

# Western Carolinian.

SALISBURY, N. C. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1827.

[VOL. VIII.....NO. 385.]

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## POLITICAL.

### MR EATON TO THE PUBLIC.

What I shall submit to the consideration of the public, demands of me no apology. Should any think otherwise, I tender to them Mr. Clay's dinner speech, delivered at Lexington in July last, with the references that have been made to me, both by General Jackson and Mr. Buchanan. Thus situated, it is neither needless nor proper to remain silent: I shall therefore speak the things that I know, from a conviction, that the references which have been made, render it proper for me to do so.

First, on an adjustment on my own account with Mr. Clay; who, in his speech delivered at Lexington, uses towards me this language:

"Before the election, an attempt was made, by an abusive letter, published in the Columbian Observer, at Philadelphia, a paper which, as has since transpired, was sustained by Mr. Senator Eaton, the colleague, the friend and the biographer of General Jackson, to assail my motives, and to deter me in the exercise of my duty."

The language employed in this sentence, is arranged with so great art and caution, as to make it susceptible of doubtful intention. The meaning which the speaker intended should attach, and which, with nine readers out of ten, will obtain, is, that the Columbian Observer was sustained by Mr. Senator Eaton, the colleague, the friend and the biographer of General Jackson, to assail his (Mr. Clay's) motives, and to deter him in the exercise of his duty. With this construction, I take leave to say, it is a misrepresentation—it is untrue. This paper was assisted, though not sustained by me for any purpose; and far less with a view to assail motives, or to deter any one in the exercise of his duty.

The return made of me by the editors of the Columbian Observer, as one of their creditors, has been a fruitful theme of exulting remark to Mr. Clay's editors and friends. I little expected to see him at so small a business; and still less that he would have hazarded an assertion before the public, when he was wanting in proof to support that assertion. A single paper, to be sure, at Philadelphia, the *Democrat Press*, had asserted it: But Mr. Clay should have recollected, that as he was decrying the force of newspaper testimony, as authority applicable to his own case, delicate, and a regard for consistency, should have restrained his willingness to insist on it, as a rule conclusive towards others. Like himself, though, I can now express my satisfaction at having the matter presented in some tangible form, and by "a responsible accuser;" and, that he may be spared all further disquietude on the subject, he shall be offered the history of the transaction, precise and accurate as it took place, with leave to make of it hereafter whatever use he can.

To the editors of that paper, and at their request, I did lend a sum of money; at that time, before, nor after, was there an agreement, understanding, expressed or otherwise, as to any political course which they should pursue. More than a year preceding this circumstance and before I ever knew Messrs. Simpson and Conrad, the editors, had that paper been warmly and zealously in the cause of General Jackson. It was my own money, not the public's; and I have yet to learn wherein there is either culpability or criminality in lending money to the respectable editor of a newspaper, greater than to any other individual in society, unless as a stipend to induce to a course not sanctioned by his preference or judgment. The character of those editors is sufficient to turn aside the imputations of opinions thus controlled—while a recollection that for eighteen months or more they had labored in support of Andrew Jackson, altogether forbids it.

But, again; in advertent to this transaction—to my mind—a very innocent and unoffending one—why was it necessary for Mr. Clay to throw around me, for description's sake, so many far fetched and high sounding epithets? Mr. Eaton, of the Senate—(there being in that body none other bearing a name, or even a similar name.) would as it appears to me, be altogether sufficient, if description of person was alone the end and object to be attained; but this was not the object, and

hence the lofty addenda, "the colleague—the friend and the biographer of Gen. Jackson." What, then, was it? An attempt at deception—a matter of special pleading; by which it was expected, a conclusion in the public mind, would be arrived at, that Gen. Jackson was the shelterer of this paper, intended and sustained for the avowed purpose to assail Mr. Clay's motives, and to deter him in the exercise of his duty. To this obviously designated intention, I apply a positive denial of its truth. Gen. Jackson was in Tennessee, and knew no more of the loan made to those gentlemen, than Mr. Clay did; nor did he know of it, until during last winter, when, on the supposition, I suppose, that it might be used as a good set-off to the charges and breakings of the Secretary, in his *By Authority* corps—it became matter of remark and censure in those columns which were friendly to Mr. Clay and Mr. Adams. Before this period, I had not spoken of it; nor until this time detailed the particulars. I do so now least under the authority of the name which brings forward the accusation; suspicions may arise, and a character and consequence be given to the transaction, greater than it merits. In presenting myself before the public on a subject which so lately has produced some excitement, and much inquiry and remark, I have felt it proper to speak thus far of matters which essentially pertain to myself; and with that portion of the subject I am now done.

In connexion with this speech, are also other matters which have been presented to the country; and about which I have been referred to, both by General Jackson and Mr. Buchanan. With references thus made, to remain silent and reserved amidst the general interest which prevails by many might be considered improper. I shall present, therefore, my understanding of things as they were at the time, and as they are still retained upon my recollection.

Between the statement of General Jackson and that submitted by Mr. Buchanan, I can perceive some differences; but they are principally verbal and not material. Those which do obtain, appear to me rather as inferences deduced from facts, than as the facts themselves; substantially, there is accord. Mr. Buchanan alleges, that on approaching General Jackson, he did not come from Mr. Clay. It is not asserted that he did; General Jackson states, his opinion at the time was, that Mr. Buchanan had come from Mr. Clay or some of his friends; but this is given merely as a matter of impression—nothing more. By the showing of Mr. Isicks and Mr. Buchanan, it now appears, that Mr. Markley was the negotiator. A difference as to the date—the period of time at which the conversation took place, may exist; for Mr. Buchanan places it on the 30th of December. It may be, however, that he intends this as the period of his discourse with Mr. Markley. If it be in reference to his interview with General Jackson, then, agreeably to my recollection, it is a mistake. I cannot precisely, and to a day, declare the time when Mr. Buchanan came to see and to converse with me; but I do recollect it to have been during that week, on Saturday of which the reported meeting of Mr. Clay and his friends took place, and when the determination was taken to support Mr. Adams. I feel quite satisfied, that the meeting to which I allude, was on Saturday the 22nd of January. Early in that week, (Tuesday or Wednesday evening,) Mr. Buchanan visited me. It was on the pavement and in front of my own residence, where we conversed together. A statement of our conversation, concisely drawn, was given to General Green, editor of the *United States' Telegraph*, at his request, in August 1826—more than a year ago—it is as follows:

"In January, 1825, a few days before it had been known that Mr. Clay and his friends had declared in favor of Mr. Adams, I was called upon by Mr. Buchanan of Pennsylvania. He said, it was pretty well understood, that overtures were making by the friends of Adams, on the subject of cabinet appointments: that Jackson should fight them with their own weapons. He said, the opinion was, that Jackson would retain Adams, and that it was doing him injury. That the Gen. should state whom he would make Secretary of State; and desired that I would name it to him. My reply was, that I was satisfied Gen. Jackson would say nothing on the subject. Mr. Buchanan then remarked: "Well, if he will merely say, he will not retain Mr. Adams, that will answer." I replied, I was satisfied Gen. Jackson would neither say who should or who should not be Secretary of State—but that he (Mr. B.) knew him well, and might talk with him as well as I could. Mr. Buchanan then said that on the next day, before the General went

to the House, he would call. He did so, as I afterwards understood."

In this application and interview, I felt that Mr. Buchanan was acting on the ground of anxious solicitude for the success of General Jackson, and from a desire that nothing of stratagem and management should interpose to prevent the election of one, for whom he felt more than common interest. I considered, in his zeal, he felt it to be right to defend the citadel against unlooked for assaults, and believed, consequently, that the enemy should be met with their own weapons. He may have intended to present this as the idea and opinion of others, not his own. Such, indeed, may have been the case, though I cannot say so understood him at the time.

I take occasion to repeat, that the conversation, as here given, at the request of the editor of the *United States' Telegraph* was afforded him in August, 1826, while he was on a visit to Tennessee. I mention this fact, because the statement being in his possession, he will entirely be enabled to say, if the one he has, and that which is here submitted be not the same. By this circumstance, thus fortunately existing, I may find safety from some of those charges which a kindly editor has already taken occasion to surmise and insinuate. The ungenerous and illiberal effort is made to excite prejudice; and to forestal the public, and to awaken suspicions, through the allegation, that an attempt would be made "to discredit Mr. Buchanan, by arraying Major Eaton and others against him," before the public. On so idle an errand, and so hopeless an effort, I should exceedingly regret the necessity of being obliged to proceed; and yet, were it necessary to maintain myself on any, the demands of truth, I should certainly venture, regardless of the sayings and prejudices of any one. Between Mr. Buchanan's statement and my own, and that of General Jackson, heretofore published, I can, as already remarked, discern no essential difference. True, before I had read and particularly examined, what had been stated, I believed differences were to be found, though that opinion no longer remains. If there be those who desire to urge that any such do exist, and that the submitted averments are in fact unlike, I shall be free and cheerful to concede, that the mistakes are those which proceed from error of recollection, and from no other cause. I have known Mr. Buchanan too long, to place any statement of his which might be discrepant with my own, under the head of intentional error, or ascribe it to any other circumstance than inaccuracy of recollection.

I might here rest my remarks, and forbear to say more on the subject, but being in possession of some facts, which may be considered material—the tendency of which may be to exhibit matters more fully to public consideration, I shall not conclude this presentation, without them also. I have already said, that a meeting was held on the 22nd of January; previous to which time, the opinions of Mr. Clay and his friends were but little known—conjecture alone pointed out what probably their course would be. On the succeeding Monday, the opinion prevailed, that they had taken their ground; and in a few days afterwards, Mr. Clay's military-chief's letter, as it has been styled, was written to Judge Brooke, of Virginia, of whom he speaks as a particular friend. In that letter, he mentions his difficult, "highly critical" situation—the interrogation to his conscience, and the course he had resolved to pursue. Thus, to a particular friend, on the 28th of January, and not earlier was a declaration made of the course he had concluded to take. Why the necessity of a silence so long, and so rigidly preserved?

This Saturday evening meeting, and the course which had been resolved upon, formed generally on Monday the subject of conversation. The Senate having adjourned, General Jackson and myself were passing from the capitol, being yet within the enclosure, and near to a flight of steps leading to the avenue, when Mr. Clay, coming diagonally on our route, from the House of Representatives, passed very near, and without speaking. He was proceeding down the flight of steps in front of the building, and we were in the act of descending, when some person coming up accosted us. At that moment Mr. Clay, turning round, observed, "how are you to-day, General?" with a manner somewhat embarrassed, as though he had just then discovered him. The salutation was returned, and Mr. Clay passed on. Immediately afterwards Gen. Jackson remarked to me, that Mr. Clay seemed disposed to pass him without speaking—my answer was, "as he has concluded to vote against you, General, I suppose he is solicitous for no further intercourse;" we here dropped the subject. I had never before perceived Mr. Clay thus

distant with General Jackson, having been previously quite the reverse; and well knowing from our near proximity at passing, that it was altogether improbable he should not have observed us, I looked to this coyness on his part, as a circumstance corroborative of what had been the reports of the day—a determination taken to support Mr. Adams.

Previously to the announcement of this meeting on Saturday, I had not distrusted the result of the election. As regarded the course Kentucky would take, even conceding the force of Mr. Clay's influence, I felt there was security in these considerations: That so far from there being any thing of good, there had been an unfriendly understanding very lately subsisting between Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay; That Mr. Adams was not the choice of Kentucky—had not been thought of or voted for there; and of all the persons presented to the public, would probably have received the most inconsiderable suffrage in that state: That Mr. Crittenden, who stood at the head of the electoral list for Mr. Clay, and whose opinions of the preference and choice of Kentucky, I hence inferred, might have weight, had written to a friend of mine at Washington, that Kentucky preferred Jackson, and wished him to succeed against Adams. But besides all this, the Legislature of the state had sent forth their instruction, (or request) on this subject, declaring what was to be considered the sense of the people; and I well remembering the warm and ancient contest between Mr. Clay and Mr. Pope, on the subject of a disregard of instructions, had not supposed that the former would venture to place at nought his previous open avowals on this important point. These were the grounds of my opinions, and of my conclusions, and they were removed, only when I understood that this meeting had been held, and the vote of Kentucky determined upon.

There were other considerations of interference and of argument. The state of New York was thought to be dependent for the course she would pursue, on the vote of a single individual. Thus situated it could not be known to absolute certainty, though conjecturally it was, what finally her course would be. Maryland, it was believed, would at least on the first ballot, be on the side of Mr. Adams. These two, with the six New England states, were all, which with any thing of certainty could be counted on. Five, were yet wanted—Louisiana and Illinois, it was believed, would be in favor of the same course; though as it was in opposition to the preference, indicated by the electoral colleges at home, it was asserted, that the members from those states would not march in that direction, except in the event that thereby the election of Mr. Adams would be rendered secure and certain. Report having urged strongly, that on the second ballot, Maryland would secede and vote for Gen. Jackson, it was therefore indispensably important to bring matters to a close. The whole affair then rested with Kentucky, Ohio, and Missouri. Under this state of things was it, and after that it had been ascertained that Jackson would make no disclosure, as to his cabinet, that the meeting of the 22d of January took place. Those who attended it, being participants in what was done, have never yet declared the particulars. I have now in my possession, a communication from a gentleman for merly of Congress, (not from this state) and heretofore the friend of Mr. Clay. He gives the reason why he is no longer that friend. To a letter which was lately written to him by me, this is his reply.

"The bargain of 1825, between Messrs. Adams and Clay, I remember well, was freely spoken of by many members of Congress, although I had no personal knowledge of any fact, which would warrant the belief that the contract existed; besides, the high estimation in which I then held Mr. Clay, forbade my suspicions on any accusations not supported by positive proof; that proof was not afforded to me, and I held him guiltless:—Yet there were some circumstances of unfavourable appearance, and which as the friend of Mr. Clay I was sorry had existence. The circumstances to which I allude, were the continued silence and lengthy reserve of Mr. Clay's friends, in publishing or letting it be known, how they would vote; and the fact that the Kentucky delegation, who voted for Mr. Adams, had a meeting to determine upon their own course, as I was informed by one of them, at which it was said to me, that upon the question being proposed to Mr. Clay, for whom shall we vote, he answered in substance, "that in case General Jackson should be elected, he believed the administration with its weight, would be opposed to him, to prostrate him; that should Mr. A. be elected, he felt satisfied it would not be so; but he hoped no per-

sonal considerations for him would induce them to act contrary to their desire." Upon these circumstances I have often remarked, that the first was not in character of Kentuckians, and that the last was the strongest appeal which could be made to a man's friends; and the heaviest requisition which could be levied on their attachment. Until a very short time since, I had not been convinced that the bargain had been made as executed, and I even now regret that I am constrained to admit it; but believing it, I shall leave nothing undone which can be honorably performed to defeat the coalition."

Anthony's oration over the dead body of Cæsar has been greatly admired for its manner, artfulness, and concealment of intended purpose; but this of Mr. Clay is quite a match for it: so pointed, and yet so modest; so retiring, and so evidently concealing its real intention—Gentlemen, you are my friends, and as such we have met. Let me not ask you to do your duty, or sacrifice yourselves for me: I ask nothing at your hands;—but of one thing you may rest assured,—If Jackson is elected I shall be prostrated; but if Mr. Adams shall be chosen, "he felt satisfied it would not be so." In the one case, there was danger to his prospects, in the other there would be none; not was this given as an opinion formed, or belief entertained—it is of stronger import—he was satisfied there would be none. The speech had its effect, the long agony was over, and the determination taken to move together. Thus was the whole machinery ready to operate, provided defection could be kept from its parts. And until this were effected, Mr. Clay's course must be a matter of conjecture. If judgment, and sound deliberation, prompted him to adopt the preference he did, certainly it does not follow, that duty demanded of him this grave and formal exercise of his influence, whereby to convert the opinions and votes of others. Resting on this ground of decision merely, apart from any other, and future consideration, such active zeal was forbidden by the situation in which he himself had very lately stood, and more especially from the personal relation which he, and Mr. Adams had recently occupied towards each other.

The course adopted by Mr. Clay, in reference to this election, and the circumstances attending it at the time, were then as now the subject of free and censorable remark. The final consummation though, did not for a time take place. Many incredulous to mere assertion, and anxious to maintain their former favorable opinions, were willing and disposed, to defer all credence until after the Inauguration, and when it should with certainty be ascertained, whether Mr. Clay would be appointed to the first situation in the Cabinet. The nomination came! It was submitted to the Senate,—a vote taken; and contrary to what before, I believe, had ever happened, in reference to a cabinet appointment, a large number of that body (one third) were found in opposition to it. Besides those, there were others, unfriendly to the confirmation, but who yielded their assent on the ground, that the President was amenable to the country, for a correct administration of its affairs, and that the immemorial usage of the Senate, had conceded him the right to select his Cabinet agreeably to his own wishes. It was said, if the Senate shall refuse their assent, and future mishaps arise, a strong defence to the Executive would be afforded, and the President be enabled to say,—the Senate opposed me, and denied a right heretofore never withheld,—the right of obtaining that assistance in which I had confidence, and which, it was my desire and object to procure. That the nomination though, was silently voted on, and nothing said respecting it, is not correct. A Senator in his place, addressed the chair—opposed a confirmation, and presented the reasons of his objections, which were entirely in reference to Mr. Clay's course and conduct on the Presidential election. I shall not use his name nor attempt to quote his remarks, although the injunction of secrecy has been long since removed. I will know, that the name of this Senator, and what he had done, and what said, were spoken of publicly; and I will remember too, that no reply to him, was made or attempted, or committee of inquiry asked for. After he had taken his seat, the nomination was voted on, and carried, and the appointment confirmed. I know not what friend or member, afforded Mr. Clay the information that his nomination was not objected to in the Senate; but I do know that he made an incorrect report.

If after a perusal of what is here written, there shall be any disposed to maintain, that a statement, simply, of Mr. Buchanan's conversation, is all that was necessary, or proper to be presented; and that I should have gone no farther, this is my answer. It is a public matter,