

MR. CLAY'S SPEECH.

At the Public Dinner in Kentucky, May 16, 1829.

Toasts—Our distinguished guest, friend and neighbor, HENRY CLAY—with increased proofs of his worth, we delight to renew the assurance of our confidence in his patriotism, talents and incorruptibility—may health and happiness attend him in retirement, and a grateful nation do justice to his virtues.

After the above was proposed, Mr. Clay rose, and respectfully saluting the immense multitude that stood before him, addressed them from a porch in which he was elevated somewhat above them, substantially as follows:

I fear, friends and fellow-citizens, that if I could find language to express the feelings which now animate me, I could not be heard throughout this vast assembly. My voice, once strong and powerful, has had its vigor impaired by delicate health and advancing age. You must have been separated as I have been, for four years past, from some of your best and dearest friends, with whom during the greater part of your lives, you had associated in the most intimate friendly intercourse. You must have been reduced as I have been, after exerting, with zeal and fidelity, the utmost of your powers to promote the welfare of our country. And you must have returned, among those same warm-hearted friends, and been greeted and welcomed and honored by them, as I have been, before you could estimate the degree of sensibility which I now feel, or conceive how utterly inadequate all human language is to portray the grateful emotions of my heart.

I behold gathered here, as I have seen in other instances, since my return among you, sires far advanced in years, endeared to me by an interchange of friendly office and sympathetic feeling, beginning more than thirty years ago. Their sons, grown up during my absence in the public councils, accompanying them: and, all prompted by ardent attachment, affectionately surrounding and saluting me as if I belonged to their own household—considering the multitude here assembled, their standing and respectability, and the distance which many have come personally to see me, and to testify their respect and confidence. I consider this day and this occasion as the proudest of my life. The tribute, thus rendered by my friends, neighbors and fellow-citizens, flows spontaneously from their hearts, as it penetrates the inmost recess of mine.—Tendered in no servile spirit, it does not aim to propitiate one in authority. Power could not buy or coerce it. The offspring of enlightened and independent freemen, it is addressed to a beloved fellow-citizen in private life, without office, and who can present nothing, in return, but his hearty thanks. I pray all of you, gentlemen, to accept these. They are due to every one of you for the sentiment just pronounced, and for the proceedings of this day. And I owe a particular expression of them to that portion of my friends who, although I had the misfortune to differ from them, in the late contest, have honored me by their attendance here. I have no reproaches to make them.—Regrets I have. But I give, as I have received from them, the hand of friendship as cordially as it is extended to any of my friends. It is highly gratifying to me to know that they and thousands of others who co-operated with them, in producing the late political change, were unaffected towards me by the prejudices, attempted to be excited against me. I entertain too high respect for the inestimable privilege of freely exercising one's independent judgment, on public affairs, to draw in question the right of any of my fellow-citizens to form and to act upon their opinions, in opposition to mine. The best and wisest amongst us are, at last, but weak and fallible human beings. And no man ought to set up his own judgment as an unerring standard, by which the correctness of all others is to be tested and tried.

It cannot be doubted that, with individual exceptions, the great body of every political party that has hitherto appeared, in this country, has been honest in its intentions and patriotic in its aims. Whole parties may have been sometimes deceived and deluded; but, without being conscious of it, they do not doubt sought to advance the welfare of the country. Where such a contest has existed as that, which we have recently witnessed, there will be prejudices on the one side and predilections on the other. If, during its progress, we cannot calm the passions and permit truth and reason to have their undisturbed sway, we ought at least, after it has terminated, to own their empire. Judging of public men and public measures, in a spirit of candor, we should strive to eradicate every bias, and to banish from our minds every consideration not connected with the good of our country.

I do not pretend to be more than other men exempt from the influence of prejudice and predilection. But I declare most sincerely that I have sought, in reference to the present administration, and shall continue to strive, to discard all prejudices, and to judge its acts and measures as they appear to me to affect the interest of our country.

A large portion of friends and fellow-citizens from whom I differed on the late occasion, did not disagree with me as to the foreign or domestic policy of Government. We only differed in the selection of agents to carry that policy into effect. Experience can alone determine who was right; if that policy continues to be pursued, under the new administration, as if its care had been confined to agents of my choice. If, on the contrary, it shall be abandoned or abandoned, the friends to whom I now refer will be bound by all the obligations of patriotism and consistency to adhere to the policy.

We take a new commencement from the 4th of March last. After that day those

who supported the election of the present Chief Magistrate were left at free to judge of the conduct of his Administration as those who opposed it. It will be no more inconsistent in them, if he disappoint their expectations, to disapprove his administration, than it will be in us to support it, if, disappointing ours, he should preserve the established policy of the Nation, and introduce no new principles of alarming tendency.

They bestowed their suffrages, upon the supposition that the government would be well administered; that public pledges would be redeemed, solemn professions fulfilled and the rights and liberties of the people be protected and maintained. If they shall find themselves deceived, in any of these respects; should principles avowed during the canvass be violated during the Presidency, and new principles, of dangerous import, neither avowed, nor anticipated by them, be put forth, they will have been betrayed; the distinguished individual for whom they voted will have failed to preserve his identity, and they will be urged by the most sacred of duties to apply the proper corrective.

Government is a trust, and the officers of government are trustees. And both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people. Official incumbents are bound, therefore, to administer the trust, not for their own private or individual benefit, but so as to promote the prosperity of the people. This is the vital principle of a Republic. If a different principle prevail, and a government be so administered as to gratify the passions or to promote the interests of a particular individual, the forms of free institutions may remain, but that government is essentially a monarchy. The great difference between the two forms of government is, that, in a Republic, all power and authority and all public offices and honors, emanate from the people, and are exercised and held for their benefit. In a monarchy, all power and authority, all offices and honors, proceed from the monarch. His interests, his caprices and his passions, influence and control the destinies of the kingdom. In a Republic, the people are every thing and a particular individual nothing. In a monarchy, the monarch is every thing. And the true character of the Government is stamped, not by the forms of the appointment to office alone, but by its practical operation. It is, in one, nominally free, the Chief Magistrate as soon as he is clothed with power, proceeds to exercise it so as to minister to his passions, and to gratify his favorites; and systematically distributes his rewards and punishments, in the application of the power of patronage, with which he is invested for the good of the whole, upon the principle of devotion and attachment to him, and not according to the ability and fidelity with which the people are or may be served, that Chief Magistrate, for the time being and within the scope of his discretionary power, is in fact, if not in form, a monarch.

It was objected to the late administration that it adopted and enforced a system of proscription. During the whole period of it, not a solitary officer of government, from Maine to Louisiana, within my knowledge, was dismissed on account of his political opinions. It was well known to the late President, that many officers, who held their places subject to the power of dismission, were opposed to his reelection, and were actively employed in behalf of his competitor. Yet not one was discharged from that cause. In the commencement and early part of his administration, appointments were promiscuously made from all the parties in the previous canvass. And this course was pursued until an opposition was organized, which denounced all appointments in their ranks as being made for impure purposes.

I am aware that it may be urged, that a change was made in some of the publishers of the laws. There are about eighty annually designated. Of these, during the four years of the late administration, about twelve or fifteen were changed. Some of the changes were made from geographical or other local considerations. In several instances one friend was substituted for another. In others, one opponent for another. Several papers among the most influential in the opposition, but otherwise conducted with decorum, were retained. Of the entire number of changes, not more than four or five were made on account of the scurrilous character of their papers, & not because of the political sentiments of the Editors. It was deemed injurious to the respect and moral influence, which the laws should always command, that they should be promulgated in columns of a public paper, parallel with which were other columns, in the same paper, of the grossest abuse of the Government and its functionaries.

On this subject I can speak with certainty, and I embrace with pleasure this opportunity for explanation. The duty of designating the Printers of the Laws, appertains to the office which I lately filled. The selection is usually made at the commencement of every session of Congress. It was made by me without any particular consultation with the President, or any member of his cabinet. In making it, I felt under no greater obligation to select the publishers of the Laws of the previous year, than an individual feels himself bound to insert a succeeding advertisement in the same paper which published his last. The Law does not require it, but leaves the Secretary of State at liberty to make the selection according to his sense of propriety. A publisher of the Laws is not an officer of Government. It had been judicially so decided. He holds no commission. The accuracy of the statement, therefore, that no officer of the Government was dismissed by the late administration, in consequence of his political opinions, is not impaired by the few changes of publishers of the Laws, which were made.

But, if they had been officers of Govern-

ment, who could have imagined that those who objected to the removal, would so soon have themselves put in practice a general and sweeping system of exclusion? The President is invested with the tremendous power of dismission, to be exercised for the public good, not to gratify any private passion or purposes. It was conferred to prevent the public from suffering by faithless or incompetent officers. It was made summary, because if the slow process of trial, before a judicial tribunal, were resorted to, the public might be greatly injured, during the progress and prior to the final decision of the case. But it never was in the contemplation of Congress that the power would be applied to the removal of competent, diligent and faithful officers. Such application of it is an act of arbitrary power and a great abuse.

I regret extremely that I feel constrained to notice the innovation upon the principles and practice of our institutions now in progress. I had most anxiously hoped, that I could heartily approve the acts and measures of the new administration. And I yet hope that it will pause, and hereafter pursue a course more in unison with the spirit of a free government. I entreat my friends and fellow-citizens, here and elsewhere, to be persuaded, that I now perform a most painful duty; and that it is far from my wish to say one word that can inflict a wound upon the feelings of any of them. I think, indeed, that it is the duty of all of them to exercise their judgments freely and independently on what is passing, and that none ought to feel themselves restrained, by false pride, or by any part which they took in the late election, from condemning what their hearts cannot approve.

Knowing the imputation which I expose myself, I would remain silent, if I did not solemnly believe that there was serious cause of alarm in the principle of removal which had been recently acted on. Hitherto, the uniform practice of the government has been, where charges are preferred against public officers, foreign or domestic, to transmit to them a copy of the charges, for the purpose of refutation or explanation. This has been considered an equitable substitute to the more tedious and formal trials before judicial tribunals. But now persons are dismissed, not only without trial of any sort, but without charge. And as if the intention were to defy public opinion, and to give to acts of power a higher degree of enormity, in some instances the persons dismissed have carried with them, in their pockets, the strongest testimonials to their ability and integrity, furnished by the very instruments employed to execute the purposes of oppression. If the new administration had found these discharged officers wanting in a zealous co-operation to execute the laws, in consequence of their preference at the preceding election, there would have been some ground for their removal. But this has not been pretended; and to show that it formed no consideration they have been dismissed, among its first acts, without affording them an opportunity of manifesting that their sense of public duty was unaffected by the choice which they had at the preceding election.

I will not dwell on the injustice and individual distress which are the necessary consequences of these acts of authority.—Men who accepted public employments, entered on them with implied understanding that they would be retained as long as they continued to discharge their duties to the public, honestly, ably and assiduously. All their private arrangements are made accordingly. To be dismissed, without fault and without trial; to be expelled, with their families, without the means of support, & in some instances, disqualified by age or by official habits, from the pursuit of any other business; and all this to be done, upon the will of one man, in a free government, was surely intolerable oppression.

Our institutions proclaim, reason enjoins, and conscience requires, that every freeman shall exercise the elective franchise freely and independently; and that, among the candidates for his suffrage, he shall fearlessly bestow it upon him who will best advance the interest of his country.—The presumption is that this is always done, unless the contrary appears. But, if the consequence of such a performance of patriotic duty is to be punishment; if an honest and sincere preference of A to B, is to be treated as a crime, then our dear-privilege is a mockery and our institutions are snares.

During the reign of Buonaparte, upon one of those occasions in which he affected to take the sense of the French people as to his being made Consul for life, or Emperor, an order was sent to the French armies to collect their suffrages. They were told in a public proclamation, that they were authorized and requested to vote freely, according to the dictates of their best judgments, and their honest convictions. But a mandate was privately circulated among them, importing that if any soldier voted against Buonaparte, he should be instantly shot.

Is there any other difference, except in the mode of punishment, between that case and the arbitrary removal of men from public stations for no other reason than that of an honest & conscientious preference of one Presidential candidate to another? And can it be doubted, that the spirit which prompts these removals, is restrained from being extended to all, in private life, who manifested a similar preference, only by barriers which it dare not yet to break down? But should public opinion sanction them, how long will these barriers remain?

One of the worst consequences of the introduction of this tenure of public office will be, should it be permanently adopted, to substitute for a system of responsibility, founded upon the ability and integrity with which public officers discharge the duties to the community, a system of universal rapacity. Incumbents, feeling the insta-

bility of their situations, and knowing their liability to periodical removals, at short terms, without any regard to the manner in which they have executed their trusts, will be disposed to make the most of their uncertain offices, whilst they hold them.—And hence we may expect innumerable cases of fraud, peculation, and corruption.

President Jackson commenced his official career on the 4th of March last, with every motive, which should operate on the human heart, to urge him to forget the prejudices and passions which had been exhibited in the previous contest, and to practise dignified moderation and forbearance. He had been the choice of a considerable majority of the people, and was elected by a large majority of the Electoral votes. He had been elected mainly from the all-powerful influence of gratitude for his brilliant military services, in spite of doubts and fears entertained by many who contributed to his elevation.—He was far advanced in years, and, if fame speak true, was suffering under the joint infirmities of age and disease. He had recently been visited by one of the severest afflictions of Providence, in the privation of the partner of his bosom, whom he is represented to have tenderly loved, and who warmly returned all his affection.—He had no child on whom to cast his honors. Under such circumstances, was ever man more imperiously called upon, to still all the vindictive passions of his nature, to quell every rebellious feeling of his heart, and to dedicate the short residue of his life to the God who had so long blessed and spared him, and to the country which had so greatly honored him?

I sincerely hope that he will yet do this. I hope so, for the sake of human nature, and for the sake of his own reputation.—Whether he has during the two months of his administration, so conducted himself, let facts tell and history pronounce. Truth is mighty and will prevail.

It was objected to Mr. Adams that, by appointing several members of Congress to public places, he endangered the purity of the body, and established a precedent fraught with the most mischievous consequences. And President Jackson (no, he begged his pardon, it was candidate Jackson) was so much alarmed, by these appointments, for the integrity and permanency of our institutions, that in a solemn communication which he deliberately made to the Legislature of Tennessee, he declared his firm conviction to be, that no member of Congress ought to be appointed to any office except a seat upon the Bench. And he added that, he, himself, would conform to that rule.

During the four years of Mr. Adams's administration, the whole number of appointments made by him, from Congress, did not exceed four or five. In the first four weeks of that of his successor, more than double that number have been appointed by him. In the first two months of President Jackson's administration, he has appointed more members of Congress to public office, than I believe were appointed by any one of his predecessors during the whole period of four or eight years.—And it appears that no office is too high or too low to be bestowed by him on this favored class, from that of a head of department down to an inconsiderable collectorship, or even a subordinate office under a collector. If I have not been misinformed, a representative from the greatest commercial metropolis in the United States, has recently been appointed to some inferior station by the collector of the port of New-York.

Without meaning to assert, as a general principle, that in no case would it be proper that a resort should be had to the Halls of Congress to draw from them tried talents and experienced public servants, to aid the Executive or Judicial department, all must agree that such a resort should not be too often made; and that there should be some limit, both as to the number and the nature of the appointments. And I do sincerely think that this limit has, in both particulars, been transcended beyond all safe bounds, and so as to excite serious apprehensions.

It is not however my opinion, but that of President Jackson, which the public has now to consider. Having declared to the American people, through the Tennessee Legislature, the danger of the practice; having deliberately committed himself to act in consonance with that declared opinion, how can he now be justified in violating this solemn pledge, and in entailing upon his country a perilous precedent which he described?

It is vain to say that the Constitution, as it now stands, does not forbid these appointments. It does not enjoin them. If there be an inherent defect in the theoretical character of the instrument, President Jackson was bound to have redeemed his pledge and employed the whole influence and weight of his name, to remedy the defect, in its practical operation.—The Constitution admitted of the service of one man, in the Presidential office, during his life, if he could secure successive elections. That great reformer, as President Jackson describes him, whom he professes to imitate, did not wait for an amendment of the Constitution to correct that defect; but, after the example of the father of his country, by declining to serve longer than two terms, established a practical principle, which is not likely to be violated.

There was another class of citizens upon whom public offices had been showered in the greatest profusion. I do not know the number of Editors of newspapers that have been recently appointed, but I have noticed, in the public prints, some fifteen or twenty. And they were generally of those whose papers had manifested the greatest activity in the late canvass, the most vulgar abuse of opponents, and the most fulsome praise of their favorite candidate. Editors are as much entitled to

be appointed, as any other class of the community; but, if the number and the quality of those promoted, be such as to render palpable the motive of their appointment; if they are preferred, not on account of their fair pretensions, and their ability and capacity to serve the public, but because of their devotion to a particular individual, I ask if the necessary consequence must not be to render the press venal, and in time to destroy this hitherto justly cherished Palladium of our Liberty.

If the principle of all these appointments—the monopoly of public trusts, by members of Congress and partisan Editors—be excepted, I would not have alluded to them, nor from my deliberate conviction that they are essentially vicious, their effects are truly alarming. I will not impute to President Jackson any design to subvert our liberties. I hope and I believe that he does not now entertain any such design. But I must say, if an ambitious President, should be established in our government, and ultimately exercise a different form, he would, at the commencement of his administration, probably, by his official acts, make the greatest public wrong, which had been the character, the services or the sacrifices of men, or applicants for office, what their experience or ability to serve the Republic, if they did not bow down and worship him, they possessed no claim to his patronage. Such an ambitious President would, as monarchs have said, "I am the State." He would dismiss all from public employment who did not belong to the true faith. He would stamp upon the whole official corps of government one homogeneous character, and infuse into it one uniform principle of action. He would scatter, with an open and liberal hand, offices among members of Congress, giving the best to those who had spoken and written and fringed most in his behalf. He would subsidize the press.—It would be his earnest and constant aim to secure the two greatest engines of operation upon public opinion, Congress and the Press, he would promulgate a new penal code, the rewards and punishments of which would be distributed and regulated exclusively by devotion or opposition to him. And when this all-powerful machinery was put in motion, if he did not succeed in subverting the liberties of his country and in establishing some form upon a throne, it would be because some new means or principle of resistance had been discovered which was unknown in other times or to other Republics.

But if an administration, conducted in the manner just supposed, did not aim at the destruction of public liberty, it would engender evils of a magnitude so great as gradually to alienate the affections of the people from their government, and finally lead to its overthrow. According to the principle now avowed and practiced, all offices vacant and filled, within the compass of the Executive power, are to be allotted among the partisans of the successful candidate. The people and the service of the State are to be put aside, and every thing is to be decided by the zeal, activity and attachment, in the cause of a particular candidate, which were manifested during the preceding canvass. The consequence of these principles would be to convert the nation into one perpetual theatre for political gladiators. There would be one universal scramble for the public offices. The termination of one Presidential contest would be only the signal for the commencement of another. And on the conclusion of each, we should behold the victor distributing the prizes and applying his punishments, like a military commander immediately after he had won a great victory. Congress corrupted, and the press corrupted, general corruption would ensue, until the substance of free government having disappeared, some Pretorian band would arise, and with the general concurrence of a distracted people, put an end to useless forms.

To be continued.

Navy Beef and Pork for 1830.

NAVY COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE.

17th June, 1829.

SEALED Proposals will be received at this office until the first of September next, for the supply of 3000 bbls. Navy Beef, & 2400 bbls. Navy Pork, for the use of the United States Navy Service, 1000 bbls. of Beef, & 800 bbls. of Pork, to be delivered at each of the U. States Navy Yards, Charleston, Miss.; Brooklyn, New York; and Norfolk, Virginia; and the whole quantity must be delivered at each & every Navy Yard by the first of April, 1830. The whole quantity of the said Beef & Pork must be of the best quality. The Beef must be packed from well fattened cattle, weighing not less than 450 pounds in the quarters, or 300 pounds on the half, all the legs, legs, heads, chubs, chucks, skins, and the neck of each animal, must be wholly excluded from the barrel, and the remainder of the carcass must be cut into pieces of ten pounds each as near as may be, so that twenty pieces will make a barrel of 200 pounds net weight of Navy Beef.

The Pork must be corn-fed and well-fattened, all the skulls, feet, and hind legs entire, must be wholly excluded from the barrel, and the remainder of the Hog must be cut into pieces of eight pounds each as near as be, so that twenty-five pieces, not more than three of which shall be shoulders, will make a barrel of 200 pounds net weight of Navy Pork.

The whole quantity of the said Beef and Pork must be perfectly salted in the first instance with, and afterwards packed with a sufficient quantity of Turck's Island, Isle of My, or St. Ubes Salt, and no other, to ensure its preservation, with five ounces of pure Saltpetre, to each and every barrel. The barrels in which the said Beef and Pork is to be packed must be made of the best seasoned heart of white oak or white ash, free from sap, with one iron hoop on each chime, and otherwise tully and substantially hooped; and each barrel must be branded on its head "Navy Beef," or "Navy Pork," with the contractor's name and the year when packed.

All the said Beef and Pork, on delivery at the respective Navy Yards, must be subjected to the test and inspection of some sworn Inspector of the State within which it is to be delivered, who shall be selected by the Commandant of the Navy Yard at the place of delivery, without any charge to the United States therefor; and who inspected in said manner, the contractor must put the barrels in good shipping order, or the Beef and Pork will not be received.

Bidders are required to state their prices separately for the Beef and for the Pork, and if they offer to furnish at more than one Yard, then separately for each Yard. They are also required to give their names, their residences, and the names and residence of their sureties, monthly; and must transmit their bids sealed, and endorsed "Offer to furnish Navy Beef" or "Navy Pork" for the year 1830.

The Commissioners of the Navy are at liberty to take the offers of a bidder for any one Yard, or for the articles deliverable at any one Yard, or in greater proportions, if such bids be the lowest.

Any bid not made in conformity to this advertisement, or not received within the limited time, will not be opened.

The parts of the animal to be excluded from the barrel will be particularly described in drawing, which will form part of the contract. Persons desiring information upon the subject, with an intention to bid, may obtain it by reasonable application to the Board.

June 19.