

THE MINERVA.

PUBLISHED (WEEKLY) BY WILLIAM BOYLAN.

TWO & A HALF DOLLARS PER ANNUM. Payable half Yearly.

TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM. Payable in Advance.

Vol. 13.

RALEIGH, (N. C.) THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1808.

No. 653.

ADDRESS

Of the Monroe Committee.

TO THE PEOPLE OF VIRGINIA.

The undersigned members of the Monroe corresponding committee, take leave to address you:

It is manifest to all, that the situation of this country is at this time in the highest degree critical and embarrassed. The questions therefore which it presents to our view, ought to be considered with calmness, discussed with candor and moderation, and decided on principles justified by truth and patriotism only. Among these questions there is none which has excited or deserved more attention, than that which relates to the next presidential election.

We are well aware that on this subject we differ from many of our fellow citizens. We regret this difference: but as it would be arrogant in us to request from others, a surrender of their opinions, we trust that we shall not be condemned for adhering to our own. We know that our motives are pure, and we conscientiously believe that the course which we pursue, leads more directly to the promotion of the best interest of the United States than that recommended by the caucusses at Washington, and the Bell Tavern in this city. You can at least hear our reasons and then judge for yourselves.

We thought last winter that the recommendation of the caucus at Washington, did not afford an unequivocal proof of the real sentiments of the nation. Time has evinced the accuracy of this opinion. Notwithstanding the number of congressional votes from Massachusetts and the other Eastern states given in the caucus to Mr. Madison, it is now apparent to the world that he is not the object of their choice.

We also thought that as the members of congress were constitutionally excluded from the right of electoral suffrage, they were the last persons, who ought to prescribe or recommend to the people the way in which their suffrages should be bestowed. The consideration of policy which induced the framers of the constitution to establish this exclusion ought to have induced our representatives in Congress to be silent. The necessity of the case, by which they justified their meeting, is an unwarranted and arbitrary supposition. The argument derived from the constitution therefore stands in full force. Members of Congress are excluded because their duty places them within the reach of undue influence and electioneering intrigues.

It seems to be a fair inference therefore that the same reason which would invalidate an electoral vote given by a member of Congress, should diminish the weight of his electoral recommendation.

Notwithstanding the force of this constitutional objection, it cannot be denied that Mr. Madison has derived a great advantage from this congressional recommendation. It has erroneously been regarded as conclusive evidence of the national sentiment, & many have declared their intention to vote for him because they supposed that he would be supported by a majority; although but for that consideration they would have preferred Mr. Monroe as the successor of Mr. Jefferson.

To this mode of reasoning we can never assent. It is the duty of the minority to acquiesce in the will of the majority; but they should wait until that will is constitutionally and formally expressed. Until this is done who can say in this extensive country what the will of the majority is? A congressional caucus, as facts before our eyes, unquestionably prove, affords but a very fallible criterion. In truth until the election is over, it is extremely difficult to pronounce, especially in times like these, so faithful in events, who will be selected by a majority of the nation. For let it be remembered that the President is chosen by a majority of the nation, and not by the majority of a party. Until this event occurs therefore, every man ought to express his own opinion and to act according to the dictates of his own judgment. By this mode of proceeding the opinion of a real majority prevails. In pursuing this mode we are satisfied that we are acting upon a principle, which is not only sound, but in reality the basis of all republican institutions.

This subject is entitled to the most serious consideration of the people. Their acquiescence in the present nomination, would contribute to the establishment of a precedent subversive of the only right except that of voting for their immediate representatives, which the constitution authorizes them to exercise in person. Their own legitimate power will be transferred to others, and what is more to be deplored, transferred to the identical persons, whom a wise policy has excluded from an electoral appointment.

We repeat to you therefore, fellow citizens, what we said some months ago, that we prefer Mr. Monroe as the next President of the United States. We think that he has the highest claims to your confidence and regard. His early devotion of himself, in the army,

to the cause of his country proved by honorable scars, his faithful and long continued services at home & abroad, his solid and vigorous understanding, his integrity, his experience acquired in the most difficult and important trusts, his undeviating firmness and decision of character, entitle him to your gratitude, affection and respect. This proposition seems indeed to be generally admitted, and we believe that the great majority of his opponents, if Mr. Madison were out of the way, would be well pleased to see Mr. Monroe at the head of our national affairs.

But Mr. Monroe has other claims. His long residence abroad, and the very high degree of estimation in which he was held both in France and Great Britain, have opened to him sources of information, with respect to the real views, motives and sentiments of the French & British cabinets, which could not have been equally accessible to his competitor. His knowledge, we think, would afford the most essential benefit to this country in our present very difficult and critical negotiations. His election according to our best judgment, would have a most auspicious influence on the destiny of this nation. We believe that if he were elected, our differences with the belligerent powers of Europe would be accommodated with less difficulty than we are likely to experience, and if war should be the result, our defence may be entrusted to his hands with more propriety than to those of his respectable competitor.

In speaking of the just claims which Mr. Monroe has upon the confidence and affection of the people, we cannot forbear to notice his conduct while governor of Virginia. The period at which he came into office, must be remembered by you all. Never was the spirit of party more violent, nor was any man ever more assailed with greater asperity and outrage. Such however were the integrity, firmness and moderation, which he uniformly displayed, that his administration was honored with universal approbation and the vote of thanks which he received from the Legislature on his retirement, was entered "unanimously" at the particular request of his political opponents. We have merely adverted to this circumstance by way of showing, such to have been the happiness of his administration, that whilst he inspired the republicans with the most implicit confidence in the solidity of his republican principles and the rectitude of his conduct, he at the same time so far reconciled his political opponents, as to obtain their entire approbation of his administration, during the term for which he was elected as chief magistrate of the commonwealth. Such a character we conceive the best interests of the nation, and the present serious crisis of our affairs, peculiarly demand. In truth, in every situation in which he has been placed, whether in the old congress, the Senate of the United States under the present constitution, the executive of Virginia, or in a diplomatic character abroad, he has acted with a degree of fidelity, zeal, and ability, which if not duly appreciated now, will at some future day not very far distant, be universally acknowledged.

There is another consideration entitled to serious attention. The public papers tell you, that the republicans are daily losing ground in the eastern states. Even in Pennsylvania they are not supposed to have a great ascendancy. The people are afraid, that the present state of things will not find a remedy under the administration of Mr. Madison. This apprehension has already produced the most serious and alarming effects throughout the eastern states. How far this sentiment may spread, it is impossible to tell; but if Mr. Monroe should be elected, all parties would unite in the belief, that every measure compatible with the honor and best interests of the nation would be adopted to relieve us from our present embarrassments and distress.

Let it not be supposed however, that we mean to derogate from the real merits of Mr. Madison. We know them well. We acknowledge his abilities, integrity and services. But there are solid objections to his election. We do not deem it necessary to state them all. The enumeration would certainly afford us no pleasure. We shall content ourselves with one only. The others have been occasionally noticed in the papers and are probably known to you all. In doing this, we presume that we shall not give offence to Mr. Madison or to his friends. Under a government like ours, freedom of discussion is our most essential right: A manly and liberal exercise of that right, will be applauded rather than condemned, by every one, who understands the principles of our government, or values that freedom which it was intended to secure.

A principal objection to the election of Mr. Madison, and one which we deem unanswerable, is derived from the present state of our national affairs. Our foreign commerce is totally suspended our ships are rotting, our seamen dispersed and gone, and our produce shut up in our ware-houses, our public reve-

nue cut off, and the deficiency resulting from that cause, must be supplied by recourse to the expensive system of internal taxation. We know very well that these mischiefs have originated in the unjust decrees of France, and the arbitrary regulations of the British council. But we are speaking of the present state of things only, and not of the causes which have led to it. The evils exist; we feel that they are great, and our best interests require that they should be speedily removed. We ask you, whether it is as probable that they will be removed under the administration of Mr. Madison, who stands committed by his writings and acts on every question between us and foreign nations, as under the administration of a man who is perfectly free from that bias, which regard for consistency of character cannot fail to produce on men even of the purest principles, and most enlightened understanding. We may be mistaken, and we shall rejoice if time shall convince our error: but if Mr. Madison is elected, we see at present, no alternative for the United States but WAR, or an EMBARGO of indefinite duration. If on the other hand, Mr. Monroe should be elected, we think for the reasons just stated, that he will at least stand a better chance to extricate us from the critical dilemma in which we are involved; and notwithstanding the groundless censure that has been cast upon him, for a supposed abandonment on the subject of the seizure of British seamen, we confidently appeal to your knowledge of his conduct through a life of thirty years devoted to your service, whether he will ever consent to any arrangement incompatible with the honor or real interests of his country.

This, fellow citizens, we have presented to you a rough sketch of the view which we have taken of the next presidential election. In exhibiting this view, we have only performed a duty which devolved upon us as members of the corresponding committee: and in the performance of this duty, we trust that we have not departed from that candor and moderation, which we took leave to recommend in the commencement of our address.

Under the influence therefore of a belief, which the events of every week seem more completely to justify, that in advocating the election of Mr. Monroe, we are promoting the real welfare and union of this country, we shall proceed with the least possible delay to publish his electoral ticket, with a hope, that his committees, and friends throughout the state will firmly and diligently assist in every arrangement which may contribute to its success.

GEORGE HAY,
JOHN CLARKE,
EDWARD C. STANARD,
WILLIAM ROBERTSON,
JOHN BROKENBOROUGH.

Richmond, Sept. 21th, 1808.

The following is the Monroe Electoral Ticket published for the information of the Citizens of Virginia.

Littleton W. Tazewell, Norfolk borough.
Arthur Smith, Isle of Wight.
Dr. James S. Gilliam, Dinwiddie.
Dr. John Lucas, Mecklenburg.
Gen. Turlin Woodson, Prince-Edward.
Hill Carter, Nelson.
Thomas Watkins, Chesterfield.
Peachy R. Gilmer, Henry.
Chanc'r Creed Taylor, Richmond.
Colonel John Taylor, Caroline.
James Hunter, Essex.
Gen. John Minor, Spotsylvania.
Armistead Mason, Loudoun.
Robert Saunders, York.
Chanc'r Samuel Tyler, Williamsburg.
Gen. John P. Hungerford, Westmoreland.
Daniel Carroll Brent, Stafford.
Dr. Robert Mackie, Frederick.
James Daily, Hampshire.
John Cunningham, Pendleton.
John Cudter, Augusta.
Daniel Sheffer, Wythe.
Lisah Minis, Greenbrier,
John Prunty, Harrison.

BRIMFIELD TOWN-MEETING.

On the 29 ult. the Inhabitants in Brimfield in Massachusetts being duly notified, assembled to take into consideration the expediency of petitioning the President of the U. States to remove the embargo in whole or in part, or to convene Congress, with that view, if his powers were deemed incompetent. On this occasion, General EATON addressed his fellow townsmen in the following Speech, which was requested for publication by vote of the town, and forwarded to us for that purpose.

REMARKS BY GEN. EATON.

In the address of the inhabitants of the town of Boston to the President of the United States, and now offered to this town for concurrence, we see nothing unconstitutional nor disrespectful. Its object, if attainable, is es-

entially important to the commercial and agricultural interests of this country; and not less necessary to our revenue. Indeed the distress and misery occasioned among all classes of our fellow citizens by the embargo, this negative measure of coercion, are of themselves sufficient to justify this appeal for relief.

It is hardly necessary, at this moment, minutely to investigate the causes or the motives which induced the Embargo. Admit, what cannot be denied, that the interdictions upon our commerce by the belligerents, if they could have been enforced, would have nearly excluded us from the ocean—that by both parties we have been outraged—plundered and insulted by both—and against both had sufficient cause of war: it does not follow, from any thing that appears to us, that the position we have taken to meet those aggressions has produced any relaxation of the restraints imposed on us as a neutral nation; nor any amelioration of our sufferings.

A season, as it relates to commerce, has elapsed since the imposition of the Embargo; the experiment has neither procured us national honour—national security—nor domestic tranquility; on the contrary, in a national and domestic point of view, we suffer from this measure every disaster incident to war, except actual invasion, without any of the possible advantages of war. For though we see not on our plains, garments rolled in blood, we see our seaboard deserted by a hardy race of our natural defenders, whom starvation has compelled to seek foreign service; to die ingloriously and unlamented. Though we see not the devastation of plundering armies, we feel our wealth diminishing to a death bed consumption for want of action—commerce annihilated—industry discouraged—the heart of enterprise broken—and a species of lazaretto beginning to crowd our porches with no other claims on our charity than want of employment! And though we do not, indeed weep the misfortunes of our flag for defeated squadrons and armies, we blush its fallen glory as the effects of a pusillanimous speculation on events much more dishonourable than manly defeat.

It is believed no real American will deny that both France and England have given us sufficient provocation to war. Not to mention the captures, detentions, condemnations, burnings and sinking of our ships and merchandise by decrees of Napoleon the First; not to mention his insolence at our court; his fraudulent sale to honest purchasers, of the unbounded Louisiana, and his subsequent interference in behalf of the claims of Spain to the very territory he sold us, should have been enough to have raised the resentment of this whole nation. That transaction always reminds one of an upstart who once offered our Saviour all the kingdoms of the earth on condition of his homage.—The Devil was rebuked—Bonaparte succeeded better with a subject. Both had an equal right to the kingdom they proposed to barter for homage.

But all the violations of our rights, on the part of the Corsican, are silently and tamely endured, and the edge of resentment, under his patronage, is solely pointed to England.—It can no longer be concealed, that the Embargo was intended for the British nation, and for her alone; else why do her ships of war continue to be excluded from our ports, and those of her enemy admitted to indulgences which are denied to our own citizens? It is believed that the Embargo was contemplated as a war measure; and meant, by some leading characters of our administration, to produce that effect. Indeed I do not hesitate to assert that war with England has been a matter of calculation with the chief magistrate of the United States. Else why have all his messengers left their dispatches in France; and to amuse our confidence, gone in blank to England? Else why do we see so many posts of trust and honour filled with avowed enemies to England and devoted friends of an usurper?

But such an event under existing circumstances, would prove ruinous to our country. Allied, as England now is, with Spain and Portugal, the whole boundary line of these United States, both by sea and by land, comprising a circumference of more than four thousand miles, would become an enemy frontier. Spain has never yet ceded Louisiana to us. The discontented subjects of that territory; the jealous Mexicans; the choice spirits on the waters of the Mississippi; the restless, untamed sons of the Forest; and the British provinces of Canada, would all cooperate against us on that border: what barrier can we oppose to them in defence of that great section of the Union?

Come to our Atlantic seaboard. What have we to defend our commercial towns and cities, the seats of our wealth, and resources of our revenue, against the combined navies of Great-Britain and her allies? Will our gun boats and mud batteries do it? The notion is ridiculous. Can Bonaparte do it? Every body knows he cannot float a Frenchman across the Atlantic, except in disguise of a mandarin. A great statesman and phi-