

SOUTHERN CITIZEN.

BY BENJAMIN SWAIN.

WHAT DO WE LIVE FOR, BUT TO IMPROVE OURSELVES AND BE USEFUL TO ONE ANOTHER?

VOLUME I.—NUMBER 10.

TERMS—\$2 IN ADVANCE.]

ASHBOROUGH, N. C. SATURDAY, MAY 6, 1837.

[OF \$3 AFTER 3 MONTHS.]

TO THE FREEMEN OF RANDOLPH COUNTY.

FELLOW CITIZENS:

Feeling as I do, the great responsibility of the office, and the little experience I have had in it, it is with diffidence and unfeigned embarrassment that I attempt to become a candidate for the County Court Clerk's office.

But when I consider that the office has been held for the last 15 or 20 years by the same officer, I consider he has been amply compensated and more too, for all the public services which he has ever rendered in the county; therefore I can see no reason why I should not be entitled to the privilege of becoming a candidate, and even of the office as well as any other citizen.

I have been raised in the county and have one common interest and claim with the rest of my fellow citizens, and have contributed my proportion to the county expenses and burthens, and have never received the first dollar for any public services (if services they may be called) which I have rendered to the county; while all the profitable offices have been given for the last 10 or 15 years to strangers, or nearly so. Therefore I feel confident as I have never before asked for a favor of this kind you will not think it premature at this time.

I hope it will not be understood that I think it wrong to give strangers offices who will come in among us and become citizens, by no means; I think they ought to be treated as citizens; but we are not bound to give all our good things to strangers, but only to divide with them.

It is a notorious fact, that our Sheriff, our County Court Clerk, our States Attorney, our Clerk & Master, our County Trustee, and County Register, have all come from other Counties, while all our native citizens are entirely overlooked as regards public offices, with very few exceptions; is it possible that we have no native of Randolph who is worthy of a public office? I think we have materials out of which good county officers might be made.

It is said by old officers when new ones are talked of, that it is bad policy to be putting out old officers and making new ones, that new ones do not understand the business,—that they cannot do the business—that it requires a long practical experience to be a good clerk, &c. as much as to say there is some secret qualification necessary to do public business, that there will be great public inconvenience and injury attending such changes. When men once get into office they are apt to swing to it, until the people become so disgusted at them that they are thrown away and are of little or no account ever after, when if they had been satisfied with a reasonable share of public patronage, they might have been useful and worthy citizens after they retire to private life.

Why is it so necessary to keep county officers in so long? our members to the General Assembly seldom serve more than three or four years till they are set aside and new ones elected, and our Governor and other State officers do not hold their offices many years; and even the President of the United States has never been known to hold his office more than eight years; but still it is said that it is bad policy to put out old and put in new officers.

The County Court Clerk's office has been as it were in the same family from the time of its creation: Old Mr. Harper gave it to his son Jesse, Jesse gave it to his adopted son who now holds it by inheritance from his father.

But you say he has been a good Clerk, I admit that he is thought by many to be a first rate clerk, but has he been any thing more than a good clerk? has he not been well paid for it? and even if he has been a good Clerk, was it not his duty to be so? was he not bound by his oath to be a good clerk? was it not his duty both morally and legally to be a good clerk? and must the people give him the office for life, and the privilege of appointing his successor after him, merely because he has done his duty? certainly the people will not be gulled by such monstrous and absurd inconsistency.

We live in a republican government, and are governed by republican laws. If it was not the wish of the people to change clerks once in a while, why did they require the law passed, giving the objection of clerk to the people? and why did the Legislature pass the law, and why did the people accept of it? It was the intention of the people, and not only the intention, but the wish of the people, that the law should not only be passed, but that it should be put into execution.

The people had no idea that it was just and reasonable that a clerk should be entitled to his office for life; and that he should give it to his sons after him, and so hand it down from father to son, from generation to generation like the crowns of monarchs and kings, descend from father to son so long as the government shall stand.

These, so far as I am capable of judging are stubborn facts, which I think no honest independent republican will deny, but I have not the vanity to expect them to please all, but be that as it may, they are my candid and honest sentiments, the result of long deliberation, and communicated to you in my plain, illiterate mother tongue, and I cannot think any man of learning and common intelligence will attempt to charge me with hiring a friend to write for me, as is sometimes the case.

It is true a new officer is not quite so well qualified to discharge the duties of the office as an old prac-

itioner, but what he lacks in experience is commonly made up in vigilance and industry, and in the end you will not find any ruinous consequences attending it, therefore upon the whole I think on mature deliberation you will be of opinion that it is best to change once in a while, and see if it is not possible for new officers to do the business of clerks.

If you should now be disposed to confide so much in me as to give me the County Court Clerk's office, I shall consider it a great favor indeed, and one for which I shall feel under very great and lasting obligations to the people, and I sincerely hope and trust if I am elected, that I shall discharge the duty confided to me to the fullest expectation of my friends, and leave no cause for my enemies to complain.

I expect warm opposition from some; but I cannot see any just cause for it. I think it will proceed from personal motives and not from any just grounds of complaint, I feel happy in the contemplation that my intentions are good.

I hope the people will come out more generally to the next election than usual, and show the strength of our county. All I want of my fellow citizens is to come out like men and vote independently for officers to fill the offices, that will be to fill at the next election. We have, I think, become a little indifferent about our elections, I hope the people will rouse up and come forward like men and give in their votes and show the world how respectable a vote Randolph can give.

We are looked upon with a degree of contempt from other counties, why is it so? I can see no cause for it only our indifference and want of energy.

I should be much gratified if the ensuing election could be conducted in a friendly and peaceable manner, without any electioneering; and let every man come forward to the polls and give in his vote, just as his own good sense and inclination leads him, regardless of any party feeling, or personal motives; if that could be the case, I have no hesitation in saying that I believe the people will make a fair, impartial and judicious choice.

Fellow Citizens, the right & power of bestowing the county court clerk's office belongs to you and ought to be, and I am well aware that you will exercise that power as you think proper, and no doubt you will think right and act right; if not influenced by some personal feeling, which I cannot believe does exist to such extent against me as to influence your votes therefore from you I shall expect nothing but fair dealing. I know that a strong prejudice has existed against some of my connexions and intimate friends, but late observation has caused me to believe that that has partially subsided, and even if it has not, I can see no reason why it should operate against my election, as it is well known that I have not shared in any public business which I suppose caused it to exist; therefore I hope you will impute no sins to me but my own, which I admit are sufficiently burdensome for me to bear. I hope the people will give themselves no alarm about my ability and inclination to do the business of a clerk, I have never undertaken any thing but what I have in some way accomplished I believe, and I pledge myself to do the business as much to the satisfaction of the people as it is now done, & hope I shall much more so if I have the honor of being elected.

Therefore, I shall rest the case with you, and expect a fair and impartial decision.

I have written this under the impression that the present clerk will be a candidate without doubt, tho' I have not heard him say so, nor any person for him, nor have I heard of his declining. Therefore I expect as a matter of course he will contend for re-election.

I am with sentiments of the highest esteem your friend and humble fellow citizen,

JAMES ELLIOTT.

P. S. Knowing the great propensity that some have to criticise on a man's public speaking or writing when he attempts to be a little smart, I have directed the printer to print this letter without any alteration or improvement.

J. E.

April 20 1837.

The richest man on Earth.—The Paris correspondent of the Albany Daily Advertiser, says:—“Louis Philippe is without exception, the richest man in the world. He receives annually, in ready money, a sum of twelve millions of francs. He receives a revenue of perhaps twenty millions more from the lands, forests, and other property of the crown. He is in enjoyment of the private fortune of the Orleans family, which should have been united to the national domain, as was the custom with former monarchs, on their accession to the throne, but which he was allowed to retain by an act consented to by Lafayette; Lafayette, and the victorious insurrectionists, who little knew what they were about, on the eve of his taking the oath to observe the charter as King of the French.—The amount of his private fortune cannot be less than ten millions of francs per annum. He possesses besides, an immense sum of money, estimated by some at between one hundred and fifty and two hundred millions of francs. He pockets the

million granted to the Duke of Orleans, as presumptive heir to the throne, and the private fortune he is supposed to have given the Queen of the Belgians, and he has none of the obligations with which the civil list of Charles X was burdened. The latter pay nearly six millions in pensions, which Louis Philippe has thought proper to suppress altogether; he had besides a large military household, a chapel hunting establishment, &c. which cost at least as much more, none of which are retained by the present king, whose revenues are totally disencumbered and consequently fully adequate to the maintenance of his family without any provision from the state.”

Affecting incident at St. Kilda.—It is well known that the “trade of egging” is carried on with most fearful adventure, in many portions of the old world. On the rugged shores of Scotland, in the Shetland Isles, amid the Needle rocks of the Isle of Wight, and at Carrick-a-Reade, in Ireland, where “the incessant wearing of waves,” or some mighty convulsions of nature, through successive ages, have cut off immense fragments of rocks, the sea-birds had undisturbedly built their nests, until the “egging business, induced the adventurers in their perilous feats of booty. They usually swing themselves off by a rope, and descend a craggy precipice of hundreds of feet, sometimes bounding from crag to crag with as much apparent ease as the sea-fowls themselves. At St. Kilda, the westernmost speck of an island in the Atlantic, the ropes are made of hide or the hair of cow's tail, sometimes two or three hundred feet in length—and they are looked upon of so much value, as to become the marriage portion of a St. Kilda girl. The fearful adventures encountered by the St. Kildans are numerous and thrilling. In one case, a father and two sons were out together, and, having firmly attached their rope at the summit of a precipice, descended on their usual occupation. Having collected as many birds and eggs as they could carry, they were all three ascending by the rope—the eldest of the sons first—his brother a fathom or two below him, and the father following last. They had made considerable progress, when the elder son looking upward, perceived the strands of the rope grinding against a sharp edge of rock, and gradually giving way. He immediately reported the alarming fact. “Will it hold together till we can gain the summit?” asked the father. “It will not hold another minute,” was the reply, “our triple weight is loosing it rapidly!” “Will it hold one?” said the father. “It is as much as it can possibly do,” replied the son, “even that is but doubtful.” “There is then a chance, at least, of one of us being saved:—draw your knife, and cut away below!” was the cool and intrepid order of the parent. Exert yourself; you may yet escape, and live to comfort your mother!”—There was no time for discussion or further hesitation. The son looked up once more, but the edge of rock was cutting its way, and the rope had nearly severed. The knife was drawn—the rope was divided—and his father and brother were launched into eternity!

A Convenient Proboscis.—A brother editor who is somewhat celebrated for the magnitude of his nasal organ, in reply to an antagonist who has threatened to put his nose, says, if he attempts it he will find his hands full.

Boston Post.

Every body knows something which nobody else knows. The wisest man therefore, may learn something from the most ignorant.

The reason why many people know comparatively nothing, is because they never can bear to be told any thing.

It is better to know a few things, than to have a mere notion about many things.

What is heresy? answered.—The committee of the Allschweye, Basle Champaigne, Switzerland, demanded lately of the council of public instruction, the dismissal of a school-master, on account of his heresy. Imagine in what it consisted.—The poor fellow asserted that the devil did not stir up the souls of the departed with a pitchfork!

Effect of Parental sternness.—“My father, (says Newton,) left me much to run about the streets, yet when under his eye, he kept me at a great distance. I am persuaded that he loved me, but he seemed not willing that I should know it. I was with him in a state of fear and bondage. His sternness, together with the severity of my schoolmaster, broke and over-awed my spirit, and almost made me a dolt; so that part of the two years I was at school, instead of making progress, I nearly forgot all that my good mother had taught me.—This statement admonishes fathers to lay aside sternness, and not keep their sons “in a state of fear and bondage,” in order to secure their obedience. Obedience exacted in this way deserves not the name of “FILIAL.”—There is no virtue in it. It is slavish—or obedience from necessity; such as is rendered to brute force. It makes a child of uncommon promise “almost a dolt.”

An Infant Scholar.—A teacher of an infant school, one day, while speaking to the little children on the life of Moses, said, “And Moses went up into a high mountain, to the top of Pisgah; and when there the Lord showed him the land of Canaan, which he had promised to Abraham and his seed. And while Moses was looking at the land he died.” “Please, sir,” said the little boy, “did Moses go to heaven when he died?” “I must think,” said the teacher, “for I don't remember its being said in the Bible, that Moses went to heaven; but I hope he did; for he loved God, he prayed to God, and he was a servant of God; but I don't think it says in the Bible that Moses went to heaven.”—“O yes, it does,” replied another little fellow. “I don't remember the passage,” answered the teacher, “so you must tell me where it is to be found.” “Why, sir,” said the little boy, “that Jesus took Peter, and James, and John, up into a high mountain, and when they were there, his face did shine like the sun, and his raiment was white as snow, and there appeared unto him Moses and Elias from heaven; and you know, sir, that Moses could not come from heaven, unless he had gone to heaven.” Thus are our little children now led to think—to compare scripture with scripture—to feel—and what is of greater importance, to obey the truth.

Single Blessedness.—We learn from the Southern Literary Journal, that there are now in Charleston, S. C. four thousand three hundred and twenty unmarried ladies between the ages of fifteen and fifty, nine hundred and seventy-one from fifteen to twenty, one thousand five hundred and seventy-eight from twenty to thirty, one thousand one hundred and twenty from thirty to forty, and six hundred and fifty-seven from forty to fifty.

An Answer.—A testy old gentleman was constantly pestered by his neighbors with inquiries after his health; at last losing all patience with the most assiduous of these intruders, “Tell your master,” said he to the servant, “with my compliments, that I am pretty well this morning, and shall continue so for 21 mornings to come.”

Sheridan's Eloquence.—One of his old city friends used to declare, that such was the effect of Sheridan's frank, cordial manner, and insinuating eloquence, that he was always afraid to go to ask him for a debt of long standing, lest he should borrow twice as much.

Facetious Thieves.—A gang of burglars stripped a watchmaker's shop, at Baltimore, on Saturday night, of goods valued \$3000, being nearly the whole of its contents. On leaving the premises, the rogues placed a placard over the door—“THIS STORE TO LET.”