

COMMUNICATIONS.

FOR THE FREE PRESS.

On whom are the people to rely for information relative to the qualifications of the different candidates (for the Presidency)?

Mr. Editor:

The above question, inserted in your last (8th) number under the signature of "Northampton," not being, in my estimation, satisfactorily answered, I will, with your indulgence, endeavor to give an opinion on the subject.

In the first place, it is necessary for us to have some idea of the pre-requisites for that exalted station. A man who aspires to the first office in the gift of a free people, should be possessed of ability, integrity, consistency, and an habitual attention to the discharge of his duties. The possession of these qualities, I conceive, would be the best guaranty of the wisdom and integrity of his administration, and of his intention to pursue upright measures.

Having these qualifications in view, the inquiry is, how are we to ascertain the strength of the claims of the several candidates? By a reference to official documents, and an investigation of the part sustained by the several candidates, in their political career, a satisfactory decision might be made, perhaps, from a comparison of their respective merits and services. That there will be a diversity of opinion cannot be doubted, but, according to the fundamental principle of Republican governments, we must abide by the decision of the majority.

This I consider an unexceptionable course; and, no doubt, as we are "all republicans, all federalists," the good sense of the people will be evinced in the result. They know too well, that when men of corrupt principles and weak intellects are entrusted with the reins of government, that their measures will always be planned with selfish views, and executed with dishonor and loss. Hence the necessity of a careful and judicious selection. We cannot, as an ancient patriot did, lament over the degeneracy of the times that could produce but one great man: our lot has been cast in a more propitious season; we have abundance of great men, and the difficulty lies in bestowing sufficient "honor to them who have filled the measure of their country's honor."

As to the superior discrimination of Members of Congress in this important affair, I beg leave to differ from your correspondent: they are too much exposed to the fascinating influence of those who are constantly "booing and booging," and who possess an insinuating address and a dazzling exterior, to decide with impartiality on those qualities of the head and heart, which are of far greater consequence.

In all governments, where power is acknowledged to be derived from the people, they ought to oppose every thing that looks like the least design of encroaching on their liberties. With all due deference, therefore, to the sagacity and penetration of our Congressional Members, of short duration will be our Republican institutions, if we rely exclusively on their "capacity and integrity" for preservation against the continual inroads of corruption and intrigue. The following extract from an *American Book*, lately published under the title of

"RANDOLPH," connected with recent disclosures at Washington, cannot fail to awaken the vigilance of every friend to the liberties of his country:

"I have just left the President's house. Shall I tell thee what I expected to see? I will—men and women—Lacedemonians, at least—characterised by sublime plainness and strength; full of republican grandeur—august in republican sobriety and steadiness; deriding, calmly, but with a derision that kings would not encounter, all the trapping, and appendage, and parade, and nonsense of royalty. But what have I found!—Thou knowest my veneration for such men as George Washington, and others, like him, the growth of America, when God himself fought her battles, and bred her children; and thou wilt endure my plainness, while I lament her degeneracy.

"What have I found! I will tell thee—a plebeian nobility; a struggle for precedence between the families of to-day, and the families of yesterday; paltry titles, given and taken by all ranks, without authority or right; the worst follies and worst vices (of foreign courts) awkwardly imitated and caricatured; talent and virtue in the dust; greatness under the chariot wheels of wealth; a Republican court affecting to disdain the patricians of Europe, their titles and diamonds; their regal foolery; the hierarchy of their churches, and the ermine of their judges and chancellors; yet loaded with dirty finery; crowded and blazing with paste jewelry; and Squires and Honors; and Excellencies! and Bishops! O, is it not paltry! Nay, so ridiculous is this bustle and parade of imitation, at times, that I should be tempted to laugh at it, outright, were it not too serious a thing for laughter, when considered in its true light,—the symptom of a mortal degeneracy in a brave and great people." HALIFAX.

FOR THE FREE PRESS.

Mr. Editor:

Though I do not presume to address myself to any of the candidates for the Presidency, or, to the "American people," still your politeness may induce you to admit into your paper a few remarks on the subject, upon which *Numa's* "meteor" shed so brilliant a light. Some apology would be offered for his appearance, did your present correspondent expect any other readers than your own Subscribers; but, as he does not, his vanity whispers—"there is no intrusion, since *Numa* has thrust his lean pate and dull humor into the" columns of a newspaper! And why has he done so? Because "WM. H. CRAWFORD is a candidate, among others, for the supreme magistracy of the United States;" and therefore, this "lover of his country," thinks a knowledge of his character and qualifications a subject of great importance." So thinking, he has come forward as one possessed of this knowledge and "would advise the *American People*." But it is astonishing to me, that either *Numa's* sagacity or modesty did not suggest to him, the great difference between a capacity to advise and a wish to do so. Of this capacity, a knowledge of facts forms a most essential part. But *Numa* appears to think broad assertions, confidently uttered, amply sufficient to convince the "American people" that "Wm. H. Crawford" should not be elected

President of the United States: "that he was, in 1798, a strong federalist, congratulating Mr. Adams on the passage of those hateful acts, the Alien and Sedition laws." Assertion is well met by counter assertion: I affirm, unhesitatingly, that in 1798, Mr. Crawford was not a federalist; that he did not congratulate Mr. Adams on the passage of the Alien and Sedition laws!! He, with other young gentlemen of Augusta, did compliment Mr. Adams on some parts of his previous conduct with respect to France, which deserved the approbation of all honest men. To substantiate this, reference is made to the Address. Indeed, it is because Mr. Crawford has been more consistent in his political career than any other candidate for the office of President, Gen. Jackson perhaps excepted, that he deserves the good will of all who are attached to the genuine Republican principles of '98. But admitting, with *Numa*, that "Wm. H. Crawford" was what he has stated, and that he has changed his politics with the same ease, with which he did his coat—still he admits, that "Mr. C.'s want of firmness in his political principles, may not be a fault of his own." Consequently, no blame can be attached to him, as he is not accountable for the faults of others and is only responsible for his own conduct. The admission, however ridiculous, destroys the objection. Indeed, throughout the whole, though *Numa* has assumed the air and tone "as of one who would say—'I am Sir Oracle!'" the idea is constantly suggesting itself—

"Pity, the best of words should be but wind!"

Did we not know that it was a privilege of great minds, particularly such as live immortal in the "Dunciad," to delight in obscurity and be unintelligible, we would ask *Numa* to give the "public" a second number, explanatory of the first: when we shall, perhaps, be able to learn, if when one's "literary talents have been cloven down," they are triumphant or not. From the connexion of his sentence this is doubtful. But enough of *Numa*! his "Augean stable" is more than a labor for Hercules, and he has lost himself amid its savoury accretions.

When we speak of Mr. Crawford as a candidate for the highest distinction recognized in our government, it is comparatively. We do not draw distinctions between him and those who "have gone before;" nor is his spirit contrasted with the "spirits of the mighty dead." But those who favor his election, fearlessly compare his pretensions with those of the other candidates. His mind, naturally strong, has received additional strength and polish from education and experience in political affairs; the native honesty of his heart could not be improved, though it has remained uncorrupted; and his political principles, bottomed upon the independency of the States, are identified with those professed by Mr. Jefferson. To strengthen these, he possesses an energetic character, which remains unshaken in the "worst of times;" and an application so unwearied, as to have injured, 'tis thought, his bodily health. To crown the whole, he has a paternal fondness for the safety and happiness of the people of the United States. This is not a moment calculated to call forth all the powers of mind, and we do not, therefore, expect either Mr. Crawford, or any other Head of

Department, to shew himself extraordinary in fulfilling the duties of his office. If he has not shed a light upon the "page of financial history," he has removed an oppressive burthen from the nation, in discharging so large a portion of the public debt, and in retaining so large a surplus in the Treasury. A faithful discharge of duty is, at this time, a virtue which, like the mantle of charity, should "cover a multitude of sins." If he has been "conversant with courts," he has preserved his integrity uncorrupted, and has extracted all the sweets without the acidities of the region in which he moved. Others, whose aspirations take as bold a flight, without entering this enchanted circle, have their private characters stained with vices which would sink an ordinary individual into the depths of infamy. And we are among the number of those, who believe that

"— there is,
"Can be, no public without private
virtue."

The uniform tenor of Mr. Crawford's life is deemed a sufficient pledge for his conduct, if elected, in the arduous discharge of Presidential duties. And, if he shall not be "chosen from the bosom of the people," he has unquestionably been nurtured there, and has arisen from it. Step by step, leaning upon the staff of his own merit, he has ascended to the height upon which he now stands. If "patient merit have fair play," he will be the President of the United States. With a hope that he will be, I remain, yours, &c.

CALLIMACHUS.

FOREIGN.

SOUTH AMERICA.

By an arrival at Salem, accounts from Valparaiso to the 29th Feb. have been received. The last dates from Lima were about the 20th January, at which time the royal troops had not entered the city, (but it was understood that they could if they chose,) the merchants had principally retired to Callao. Report says that there were misunderstandings between the Colombian and Peruvian troops; and it was thought Bolivar would return to Colombia. It was also reported that there was very little confidence in the government—that every thing exhibited the utmost confusion, and it was conjectured that the Peruvians would come upon some terms with the Royal troops. The despatches from Com. Stewart will probably give a more particular account.

There appears to be a great want of confidence in the Chilean government. The Supreme Director had concentrated his land and naval force at Talcahuana, and the expedition had sailed to attack Chiloe, the issue of which is thought very doubtful. The people appear much dissatisfied, and the country in a very impoverished and unsettled state. New tariffs and regulations are so frequent, that there can be no correct calculations made. They were expecting a large force from Spain, and it was thought they would meet with little resistance.

Mexico.—Mexican papers to the 19th ult. have been received at the office of the National Gazette, Philadelphia. Mr. Walsh says the Mexican Congress appears to have regarded the country as in a fearful crisis, requiring a very energetic executive. The wide prevalence of discon-

tent and treachery leaves no alternative. We have received a publication, issued in the Mexican metropolis on the 10th of April, which contains a copy of a private communication of the Ex-emperor Iturbide, dated 2d November, 1823, to King Ferdinand, and obtained through bribery at Madrid, by a friend of Mexican independence. Iturbide stated to the King of Spain, that all his movements in Mexico had been studiously adapted to the purpose of retaining the throne of that country for a Spanish Bourbon; that he had intentionally abstained from reducing the castle of St. Juan de Ulloa, as he might have done in the beginning, with a view to leave a *point d'appui* for the royal cause; that the natives of Mexico are incapable of governing themselves, &c.

SPAIN.

The private advices received here from Spain, would warrant the opinion, that the French army of occupation will be withdrawn ere long, and that another and fierce civil war will almost immediately ensue. France is obliged to support the army altogether, and has no prospect of reimbursement, either for past or present expenditure. The Spanish government can scarcely collect wherewithal to meet the exigencies of the king's household. The old monopolies are restored, but yield very little revenue. His Catholic Majesty has taken that necessary article in the European Catholic countries, *codfish*, under his special protection and control. The consequence is, that none will be shipped direct to a Spanish port, but all to Gibraltar, as a place of deposit, from whence it will be smuggled into all quarters of the kingdom.

The importation of grain and flour into Spain, has been prohibited, so that, in the first weeks of March, while wheat was selling at Gibraltar at less than one dollar per bushel, the poor Spaniard within 5 miles of that place, was obliged to eat his bread at the rate of two dollars and a half per bushel. Spanish salt, at Gibraltar, was twelve and a half cents, and the Spaniard paid one dollar and a half per bushel for it, owing to the royal monopoly. He is not allowed to say that he does not want salt—that he does not use, or cannot pay for it. The salt-administration, or commissioners, judge for him, and each year supply each family with such quantity as they think proper, for which they must pay. It was calculated that the Constitutional party had rather gained than lost, in numbers, since the king's restoration, notwithstanding the ruthless persecution to which every thing in the shape of a liberal, or *liberalism* was subjected. *Legitimacy* was supported by the French force alone, and whether to stay, or march out, is a problem for the French government, almost as difficult as was that of attempting the invasion. To repeat invasion in case of a new intestine struggle, would be attended with difficulties and results of a peculiar and aggravated nature. In short, from the recent condition of Spain, which has been so paradoxically styled a deliverance, the peace of Europe, as it is called, may be conjectured to be by no means fully assured.—*Phil. Nat. Gaz.*

Algiers.—The difference between Spain and Algiers having been settled, all the Spanish prisoners were released.