

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man.—Thomas Jefferson

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TERMS:

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POLITICAL.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

Fellow Citizens:

The Convention which has this day assembled, meets to discharge a duty of the most impressive, and momentous character. Representing the wishes of nearly the entire democracy of Pennsylvania, on a question so vitally important to the friends of democratic principles in every section of the country—the question of a candidate for the next Presidency, it becomes us to urge with all the force which the occasion demands, the often expressed wishes of the people of a state which has formed so important, so disinterested, and so effective an aid in the repeatedly glorious achievements of the democratic arms. The voice of the smallest commonwealth, in our confederacy, coming at the expression of a sovereign state, has ever received the most respectful consideration. Nor is it believed that the usage will be departed from in the case of the glorious old Keystone. Respect for her rich, inexhaustible, and inestimable resources—her important geographical position—her honest, enterprising and intelligent people—the glorious memories which are revived in the history of her brave and great men of past days—will strengthen the expression of her citizens on any of the great questions which agitate the country. And when this expression is made with that calm, undisturbed, and conciliatory spirit, which should ever distinguish the discussions, of the members of our democratic family—when the facts are laid before the country without abuse of any of the statesman now urged forward by their friends in various parts of the country, as candidates for the Presidency—an appeal, thus sustained and thus advocated, will be certain to meet with a fair reception from the democracy of the other parts of the Union.

Will it be urged that we are thus giving undue importance to one state—that we are presenting a local candidate to the suffrages of the National Convention? Yet these are arguments which might be urged, as well in relation to South Carolina, to Massachusetts, to New York, to Virginia, to Kentucky, as to Pennsylvania. All candidates, are of necessity local at the start.—We are all proud of Virginia, as the author of much that is great and good in our political history; and although Virginia has given five Presidents to the Union, yet Pennsylvania never objected to the repeated nomination of Virginia's sons for the highest offices in the gift of the nation, that Virginia did not deserve a monopoly of these public honors. Never was it alleged that we in Pennsylvania had statesmen as great as those of the Old Dominion—that Pennsylvania was more effective, in the cause of popular rights than Virginia—that our soil was richer—our position more important, to our claims greater? No! The response which Pennsylvania made was in the democratic majorities which she gave at the polls at every political contest, during a period of more than forty years! Why, then, should the first claim of Pennsylvania—her first serious and powerful appeal to the justice and magnanimity of her sister states—be discouraged by an argument which she has never raised against her sister States?

But it is not only on the broad and impregnable foundation of the claims of Pennsylvania, that the present representatives of the people of this commonwealth base their appeal to the whole democracy of the Union. The candidate in whom these claims are embodied—the man through whom these claims it is hoped will be respected—is one known to the whole country, and eminently worthy of the support of the democracy of the whole country. The name of JAMES BUCHANAN is not confined to his native state. His friends are not limited to the disinterested democratic yeomanry of Pennsylvania; but wherever the principles of democracy are understood and appreciated, the name of JAMES BUCHANAN is as well known, as his virtues as a man, his honesty as a politician, and his services as a democrat, are enthusiastically admitted.—Among the hardy and daring settlers of the West, he is spoken of in terms of familiar gratitude as the early and eloquent advocate of pre-emption rights, against the power of federal eloquence and federal persecution. On the New York frontier he is regarded as the manly and fearless enemy of the humiliating tergiversation of those who, with all the rights on their side, permitted the blood of outraged innocence to go unavenged, and would have been rejoiced to instruct our courts to pronounce a verdict in favor of British marauders. In Maine he is applauded as the unflinching statesman who, even for peace, would not see his country dishonored by a lame surrender of our territory and inherent rights, to a government whose towering ambition and love of dominion had just been rebuked by the opportune interposition of our representative at the French court. In Michigan the noble effort of Mr. BUCHANAN, in 1807, in favor of the admission of that state into the confederacy—an effort distinguished by the advocacy of the right of popular government in its broadest, most universal sense—will long be remembered to his honor. In Rhode Island the friends of free suffrage regard him as one of their most eloquent advocates at a time too, when the tempest of persecution would have swept them from existence and when the dungeons of the landholders and Royal chartists were used to frighten them into submission. In the South, the clear and perspicuous, and profound expositions of State rights, by JAMES BUCHANAN are recorded among the productions of their ablest exponents. Each of these separate acts is well known to every section of the country, and each, in rapid succession, has won the applause of the democracy of the country. These alone, without enumerating the many other services he has rendered to the people, and to the cause of popular principles, are sufficient to show, that among all our democratic statesmen, there is no one whose course has been more generally known, or more generally admitted.—They will also suffice to show how far his pretensions are not based on local considerations alone.

The example of nearly all our nominations for the Presidency, is the vindication of valor, or virtue, or patriotism, or talent, in the person of the several distinguished individuals who have filled the Executive Chair of the Nation.

Thus have been honored the sublime and high souled qualities of the immortal WASHINGTON—the liberal and effective republicanism of JEFFERSON—the profound wisdom and pure patriotism of MADISON—the stern virtues and daring courage of JACKSON. These are bright examples in our history; and they will ever remain monuments alike of the gratitude and the sagacity of the American people. Yet, when a great State superadds to her own claims, based on the long and faithful and undeviating adherence of her people to the principles of democracy, and rendered powerful by her position, her resources, her population, the irresistible claims of the man she presents, we might well suppose that the nomination made, under such circumstances would not be ineffectual before the American people. Pennsylvania is this instance!

Read over the list of Republican States—and where is the one whose career has been more steady, more self sacrificing, more effective in the democratic cause? Her history is one that reflects honor equally upon herself and her country—her statesmen and her soldiers have contributed to many of the most glorious events in our annals. Her prowess was signally exhibited in the war of the Revolution, in nearly all the struggles of our infant people; and also on the Northern frontier, on the shores of the Chesapeake, and on the ocean in the war of 1812. Her civic fame is equally honorable to her. The name of her PENN has itself established for her, the character of peace and humanity.

Pennsylvania has been also contributed to Art and to Science, some of their proudest triumphs. 'Pennsylvania is the State of the lightning rod and the steamboat.' Such names as Franklin, and Fulton & Rittenhouse, are not the productions of every century, and we in Pennsylvania rejoice to know, that the first spent almost his entire life in Pennsylvania, and two last were the offspring of our noble commonwealth.

The position of Pennsylvania is one that is beautifully typified in her distinguished BUCHANAN in the national legislature. In his own expressive language, 'her Democracy holds the balance with steady judgment and enlightened patriotism between the opposite extremes of consolidation and disunion'—repelling, on the one hand, the meretricious advances of monied prostitution, and on the other, keeping down the impulsive excitements that arise from the question of slavery. Herself one of the very first to abolish slavery, and occupying a position, as it were, between the institution and its misguided enemies, she has ever thrown her weight of character and counsel and position with signal success on the side of the country. This position has been admirably represented in the national councils by Mr. Buchanan. His profound disquisitions on the doctrines of state rights, and his consistent opposition to the mad-dened excitement of fanatical zeal, while pursuing an imaginary evil, regardless of the very existence of our country and our constitution, have become memorable in our political history, and have given his name a warm place, (not only among his countrymen in that region which he has befriended; but every where else, in the affections of all friends of the country. Pennsylvania thus stands as a barrier between the North and the South, and her gigantic interposition has always been felt with effect, to her disgrace and confusion of those who plotted out common downfall in the name of philanthropy!

Patiently and even willingly, has this great State borne the burdens of the democratic party. Second, in population only, to all the rest, she has seen the honors and the distinctions of the government borne away by others, and seemed to know no duty but the duty of compliance. She has on all occasions sustained the democratic nominations for the highest offices in the government, and her support has always been necessary to insure the success of the democratic candidates. To her, the post of obedience was the post of honor; and, though in other places disaffection might reign, the spirit of self denial, which always animates the democracy of Pennsylvania, has preserved her in the path of allegiance to the party. What has been the reward of this patriotic disinterestedness, Nothing, but the thanks of those who carried away the honors of the government? Nothing, but the approval of those who rejoice to see the submissive spirit which always actuated Pennsylvania, while they could not but condemn the easy good nature which made this great commonwealth yield so readily her claims to others.

The man presented to the country as a candidate for the Presidency by the great state, so long and coldly neglected, is the appropriate representative of Pennsylvania. Calm in debate, safe and steady in his principles, and strong and overwhelming in his advocacy of them, he has ever succeeded

in commanding the respect and admiration of his countrymen. He has occupied a position in Congress of pre eminent distinction. His defenses and illustrations of democratic doctrines, powerful in their eloquent simplicity, and convincing by their earnest sincerity, have always caused his fellow citizens to feel proud of having such a representative in the loftiest legislative body of the world. Among the foremost in the front rank of democratic champions, JAMES BUCHANAN is a statesman that Pennsylvania presents, with proud confidence to her sister states, as her candidate for the Presidency.

The name of Mr. Buchanan has been so intimately connected for the last twenty years with the diplomatic and legislative history of the government, that it is unnecessary to spread in detail the various acts of his public life or his high qualifications for the first office in the gift of free people. From the time that he marched as a volunteer to Baltimore during the last war, until the present moment; the cardinal object of his life, has been the prosperity and happiness of the people of America, and we, who are his immediate fellow citizens, believe and know that his administration of the government, would be characterized by the same untiring devotion to the interests of our beloved country.

In the Senate of which he has been a most distinguished member for the last eight years, he has uniformly opposed the bank and a Bank of the U States a profuse expenditure of the public revenue or the creation of an unnecessary public debt; a government bank of discount, circulation and deposit under the British name of an Exchequer; the substitution of paper money for the constitutional currency, gold and silver coin; the surrender of M'Leod, upon the insulting demand of opium-selling England; and an unjust distribution of an essential part of the public revenue alike to the states of this confederation. He sustained the honor of the nation by his unanswerable demonstration of the right of each state to punish a foreign murderer, who in time of peace, kills an American citizen upon its own soil, although American Secretary of State had basely surrendered it upon a threat, after three days deliberation. His masterly expositions of our unquestionable title to the North Eastern boundary line, were upheld by the decisions of Congress, and he deserves high honor for his opposition to a treaty; which gave a large portion of American territory to a foreign government.

The following sketch, coming from those 'who know him best, and have known him longest,' will serve to place before the people of the country; a brief memoir of a statesman, who is treasured in their ardent affections and who is now presented as the candidate of democratic Pennsylvania for the Presidency.

Mr. BUCHANAN'S first appearance in public life was in 1814, a short time after the capture of Washington by the British. The highland and daring proceeding lighted up a flame of patriotism which pervaded the whole country. A public meeting was called in Lancaster for the purpose of adopting measures to obtain volunteers to March for the defence of Baltimore. On that occasion Mr. Buchanan addressed his fellow citizens in a speech of great spirit, in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the war, which he followed up by registering his name as a volunteer among a company of other young & patriotic hearts; A company of dragoons was formed on the spot, of which the late Judge H. Shippen was elected Captain. They marched to Baltimore, and served under the command of Major Charles Surret Ridgely, until they were honorably discharged. The early stand of Mr. Buchanan in favor of the late war, will serve to show what his feelings at that day were, at a time when the country needed the strong arms and stout hearts of her citizens. Hundreds of his political opponents in Lancaster city will bear testimony to the facts just named.

But it will be seen that Mr. Buchanan's active friendship in behalf of his country did not stop here. He was elected in October of 1814 to the Legislature of Pennsylvania from the county of Lancaster. Here the some fearless and patriotic spirit distinguished his career. An attack was threatened against the city of Philadelphia. The General Government was nearly reduced to a state of bankruptcy, and could scarcely raise sufficient money to maintain the regular troops on the remote frontiers of the country. Pennsylvania was obliged to rely upon her own energies for her defence, and the people were ready to do their utmost in the cause. Two plans were proposed in the Legislature. The one was what was called, 'The Conscription Bill,' and similar to that which had been rejected by Congress, by which it was proposed to divide the white male inhabitants of the State above the age of eighteen years, into classes of twenty-two men each, and to designate one man, from the members between the ages 18 and 45 of each class, who should serve one year, each class being compelled to raise a man not exceeding \$200, as a bounty to the conscript. This army was to be paid and maintained at the expense of the State, and its estimated cost would have been between three & one-half millions of dollars per annum. The officers were appointed by the Governor, by and with the consent of the Senate.—The other plan was to raise six regiments, under the authority of the state, to serve for three years, or during the war, and to pass efficient volunteer and militia laws.

During the discussion of these two plans Mr. Buchanan took an active and highly patriotic stand. During the debate since then Congress have deserted us in our time of need; there is no alternative, but either protect ourselves by some efficient means, or surrender up that independence which has been purchased by the blood of our forefathers. No American can hesitate which of these alternatives ought to be adopted.—The invading enemy must be expelled from our shores; he must be taught to respect the rights of freemen.

Mr. Buchanan opposed the Conscription bill, because of its too palpable injustice. Speaking of this measure he said, 'This law is calculated to be very unequal in its effects.—While it will operate as a Conscription Law upon the poor man, in the western parts of the State, whose property is not in danger, it will be but a militia law with the rich man in the eastern part of the State whose property it contemplates defending. The individuals in each class, are to be sure, to pay the two hundred dollars in proportion to their comparative wealth, as a bounty to the substitute or conscript. It will therefore be just in its operation among the individuals composing each class. But how will it be with respect to entire classes? Twenty-two men in the city of Philadelphia, whose united fortunes would be worth \$2,000,000 would be compelled to pay no more than twenty-two men in the western country who may not be worth the one thousandth part of that sum.'

'After all,' he continues, 'I confess that in my opinion, an efficient volunteer and militia bill, together with the troops which can be raised under the voluntary enlistment bill, would be amply sufficient for the defence of the city of Philadelphia. We need not be afraid to trust to the patriotism or courage of the people of this country when they are invaded. Let them have good militia officers, and they will soon be equal to any troops in the world. Have not the volunteers and militia under Gen. Jackson covered themselves with glory? Have not our volunteers and militia on the Niagara Frontier fought in such a manner as to merit the gratitude of the nation? Is it to be supposed that the same spirit of patriotism would animate the name who is dragged out by a conscription law to defend his country, that the volunteer or militia man would feel?