

# THE WHIG CLARION.

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FROM THE RALEIGH REGISTER.

In a late number of the Portsmouth Chronicle and Old Dominion, appeared an article which has been copied in the Raleigh Standard, making an illiberal and unwarranted attack upon our Representative in Congress, the Hon. Kenneth Rayner. The writer signs himself "Currituck," and professes to be a citizen of that county. The writer may live in Currituck, but I incline to the opinion, for reasons known to myself, that he resides much higher up in the district, and that he professes to live in that county, merely for the purpose of disguise.

The article in question betrays as much malevolence of feeling, as it does clumsiness of style, and stupidity of intellect. It is malignant in tone, ungrammatical in composition, and reckless of truth in its statements of facts. The writer of this has been intimately acquainted with Mr. Rayner from the commencement of his political career; is himself personally conversant with many of the incidents alluded to, and so grossly misrepresented by "Currituck." As to the abusive epithets contained in the article alluded to, I have nothing to say. They are matters of taste, and in regard to them I am not disposed to dispute with the writer. As to the illiberal charges of 'ambitious demagogue,' 'traitor to the cause,' 'completely turned your coat' &c. &c., they deserve nothing but contempt, and I doubt not they will receive no other notice from Mr. Rayner.—The writer should recollect that abuse is not argument, and I presume Mr. R. has received too much of the former from his disappointed enemies, to suffer his composure to be disturbed by it now.

I shall only notice "Currituck's" statement of facts, perverted and misrepresented as they are. He says that he "had been told that you (Mr. Rayner) commenced your career in Hertford as a devoted friend of Mr. Calhoun, breathing fire and vengeance against the advocates of the Tariff." "Had been told!" Then it seems that the writer of his own knowledge knows nothing about it; and does the writer think it fair to prefer grave charges against a public man, founded upon a piece of mere political gossip, at a time when political and partizan malignity will do no public man justice? But admit Mr. Rayner was a devoted friend of Mr. Calhoun—yet, was he bound to adhere to Mr. Calhoun through all his political tergiversation? Mr. Calhoun was at that time the advocate of a United States Bank; for two years afterwards, in 1834, he advocated in the Senate, the recharter of the Bank for 12 years. He was at that time, a violent opponent of Gen. Jackson's, as he was at a later period, of Mr. Van Buren's administration—denouncing their profligacy and extravagance, and charging them and their partizans with being "rogues and royalists, held together only by the cohesive principles of the public plunder." And after he had thus taught his advocates to look on these men as so corrupt and unprincipled, were they bound to change their opinions with him, and go over, at the word of command, to the support of Mr. Van Buren, whom Mr. Calhoun had charged but a short time before, with possessing the attributes of no more noble animal than the "mink and the weazle"? Mr. Rayner is now exactly where Mr. Calhoun left him in 1837—advocating a National Bank, and opposing corruption and extravagance in the administration of the government. "Breathing fire and vengeance against the advocates of the Tariff!" and again the writer speaks of Mr. R.'s patriotic avowals to shoulder his musket, and march to the defence of the gallant Palmetto." This is a very unfair statement of the case.—"Tis true, Mr. Rayner was a strict States Rights constructionist; and whilst protesting against the gratification of Gen. Jackson's malignant passions, by sustaining him in his warfare against South Carolina, or rather Mr. Calhoun, yet he uniformly took the ground, in 1832, when canvassing for the Legislature in Hertford county, that although South Carolina might have acted hastily and imprudently, yet as opposition to the high Tariff of 1828 was a common cause throughout the South, and as the gratification of Gen. Jackson's passion would establish a precedent that would for all future time, subject the States to Federal control—therefore it became every Southern State and every Southern man, to prevent the subjugation of South Carolina by Federal bayonets.—Does Currituck mean to insinuate that Mr. Rayner ever was opposed to a Tariff in any and every shape? No such thing. This would involve him in the advocacy of raising revenue for the support of the government by direct taxation, against which I have always understood him to protest. But what blame can Currituck attach to Mr. Rayner in regard to the Tariff? He voted against the Tariff of the last Session; and whether he voted against it because he did not approve of its range of duties, or because he would not gratify John Tyler in his attempt to dictate to Congress exactly what kind of a Tariff they should pass—still Mr. R.'s vote stands recorded against it. How then can Currituck complain of him in regard to the Tariff? What evidence has he, that Mr. R. has "turned his coat" on this question?

After speaking of Mr. Rayner's violent opposition to the Tariff, which I suppose must be referred to 1832—Currituck goes on to say "and a little later, your last Session in Raleigh, I have

been informed the Democrats made a formal proposal to run you (Mr. Rayner) for Speaker against the Federal Candidate Mr. Graham, and you entertained the proposal long enough to sound your professed party friends, the Whigs, until you found that you could carry none off with you, and then you declined the canvass." Here the writer again speaks of what he "has been informed." I would again ask Currituck is it fair, is it generous, to prefer a grave accusation like this, publicly, through the columns of a newspaper, upon mere report, which so seldom does a public man justice? The writer of this happens to know something of the facts connected with the incident here referred to—not from what he "has been informed" of, but of his own personal knowledge. I have conversed with Mr. Rayner on the subject, since the appearance of the article in the "Chronicle and Old Dominion," and his recollection of the facts correspond with my own, as far as I learnt them from Mr. Rayner at the time. Mr. Rayner's last Session at Raleigh, was the winter of 1838-39. I was then in Raleigh, and the relations between Mr. R. and myself were of an intimate and confidential character. The facts of the case are these. It is true that a proposition was made by two of the prominent members of the Democratic party to Mr. Rayner, to run him for Speaker of the Commons, in opposition to Mr. Graham. It can only be accounted for in this way. It was known that Mr. Rayner had been a strict States-Rights man and a friend of Mr. Calhoun, and I suppose those who made the proposition to Mr. R. thought it probable, that as so many who professed to be State-Rights men had gone over to the opposite party with Mr. Calhoun, it was therefore reasonable to suppose that Mr. R. was also lukewarm and indifferent in the Whig cause. When the proposition was made to run him for Speaker by the Democrats, Mr. Rayner replied that he would be doing injustice to the Democrats themselves, to allow them to vote for him under a misapprehension as to his political views. That he was opposed to them in principle, that he had taken open ground against the Sub-Treasury, their favorite measure, in the canvass in Hertford. But, said one of the gentlemen, "you are not in favor of a United States Bank?" Mr. Rayner stated that he had also taken ground in favor of a Bank. After some further conversation, the same gentleman remarked to Mr. R. that at all events, they (the Democrats) would vote for him, if he would agree to it, and that he (the gentleman making the proposition,) would nominate him, (Mr. R.) if he would consent. Mr. Rayner refused to yield that consent. It is not true that Mr. Rayner "entertained the proposal long enough to sound his professed party friends." It was well known who were Mr. Rayner's most intimate friends. Of course he would have "sounded" them on this subject first. It is a fact, that those friends are now ready to certify, as some of them have informed me, that immediately after the proposition was made to him, Mr. R. communicated the fact to them; and so far from his consulting them, or "sounding" them on the propriety of his acceding to the proposal of being run by the Democrats, he (Mr. Rayner) mentioned the matter to his friends, as a good joke, and as an evidence of the difficulty in which the Democrats were placed. Mr. Gilliam, of Granville, Dr. Speed, of Gates, Dr. Hill, of Brunswick, Mr. Waddell, of Chatham, and Mr. Cherry, of Bertie, will if called on, certify that Mr. Rayner, in mentioning the matter to them, so far from having the matter under advisement, so far from consulting them as to what he should do, spoke of it as a matter, about which he had never entertained a doubt. And on the very evening of the day, on which this proposition was made to Mr. R. he (Mr. R.) went to the Whig meeting, proposed Mr. Graham as the candidate of the Whigs for Speaker, and on next day nominated Mr. Graham in the House of Commons. Because Mr. Rayner treated politely those who made the proposition to him, because he did not rudely and insultingly reject the proposition, because he may have evaded the proposal by suggesting difficulties—is he to be charged with "entertaining the proposal long enough to sound his professed party friends, the Whigs," as to the chance of success? I defy, as I feel confident, Mr. Rayner can defy, any one member of Mr. R.'s then "professed party friends, the Whigs," in the Legislature of 1837-39 to say that Mr. R. ever "sounded," or advised with him as to the propriety of his agreeing to be run for Speaker by the Democrats. The mere tender of voting for Mr. R. for such a station was a compliment; and of course, he treated politely and even kindly, those making it, and rather evaded the proposition by suggesting difficulties, instead of scornfully and indignantly rejecting it in their presence. He may have said when leaving the room, by way of getting clear of the subject, "well I shall see you again," but that he ever took any measure towards ascertaining the probability of success is not true. He immediately mentioned it to his intimate friends; and spoke of it as a matter that was not to be thought of. And must he now be censured for that very "cordiality of bearing," which "Currituck" speaks of, as the secret of his political success? The fact is, another Whig Member of the House of Commons was "sounded" on the same subject, by some of the

Democrats, and he also refused—the object being, as stated to Mr. Rayner, to defeat the regularly nominated Whig candidate, who it was sure, would be Mr. Graham.

Speaking of this proposition from the Democrats to run Mr. Rayner for Speaker in Nov. 1838—"Currituck" goes on to say, "Major Sawyer had voted for the Sub-Treasury, as doubtless you yourself (Mr. Rayner) would have done; for even then your first love for Mr. Calhoun had lost none of its fervor. This was enough for you (Mr. Rayner). You took the ground in opposition to him, and came out for a United States Bank, and other Federal measures. Had he voted against the Sub-Treasury, you would have voted for it, for this was certainly your natural position." Here is a tissue of misrepresentation, from beginning to end; and "Currituck" had better acquaint himself with facts and dates, before he again attempts to cast censure upon, or deal in uncharitable insinuations towards a public man. Mr. Rayner advocated a United States Bank in his public speeches, when canvassing for the Legislature in Hertford, as far back as 1834, as will be recollected by both parties in that County. He again advocated it publicly in the canvass of 1836, and again in 1838. This is a matter of public notoriety in Hertford. Here then, Mr. R. was the open advocate of a National Bank three years before Mr. Sawyer was a candidate for Congress. When Mr. S. became a candidate in 1837, Mr. R. advised him (Mr. S.) to come out in favor of such an institution, which he (Mr. Sawyer) did. Mr. Rayner was in Washington a few days after Mr. Van Buren had sent in his message to Congress at the extra session in September 1837; and advised Mr. Sawyer not to commit himself in favor of the Sub-Treasury which Mr. Van Buren had just recommended. Mr. Calhoun had not then taken ground in favor of the scheme, although it was intimated that he was favorably inclined to it. Upon the solicitation of some of his friends, that he should call on Mr. Calhoun and hear him talk on the subject, Mr. Rayner positively refused, and came home openly denouncing the Sub-Treasury. From that day to this, since the very first day that this system was proposed, Mr. R. has been its uniform and consistent opponent. And it is well known to all, who have been acquainted with Mr. Rayner's political course, that he expressed a loss of confidence in, and abandoned the support of Mr. Calhoun, as soon as he committed himself in favor of the Sub-Treasury. "Currituck" says Mr. Rayner "would doubtless have voted for the Sub-Treasury as Major Sawyer did, for even then, his (Mr. R.'s) first love for Mr. Calhoun had lost none of its fervor." Here "Currituck" has unadvisedly exposed himself.—Here is a plain assertion that it was the "fervor" of "first love for Mr. Calhoun" which has induced so many of Mr. C.'s friends to follow him in support of the Sub-Treasury. "Currituck" does not seem to imagine that principle had, or could have, any influence with Mr. Calhoun's friends—and that in the absence of some interested motive, Mr. R. "would doubtless have voted" for the Sub-Treasury. And why? Because his "first love for Mr. Calhoun had lost none of its fervor." Pretty reason this for supporting a measure truly! This was the very reason that caused Mr. Rayner to doubt whether his "first love for Mr. Calhoun had not been misapplied. And from doubt, he was led to conviction, by Mr. C.'s subsequent course.

"Currituck" says, "had he (Mr. Sawyer) voted against the Sub-Treasury, you (Mr. Rayner) would have voted for it, for this certainly was your natural position." Here the writer of the article in question has again ignorantly exposed himself. He does not seem to know that Mr. Sawyer voted against the Sub-Treasury at the extra session in 1837. Why did not Mr. Rayner then come out for it, if his object was to make up an issue with Mr. Sawyer? So far from it, he sustained Mr. S. and had he (Mr. S.) continued to oppose the Sub-Treasury, and sustain a U. States Bank, opposition to him from any quarter would have been unavailing, personally popular as he was in the district. "Your (Mr. Rayner's) natural position." I see but one meaning implied in this—that having once been a friend of Mr. Calhoun, it was "natural" that Mr. R. should follow him wherever he might go.

"Currituck" says Mr. Rayner "came out in favor of a United States Bank, and other Federal measures." What "other Federal measures?"—I defy the writer to point to a single great political question on which Mr. R. has changed his ground. If consistency be so great a virtue in the estimation of "Currituck," then is Mr. R. entitled to his highest commendation. Mr. Rayner came out for a United States Bank, when he first entered public life, and has sustained it ever since. He advocated the distribution of the land fund in a speech in the State Legislature, in 1836-'37, and still advocates that measure. He has, ever since the removal of the deposits in 1832, been struggling against the enlargement of Executive power, and still opposes it, even to the extent of limiting the exercise of the veto. He opposed the high and unequal Tariff of 1828—and although the Tariff of 1842 was not so objectionable, yet his vote is recorded against that. For what then is he denounced? Merely because he would not take every political somerset practiced by Mr. Calhoun.

"Currituck" asks "why was the farce of a Convention got up," to nominate Mr. Rayner.—Mr. R. has answered him sufficiently in his letter of acceptance. Mr. R. then says that having no disposition to continue longer in public life—in yielding to the solicitation of friends, he suggested the propriety of a convention to let his constituents pass upon his conduct, and to give the new Counties of the District an opportunity of being heard.

"Currituck" asks why were not "Currituck and Camden represented" in the Convention? Simply because they did not see fit to send Delegates. Four-fifths of the Counties in the District, 8 out of 10, were represented—and that by primary meetings held with due notice to all, in open day; and not by some five or six party leaders, secretly convened around a grog-shop counter, or in the back room of a grocery, as was the case with some of the meetings, that appointed delegates to the Locofoco convention that nominated Dr. Moore in opposition to Mr. Rayner.—Although Mr. Rayner is opposed with unusual bitterness and malignity, yet all he asks is

JUSTICE.

## ASTOUNDING CORRUPTION.

Major CHARLES GERRARD, a gallant Officer of the Revolution, died, leaving a Widow; that widow afterwards intermarried with Mr. HARRY HUNTER, of Edgewood, when he also died, leaving the same lady surviving him as his widow. Mrs. Hunter, believing herself entitled to a Pension, as the widow of her first husband, Major Gerrard, procured the services of a gentleman named Mosely to prepare her papers and proofs, and present them to the Pension Agent. This was done, the claim was presented and rejected, because the applicant, Mrs. Hunter, was, at the time of her application, the widow of Hunter, the second husband, and not the widow of the Officer Gerrard. To suit this case, a law of Congress became necessary. The claim was placed in the hands of Gen. Saunders, a member of the last Congress, to get it allowed; a Bill was introduced, covering this identical case, and declaring that the second marriage of the widow of an officer or soldier should not deprive her of her Pension, if she was a widow at the time of her application. (See Act of 27th Congress, 2d Session, Chap. 191, page 123, approved 23d August, entitled "an Act to amend the Acts of July 1836, and 1838, allowing Pensions to certain widows.") Provision now being made for Mrs. Hunter, her claim is presented and allowed; he gets possession of her Certificate, comes home, and demands a fee for his services of One Hundred Dollars! Payment of the fee is refused, and Gen. Saunders refuses to deliver up the Certificate, unless his exaction is complied with. The Son of Mrs. Hunter applies to Counsel, and under his advice, takes a witness and makes a formal demand of the Pension Certificate, giving at the same time a distinct intimation, that he designs it as the foundation of a law suit. To avoid public exposure, the Certificate is then surrendered.

Now for a few questions to Gen. Saunders. You must answer them, Sir—an indignant constituency demands it.

- 1st. Was the claim of Mrs. Hunter rejected in the first instance?
- 2d. Was it thereafter placed in your hands to have it allowed?
- 3d. Was there a law passed at the last Congress, of which you were a member, to cover her case?
- 4th. Did you obtain her Pension under that law?
- 5th. Did you demand pay for your services, and if so, state what those services were, besides voting for the law passed for her relief?
- 6th. Did you refuse to deliver Mrs. Hunter or her Agent, the Certificate of Pension, unless you were paid \$100, or some other fee, and what?
- 7th. Did you thereafter give it up to young Hunter, upon being threatened with a law suit.
- 8th. The Voters of this District have a right to know your opinions. Do you think that a law maker should demand or receive pay from Petitioners for making laws for their exclusive benefit; or that a member of Congress should demand from Claimants on the Government, compensation for passing laws for their relief; or that a Judge should decide a cause in which he is interested, in his own favor; or demand or receive a fee from the successful party, in a suit tried before him? Sir, you must clear up this matter, if you wish to represent this District of honorable Freemen. Your bare denial of it won't do. Here is no question for parties to differ about. Explain and come clean out of this matter, or you are, civilly and politically, a dead man.

A VOTER.