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## Political.

### EXPOSITION.

Of motives for opposing the nomination of Mr. Monroe, for the office of President of the United States.

Circumstances have arisen which make it proper to explain to the nation, and to the republican party in particular, some of the leading motives which induced the representatives of the people, in the late caucus at Washington, to oppose the nomination of Mr. Monroe for the office of president of the United States. The exposition will be brief, it is hoped it will be clear; and to every impartial mind it must be satisfactory.

The objection to Col. Monroe as a candidate for the presidency was twofold: First, as it regarded the policy which presented him for adoption to that high station: Secondly, as it respected his particular qualifications for the chief magistracy.

On the first point, the following considerations, founded upon facts universally known, seemed irresistibly to prescribe his exclusion. The present constitution has been in operation about 27 years during the whole of which term (excepting four years) the president has been from the state of Virginia. This monopoly of the first post in the government, so far from being considered by the Virginians as an encroachment on the fair claims of the other sections of the Union, has by dexterous sophistry, been converted into an argument to prove, that those who question the propriety of continuing power for so long a time in the same hands, are only guided by ambition, or impelled by factitious motives; as if the tenacity with which a few men, in that state, cling to the presidential succession, were not in itself an admonitory indication in them of the most ardent and unquenchable thirst for power. But this feature of local policy, odious as it is, would have awakened a spirit of indignant resistance, had it not been apparent that, in order to ensure its success, the whole weight of the republican party, for fifteen years past, had been artfully wielded to cut off from popular respect and estimation, the most distinguished characters in other parts of the United States: To support this assertion, it is only necessary to recur to a few facts within the recollection and observation of every politician who has been on the public stage.

First, With the view of securing the presidency to a Virginian, a vice president for Mr. Jefferson's second term of office was selected from New York, of an age too advanced to render it probable that he would be chosen to the most prominent character, it formed an insuperable barrier to the pretensions of other distinguished men in that state. The claims of the older Clinton were accordingly superseded by those of Mr. Madison—care was taken that this circumstance should not be overlooked at the critical moment, and Mr. Jefferson, about to retire from office, in answer to an address from the legislature of Maryland, alluded to it in terms too glaring to be mistaken. The same policy was again adopted in the selection of Mr. Gerry from Massachusetts.

The vice president of the United States should be possessed of every qualification to discharge the important duties which would devolve on him, in the event of the death of the president—and when it is taken into consideration that merely to secure the *Virginian succession*, the best interests of the country are jeopardized, by calling men to that office who are superannuated, and past the discharge of important functions, it cannot but be viewed by the people with disgust if not with indignation.

Secondly, about the same period the state of New-York brought Gen. Armstrong into public notice. He had been a senator in congress from that commonwealth. His genius was feared. He was taken off by a foreign embassy. His diplomatic career in France was marked by spirit and ability—an at his return he became popular in the United States. He accepted a seat in the cabinet, at a time of great difficulty and responsibility. Respecting his administration of the department of war, there have been various opinions. He alleges that he experienced perpetual embarrassment in the concerns of his department, by the unusual interference of "a great civil officer of state," viz. Col. Monroe. The capture of the metropolis was adroitly seized upon as a pretext for denouncing him. The particular and personal friends of Col. Monroe, uniting with the federalists, insulted him in the streets of Washington, and Mr. Madison discarding him from office, gave the fatal blow to his reputation. Whatever might have been the conduct of General Armstrong, it is evident that the president, when he took the field, as commander in chief, was at least equally responsible for the safety of the capital. Col. Monroe also took the field, and formed a part of the troops at Bladensburg.

After having thus volunteered his services, in a military capacity, it remains for him to account to the nation, why he was not among the

troops rallying and encouraging them, instead of precipitating himself to the rear, and being among the foremost in that disastrous, disgraceful retreat. Why did he not take measures for the security of the public buildings, which could have been defended by four hundred men properly posted in them? But Gen. Armstrong was made the scapegoat of the transaction.

Thirdly—The severity of Virginia policy has no tenderness even for citizens of her own state, should they be sufficiently disinterested and independent to oppose this monopolizing spirit. Mr. Giles was a republican of the first grade of talents, and no one has rendered more services to the nation in the legislative body. He was known to be opposed to the elevation of Col. Monroe to the presidency, from a diminutive opinion of his abilities. He was gradually disclaimed, and finally compelled to retire.

Fourthly—the man in Massachusetts who appeared most likely to disturb the Virginia succession, was John Quincy Adams. He was removed by an embassy to Russia. Mr. Madison proffered him a Judgeship, which he had the sagacity to refuse. By being constantly abroad, he will be kept from the view of the people, and his claims, which are every way superior to Mr. Monroe's, will in this way be prevented from interfering with the regular succession.

Fifthly—A prominent trait in the policy of Virginia, in regard to the presidency and one which has made a deep impression is the open countenance shown to the particular personal friends of Aaron Burr, on account of their long continued and persevering hostility to Mr. Clinton. The patronage showered upon the persons most in the confidence of that man, is indeed extraordinary; because not one of them had been conspicuous for services rendered to the nation, or sacrifices to promote the welfare of the republican party.—Some idea may be formed of the governmental profusion, in this particular, from the following appointments, which have all taken place within the compass of Mr. Madison's administration, viz.

William P. Van Ness, the second to Burr in his duel with Gen. Hamilton, district judge of New York.

His brother John P. Van Ness, superintendent of the public buildings at the city of Washington, with a salary of 1600 dollars, and contracts.

And Cornelius P. Van Ness, in the first instance, United States district attorney at Vermont; then collector of the customs for the same district; and, lastly appointed a commissioner for running the boundary line, with a salary of 5,000 dollars per annum.

Jonathan Fisk, U. S. attorney for the district of New York.

Besides several others, whom it is not necessary to designate. These all belong to that class of politicians, called Burrites, known to be the most welcome guests at the President's house, and in all the public offices of the government. The object of this patronage is perfectly understood. They form a small but active band of politicians in New York, and have always had a press at their command, whose attacks have been directed against De Witt Clinton, as the man most likely from his talents and high standing with the republican party, to interfere with the "regular succession." This band is in constant correspondence through its associates at Washington with the administration—and all its proceedings at New-York have been subservient to the Virginia policy. It was in this way Mr. Clinton was for a long time cut off from the confidence of the republican party. He, however, has now regained his standing with the republicans of New-York.

It is true that Mr. Clinton, in compliance with the solicitations of the New-York Legislature, committed an error in permitting his name to be set up against Mr. Madison, at an unfortunate period—the same however, is equally true as it regards Col. Monroe; with this difference that the latter was discountenanced by the Virginia Legislature, and still persevered in his opposition to Mr. Madison. The one was pardoned and taken into favour, and the other has laboured under the weight of court proscription and denunciation.—And yet it is acknowledged by the most intelligent of Colonel Monroe's friends, that as to all endowments which should belong to the chief magistrate of this country, strength of mind, knowledge of character, decision, literary, legal, and philosophical attainments, and enlarged views of national policy, there is no comparison between him and Mr. Clinton.

This perseverance and bitterness of proscription was less pardonable, as Mr. Clinton was the most zealous in revolutionizing New-York to republican principles—and from the year 1799, when this revolution (which secured the election of Mr. Jefferson) was first effected, until 1812, the era of his denunciation, was the pride, the stay and support, the life and soul of the republican party, in that important state. That gentleman is, in all his principles of government, strictly and sternly a republican—as the older Clinton was wont to say of him, he was born a republican.—His great error was interfering with the regular succession, at an unfortunate period—even the Burrites cannot accuse him of opposing the war. But it never will be a reason why Virginia persecution should slacken, that the object of it, is in all respects, a suitable character for chief magistracy of the country—on the contrary, the furnace will glow with a heat more intense—the arrow will be dipped in a more fatal venom.

Sixthly—Every distinguished republican in other states, who might justly aspire to the presidential chair, having, in this manner, been thrown in the back ground, nothing remained but to popularize Colonel Monroe—and that was effected as if it were, by enchantment. His former hostility to Mr. Madison was forgiven—a conciliatory dinner was provided in the neighbourhood of Mr. Jefferson's residence, at which were present Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Madison, and Colonel Monroe, and there the plan was laid. Colonel M. as a preliminary step, was elected Governor of Virginia, was hurried thence into the office of secretary of state—and from that moment every measure in peace and in war, on the part of the executive, has pointed towards his elevation to the chief magistracy.—The press, which alas! is venal, put at his disposal, by the patronage bestowed in painting the United States' laws.—The newspapers under his controul have been constantly teeming with the grossest panegyrics—and the people, who know not the man, take their impressions only from the public prints. Even the National Intelligencer, which is well known to be a subservient organ of the executive, has been filled with adulation, at which a mind of the least delicacy must sicken with disgust. The hired applauders at the theatre afford not an instance of more disgusting venality.

It is thus, that in the name of republicanism, a few leading men in Virginia, have outrageously violated republican principles. They have with extraordinary art made use of the zeal, the honest prejudices, and devotion of the republican party to further the purposes of a selfish ambition, and accomplish the degradation of every other state in the Union.—Having thus, by various artifices cut off from the good will of the people the eminent characters of other states, they tauntingly exclaimed, who is so popular as our candidate? This is worse than scorn; it is cruel mockery.

Seventhly, it is not necessary to dwell upon the circumstances of Mr. Jefferson's having, in the flood tide of republicanism enforced an alteration in the constitution. It was unfortunate, that the republicans were precipitated into that measure. They now find the evil of it. Instead of the question's being left at large between two of our best citizens by the mode of designation now in practice an individual is enabled to intrigue directly for the office.

Eighthly, to these various causes of legitimate opposition to the Virginian policy there is a point to be added, that in some sort touches the honor of the republican party. In the gloomy times of the late contest, when the city of Washington had been burnt, & the war wore a menacing aspect on different points of the frontier, when Mr. Dallas had officially proclaimed the nation a bankrupt, and Virginia found herself unable to sustain the incumbent weight of domestic odium, and foreign hostilities, Col. Monroe commissioned two of his friends to declare to the republicans of congress that he abdicated his pretensions to the presidency, and would lend his influence in the support of a candidate from any state. But no sooner did the horizon begin to clear up, and victory at New Orleans give an earnest of the speedy return of peace, than he recalled his abdication; and the same friends, honorably indignant, as it is understood, at this proceeding, were instructed to explain, and state that Col. Monroe's intentions did not correspond with his words. For the truth of this statement the curious inquirer may appeal to Gen. J. G. Jackson, or to Gen. Desha.

Ninthly, But it is not the north and east alone, over which the policy of Virginia has predominated.—The minor officers have indeed been bestowed in that quarter, while Pennsylvania has been studiously neglected, and only escaped the abasement intended her, by the energy of the late Jno. Smilie.—The third census placed New-York, in point of population at the head of the Union. It was with grief Virginia saw herself removed by natural causes, from that high eminence, and she resolved at least to fill the second niche. Accordingly the late John Dawson, a relative of Col. Monroe, and intimately in the confidence of the administration, before the bearing of the census was fairly understood, proposed in congress 37,000 as the ratio for each representative. This would have thrown Pennsylvania by one member of congress; behind Virginia. Smilie penetrated the design, and united the Pennsylvania delegation in favor of a ratio of 35,000, which prevailed. This raised that state to an equal rank with Virginia. The files of the Intelligencer will amply verify these particulars. It is remarkable too, that the policy of Virginia has led her to shower the patronage and offices of government on refractory states. Her most faithful friends she most neglects. Secure in the obedience of the south, they experience but little of the blushing honors and rich patronage of office. The great and important state of North-Carolina is an example of most marked and preserving neglect. Not an important officer of administration, a foreign minister, or any other officer of importance, has been selected, from that since the adoption of the constitution. The reason is obvious.—She can be otherwise governed and why waste honors and emolument on a state sufficiently acquiescent in the views of the succession, when discontented and restless states call with a turbulent voice, "for office and patronage."

So many efforts all tending to the same result,

\* Gen. Davie, was, indeed on a special mission for a short time.

cannot have been the effect of accident. They incontestably establish, on the part of a few leading men in Virginia, a systematic design of perpetually governing the country, not upon the sound and general principles of republicanism, but by taking advantage of the generous bias, and unsuspecting passions, of the republican party, by official management, the venality of the press, and governmental patronage.

On the second point of the objection, namely, the particular qualifications of Col. Monroe for the presidency, the considerations against him were not less cogent and weighty. His best friends allow him to be but of moderate capacity; and slow of comprehension. This, it is notorious, gives to those around him an undue influence over his intellectual determinations, and leads him, in a throng of business, to commit the most important affairs of state to incompetent hands. Urbanity is not denied him; but that, by rendering him more accessible, lays him still more open to the artifices of imposture. A man of this cast will always keep talents at a distance, and surround himself by compliant mediocrity, and hypocritical dullness.

This slowness of comprehension, and want of penetration and decision in Col. Monroe, have been conspicuous throughout his political life. In France he mistook his instructions and committed great blunders, or willful errors, and was recalled by Gen. Washington. In England, also he misconstrued his instructions, or rather perversely acted contrary to them, and signed a treaty with such mortifying condition annexed, that Mr. Jefferson indignantly sent it back, without consulting the senate. He was recalled in disgrace. Thus disclaimed in his diplomatic career on all sides, by federal and republican administrations, candour must allow that he has no title to rank with the first characters in America. But thus ordinarily gifted, Col. Monroe has furnished unequivocal evidence that his lust for power is insatiable.

Returning from England at a time when he knew he was not the choice of the republican party for the presidency he coalesced with the federalists of Virginia in opposition to Mr. Madison. Why should that gentleman escape censure on that score? The executive mantle is too thin to conceal the deformity. To promote his ambitious views, he forced into public notice his private correspondence with Mr. Jefferson, and never ceased his hostility to Mr. Madison, until he was assured of being brought into the department of state. If the executive has the power to nominate as his successor a man who notoriously incompetent, has committed the greatest political errors, and outraged the will of the republican party, it is evident that election is a farce, and the voice of the people an unmeaning sound.

Besides these weighty objections to Col. Monroe, on these main points, there are others of a very serious nature. Power has continued so long in the same hands that in many instances, the incumbents of office appear to be losing sight of the fundamental principles of republican government.

A system of official management, and speculation on the disbursements of office appears to be gaining that threatens to subvert the plain and wholesome provisions of the constitution. Ideas of economy are no longer in fashion at Washington: banking and funding systems, which give rise to iniquitous stock jobbing, the art of governing by Presidential patronage, and entangling intercommunications with Europe, are alone in vogue. Such a state of things seem loudly to demand a change in the executive office; and this change can never be effected, so long as the office is transmitted from one hand to another in regular succession. Large balances of unsettled accounts remain unadjusted on the books of the treasury. Col. Monroe himself, it is understood, is still a co-sinister on these books to a very considerable amount. One fact, in this respect, will speak more than a volume. The late consul of the United States at Algiers, returning home, and still having an unsettled account of some thousands of dollars, was nevertheless appointed accountant of the war department. The debt which he owes to the nation is a guarantee of his obedience to the government in the settlement of any account, in any mode that may induce an accession of influence to a favorite candidate.

These are some of the reasons which induced fifty four republican representatives of the people to oppose the nomination of Colonel Monroe in caucus. They supported Mr. Crawford because they know him to be independent, virtuous and able. Had it not been for the discouraging deliquency of that respectable gentleman, and his more immediate friends, he would, beyond all question, have been nominated for the presidency. It is with regret we announce our belief that this gentleman will not consent to be looked to as the candidate of what we conceive to be a majority of the republicans.

This candid exposition of motive is confidentially submitted to the people. Supreme arbiters if they choose, it is for them to decide whether the conduct of those opposed to Col. Monroe has, been instigated by unworthy motives, or guided by sound, honourable and constitutional principles; it is for them to determine whether they will elect, as their chief magistrate, a person recommended to them only by the casting vote of the Virginia delegation, after having in that state enjoyed that high office twenty four out of twenty eight years, against whom fifty four republican delegates, representing two millions of people, after deliberate investigation and per-