

could afford—of his unvarying habits of reflection and study—of his being intimately and practically conversant with the public measures of this country for the last forty years—of his high rank among the men of learning of the world—or of the pledges which are given in his uniformly unexceptionable private character, throughout his whole life. But we shall maintain our opinions and preference upon public grounds alone, and upon reasons and views which exclusively appertain to the prosperity of the people, and the glory of the country.

The work of man, however admirable, is necessarily imperfect; and there is no part of our excellent Federal system which the forecast of its authors and the reflective wisdom of those who ratified it, thought would be so likely in time, to endanger its existence, as the election of Chief Magistrate. Although our form of government was in some parts new, & in others an improvement upon things which had existed before, yet the principle of an elective Chief Magistrate was not new, and whilst we were to partake of the advantages of that feature, we were unavoidably exposed to some of the evils to which it had been found subject—among the greatest of which is the train of incidents inevitably flowing from the frequent recurrence of contests between rival candidates for that high station. Nor did the founders of the government expect to ward off these evils so much by the limitations and proportions with which they fashioned this part of the constitution relating to the appointment of President, although less objected to than any other part of that charter. They had a stronger, and as they thought, a safer reliance upon the sober-minded character of the people who were to carry it into effect—in their love of order, their sagacity to discriminate, and their intelligence and firmness to resist every thing that had a tendency to impair the system.

Jealousy, strife, and local feelings, are the dangers against which we have been particularly counselled by our illustrious political Father, and these, unfortunately, are the probable attendants upon a contest for the Presidential Chair. So long as the selection for this exalted post was confined to Revolutionary worthies, there was much in the character of our admiration for those Patriots, as well as in the youthful purity of our institutions, that forbade these incidental evils to arise. We have now exhausted that store of worth, and have come to men nearer to our times, who, whatever may be their merits, can never experience the unwonted devotion that was paid to their predecessors.

Fertile as our country is, in the growth of distinguished men, and propitious as our government is to display them, the expansion of empire, the progress of science, and the increase of population, must necessarily augment the number of favorites, and meritorious favorites too, who will engross the attention and confidence of their respective sections of country. From the operation of this affection and confidence, local attachments, and jealousies, and contests will arise, and, without a check, the nation will quiescently be thrown into agitation, that will become most alarming. To guard against this impending terror, we have nothing to rely on but the salutary influence of established custom, which, being founded in wise precaution, in a nation of intelligence, easily acquires force. The first President of the United States having voluntarily retired from office at the expiration of his second term, that voluntary retirement has been construed into an example that has been implicitly followed by every successor who had an opportunity of doing so, and has been approved of by the People. Under the sanction of this usage will it not be wise and prudent, to establish the system of re-electing a Chief Magistrate for a second term, except in case where the qualifications of the opponent are known to be greatly superior to those of the incumbent—or, where the course of administration is palpably and fatally prejudicial to the true interests of the country? In the last case, any change is to be sought, and any hazard will be worthily encountered to extinguish the existing evil.

But we demand with frankness and we expect to be answered with candor, if such a state of things, or if such a necessity now exists in our country? Is it even pretended that it does? Has the Opposition to Mr. Adams been undertaken by the friends of General Jackson, because it is known that General Jackson possesses all the necessary qualifications for the Presidential office, in a superior degree to what Mr. Adams does? Or because the measures of Administration are bad, and that they expect such defects will be remedied by a different course of administration likely to be pursued under General Jackson? Or was this Opposition determined on anterior to the development of any measure by this Administration? Or did it originate in a predetermined intent to eject a man from office, who notwithstanding the generally mild, judicious and able course of his measures, has been so unfortunate as not to have propitiated those who were resolved never to be appeased?

Fearing lest the constitution and the reason of things should be against them in this objection, the opposition then assert, that Mr. Adams was corruptly elected in the House by the intrigue of Mr. Clay; and to this accusation, as gross as it is unworthy, as hideous as it is unfounded, the Jackson Convention have lent themselves with all the positive force of their fame, and with all the artificial influence of

their learned notes and commentaries.

That the first moments of mortification and disappointment should have given rise, among some men, to a heated and irascible ebullition (this sort, was neither to have been wondered at nor regarded)—but time and reflection ought to have induced a juster construction of things. It is easy to indulge in accusations against men, and in times of high political ferment, he disposition to yield a submissively credulous ear to imputations against those whom it is our purpose to oppose, is often the vice of men. Let us however judge by safer and more just laws of construction, and more becoming the high character of all.

In the absence of every thing like positive proof, which is admitted by the Opposition in this case, they have recourse to circumstantial proof, in the construction of which we maintain that it is a violation of all rule and interpretation and of moral right to recur to supposed corrupt motives and views to explain that, which may be equally well explained by obvious and known facts. As a representative in Congress at the time of the late Presidential election, Mr. Clay was obliged to vote—he was in effect limited to a choice between Mr. Adams and General Jackson, for the condition of Mr. Crawford's health, at that time put him out of the question with all who were not previously pledged. Between Mr. Adams and General Jackson there was an entire good understanding; but between neither of them and Mr. Clay, did there exist any prepossession—indeed there was something more between Gen. Jackson and Mr. Clay, than the ordinary feelings between rival candidates.

During the late canvass for electors of President and Vice President, exception was taken by Mr. Clay to the construction and facts given in a correspondence between Mr. Adams and Mr. Russell in relation to events that transpired on the Mission to Ghent; yet the contest which grew out of this between Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay, was not of a nature to interrupt their accustomed intercourse and association. But the stand taken by Mr. Clay in the year 1819, against General Jackson's conduct, just after the Seminoles war, a time when no man on earth expected that the General would ever be held up as a candidate for the Presidential Chair, was of a much harsher and more serious character; and we have every reason to believe, produced from that day an entire alienation between them, and implanted in the breast of the most implacable resentment. Mr. Clay, on that occasion, arraigned the conduct of General Jackson, in the strongest and most fearless terms, with an ability rarely equalled by any man, seldom surpassed by himself. This he did in the discharge of his congressional duty, when the gems of General Jackson's glory were fresh sparkling around his brow. Some years after this, when Mr. Clay is called upon by the Constitution with other members of the House of Representatives to "make choice" between Mr. Adams and Gen. Jackson of a President of the United States, he professes and votes for Mr. Adams. Mr. Clay's influence in the House was long known and had been considered greater than that of any other member—an influence derived from his splendid abilities, his long standing as a member, his engaging deportment towards every body, and his able and satisfactory discharge of the office of Speaker. It was doubtful who would be elected by the House—Mr. Clay being known to advocate Mr. Adams' election, and Mr. Adams being elected on the first ballot it was immediately imputed to Mr. Clay's influence, and it was then most unworthily and unaccountably asserted by some, who were smarting under disappointment, that this result was owing to a corrupt understanding between them. When Mr. Adams, in forming his cabinet, nominated Mr. Clay as Secretary of State, and the Senate advised and consented to it, then the story was rounded off, and it was agreed by the Opposition that the appointment of Secretary of State should be considered as the "swages of sin"—thus imputing to a majority of the Senate of the United States, who were present throughout the whole transaction, and who were intimately conversant with all the circumstances, a deliberate participation in the corruption, by advising and consenting to the nomination—and a large portion of that majority too are now of the present Opposition.

In the speech of Mr. Clay in 1819, arraigning Gen. Jackson's conduct is referred to, it is believed that no unprejudiced man would ever suppose after that, that he could have been induced to vote for General Jackson as the Chief Magistrate of the country. Nor is there any fair grounds to believe that he supported Mr. Adams from personal motive of any sort, but from a conviction, such as influences ourselves, that he was obviously and decidedly the best qualified man, and as such, he was compelled by duty to vote for him.

As little do we believe that Mr. Adams nominated Mr. Clay to the Senate as Secretary of State from personal attachment or obligation; but knowing that no man in this country had passed through a more brilliant public course for the last twenty years than Mr. Clay, in which he had acquired great popularity and evinced a Statesman-like ability that classed him in the foremost rank of American Statesmen, it is fair to conclude, that Mr. Adams was governed by the established reputation of Mr. Clay and the public sentiments towards him, and that he very properly desired both his services and his fame to give their usefulness and lustre to his Administration. It was not necessary for Mr. Clay to have a bargain

or understanding with any of them—he was conscious and the world knew full well, that whichever candidate he supported, if he succeeded would call him to the station of Secretary of State as a tribute to his merit, and as a powerful aid to the Administration.

Had Mr. Clay been an ordinary or subaltern man who could have been managed, and who had been thus elevated to a station for which he was unfit, then indeed there might have been some plausibility in the story of a "bargain"—But in his conceded distinction as a Statesman justifiably commanded the appointment, we ought to distrust both the reasoning and the conjecture that implied the belief of stipulated reward. We disclaim all such suppositions imputations to accomplish ends—and with this plain narrative of facts we meet the conjectured and gratuitous portraits of the Opposition.

TRUTH TRIUMPHS.

To the Editor of the Lancaster Journal.

The Cincinnati Advertiser was last night placed in my hands by a friend, containing an address from General Jackson to the public, dated on the 10th ultimo, in which he announced me to be the Member of Congress in whom he had referred, in his letter to Mr. Beverly, of the 5th of June last. The duty which I owe to the public, and to myself, compels me to publish to the world, the only conversation which I ever held with General Jackson upon the subject of the late Presidential election prior to its termination.

In the month of December, 1823, a short time after the commencement of the session of Congress, I heard among other rumors then in circulation, that Gen. Jackson had determined should be elected President, to continue Mr. Adams in the office of Secretary of State. Although I felt certain he had never intimated such an intention, yet I was sensible that nothing could be better calculated both to cool the ardor of his friends, and to inspire his enemies with confidence, than the belief that he had already selected his chief executive, for the highest office within his gift. I thought Gen. Jackson owed it to himself and to the cause in which his political friends were engaged, to contradict this report; and to declare that he would not appoint to that office the man, however worthy he might be, who stood at the head of the most formidable party of his political enemies. These being my impressions, I addressed a letter to a confidential friend in Pennsylvania, then and still high in office, and exalted in character, and one who had ever been the decided advocate of Gen. Jackson's election, requesting his opinion and advice upon the subject. I received his answer, dated the 27th December, 1824, upon the 29th, which is now before me, and which strengthened and confirmed my previous opinion. I then finally determined, either that I would ask Gen. Jackson myself, or get another of his friends to ask him—whether he had ever declared, he would appoint Mr. Adams his Secretary of State. In this manner, I hoped a contradiction of the report might be obtained from himself, and that he might probably declare it was not his intention to appoint Mr. Adams.

A short time previous to the receipt of the letter to which I have referred, my friend Mr. Markley and myself got into conversation, as we very often did, both before and after, upon the subject of the Presidential election, and concerning the person who would probably be selected by Gen. Jackson to fill the office of Secretary of State. I feel sincerely sorry, that I am compelled thus to introduce his name; but I do so, with the less reluctance, because it has already, without any agency of mine, found its way in the newspapers, in connection with this transaction.

Mr. Markley adverted to the rumor which I have mentioned, and said it was calculated to injure the General. He observed that Mr. Clay's friends were warmly attached to him, & that he thought they would endeavor to get in concert at the election. That if they did so, they could either elect Mr. Adams or Gen. Jackson, at their pleasure; but that many of them would never agree to vote for the latter, if they knew he had pre-determined to prefer another to Mr. Clay, for the first office in his gift. And that some of the friends of Mr. Adams had already been holding out the idea, that in case he were elected, Mr. Clay might probably be offered the situation of Secretary of State.

I told Mr. Markley, that I felt confident Gen. Jackson had never said he would appoint Mr. Adams Secretary of State; because he was not in the habit of conversing upon the subject of the election, and if he were, whatever might be his secret intention, he had more prudence than to make such a declaration. I mentioned to him that I had been thinking, either that I would call upon the General myself, or get some one of his other friends to do so, and thus endeavor to obtain from him a contradiction of the report; although I doubted whether he would hold any conversation upon the subject.

Mr. Markley urged me to do so; and observed, if Gen. Jackson had not determined whom he would appoint Secretary of State and should say that it would not be Mr. Adams, it might be of great advantage to our cause, for us to declare, upon his own authority we should then be placed upon the same footing with the Adams men, and might fight them with their own weapons. That the western members would naturally prefer voting for a western man, if there were a probability, that the claims of Mr. Clay to the second office in the Govern-

ment should be fairly estimated, and that they thought proper to vote for General Jackson they could soon decide the contest in his favor.

A short time after this conversation, on the 30th of December, 1824 (I am enabled to do this, not only from my own recollection, but from letters which I wrote on that day, on the day following, and on the 31 of January, 1825.) I called upon Gen. Jackson. After the company had left him, by which I found he was surrounded, he asked me to take a walk with him; and whilst we were walking together, on the street I introduced the subject—I asked him I wished to ask him a question in relation to the Presidential election; that I knew he was unwilling to converse upon the subject, and therefore, if he deemed the question improper, he might refuse to give it an answer. That my only motive in asking it, was to test his opinion for him, and I trusted he would excuse me for thus introducing a subject, upon which I knew he wished to be silent.

His reply was complimentary to myself, accompanied with a request that I should proceed. I then stated to him, there was a report in circulation, that he had determined he would appoint Mr. Adams Secretary of State, in case he were elected President, and that I had learned this from him, whether it had ever intimated such an intention. That I had at once perceived how injurious to his election, such a report might be. That I doubted, there were several able and energetic men in the country, among whom I named Mr. Clay might be included, who were equaling to that office, and if it were believed, he had already determined to appoint Mr. Adams, it would have a most unhappy effect upon their exertions, and those of their friends; that unless he had so determined, I thought it would be promptly contradicted, for his own authority.

I mentioned I had already probably given him some injury, and proceeded to relate the substance of the conversation which I had held with Mr. Markley. I do not remember whether I mentioned his name or not, except as I did as a friend of Mr. Clay.

After I had finished, the General declared he had not the least objection to answer a question. That he thought well of Mr. Adams; but had never said or intimated, that he would, or would not, appoint him Secretary of State. That these things were secrets he would keep to himself—he would conceal them to the very hairs of his head. That his belief of his right hand then knew what he had said would do on the subject of appointing to office, he would cut it off and carry it to the fire. That if the error in the report, it would be without intention, and without impropriety on his part—that he would then go to the office perfectly free and untrammelled, and would be left at perfect liberty to fill the office of Government with the men whom at the time, he believed to be the ablest and the best in the country.

I told him that his answer to my question was such as I had expected to receive, if he answered it at all; that I had not sought to obtain it for my own satisfaction, I thought of him, if I were at liberty to repeat his answer. He said I was perfectly at liberty to do so to any person I thought proper. I need scarcely remark, that I afterwards availed myself of the privilege. The conversation upon this topic, here ended; in all our intercourse since, whether personally, or by the course of our correspondence, Gen. Jackson never once adverted to the subject, prior to the date of his letter to Mr. Beverly.

I do not recollect that Gen. Jackson told me I might repeat his answer to Mr. Clay and his friends, though I should be sorry to say he did not. The whole conversation being upon the public street, it might have escaped my observation.

A few remarks more, and I trust I shall have done with this disagreeable business forever.

I called upon General Jackson, on the occasion which I have mentioned, solely as his FRIEND, upon my individual responsibility, and NOT as THE AGENT of Mr. CLAY, or any other person. I never have been the political friend of Mr. Clay, since he became a candidate for the office of President, as every well known. Until I saw General Jackson's letter to Mr. Beverly of the 5th ult, and at the same time was informed by a letter from the Editor of the U. States Telegraph, that I was the person to whom he alluded, the conception never once entered my mind that he deemed me to have been the agent of Mr. Clay, or his friends, or that I had intended to propose to him terms of any kind from them, or that he could have supposed me to be capable of expressing the opinion that it was right to fight such intriguers with their own weapons. Such a supposition, had I entertained it, would have rendered me exceedingly unhappy, as there is no man upon earth, whose good opinion I more valued than that of General Jackson. He could not, I think, have received this impression, until after Mr. Clay and his friends had actually elected Mr. Adams President, and Mr. Adams had appointed Mr. Clay Secretary of State. After these events had transpired, it may be readily conjectured in what manner my communications might have led him into the mistake. I deeply deplore that such has been his effect.

I owe it to my own character to make another observation. Had I ever known, or even suspected, that Gen. Jackson believed I had been sent to him by Mr. Clay or his friends, I should have immediately corrected his erroneous im-