

# ROANOKE ADVOCATE.

VOL. IV.—NO 20.

HALIFAX, N. C. JULY 12, 1832.

WHOLE NO. 175.

BY EDM. B. FREEMAN.

The ADVOCATE will be printed every Thursday morning at \$2 50 per annum, in advance, or \$3 if payment is not made within 3 months.

No paper to be discontinued until all arrearages are paid, unless at the option of the Editor; and a failure to notify a discontinuance will be considered as a new engagement.

Advertisements, making one square or less, inserted three times for One Dollar, and twenty-five cents for every subsequent insertion, longer ones in proportion. All advertisements will be continued unless otherwise ordered, and each continuance charged.

## ADDRESS

Of the Charlottesville JACKSON & BARBOUR Convention.  
TO THE PEOPLE OF VIRGINIA.

We, the delegates of a portion of the citizens of this Commonwealth having assembled in Convention at Charlottesville for the purpose of promoting the re-election of ANDREW JACKSON as President, and the election of PHILIP P. BARBOUR as Vice-President of the United States, deem it due to ourselves, our constituents, and to our countrymen at large, to declare with becoming candor and sincerity, the motives and reasons by which we are actuated. While we would not cherish that wild and reckless spirit of faction which has already shed its maledictions on our country,—we cannot basely betray our trust as sentinels, by crying that "all is well" when we behold the wide-spread and alarming discontents which pervade our Union. We would speak, as we feel, the sentiments of Virginians and freemen, who love their country, and loving it would perpetuate its peace, its happiness, and its glory.

Time and experience have long since demonstrated that written Constitutions by which the powers of Government may be defined and restrained within just limits, and the rights of the people protected are indispensable to the preservation of human liberty. Where these do not exist, or where they have ceased to answer the great ends for which they were designed, there is no guarantee of the rights and liberties of a people, but the arbitrary and capricious discretion of those who may usurp the powers of government.

When powers which belong to the people are thus usurped, whether by one despot, or by millions, there is no standard of right, no bulwark of freedom, but the clemency of usurpers.

As American Patriots—as Virginia republicans, we have looked to this sacred principle of Constitutional restriction, as the last, best earthly hope of an oppressed world, which would ultimately dispel the cloud, and burst the fetters of tyranny every where, and fulfil all the brilliant destinies of our happy country. It remains to be seen whether that great moral experiment of which our country has been the theatre since the period of its glorious revolution, shall finally triumph, or whether it can be baffled by the restless and corrupt ambition of man, which has soon or late, subverted the liberties of all the nations who have gone before us.

We are among those who believe that the liberties of our country, cannot long survive its constitution.—Hence our solicitude to preserve inviolate this sacred charter of all the blessings which we have inherited from our ancestors, and which we hope to transmit to our posterity. In popular governments, the sovereign will is declared through the medium of elections. No man can claim the suffrages of the people by right,—no one can deserve their confidence, who would be an unsafe depository of that power which is granted in trust for their security and protection.

As our form of government is created by written constitutions—so its spirit and purity can only be preserved by the vigilance of the people, and a judicious exercise of the elective franchise. The fidelity of those public agents who may be selected to administer the government, depends essentially on the caution with which the people guard their own exclusive and inalienable privileges. We cannot guard, our own elections with too much caution against the influence of that factious excitement, which is the degenerate offspring of an elevated party zeal.

When public honors cease to be conferred as the reward of public merit, our elections can no longer fulfil their great design, as exponents of the popular will, but must be degraded into mere political lotteries, where the most daring and ambitious adventurers may win, without deserving, the power to wield the destinies of a government.

In the present agitated and melancholy condition of our country, we trace but

too distinctly the fatal consequences of that disregard of written constitutions, which has marked the progress of our federal government, and which but for our undiminished confidence in the intelligence of our countrymen, would seem to indicate the decline and fall of our glorious republic. We cannot listen without pain and sorrow to the confident predictions which are already made, of those awful calamities which may speedily ensue a severance of our happy Union, or an absolute consolidation of the States. We would still confide in that constitution which is our bond of Union. We would again appeal to the intelligence, the virtue, the patriotism of our countrymen, to avert, ere it is too late, these impending evils. We yet believe that the suffrages of an enlightened and free people, may be more efficacious than the sad alternative of civil commotion, in restoring tranquility and public confidence.

We would therefore earnestly invite the co-operation of our fellow-citizens in extirpating as far as we can, the cause of the evils which they deplore in common with ourselves. We would ask them to judge, and to approve or condemn public men, by the same standard as they judge public measures. We would ask them to carry out the principles we profess in common, if (as we believe) they are not prepared to abandon them.

In selecting Philip P. Barbour as a candidate for the Vice Presidency at this interesting crisis of our public affairs, we have chosen one, who has been known to you through all the vicissitudes of an eventful and distinguished political career, and whose eminent virtues as a man, and abilities as a statesman have been conspicuously exemplified in a life chiefly devoted to your service.

He is contrasted on the present occasion with an individual, whose claims to your confidence, rest, either on an indiscriminate hostility to, or an equivocal support of, every principle and interest which has been justly held dear by Virginians.

You are required at this critical juncture of our country's affairs, to do homage to the man, while you denounce his measures,—to elect to the second office of our government, a political enemy, who still bears the arms of his hostility in his hands, and wears the laurels, fresh on his brow, which were won by his inveterate and relentless opposition to your rights, your interests and your principles.

We would ask you to pause, ere you commit yourselves and your country into such hands, and to scrutinize the political character for whose aggrandizement alone, you are required to sacrifice so much.

Mr. Van Buren has advanced to that age, and has filled those stations in public life, which generally stamp the political characters of men unalterably, either for good or for evil. He may therefore be fairly judged by his political acts—and fairly condemned.

At an early period of his public career, we find him pursuing a course of systematic and indiscriminate hostility to the favorite measures and men of Virginia. During the last war, when all the energies of our government were scarcely equal to the shock of external force, and the intrigues of domestic faction; when every patriot was posted in the tented field; or anxiously deliberating for his country's safety—Mr. Van Buren was found in the ranks of an insidious opposition to Mr. Madison's administration, of which that war was the leading measure. This opposition was carried to extremes by some of the prominent politicians of New York and New England. The memory of the Blue Lights—and the Hartford Convention, would endure forever as an abiding stigma on our national character, were it not effaced by the glorious victories which our armies and navies achieved despite the insidious treachery of some of our politicians. In November, 1812, a ticket of Presidential electors was formed by the legislature of New York (of which Mr. Van Buren was then a member) with the avowed purpose of defeating Mr. Madison's re-election and the war. This statesman, who is now held up as the mirror of republican orthodoxy, voted throughout for that ticket.

In 1820, the celebrated Missouri question was deliberately conceived and concocted by some of the leading politicians of New York, and the legislature of that State instructed Rufus King as their Senator to insist on the terms of admission, which he subsequently proposed. Mr. Van Buren was then a member of the Senate of that State, concurred in this course, and voted for Mr. King under these instructions.

In 1821-2, we find Mr. Van Buren in the Senate of the United States. His debut in that body was signalized by his support of a bill, which proposed to erect toll gates on the Cumberland road, to

collect tolls, &c. within the jurisdiction of the States, and to appropriate the sum of \$9,000 to the repair of this work of national improvement. This bill did not become a law, because it was arrested by the veto of Mr. Monroe, on the ground that it was unconstitutional. Actuated by the same principles, we have seen Mr. Van Buren more recently, as a member of Gen. Jackson cabinet, declaring to members of Congress, that "it was impossible for the President to veto the Maysville road bill because the principle, in some way or other had been sanctioned, by every administration since the commencement of the government"—and because "it might lose the votes of several States to the administration." It has been said, (on good authority) that Mr. Van Buren finally approved this act of the President, and professed his concurrence in the principle of the Veto Message. If this be so, we submit to a candid public, to judge when and why he changed his opinion, as facts shall warrant.

In 1827, when the protective or "American System" (as it has been falsely termed) had been already carried to the extreme of prohibition as to many articles of prime necessity, and when that course of systematic extortion and plunder had become thoroughly organized, by the Union of all the interests which were to be enriched by its operations, Mr. Van Buren advocated and voted for the tariff bill which passed the House of Representatives, and opposed all attempts to mitigate the enormous duties proposed on salt and other articles of absolute necessity.

Mr. Tazewell, Mr. Macon and other Senators from the South, whose constituents had felt the grievous and heavy course of this "American System," and who then complained of its intolerable burdens, made frequent and unavailing efforts to lay the bill of 1827 on the table—to re-commit it to the Committee on Manufactures, with instructions to inquire whether its duties were not prohibitory, &c. Van Buren voted throughout against all these attempts, with the unrelenting and inexorable friends of the protective system. At length, another motion was made to lay the bill on the table, and Mr. Van Buren being absent from his seat, there was an equal division of the Senate, and the action was carried in the affirmative by the casting vote of the Vice President.

Fearing that the accidental respite which was thus gained by the Southern States, for one short year, from the oppression of that bill, might be imputed to a returning sense of justice in his bosom, Mr. Van Buren took occasion in a public speech during the ensuing summer, at Albany, to disclaim an intention to hesitate or falter in his devotion to the protective system. In this speech, made at a meeting, to send delegates to a "Manufacturers' Convention," Mr. Van Buren declared that he was accidentally absent when the tariff bill of 1827 was lost—that he could scarcely be suspected of wanting zeal in behalf of the system of protection—(especially the protection of wool) as he owned more than \$20,000 worth of sheep. As the fleeces of these sheep were to have been enhanced by that bill, Mr. Van Buren seems to have regarded them as so many hostages which he had given to the American System. After thus aiding in sending delegates to conventions of manufacturers, and being instrumental in forwarding the celebrated Harrisburg Convention, Mr. Van Buren's political friends moved to instruct him during the ensuing session on the subject of the tariff. They instructed him to vote for such a tariff as would "afford a sufficient protection to the growers of wool, hemp, and flax, and the manufacturers of iron and woollens and every other article, so far as the same may be connected with the interests of manufactures, agriculture and commerce." These are the vague and indefinite instructions, (thus gotten up by Mr. Van Buren's partisans,) which are now relied on, to extenuate or justify his vote for the tariff of 1828—which has driven the Union, we fear, to the verge of dissolution. This shallow excuse concedes that Mr. Van Buren does not regard a protective tariff as unconstitutional—a doctrine which lies in our estimation at the foundation of the whole system. We have never heard, however, that Mr. Van Buren was instructed to vote for the tariff of 1827, and those preceding it, or to make his speech during that year, in which he showed himself in favor of the system.

While these acts and opinions are unexplained and unatoned for, we cannot regard Mr. Van Buren as possessing those peculiar claims to the confidence of the republicans of Virginia, which have been recently asserted in his behalf. We will not acknowledge the humiliating necessity

of making yet another sacrifice, to appease the ruthless spirit of a task-master—nor can we cast the principles of our State into the political scales to be weighed down by "the Spoils of Victory."

But you are told that Mr. Van Buren is recommended to your confidence by the nomination of the Baltimore Convention. Before you take such counsel, it were well to consider whence it proceeds. It is the first time that Virginia ever doubted her competency to think, to decide and act for herself, according to her own convictions of duty. It is the first time that the character and principles of our State were ever committed to the keeping of a northern convention; to be bartered away in a political action, by the vote of New York and New England.

We have already adverted briefly to some of the political traits of the candidate thus nominated—let us now look for a moment at the source whence that nomination comes.

As the reasons which induced the Baltimore Convention to recommend Mr. Van Buren, to you, as a candidate for the Vice Presidency, have not been assigned by those who were most competent to the task—we are left to infer, that they regarded his claims to your confidence, either as utterly indefensible, or as self-evident. That Convention was composed of a heterogeneous mass of materials, made up of fragments of all political parties which ever existed in our country; and if that studied silence which reigned over their conclave, had once been broken, there must have been a confusion of tongues and principles, which would probably have saved us the trouble of addressing you. It is manifest that a body composed of such materials could have agreed on nothing but the nomination of Mr. Van Buren—and that only when no reasons were to be assigned for it.

When did Virginia ever take council of the Federalists of New England—the ultra friends of the "American System" from New York—or of George Kremer of Pennsylvania? Why are they now the exclusive guardians and conservators of our principles? Are the disciples of Jefferson and Madison to be suddenly identified with such a Republican party—by the magic of such a convention? We look in vain for the republican principles which animate this party, in the public character of him whom they have nominated—or in the history of those who constituted a majority of that Convention.

By what right did this Baltimore Convention assume to regulate that party which brought Andrew Jackson into power, and which alone can ensure his re-election? It was composed of delegates from all the New England States, in one of which, save New Hampshire, has the election or the administration of General Jackson ever received any support.

The entire votes of six States which are known to be favorable to Mr. Clay's election, were unceremoniously transferred to the account of Mr. Van Buren—while Pennsylvania was ceded on the authority of Mr. Kremer, notwithstanding the unexampled unanimity of that State against Mr. Van Buren's election. A portion of the delegates from Virginia to that Convention, represented counties and citizens known to be unfavorable to General Jackson's re-election. Thus, have many states and counties, which will certainly vote for Mr. Clay, contributed to this nomination of Mr. Van Buren.

Such is the Candidate—and such the nomination by which he is recommended to you. It remains to be seen, whether you are prepared to ratify this first act of a systematic design to subject you to the control of a northern regency. Our interests are identified with yours—and we can have but one common safety, or one common danger with yourselves.

We would therefore invoke your aid in endeavoring to avert the evils which will too surely ensue, if we continue to slumber in mistaken security.

The nominee of the Baltimore Convention has not merited our suffrages by his regard for our interests, our

opinions, or our principles—nor is he worthy of them because his name has been associated on this occasion with that of Andrew Jackson. Had any other name been substituted by this Baltimore Convention, your suffrages might have been claimed for precisely the same reasons, and the individual thus nominated might have been declared a republican too, though opposition to all the tenets of your political faith had constituted his only right to the appellation.

We have recommended the adoption of the same ticket of electors which was framed by the legislative caucus. That ticket is unpledged as to the Vice Presidency. It is for you to instruct the electors, whether your votes shall be given to Judge Barbour or to Mr. Van Buren. We only desire to produce a fair contest between them for the Vice Presidency. In doing this, we have endeavored by all the means in our power, to insure the undivided vote of our State for the re-election of Andrew Jackson. The friends of Mr. Van Buren will have the same means of declaring their preference for him, which we have recommended to the friends of Judge Barbour.

It is for you to decide, whether you can give your support to Mr. Van Buren, at this potent crisis of our country's fate—or whether you will repudiate him, as you have long repudiated his doctrines and measures. We would warn you with that sincerity which is prompted by a regard for our common welfare, that if you take him, you must take his measures, as surely as the effect follows its cause.

S. WHITAKER,  
Attorney at Law.

PRACTICES in the County and Superior Courts of Martin, Northampton and Halifax and the Superior Courts of Washington. When not absent on professional duty, he will be at his office in the Town of Halifax on Mondays & Tuesdays; at any other time at his residence in the County.  
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