EASTON GAZETTE.

WHERE THE PRESS IS FREE—"Literature, well or ill-conducted, is the Great Engine by which all Popular States must ultimately be supported or overthrown."
Religion purifies the Heart and teaches us our Duty—Morality refines the Manners—Agriculture makes us rich—and Politics provides for the enjoyment of all.

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MR. CLAY'S SPEECH, At the dinner at Noble's Inn, near Lexington, July 12.

4. *Our distinguished Guest, Henry Clay.*—The furnace of persecution may be heated seven times hotter, and seventy times more, he will come out unscathed by the fire of maliguity, brighter to all and dearer to his friends; while his enemies shall sink with the dross of their own vile materials.

Mr. Clay, after the above toast had been read, addressed the company as follows:

Mr. President, friends and fellow-citizens,

I beg permission to offer my hearty thanks, and to make my respectful acknowledgments, for the affectionate reception which has been given me during my present visit to my old Congressional district, and for this hospitable and honourable testimony of your esteem and confidence. And I thank you especially for the friendly sentiments and feelings expressed in the toast which you have just done me the honor to drink, I always had the happiness of knowing that I enjoyed, in a high degree, the attachment of that portion of my fellow-citizens whom I formerly represented; but I should never have been sensible of the strength and ardour of their affection, except for the extraordinary character of the times. For near two years and a half I have been assailed with a rancor and bitterness which have few examples. I have found myself the particular object of concerted and concentrated abuse; and others, thrusting themselves between you and me, have dared to arraign me for treachery to your interests. But my former constituents, unaffected by the calumnies which have been so perseveringly circulated to my prejudice, have stood by me with a generous constancy and a noble magnanimity. The measure of their regard and confidence has risen with, and even surpassed, that of the malevolence, great as it is of my personal and political foes. I thank you, gentlemen who are a large portion of my late constituents. I thank you, and every one of them, with all my heart for the manly support which I have uniformly received. It has cheered and consoled me, amidst all my severe trials; and may I not add that it is honourable to the generous hearts and enlightened heads who have resolved to protect the character of an old friend and a faithful servant?

The numerous manifestations of your confidence and attachment will be among the latest and most treasured recollections of my life. They impose on me obligations which can never be weakened or cancelled. One of these obligations is that I should embrace every fair opportunity to vindicate that character which you have so generously sustained, and to evince to you and to the world, that you have not yielded to the impulses of a blind and enthusiastic sentiment. I feel that I am, on all fit occasions especially bound to vindicate myself to my former constituents. It was as *their* representative; it was in the fulfilment of a high trust which *they* confided to me, that I have been accused of violating the most sacred of duties, of treating their wishes with contempt, and their interests with treachery. Nor is this obligation in my conception of its import, at all weakened by the dissolution of the relations which heretofore existed between us. I would instantly resign the place I hold in the councils of the nation, and directly appeal to the suffrages of my late constituents, as a candidate for re-election, if I did not know that my foes are of that class whom one rising from the dead cannot convince, whom nothing can silence, and who wage a war of extermination —On the issue of such an appeal, they would redouble their abuse of me and you; for their hatred is common to us both.

They have compelled me so often to be the theme of my addresses to the people, that I should have willingly abstained on this festive occasion, from any allusion to this subject, but for a new and imposing form which the calumny against me has recently assumed. I am again put on my defence, not of any new charge nor by any new adversary; but of the old charges, clad in a new dress, and exhibited by an open and undisguised enemy. The fictitious names have been stricken from the foot of the indictment, and that of a known and substantial prosecutor has been voluntarily offered. Undaunted by the formidable name of that prosecutor, I will avail myself, with your indulgence, of this fit opportunity of free and unreserved intercourse "with you, as a large number of my late constituents, to make some observations on the past and present state of the question. When evidence shall be produced, as I have now a clear right to demand in support of the accusation, it will be the proper time for me to take such notice of it as its nature may require.

In February, 1825, it was my duty, as the Representative of this District, to vote for some one of the three candidates for the Presidency, who were returned to the House of Representatives. It has been established, and can be further proved, that, before I left this state the preceding fall I communicated to several gentlemen of the highest respectability, my fixed determination not to vote for General Jackson. The friends of Mr. Crawford asserted to the last, that the condition of his health was such as to enable him to administer the duties of his office. I thought otherwise, after I reached Washington City, and visited him to satisfy myself; and thought that physical impediment, if there were no other objections, ought to prevent his election. Although the Delegations from four states voted for him, and his pretensions were zealously pressed to the very last moment, it has been of late asserted, and I believe by some of the very persons who then warmly espoused his cause, that his incompetency was so palpable as clearly to limit the choice to two of the three returned candidates. In my view of my duty, there was no alternative but that which I embraced That I had some objections to Mr. Adams, I am ready freely to admit; but these did not weigh a feather in comparison with the greater and insurmountable objections, long and deliberately entertained against his competitor. I take this occasion, with great satisfaction to state that my objections to Mr Adams arose chiefly from apprehensions which have not been realized. I have found him at the head of the Government, able, enlightened, patient of investigation, and ever ready to receive with respect, and when approved by his judgment, to act upon the counsels of his official advisers. I add, with unmixt pleasure, that, from the commencement of the Government, with the exception of Mr. Jeffersons' Administration, no Chief Magistrate has found the members of his Cabinet so united on all public measures, and so cordial and friendly in all their intercourse, private and official, as those of the present President.

Had I voted for General Jackson, in opposition to the well known opinions which I entertained of him, one-tenth part of the ingenuity and zeal which have been employed to excite prejudices against me would have held me up to universal contempt: and what would have been worse, I should have *felt* that I really deserved it.

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. This letter being avowed by Mr. George Kremer, I instantly demanded from the House of Representatives an investigation. A Committee was accordingly, on the 5th day of February, 1825, appointed in the rare mode of balloting by the House, instead of by the selection of the Speaker. It was composed of some of the leading members of the body, not one of whom was my political friend in the preceding Presidential canvass. Although Mr. Kremer in addressing the House, had declared his willingness to bring forward his proofs, and his readiness to abide the issues of the inquiry, his fears of other counsels than his own, prevailed upon him to take refuge in a miserable subterfuge. Of all possible periods, that was the most fitting to substantiate the charge, if it was true. Every circumstance was then fresh; the witnesses all living & present; the election not yet complete; and therefore the imputed corrupt bargain not fulfilled. All these powerful considerations had no weight with the conspirators and their accessaries, and they meanly shrunk from even an attempt to prove their charge, for the best of all possible reasons—because, being false and fabricated, they could adduce no proof which was not false and fabricated.

During two years and a half which have now intervened, a portion of the press devoted to the cause of General Jackson, has been teeming with the vilest calumnies against me, and the charge, under every camelion form has been a thousand times repeated. Up to this time I have in vain invited investigation, and demanded evidence. None, not a particle has been adduced.

The extraordinary ground has been taken, that the accusers were not bound to establish by proof the guilt of their designated victim. In a civilized, christian and free community, the monstrous principle has been assumed, that accusation and conviction are synonymous; and that the persons who deliberately bring forward an atrocious charge are exempted from all obligations to substantiate it! And the pretext is, that the crime, being of a political nature, is shrouded in darkness, and incapable of being substantiated. But is there any real difference, in this respect, between political and other offences? Do not all perpetrators of crime endeavor to conceal their guilt and to elude detection. If the accuser of a political offence is absolved from the duty of supporting his accusation, every other accuser of offence stands equally absolved Such a principle, practically carried into society, would subvert all harmony, peace & tranquility. None—no age, nor sex, nor profession, nor calling, would be safe against its hateful and overwhelming influence.—It would amount to an universal license to universal calumny.

No one has ever contended, that the proof should be exclusively that of eye witnesses, testifying from their senses positively and directly to the fact. Political, like all other offences, may be established by circumstantial as well as positive evidence. But I do contend that *some* evidence, be it what it may, ought to be exhibited. If there be none, how do the accusers *know* that an offence has been perpetrated? If they do know it, let us have the *facts* on which their conviction is based. I will not even assert that, in public affairs, a citizen has not a right, freely to express his *opinions* of public men and to speculate upon the motives of their conduct. But if he chooses to promulgate opinions, let them be given as *opinions*. The public will correctly judge of their value and their grounds. No one has a right to put forth the positive assertion, that a political offence has been committed, unless he stands prepared to sustain, by satisfactory proof of some kind, its actual existence.

If he who exhibits a charge of a political crime is, from its very nature, disabled to establish it, how much more difficult is the condition of the accused? How can he exhibit negative proof of his innocence; if no affirmative proof of his guilt is, or can be adduced.

It must have been a conviction that the justice of the public required a definite charge, by a responsible accuser, that has, at last, extorted from General Jackson his letter of the 6th of June, lately published. I approach that letter with great reluctance; not on my own account, for on that, I do most heartily and sincerely rejoice that it has made its appearance. But it is a reluctance, excited by the feelings of respect which I would anxiously have cultivated towards its author. He has, however, by that letter, created such relations between us, that, in any language which I may employ, in examining its contents, I feel myself bound by no other obligations than those which belong to truth to public decorum, and to myself.

The first consideration which must, on the perusal of the letter, force itself upon every reflecting mind, is that which arises out of the delicate posture in which Gen. Jackson stands before the American public. He is a candidate for the Presidency, avowed and proclaimed. He has no competitor at present, and there is no probability of his having any but one.—The charges which he has allowed himself to be the organ of communicating to the very public who is to decide the question of the Presidency, though directly aimed at me, necessarily implicates his only competitor. Mr. Adams and myself are both guilty, or we are both innocent of the imputed arrangement between us. *His* innocence is absolutely irreconcilable with *my* guilt. If General Jackson, therefore, can establish my guilt, and, by inference, or by insinuation, that of his sole rival, he will have removed a great obstacle to the consummation of the object of his ambition. And if he can at the same time, make out his own purity of conduct, and impress the American people with the belief that his purity and integrity alone prevented his success before the House of Representatives, his claims will become absolutely irresistible. Were there ever more powerful motives to propagate,—was there ever greater interest, at all hazards, to prove the truth of charges?

I state the case, I hope, fairly; I mean to state it fairly and fearlessly. If the position be one which exposes General Jackson to unfavorable suspicions, it must be borne in mind that he has voluntarily taken it, and he must abide the consequences. I am acting on the defensive, and it is he who assails me, and who has called forth, by the eternal laws of self-protection, the right to use all legitimate means of self-defence.

General Jackson has shown, in his letter, that he is not exempt from the influence of that bias towards one's own interests, which is unfortunately the too common lot of human nature. It is his interest to make out that he is a person of spotless innocence, and of unsullied integrity; and to establish, by direct charge, or by necessary inference, the want of those qualities, in his rival. Accordingly, we find throughout the letter, a labored attempt to set forth his own immaculate purity in striking contrast with the corruption which is attributed to others. We would imagine from his letter, that he very seldom touches a newspaper. The Telegraph is mailed regularly for him at Washington, but it arrives at the Hermitage very irregularly. He would have the public to infer, that the postmaster at Nashville, whose appointment happened not to be upon his recommendation, obstructed his reception of it. In consequence of his not receiving the Telegraph, he had not on the 6th of June, 1827, seen Carter Beverley's famous Fayetteville letter, dated the 8th of the preceding March, published in the numerous Gazettes, and published, I have very little doubt, although I have not the means of ascertaining the fact, in the Gazettes of Nashville. I will not say, contrary to General Jackson's assertion, that he had never read that letter, when he wrote that of the 6th of June, but I must think that it is very strange, that he should not have seen it; and that I doubt whether there is another man of any political eminence in the United States who has not read it. There is a remarkable coincidence between General Jackson and certain Editors who espouse his interest in relation to Mr. Beverley's letter. They very early took the ground, in respect to it, that I ought, under my *own signature*, to come out and deny the statements And General Jackson now says, in his letter of the 6th of June, that he "always intended, should Mr. Clay come out over his own name, and deny having any knowledge of the communication made by his friends to my friends and to me, that I would give him the name of the gentleman through whom that communication came."

The distinguished member of Congress, who bore the alleged overture, according to General Jackson, presented himself with diplomatic circumspection lest he should wound the very great sensibility of the General. He avers that the communication was intended with the most friendly motives, 'that he came as a friend,' and that he hoped, however it might be received, there would be no alteration in the friendly feelings between them. The General graciously condescends to receive the communication, and, in consideration of the high standing of the distinguished member; and of his having always been a professed friend, he is promised impunity, & assured that there shall be no change of amicable ties. After all these necessary preliminaries are arranged between the high negotiating powers, the envoy proceeds:—"He had been informed by the friends of "Mr. Clay, that the friends of Mr. Adams "had made overtures to them, saying if "Mr. Clay and his friends would unite in "aid of the election of Mr. Adams, Mr. "Clay should be Secretary of State; that "the friends of Mr. Adams were urging as "a reason to induce the friends of Mr. "Clay to accede to their proposition, that "if I was elected President, Mr. Adams "would be continued Secretary of State, "(inuendo, there would be no room for "Kentucky.") [Is this Gen. Jackson's inuendo, or that of the distinguished member of Congress?] "That the friends of "Mr. Clay stated the West does not want "to separate from the West, and if I "would say or permit any of my confidential friends to say that, in case I was elected President, Mr. Adams should not "be continued Secretary of State, by a "complete union of Mr. Clay and his "friends, they would put an end to the Presidential contest in one hour; and he was "of opinion it was right to fight such intriguers with their own weapons."—To which the General states himself to have replied in substance, "that in politics, as "in every thing else, my guide was princi"ple, and contrary to the expressed and "unbiased will of the people or their constituted agents, I never would step into "the Presidential chair; and requested him "to say to Mr. Clay and his friends, (for I "did *suppose* he had come from Mr. Clay "*although he used the terms of Mr. Clay's "friends,*) that before I would reach the "Presidential chair by such means of bar"gain and corruption, I would see the earth "open and swallow both Mr. Clay and his "friends and myself with them." Now all these professions are very fine, and display admirable purity. But its sublimity would be somewhat more impressive, if some person other than Gen. Jackson had proclaimed it. He would go into the Presidential chair, but never, no! never contrary to 'the expressed and unbiassed will of the people, or their constituted agents:' two modes of arriving at it the more reasonable, as there happens to be no other constitutional way. He would see 'the earth open and swallow both Mr. Clay and his friends and myself,' before he would reach the Presidential chair by 'such means of bargain and corruption.' I hope General Jackson did not intend that the whole human race should be also swallowed up on the contingency he has stated, nor that they were to guaranty that he has an absolute repugnance to the employment of any exceptionable means to secure his elevation to the Presidency. If he had rendered the distinguished member of Congress a little more distinguished, by instantly ordering him from his presence, and by forthwith denouncing him and the infamous proposition which he bore to the American public, we should be a little better prepared to admit the claims to untarnished integrity, which the General so modestly puts forward.

But, according to his own account, a corrupt and scandalous proposal is made to him; the person who conveyed it advises him to accept it, and yet that person still retains the friendship of Gen. Jackson, who is so tender of his character that his name is carefully concealed and reserved to be hereafter brought forward as a witness! A man, who, if he be a member of the House of Representatives, is doubly infamous—infamous for the advice which he gave, and infamous for his willingness to connive at the corruption of the body of which he was a sworn member—is the credible witness by whom Gen. Jackson stands ready to establish the corruption of men whose characters were never questioned.

Of all the properties which belong to honorable men, not one is so highly prized as that of character. Gen. Jackson cannot be insensible to its value, for he appears to be most anxious to set forth the loftiness and purity of his own. How has he treated mine? During the dispensation of the hospitalities of the Hermitage in the midst of a mixed company, composed of individuals from various states, he permits himself to make certain statements respecting my friends and me which, if true, would forever dishonor and degrade us.—The words are hardly passed from his mouth before they are committed to paper, by one of his guests, and transmitted in the form of a letter to another state, where they are published in a newspaper, and thence circulated throughout the Union. And now he pretends that these statements were made "without any calculation that they were to be thrown into the public journals." Does he reprove the indiscretion of the guest who had violated the sanctity of a conversation at the hospitable board? Far from it. The public is incredulous. It cannot believe that Gen. Jackson would be so wanting in delicacy and decorum. The guest appeals to him for the confirmation of the published statements; and the General promptly addresses a letter to him, in which "he most unequivocally confirms (says Mr. C. Beverley) "all I have said regarding the overture "made to him pending the last Presiden"tial election before Congress, and he as"serts a great deal more than he ever told "me." I should be glad to know if all the versions of the tale have now made their appearance, and whether General Jackson will allege that he did not 'calculate' upon the publication of his letter of the 6th of June.

The General states that the unknown envoy used the terms, "Mr. Clay's friends," to the exclusion, therefore, of myself, but he nevertheless inferred that he had come from me. Now, why did he draw this inference contrary to the import of the statement which he received. Does not this disposition to deduce conclusions unfavorable to me manifest the spirit which actuates him? And does not General Jackson exhibit throughout his letter a desire to give a coloring to the statements of his friend, the distinguished member of Congress, higher than they would justify? No one should ever resort to implication but from necessity. Why did he not ascertain from the envoy if he had come from me? Was any thing more natural than that General Jackson should ascertain the persons who had deputed the envoy? If his shocked sensibility and indignant virtue & patriotism would not allow him to inquire into particulars, ought he to have hazarded the assertion, that I was privy to the proposal, without assuring himself of the fact? Could he not, after rejecting the proposal, continuing as he did, on friendly terms with the organ of it, have satisfied himself if I were conusant of it? If he had not time then, might he not have ascertained the fact from his friend or from me, during the intervening two and a half years? The compunctions of his own conscience, for a moment, appear to have visited him towards the conclusion of his letter, for he there does say, 'that in the supposition stated, *I may* have 'done injustice to Mr. Clay: if so, the gentleman informing me can explain. No good or honorable man will do another voluntarily any injustice. It was not necessary that General Jackson should have done me any. And he cannot acquit himself of the rashness and iniquity of his conduct towards me by referring, at this late day, to a person, whose name is withheld from the public—This compendious mode of administering justice, by first hanging and then trying a man, however justifiable it may be, according to the precepts of the Jackson code, is sanctioned by no respectable system of jurisprudence.

It is stated in the letter of the 6th of June, that the overture was made early in January; and that the second day after the communication, it 'was announced in the newspapers, that Mr. Clay had come out openly and avowedly in favor of Mr. Adams.' The object of this statement is obvious. It is to insinuate that the proposal which was rejected with disdain by General Jackson, was accepted with promptitude by Mr. Adams. This renders the fact as to the time of the alleged annunciation very important. It is to be regretted that General Jackson had not been a little more precise. It was *early* in January that the overture was made, and the *second day* after, the annunciation of my intention took place. Now, I will not assert that there may not have been some speculations in the newspapers about that time, (although I do not believe that there were even any *speculations* so early,) as to the probable vote which I should give; but I should be glad to see any newspaper which, the second day after early in January, asserted in its columns, that I had come out 'openly and avowedly in favor of Mr. Adams.' I challenge the production of such a paper. I do not believe my intention so to vote for Mr. Adams was announced in the newspapers openly and avowedly during the whole month of January, or at any rate until late in the month. The only *avowal* of my intention to vote for him, which was publicly made in the newspapers, prior to the election, is contained in my letter to Judge Brooke, which is dated the 28th

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