city, has solemnly announced that 89 members of the two Houses of Congress met on Saturday night last in the Senate chamber, and there, *in violation of the constitutional provision*, did proceed to ballot for the purpose of recommending a person for our next President. The same paper proceeds to state, that during this transaction, they divested themselves of their public characters as members of Congress, without explaining by what magical process this transformation was effected: neither did that newspaper state the authority by which the meeting was called.

On first casting my eye over that statement, I supposed it ironical, until several gentlemen assured me that the subjoined circular had been sent to a large majority of the members.

On enquiring what answers had been sent to this extraordinary summons, I found that the members generally were indignant at the monstrous usurpation, and declined answering: several however did reply. Two of these answers are also subjoined. Some went merely to see the farce, and in the whole, 64 out of 142 members of the House of Representatives, attended this Caucus, 6 of whom voted for Messrs. Clinton and Monroe as President; the remainder of the votes were either Senators or Delegates; so that only 57 of the immediate representatives of the people have been seriously concerned in this plot against their rights.

The writer means not to derogate from the merits of Mr. Madison—he, as well as Messrs. Clinton and Monroe, will no doubt cheerfully acquiesce in the decision of the consti-

tutional authority. He ought not to be blamed for the anti-constitutional proceedings of his over officious friends.

I recollect my promise to Franklin, who in the third number of the Expositor, says, he looks upon the opposition made to Mr. Madison, "as one of those office-hunting, disorganizing, and factious oppositions, which can only disgrace those who make them."

Certainly he was unlucky in connecting the name of office-hunter, with that of opposition-man.

After near forty years enthusiastically contending for the rights, and liberties of mankind, am I merely for preferring two other unimpeached republicans to Mr. Madison, to be stigmatized as a disorganizer, an opposition-man?

This is another specimen of that dangerous sycophancy, which contaminates the atmosphere of the seat of government: another evidence, that this, of all places in the Union, is the most improper to commence President-making. The writer of this, never either directly or indirectly, sought an office for himself, from any administration—it was not with such views he gave his feeble aid to bring the present republican administration into power—he has ever opposed the vile slanders of its enemies; he has zealously supported all its measures as far as a sense of duty would permit; and in many instances endeavored to support it against the unintentional slanders of its own sycophants, the real office-hunters. How long he will labor in this work is uncertain, as he is every day more and more convinced that it will be labor in vain.

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COPY OF THE INVITATION TO THE CAUCUS.

SIR,

IN pursuance of the power vested in me as president of the late convention of the Republican members of both houses of Congress, I deem it expedient, for the purpose of nominating suitable and proper characters for President and Vice-President of the United States for the next Presidential election; to call a convention of the said Republican members, to meet at the Senate chamber on Saturday the 23d instant at 5 o'clock P. M. at which time and place your personal attendance is requested, to aid the meeting with your influence, information and talents.

*Dated at Washington, this 19th day }  
of January, A. D. 1808. }*

S. R. BRADLEY.

## MR. GRAY'S ANSWER.

SIR,

YOUR proclamation, dated the 19th January, addressed to me, has been received, and I take the earliest moment to declare my abhorrence at the usurpation of power declared to be vested in you—the mandatory style—and the object contemplated therein. I deny that you possess any right to call upon the republican members of Congress or other persons, at this time or place, to attend a Caucus for the Presidential election.

You must permit me to remind you, that it was a far different purpose for which my constituents reposed their confidence in me.—I cannot consent either in an individual or representative capacity to countenance, by my presence, the midnight intrigues of any set of men, who may arrogate to themselves the right which belongs alone to the people, of selecting proper persons to fill the important offices of President and Vice-president—nor do I suppose that the honest unsuspecting people of these United States, can much longer suffer in silence, so direct and palpable an innovation upon a most important and sacred right belonging exclusively to them.

I am Sir,

Your's, &amp;c.

EDWIN GRAY.

*Washington, January 20, 1808.*

HON. STEPHEN R. BRADLEY, }  
*Senate United States.* }

## COPY OF MR. LYON'S ANSWER.

*Washington, January 21, 1808.*

SIR,

YOUR polite note of the 19th, requesting my personal attendance, with my "influence, information and talents," at a Saturday night's meeting in the Senate Chamber, I found on my table this morning. Feeling it a duty I owe to your politeness (as I shall not be able to attend the convention, as you are pleased to christen it) to state to you and the honorable gentlemen who may collect on the occasion, some of the reasons which will prevent my attendance—I will proceed to observe, that having attentively perused the constitution, I do not find a convention of the Senate and House of Representatives is authorised or recognized in that book—of course I do not consider that I am bound to attend.

Another reason is, the constitution, in the first section of

the second article, expressly forbids members of Congress to nominate a President or Vice-president, in the following words, "but no Senator or Representative, or person holding an office of profit or trust under the United States, shall be appointed an elector." This prohibition was introduced for wise purposes no doubt, one of which was obviously to disable the members of Congress from bartering the Presidency and Vice-presidency, for personal favors and attentions.

If a third reason were necessary, I would say, that for some time I have perceived an intention, nay I may say, determination in the members of Congress, to nominate, over the head of the present Vice-president, a man in my view by no means so well qualified to wield the high important powers of President of the United States. I consider this as an attempt to violate and destroy one of the most correct propensities of the American mind, which is to suffer worthy and meritorious men regularly to progress to the highest trust and honors, thereby encouraging that virtuous and honest emulation which is the very soul of a republic.

If there ever was a time for the strict application of the constitutional provision, I see it now necessary: the Vice-president, whose generosity is as it were proverbial, whose heart never fails to feel for the distressed, and whose hand never fails to extend relief to proper objects, has not excelled in splendid dinners, balls, card parties, or squeezes at his house: he has lived in the same plain republican stile, which our beloved President did during his Vice-presidency: the Vice-president is not the medium through whom applications for office are to be made, and that being a subject on which he is not consulted—he has no offices to bestow.

With equal propriety I might add another reason against what I call a violation of the constitution, which is—I have long seen too great a disposition in the members of Congress to yield to the ambitious propensity of a certain state, to perpetuate the Presidency in that state: this propensity being in human nature, I do not mean to criminate it: but foreseeing that yielding to it, will in some future day become a cause of dangerous dissention, and considering that I shall not live to see a time more favorable to an interruption of this dangerous perpetuation; I cannot humble myself to the situation of an out-voted minority-man, called there for that express purpose, where the number of those who meet is to give sanction to what I consider a wicked purpose.

I very well know that it may be said these scruples are new to me, and that I attended a caucus in the capitol four years ago. I did attend at that time, but I hope to be allowed in common with my coadjutors to profit and grow wiser by experience.

I learned something in that caucus—I learned that it was not a convention *where influence was wanted*—that it was not a convention where information or talents were called for—no, it was votes, ready cut and dry votes, that were called for—discussion was not permitted, or if it was allowed by the chair, it was disturbed by every kind of noise, clamor, and contumacy that could be brought into action: adjournment for consideration was frequently called for, and as often refused—the vote, the vote, was the cry. Indeed, Sir, I have not witnessed a more boisterous meeting of pleasantly disposed people, since a certain Saturday night assemblage, over which you had the honor of presiding about six and twenty years ago, where, after repeated calls to order, and votes empowering the president to keep order, “Almighty power was voted to you, which was afterwards reinforced by an *additional vote of power.*”

After the utmost research in the constitution and in my own memory, for the power under which you act, my dear Sir, in calling the approaching convention, I can deduce it from no other source than the Vermont Saturday night convivial convention. Analogy, and a desire to find an apology for an old friend, has brought the long forgotten frolic fresh to my memory.

Your goodness will, I am persuaded, excuse the unadorned address of a plain old man, who cannot intentionally be guilty of disrespect to you, or any member of Congress. If any unguarded expression has escaped my hasty pen, I beg you will impute it to any thing else rather than a want of due respect for your person, or any of the members of the National Legislature.

M. LYON.

HON. STEPHEN R. BRADLEY.

FROM THE WASHINGTON EXPOSITOR OF FEBRUARY 13,  
No. VI.

*Who is to be the next President?*

IT appears that this question, at this time, occupies the attention of the Virginian newspapers more than the defence of the nation, war or peace, the embargo, or any other subject.

It is really laughable to see the solicitude with which each party (in its mad zeal for the perpetual presidency) advocates the pretensions of its favorite candidate, to the exclusion of those of the present Vice-President. A stranger on reading the numberless essays that have been published in that state in favor of the Virginia candidates, would naturally be led to suppose that whatever might be the population of the nation out of that State, it must consist of colonists; and that the poor underlings were waiting with great humility and patience for the great men of Virginia to agree which of her sons she would give to the nation for its next President.

The pains taken by each party to convince the other that their favorite would be most acceptable to the people of the other States, and the kindness they express in their wishes to accommodate the republicans of those other States in a choice, provided that choice be a Virginian, although extremely polite in them, is truly ridiculous; almost as much so, as the arrogance with which they insist that the people of the United States have a desire for another Virginian President. And they pretend to ascertain this fact from the result of the Caucus at Washington. Let us see of what materials that Caucus was composed.

According to the *Intelligencer* it consisted of eighty-nine persons, who being sensible of the violation of the Constitution they would be guilty of, as members of Congress, in thus encroaching on powers forbidden them by the Constitution; converted themselves into "*private individuals*," and there balloted for, and elected the man they would choose to be the *next President of the United States*—and him they did recommend to the people for that office.

Notwithstanding the great deference I entertain for the opinion of the learned editor of "*The Weekly Register*," I contend that balloting is for the purpose of a choice, and that choice is electing; I need not repeat the words of that part of the Constitution which prohibits members of Congress from being electors, nor need I be told that they cannot, in January 1808, make a constitutional election. The *Intelligencer* and *Register* have both stated that those men did ballot—for what? a choice. It was, to be sure, a mock election, a premature election, which they felt ashamed of, as members of Congress, and therefore attempted to divest themselves of their official characters.

A curious transformation! Had they effected it before they got into the Senate chamber, and had the honest old door-keeper found a collection of private individuals, (as they stated themselves to be) breaking into the room of which he has the charge, at 10 o'clock at night; he would have turned them out of doors.

It is evident, that notwithstanding their transformation, he could see them in no other light than as members of Congress; and they may ere long be made to see that what they seem to have attempted in jest, their constituents may do in earnest; they may think them unworthy of a character of which, by their own act, they have lately attempted to divest themselves.

After all attempts to divest the Caucus Members of their official character, their friends in Virginia and this city endeavored to puff the transaction into great importance; some of them saying, that as the election may come to the members of Congress at last, there can be no harm in their commencing it. The National Intelligencer in defending it, tells us, that to prevent the very great evil of suffering the election to come to the House of Representatives, the members may be justified in commencing it by Caucus.

Suppose, for once, we were to admit that the House of Representatives (for the Senate is under all circumstances precluded from participating in the choice) might as well commence as finish the election; (which by the way is directly contrary to the Constitution,) will that justify 64 or 65 out of 142 members of that house, in getting together at the dead of night and assuming to themselves the rights of the whole body? Let it be understood, there were sixteen members in the late Caucus from Virginia, and her child, Kentucky, (I will not apply to this latter state the reproachful name given to it by a Virginian member on the floor of Congress the other day,\*) while there were but eighteen members from eight of the other states, and two states left totally out of the question, because they were federalists; though at the same time, such of the federalists were admitted, as it was known would coincide with their views.

This comports exactly with the object of Virginia writers, who, to give currency to their eulogiums on the Caucus, have denounced a number of the firmest and most determined republicans in Congress

\* *The fungus of Virginia.*

This anti-constitutional attempt to impose Mr. Madison on the people of this nation over the head of the venerable, the meritorious George Clinton, is very curiously defended by the Editor of a Register published in this city, in his third number.

He is an eulogist of no common abilities—he is excellent at biography, and has given a *most interesting* history of Mr. Madison, which occupies better than two whole pages of an octavo sheet. He gives us *two substantial reasons* for making Mr. Madison President; one is, that he was born in Orange County, Virginia; the other, that he was educated at Princeton College. But he gives also a third reason, (an *excellent one too*,) he never had a personal enemy. — This last is a reason which Solomon himself would never have thought of. The author of our religion has left on record a bold denunciation of such negative characters. Thomas Jefferson and George Clinton cannot boast of such perfections—no, they have had the curses of many a tory—many a monarchist—many a federalist—and, what is more, they have earned those curses: they have not been afraid of making enemies by doing right.

It is well this *tender hearted* biographer did not undertake to write the history of Governor Clinton. Besides telling us where he was born, and naming the college at which he was educated, he would have marches, campaigns, battles, and sieges, to intermix with a long series of professional and official duties, as a lawyer, a legislator and a governor. These *'coarse'* and *indelicate* things, might be too much for the refined taste of so polite a writer.

As I have other objects to attend to in this number, however unwilling to quit this gentlemanly editor, he must excuse me for the present. I will here take the liberty, in my own plain way, of bringing into view the foundation of an opinion I have long entertained—that it is almost as necessary to have an eye to rotation in the States, in choosing a President, as it is in the individual to be elected.

With all our partialities for our late President Washington, and our present President Jefferson, we will not contend that they, or either of them, possessed supernatural faculties; nor do we pretend that the great knowledge they possessed of men and things was derived to them otherwise than through the organs of the senses common to other men.

Each of them, while President of the United States, possessed the power of selecting all the officers of the general government; they very properly felt themselves responsible to the nation for the good behavior of every officer thus appointed, and therefore, naturally selected those who, from personal knowledge, were believed most likely to do the respective duties well, in preference to those whom they did not know. In this way the most suitable characters are sometimes disappointed, and thus it has happened that three out of seven Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, and four out of five Territorial Governors are natives of Virginia, and nearly the same proportion of Judges and Secretaries of Territories are of the same description.

The writer of this is not particularly acquainted with the birth-place of all the foreign ministers and consuls, nor that of all the officers of the army and navy; but if there should appear to be a like proportion of Virginians amongst them, (which by the way is not likely to be the case) it ought to be imputed to the same blameless and accidental cause, incident to the nature of humanity. This can only be remedied by a change in the States from whence our Presidents are taken. In order to destroy that jealousy which results from the present state of things; when the talents and qualifications of the candidate from a part of the union distant from the residence of the former President will admit, he ought to be preferred; and no doubt this consideration will have great weight out of Virginia; no doubt this was apprehended by the members of the caucus, and hurried on that manœuvre. They complain that the newspaper publications hastened them—perhaps they did; they knew the light of discussion was ruinous to their ambitious views—they assembled the few over whom they had influence—they bawled out for unanimity, while they were undermining its pillars; they conjured all, by the sacred name of republicanism, to join them in one of the most anti-republican measures which aristocracy itself was ever guilty of.

For the *consolation* of those gentlemen, let it be observed, that many who consented to meet them are now declaring that they do not feel pledged to support Mr. Madison; that their minds are open to conviction; that when they yielded to vote on the occasion, they did it more with a view to assent, than to do any thing like dictating to others.

Members of Congress, of this description, when they return among their constituents and are called on for their

reasons for attempting to recommend their Caucus President in preference to the Vice-President and Veteran Soldier, will do their cause but little good; they cannot have recourse to the hackneyed story of his being superannuated: no—their nominating him to the Vice-Presidency (the duties of which are well known to be more arduous than that of President) gives that story the lie direct. They will doubtless get off as well as they can, by answering, that the thing was hastily done, that they intended no wrong.

The length to which this number has already extended, obliges me to hasten to fulfil my promise respecting the charge brought against our present President, of having borne hard upon his coadjutor Clinton, and of having attempted to point out his successor. I have ever considered the answer given by the President to the addresses made to him on the subject of standing another election, as the capstone of the pyramid of his fame, which posterity will regard with true filial veneration; and so far from imputing to the man who tells the world that the mind of Franklin was as bright as ever at eighty, a design to injure the pretensions of the Vice-President; I have viewed it as a modest reprimand, intended for those in whose hands the power of the Constitution rests, for their neglect of that all-important duty, the insertion of a clause limiting the duration of the presidency in the hands of one man. It forcibly recommends the electing a man far advanced in life to fill that office. Mr. Jefferson says, "truth also requires me to add, that I am sensible of that decline which advancing years bring on." I say, when he feels himself under the necessity of giving this additional reason for declining another election, we are left to conjecture whether, if he had been a younger man and not committed in favor of the rotation principle, he might not have been induced to yield to the solicitations of his sycophantic admirers, and to have consented to a re-election. History gives but few examples of men relinquishing power in the full tide of their popularity in the magnanimous manner that Washington and Jefferson have done, and that with so many solicitations as the latter has had. Such solicitations are not difficult to be procured by an ambitious man, wielding such immense patronage, and such powers as the President of the United States possesses.

The part of Mr. Jefferson's answer adverted to, reminds me of an exclamation which has often escaped me; that it

is better three successive Presidents should die in the chair, than that one young or middle aged man should get into it, who, with a common share of ambition, using the means within his reach, and aided by that sycophancy which will ever occupy the atmosphere of so much power, would be able to make himself a tenant for life, and thereby saddle the nation with a monarchy.

When the enlightened people of this nation take into their consideration the propriety, and indeed the necessity of some kind of rotation in the states from which the president is taken; and when they call to mind the important services, the great weight of character, the talents, the political and governmental experience by which George Clinton is distinguished—the man whom they have heretofore placed in the second station of honor; the writer of this cannot believe they will suffer themselves to be cajoled out of their honest predilection for promoting, in succession, their deserving and faithful servants, by the artifice and cunning of any set of Caucussers, be their public or private characters ever so elevated.

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*Extract from the Protest of a number of the Members of Congress, against the nomination in Caucus.*

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TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

In the course of the events which have marked the conduct and characters of those to whom you have, at different periods, entrusted by your suffrages, the power of making laws for your government, few measures have occurred, since the adoption of the present Constitution, more extraordinary, than the meeting lately held for the purpose of nominating a President and Vice-President of the United States.

Our alarm is equally excited, whether we advert to the mode in which the meeting was summoned, or to the proceedings after it was convened. The Senator who assumed the power of calling together the members of Congress, did it under the pretext of that power being vested in him, by a former convention: this pretext, whether it be true or not, implies an assertion of a right in the Congress of 1804, to direct their successors in the mode of choosing the chief magistrate; an assertion which no man has ever before had the

hardihood to advance. The notices were private, not general to all the members of the two houses; nor confined to the republican party; a delegate from one of the territories was invited and attended—a man who in elections has no suffrage, and in legislation no vote. The persons who met, in pursuance of this unprecedented summons, proceeded *without discussion or debate*, to determine by ballot the candidates for the highest offices in the Union. The characters of different men, and their pretensions to the public favor, were not suffered to be canvassed, and *all responsibility was avoided by the mode of selection*. The determination of this conclave has been published as the act of the republican party; and with as much exultation as the result of a solemn election by the nation. Attempts are making to impress upon the public mind, that these proceedings ought to be binding upon all the republicans, and those who refused to attend, or disapproved of the meeting, are denounced as enemies of liberty, and as apostates from the cause of the people. In this state of things we think it our duty to address you, and we deem ourselves called upon to enter our most solemn protest against these proceedings.

It is true, that at former periods, when the election of a President and Vice-President approached, it was customary to hold meetings of the members of Congress, for the purpose of recommending candidates to the public. But these meetings, if not justified, were palliated by the necessity of union. The federalists presented a formidable phalanx; and either to succeed at all or to prevent them from placing the candidate for the Vice-Presidency in the Presidential chair, it was necessary to exert the combined efforts of the whole republican party. But it is equally true that in those instances the nominations for the Presidency were mere matters of course. In the first and second elections under the constitution the eyes of all were turned upon General Washington, and since the expiration of the two periods, during which he filled the supreme executive office, there has not until now been any difference of opinion among the republicans, as to the candidate for the first magistracy. The real object of all former meetings, was to produce such a co-operation as would secure the election of a republican Vice-president.

The circumstances which might be urged in extenuation of such a measure heretofore, do not now exist. The federalists are comparatively few in number, and form but a feeble party; they cannot give any one candidate, more than

sixteen or seventeen votes out of one hundred and seventy-six; no federalist can therefore be elected by the electors; and should no person have a majority of all the electoral votes, the choice of the President will devolve on the members of the present house of representatives, in which the federalists have the votes of only two states, Connecticut and Delaware. The alteration of the Constitution prevents the danger of any intrigue, by which the intended Vice-President might be elected President. No good reason can therefore now be assigned, why an union of the republicans in favor of any particular person should be attempted by a measure in itself so exceptionable, as a nomination by the Senators and Representatives in Congress.

We do not say that a consultation among the members of Congress, respecting the persons to be recommended as candidates for the two highest offices of the nation, may not in some extraordinary crisis, be proper. But the propriety must arise from absolute necessity. Even then, we doubt whether it can be completely justified. The people ought to exercise their right of election without any undue bias; and is it not the evident intention of such consultations to produce a bias? Besides, in the event of there being no election by the electors; the choice of the President devolves on the House of Representatives, and that of the Vice-President on the Senate: Should the House of Representatives not succeed in electing the President, the Vice-President will become the chief magistrate; hence the impropriety of nominations, by the members of Congress, is more glaring, as it may become the political interest of the Representatives to prevent an election by the electors, and of the Senators to frustrate any choice by either. Nor is this all; a danger of more than ordinary magnitude arises from the influence which may be used by the President, over meetings of any individuals at the seat of the general government. The hope, or the promise of office may be employed to induce a nomination either of himself, or of a favorite successor, and it requires but little sagacity to foresee the consequences of such corruption.

So conscious were the members who attended the late meeting, of the weight of objections which might be urged against their proceedings, that they have thought it proper to publish an exculpatory resolution, proposed by Mr. Giles of Virginia, and unanimously adopted. They have declared, "that in making their nominations, they have acted

only in their individual characters as citizens ;" this is very true, because they could act in no other, without a breach of their oaths, and a direct violation of the letter of the Constitution. But was it not intended that those nominations should be enforced by the sanction of Congressional names? They proceed to assert, "that they have been induced to adopt this measure from the necessity of the case, from a deep conviction of the importance of union to the republicans throughout all parts of the United States, in the present crisis of both our external and internal affairs." We trust we have shewn that no such necessity exists, and that an union among the republicans, in favour of any individual is not important. We acknowledge that the aspect of our foreign affairs is unpromising. We are, perhaps, on the eve of a war with one of the great powers of Europe ; we are therefore, strongly impressed with the difficulties of our situation. In such a crisis, if unanimity in the choice of President is necessary, that choice should be directed to a man eminently calculated by his tried energy and talents, to conduct the nation with firmness and wisdom, through the perils which surround it ; to a man who had not, in the hour of terror and persecution, deserted his post, and sought in obscurity and retirement, a shelter from the political tempest ; to a man not suspected of undue partiality or enmity to either of the present belligerent powers—*Is James Madison such a man?* We ask for energy, and we are told of his moderation ; we ask for talents, and the reply is, his unassuming merit ; we ask, what were his services in the cause of public liberty, and we are directed to the pages of the *Federalist*, written in conjunction with *Alexander Hamilton* and *John Jay*, in which the most extravagant of their doctrines are maintained and propagated. We ask for consistency, as a republican, standing forth to stem the torrent of oppression, which once threatened to overwhelm the liberties of the country ; we ask for that high and honorable sense of duty, which would at all times turn with loathing and abhorrence from any compromise with fraud and speculation—we ask  
IN VAIN.

But further, one of the reasons assigned by Mr. Jefferson for declining to stand again, as a candidate for the chair of the chief magistrate, is the propriety of a rotation in that office. The great advantage of this principle of rotation is, that by appointing as a successor to the present officer, a man not immediately connected with him, the acts of the

administration may be impartially reviewed; those measures which tend to promote the public good will be adopted, and those of a contrary tendency, which, from the fallibility of human nature, may have been pursued, will be abandoned, and if necessary exposed. All other rotation is a mockery.

We do, therefore, in the most solemn manner, Protest against the proceedings of the meeting held in the Senate Chamber, on the twenty-third day of January last, because we consider them—

As being in direct hostility to the principles of the Constitution :

As a gross assumption of power not delegated by the people, and not justified or extenuated by any actual necessity :

As an attempt to produce an undue bias in the ensuing election of President and Vice-President, and virtually to transfer the appointment of those officers from the people, to a majority of the house of Congress.

And we do in the same manner Protest against the nomination of *James Madison*, as we believe him to be unfit to fill the office of President in the present juncture of our affairs.

—  
*New York, 9th March, 1808.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE AMERICAN CITIZEN.

The following letter, received by mail, has been communicated to several of the friends of Governor Clinton, but finding the opinions it was intended to refute, more extensive than at first imagined, the gentleman to whom it was addressed, conceives he will be justified in giving it publicity, through the medium of the press.

*Washington, 5th March, 1808.*

DEAR SIR,

“Yesterday I had the honor to receive your letter of the first instant, and am not surprised to learn that some of my friends in your city are induced to infer, from my silence on the subject of the nomination of candidates for the offices of President and Vice-President, made some time ago at this place, and since published in the news-papers, that my name was mentioned for the latter, with my knowledge and approbation. The inference is a natural one, although in the present instance incorrect.

“Viewing with great anxiety the critical and alarming situation of our national affairs, and deeply impressed with

a belief that it would require the united wisdom and patriotism of the different branches of the government to avert the dangers which threaten our country; I formed a resolution, at the commencement of this important session, not to participate in any conversation touching the ensuing Presidential election, nor to express any sentiment or determination respecting it, that might have a tendency to disunion, or to any baneful effect on our public deliberations: this resolution I have hitherto scrupulously observed, and now regret the necessity I feel myself under of a partial departure from it, in order to remove the false impressions which it seems my silence has occasioned, by assuring my friends, through you, that I never have been directly or indirectly consulted on the subject, either before or since that nomination was made, nor was I even apprised of the meeting held for the purpose, otherwise than by having accidentally seen a notice, or summons, to one of the members to attend it, from S. R. Bradley, Esquire.

“ However correct and forcible the objections which you have stated against this procedure may be, yet as it is a business in which I have had no agency or participation, and over which I can have no controul, it might be considered improper for me, situated as I am, to make any comments upon it.

“ I am, with great respect and esteem,  
Your most obe't serv't,

GEO. CLINTON.”

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TO THE  
CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES.

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*Thoughts on the Constitutionality, Propriety and Necessity of the late Grand Caucus, held at the seat of the General Government.*

WITH the character, talents, and services of George Clinton, you have long been familiarly acquainted. His activity and merit brought him into notice in his native state, even in the early dawn of that Glorious Revolution which has thrown resplendent light and lustre on us as a people, and given us, as a nation, an independent and elevated standing among the other nations of the earth.

When the din of the revolutionary armies was hushed, and Peace, with her Olives, had shaded the rugged front of

War, and Plenty had poured from her Cornucopia blessings among Columbia's sons, Mr. Clinton was selected by his fellow citizens to preside, in his native state, in her councils of peace. This mark of distinction was thought to have been well earned by him who had led their troops to victory. In this highly responsible and honorable station we find the Hero and the Statesman continued, by frequent elections, for eighteen years. The zeal, integrity and fidelity with which he invariably and unremittingly discharged the duties of his office, raised him greatly and deservedly in the estimation and confidence of his fellow citizens.

From the exercise of the duties of Chief Magistrate of the State of New York, you were pleased to call him, by as honorable a vote as ever bore testimony to worth, patriotism and talents, to participate in the public councils of the United States; and this too at a time when the political horizon was dark and portentous. In this situation, which he did not seek or obtain by any intrigue, the virtuous and independent members of the Senate, will bear testimony to the disinterested integrity with which Mr. Clinton has at all times, and upon all occasions, discharged its important duties.

It is neither wished or intended to censure the conduct of particular persons. The object of the writer is to invite inquiry; to present a correct statement of facts, and to test the principles which have been acted upon, by the Sovereign law of the land, the Constitution of the United States! In the observations to be made, the writer has no wish to imply a disapprobation of the principle of selecting candidates to be supported as *party recommendations*; it is a principle upon which he has repeatedly acted, when, in a contention for the officers to be elected, there was a probable chance of success to a candidate of principles hostile to the democratic party, of which he is a member. In the present case, there is no such chance, and what is yet stronger and more conclusive, is the belief, that the late proceedings are hostile to the dictates of justice, to the interests and rights of the community, and to the spirit and the letter of the Constitution of our country.

*See Mr. Bradley's letter, pag. 22.*

Before we pass on, my fellow citizens, to test these proceedings, by the principles, the spirit and the letter of our Constitution, allow me to arrest your attention a few minutes, to examine, not the style or manner, but the informa-

tion, the substance and facts contained in this extraordinary circular.

From it we learn the impressive fact, that there exists at the seat of the general government, a body of men unrecognized by the Constitution, who execute without responsibility, important public functions, for which they were never delegated by the people; which body of men are self-styled a *convention*, and who have a *president* and we know not how many other officers

By whom this convention is chosen we are not informed but from the manner in which the letter is directed to particular individuals, it is evident that they must be privately selected by some one or more persons—whose names do not appear.

The times or places of meeting, of this convention, do not appear to be stated, but to depend on the will of the president, or of those who govern the president. To this conclusion we are inevitably led by the words, “In pursuance of the powers vested in *me*, &c. *I* deem it expedient” to call a convention, which is to meet on the 23d instant.

This convention, consisting of men whose names are unpublished—selected by men whose names are unknown—and called together by a president unacknowledged by our Constitution or our laws—being assembled are to do what?

On referring to this mysterious and singular letter, we shall find, that the convention is assembled “for the purpose of *nominating*” a President and Vice-President of the United States for four years.

If this body of men assembled in conclave, and called a convention, can *nominate* the chief magistrates of the Union where was the necessity of the people taking such pains, and going to such expense to point out the mode of their being elected by the Constitution? If this convention can *nominate*, what a farce is it for the people to hold special elections to choose electors of President and Vice-President, and for those electors to meet and go through the ceremony of voting?

I request you, my fellow citizens, with candor and impartiality to examine what I have stated: reflect how deeply we are all involved, and having done this, I am confident you will act worthy of the descendants of the heroes and legislators who achieved that independence which we prize so highly, and which we are resolved to transmit as a precious blessing to our children, and our children’s children.

If under all the circumstances of our country, in its foreign relations and internal concerns, and in the state of parties, you can see no full and honest justification of the late proceedings, you will exercise *independently* your constitutional rights. But if, in those proceedings, you perceive not only the germ, but the shoots of a destructive and poisonous aristocracy, then I am assured, that you will zealously, and anxiously, and actively exert yourselves to root it out from the land of democracy.

In another number I shall lay before you such parts of the Constitution of the United States, as bear most strongly on the subject to which your attention has been called.

MONTGOMERY.

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No. II.

IN consequence of the letter from Mr. Bradley, a number of members met in the Senate chamber, and a *nomination* took place, which has been announced in some of the public papers with an air of triumph and exultation, which seemed to enquire, who dare to say Nay? It remains with you, my fellow citizens, to examine how far your rights have been usurped; by what *authority* this meeting was called and acted; and the real objects which the promoters of it had in view. If it shall appear upon a fair and impartial inquiry that, in the present situation of parties in our country, it is, in the first instance, a flagrant usurpation of a right reserved by the Constitution of the United States, from the powers of Congress, and in the second, that it is a continuation of an intrigue commenced some years ago, at the seat of the general government, and now revived, for the express purpose of wounding the feelings, and hissing off the stage, an aged, faithful and meritorious servant; I appeal to your hearts and your understandings, whether you ought to bow implicit obedience to the nomination? Let a recollection of past services prompt us, by our votes, to give the lie direct to that scandalous falsehood, that Republics are ungrateful. Without at all implicating the characters brought into view in the nomination, we ought, in a manly and independent manner, to discountenance an attempt to wrest from us the free exercise of the right of suffrage.

By the second section of the second article of the Constitution of the United States it is declared, that "He (the President) shall have power, by and with the advice and consent

“ of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the  
 “ Senators present concur: *and he shall nominate* and by and  
 “ with the consent of the Senate, shall *appoint* ambassadors,  
 “ other public ministers and consuls, Judges of the Supreme  
 “ Court, and all other officers of the United States, whose  
 “ *appointments* are not herein otherwise provided for, and  
 “ which shall be established by law:”—“ the president shall  
 “ have power to fill up all vacancies that may happen during  
 “ the recess of the Senate, by granting commissions which  
 “ shall expire at the end of the next session.” Has it not been  
 the common understanding and the universal acceptation of  
 the intent of these clauses of the Constitution, that the Pre-  
 sident of the United States is *responsible* for the officers  
 which he *appoints*? In the first, he nominates to the Se-  
 nate—in the second, he grants a commission. Is it not per-  
 fectly clear that in the Constitution the words *nominate* and  
*appoint* are used as synonymous terms?

In another part of the Constitution of the United States  
 we find the following provision, that “ Each State shall ap-  
 “ point, in such manner as the legislatures thereof may di-  
 “ rect, a number of Electors, equal to the whole number of  
 “ Senators and Representatives, to which the state may be  
 “ entitled in Congress: but *no Senator or Representative, or*  
 “ *person holding an office of trust or profit under the United*  
 “ *States, shall be appointed an Elector.*”

Why, except from the conviction of its necessity, should  
 all this anxiety be manifested by the framers of the constitu-  
 tion expressly declaring that no member of either house of  
 congress shall be an elector? Is not this constitutional pro-  
 hibition completely defeated, if the members by a previous  
 nomination, can give the tone to the public opinion? If they  
 can, by a midnight meeting, throw a man of tried integrity,  
 virtue, and intelligence, into the back ground, vain and fool-  
 ish is the constitutional interdiction, which prevents them  
 from being electors, and standing *responsible* to the nation  
 for the choice which they have made. If the members of  
 congress can, without a violation of the Constitution, which  
 they ought to support, make a previous nomination to the  
 electors of the persons who are to be President and Vice-  
 President of the United States, why do the sections of the  
 Constitution which have been quoted, consider *nomination*  
 and *appointment* as convertible terms, and therefore expressly  
 exclude *all* members of Congress from being Electors? Can  
 any reasons be assigned which will satisfy the plain letter

and intention of the Constitution, and yet justify the members of Congress, or any portion of them, in making a previous nomination of a President and Vice-President? It is for you my fellow citizens, to answer these questions.

Let us return to the Constitution, while we have that for our guide, we walk on sure ground: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people."

Will it, in the spirit of sophistry, be said in reply to this declaration, that there is a material distinction between the proceedings of the two houses, when sitting upon their own adjournment, in their respective chambers, and in their holding a promiscuous or select meeting in either of the chambers? When quibbling is resorted to, there is an end to all rational inquiry. The plain question is, would any more bias be given to the public mind—would any greater effect be produced, in the one case rather than in the other? It is the substantial right in things which the Constitution intended to preserve to the people, not the unmeaning, unreal distinctions of the gentlemen of the long robe. The right now contended for, is of the deepest interest, and strongly guaranteed to *us* by the Constitution. The part just quoted, is one on which any state in the Union is bound to put such a construction, as will prevent the United States from encroaching upon any of those rights which they have not surrendered to it: It is one of those rights which is nowhere granted to Congress, or the members which compose Congress, nor is it in any part of the Constitution of the United States, prohibited to the states, consequently the right remains in the *States or the People*.

In this inquiry, we are not left to mere speculation: we have recent, substantial facts for our guide. The state of Virginia claims this right, and by her legislature has exercised it. She has nominated her candidates. Will it be contended that there is a concurrent right in the members of Congress, and in the members of the Legislature of Virginia at the same time? This absurdity will not, I think, be defended. What follows? That either the members of Congress, or the state of Virginia are usurpers. Which of them have acted out of character, will, I apprehend, become apparent, when we take a view of the Constitution of the United States, in that part which directly bears on this question.