

TERMS OF THE "AMERICAN"
H. B. MASSER, Editor.
Office in Centre Alley, in the rear of H. B. Masser's Store.

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SUNBURY AMERICAN.

AND SHAMOKIN JOURNAL.

Absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of Republics, from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism.—JEFFERSON.
By Masser & Elsely. Sunbury, Northumberland Co. Pa. Saturday, Feb. 1, 1845. Vol. 5--No. 19--Whole No. 227.

PRICES OF ADVERTISING.
1 square 1 insertion, \$0 50
1 do 2 do 0 75
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Advertisements left without directions as to the length of time they are to be published, will be continued until ordered out, and charged accordingly.
Sixteen lines make a square.

COMMUNICATED.
H. B. MASSER, Esq.—Dear Sir:—Peace, and the cultivation of generous feelings among all its members is so obviously the interest of the Democratic party, that I should feel myself guilty of premeditated treason, were I to doubt it. But why, when the victorious shouts of an exulting democracy are every where heard and our exhausted legions demand repose, is it that factious discord prevails in our ranks, and the universally wished for peace disturbed by the incongruous yells of disorganizers? Why is it that men are permitted, under a cowardly disguise, to "let slip" their venom, and vent their malignity in the unenviable character of the slanderer, by insinuations and innuendoes? There is no question why, as long as consistent democrats stand by and behold their worthy associates vilified by an ungrateful and mischievous set of pretenders. The difficulties in this country, past and present, may be all traced to one common source. The fact is remarkable, but nevertheless true, that it is to those alone who now affect so much regard for regular nominations and the ticket, we owe every misfortune which has befallen us, as a party, in this country for the last nine years, (and if disposed we could refer to two or three striking examples of inconsistency of an older date,) not excepting the late defeat for Congress. I assert unhesitatingly that Gen. PETRIKIN, and a very few others, (of his kindred spirits,) who are now lauding over his defeat have been the sole cause of it themselves. Political, as well as all other sins, must meet their just reward, and their disorganizing course heretofore, and their present hostile position to the party, as completely annihilates them as if they had formally espoused the cause of the opposition; and they should be the first of all professing democracy, to shrink from public scrutiny. But it is meet that their political transgressions should be known, that the public may estimate how far their squallid onslaughts should effect the reputation of honest men. I will therefore draw a portrait of some of these same fustian patriots, and if the picture be not true to the pencil, it will be only because the originals have so many shades and alterations, that all art will be laughed at by their capricious natures in the trial.

This, in accordance with the prudent suggestions of the standing committee, of which Gen. Petrikin and Thomas Maxwell were a part, a perfect union of the party, on local questions, was effected, and a single ticket presented to it for support; all the delegates having pledged themselves unanimously to support the ticket formed. But what a singular aspect did the returns of the election of that year present! The two democratic candidates for Governor received 2094. Ritner (whig) received 1277. Now, it is plain that with a full vote, each candidate on the democratic compromise ticket should have received about 800 majority over their whig opponents, if the whole party had supported it honestly and faithfully. But, unfortunately, it was not so. Mr. Packer received but 1455, while his whig opponent received 1773. Mr. Gamble received but 1617, while Mr. Taggart, the political twin-brother of Gen. Petrikin, received 1950 votes,—a number very nearly equal to the whole democratic strength of the county. How manifest it is that while Messrs. Packer and Gamble, and others, their friends, in good faith supported Mr. Taggart and the other friends of Gen. Petrikin, that this same Gen. and Mr. Taggart, with nearly all their friends, proved traitors to Messrs. Packer, Gamble and their friends, by secretly plotting their defeat,—either voting for the whig candidates or conniving at their election by not voting at all, while at the same time they were making loud professions of honesty, which plot was not discovered until after the election, by the friends of Messrs. Packer and Gamble. But, as the fact of treason is fully established by the election returns of that year, I shall show from what quarter it came, and how admirably will our two distinguished committee-men, Gen. Petrikin and M. Maxwell and their particular friend and candidate, Taggart, discharged their duty, and carried out their own commendations and pledges. The two first of these gentlemen, it is well known, reside in Muncy, and Mr. Taggart in Moreland, and it is equally well known that they claim and exercise a controlling influence over the political destinies of that part of the lower end of the county immediately around them. That they have, on sundry occasions, most effectually hood-winked and deceived a part of the honest democracy of this section, we are free to admit; and never more completely did they do this than at the election in 1835, as is manifest by the annexed table. The districts which I have selected, include that part of the lower end over which Gen. Petrikin & Co. exercise their political influence. The vote for the two democratic candidates for Governor are added together:—

I have witnessed the political struggles in this county for the last twenty years. The first ten years of this period was the more halcyon era of our Democracy—meeting with but two or three interruptions from the General and his friends. But few domestic broils or civil discords disturbed the tranquility of our onward progress. But how different the case stood in 1835. Factious opposition, originating in disappointed hopes, sprung up, and aspirants to office hungered after the "flesh pots of Egypt." Here Gen. Petrikin, as in every other instance of factional opposition to regular nominations, was found opposing and plotting the defeat of the regularly nominated candidates. The usual meeting of the standing committee, preliminary to the call of a county convention to form a ticket, was held on the 1st day of August, in that year, at the house of H. Haghes, Esq., in Williamsport, and after performing their usual business and appointing a time for a general county convention of the delegates of the several townships, the following section of conciliatory advice to the party was incorporated with the proceedings—

	Wolf & Muller's	Blair,	Packer,	Irvine,	Gamble,	Taggart,
Muncy,	232	138	183	196	178	282
Moreland,	96	13	10	93	6	88
Shrewsbury,	27	18	21	17	9	19
Franklin,	62	11	6	58	10	52
Wolf,	113	35	69	62	37	119
Total,	570	215	295	426	210	530

What a commentary are these figures on the boasted fidelity of Gen. Petrikin and his particular friends around him, to the party. The democratic vote for Governor, united, is 570, and yet the regular candidate for Senator gets but 295, and one of the democratic Representatives only 210, while the other, Mr. Taggart, received 580, or within 40 votes of the entire party strength. But let this plain statement of figures suffice—it is too plain to need comment for the public to discover the object which prompted this renewed attempt by this same Gen. to disorganize the party in Lycoming. But all this might have been forgotten and forgiven had it not been followed up with unremitting vigor, and steadily persisted in on all suitable occasions, as I shall presently show it was. Under such circumstances who can wonder that a candidate so obnoxious and liable to censure as Gen. Petrikin, should be defeated, with even the most favorable circumstances on his side.

In 1836, Gen. Petrikin was a delegate to the convention which formed the county ticket, and in a speech characteristic malignity denounced Gen. Fleming, who had been nominated as the Senatorial delegate to the reform convention.

Previous to the formation of the county ticket in 1837, it is a well known fact that the exertions of Gen. Petrikin were all directed to the defeat of Dr. Taylor, for re-election to the Legislature. He was, however, almost unanimously nominated by the convention. Rumors of the disaffection of Gen. Petrikin, in this particular, were soon followed by the announcement of S. Bostere, Esq., as a volunteer candidate. Mr. Bostere was the warm personal and political friend of this same Muncy Factionist, and the same person who had received the support of himself and friends for Senator, in the convention of 1835, which nominated Mr. Packer. He

had been tampered with by Gen. Petrikin, and I venture he will not deny receiving encouragement from that quarter. But their plan was discovered in time, and the forlorn Gen. could do nothing more for his friend than sympathize with him in the calamity he had brought upon him.

At the Governor's election in 1838, it happened that three of the most important local offices then to be filled were aspired for by personal and political friends of Gen. Petrikin, who with great unanimity received the nominations therefor. Hence we had no political opposition that year to the ticket, which was of course elected triumphantly and smoothly, but the cause of the General's adhesion on this occasion is too obvious. For it is an old and very common saying, "where there's no danger, there's no need of praying."

In 1839, Gen. Petrikin, previous to the nominations, appeared in the field as a candidate for Senator, but very unfortunate for the interests of the world, the Gen. thought proper to withdraw his pretensions previous to the convention. The ghost of the defeated Packer, and his attempt to defeat Mr. Gamble, was too constantly before his eyes; and he felt that conscience at least made cowards of some. He succeeded, however, in getting his own brother-in-law nominated Representative conferee, who voted for James H. Lavery for member against the positive instructions of the convention.

In 1840, the nominations were so entirely satisfactory to the Gen. that there was no opposition that year.

The nominations in 1841 were attended with much difficulty. Loud complaints were made by the Petrikin faction against the official course of Mr. James Gamble as member, and an organized attempt was made to supercede him in the mountains, which proved a total failure. Mr. Turner, who had been an unsuccessful competitor of H. Douley, Jr. for the county nomination of Sheriff, and who was the near neighbor of Gen. Petrikin, and had been, a short time previous, foreman under supervisor Maxwell, came out in opposition to the ticket as a volunteer candidate. Can any one doubt who encouraged him to do so, when we remember that his support in the county convention came chiefly from the Petrikin faction, and that the General, Maxwell and John Bennett, were all personally hostile to the election of Sheriff Douley! The Conclusion is too apt and natural for any one to doubt the source of this opposition.

Thomas Maxwell, the supervisor, was a candidate for the Assembly, in 1842, provided he could in any manner obtain the Democratic delegate nomination. The people, however, positively signified their desire that he should remain at home, and that Gen. F. Boal should have the honor to fill that post. Smarting under the indignity which they conceived had been offered them, they sullenly retired and awaited the first opportunity for revenge; and an opportunity was soon presented. The Senatorial conference met, and Jesse C. Horton of Northumberland received two-thirds of the votes of the conference, and he was declared the Democratic nominee for Senator. Here the old disorganizers of our party at once showed their hands for disorder, and Gen. Petrikin & Co. pledged themselves "to stick by" a volunteer candidate, who was finally brought into the field. Gen. Petrikin pursued a course in reference to some of our back townships, for which he will long be remembered, by misrepresenting through his stepson, Brindle, (who should never be held responsible for much,) that Mr. Horton was a volunteer candidate, and opposing the regularly nominated candidate, by which many honest democrats were deceived. But we need not particularize the many events which characterized the course of his rule or ruin tribe in the county in that campaign, they are fresh in the minds of the Democracy. The nomination of Mr. Horton was in opposition to the ambitious views of Gen. Petrikin, and the conviction of the volunteer candidate with his own family, made his election an object so desirable, that he at once resolved to trample upon every restraint which party usage imposed, to go for him.

Now we might well suppose that a continued course of conduct such as we have described for upwards of eight years was, in all conscience sufficient to exclude the person purring it from all communion and fellowship with the party in future; but a still longer probation was granted. 1843 brought with it the usual fruit from that quarter. Boal had beaten Maxwell the fall previous, but all his industry and exertions as a member was insufficient to merit in the eyes of Gen. Petrikin the old usage and usual courtesy of a re-election. He was accordingly placed on the black book for execution at the proper time and the General's step-son, dandy Bill, agreed upon as his successor. The contest for delegates was therefore both interesting and exciting. On the one side was seen the influence and money of a known political intriguer, and on the other the bare crust of right, unaided and unsupported with either. The result was an overwhelming defeat of the Petrikin faction, and the election of two thirds of the whole number of Delegates favorable to the nomination of Geo. F. Boal. This was a disaster striking too near the heart of Gen. Petrikin to be tolerated, and accordingly the Brindle delegates, numbering some 30 out of a delegation of 84, seceded from the convention, and formed an entire factional ticket against the regular one, with that darling youth of his would be honor at its head. This high handed procedure and disorganizing act being ab initio wrong, necessarily invalidated all proceedings under it, and the people's verdict so pronounced it. Mr. Boal was as he should have been, re-elected, and Mr. Brindle, after having bargained and sold himself to the Whigs in the expectation of obtaining their votes, was most shamefully defeated. The General's separate and distinct party organization was therefore abandoned, and he once more threw himself and his "seven men in buckram" upon the paternal kindness of the old Democratic party, whose solid foundation he had so often attempted to tear to pieces. Such was the disorganizing character of Gen. Petrikin, as well since as on several occasions previous to 1835, and such his political position in 1844; yet with all his inconsistency, fraud and treason to the party, whom should we be asked to support for Congress last fall, but Gen. Petrikin? Most men would have shrunk from the thought of asking from a party they had so often attempted to destroy, any of its favors; but the General's so often repeated transgressions familiarized his error, and in his eyes it became almost a virtue. But how came he by the nomination? Was he the choice of a majority of the convention which nominated him in this county? He was not. He and his friends attending that convention, well know that his nomination was a coerced one, and basely did he misrepresent, through his miserable organ at Muncy, the circumstances of his nomination in more than one way, but particularly in asserting that he, against the efforts of two honorable competitors, had received the nomination by almost a unanimous vote of the convention. Who will be bold enough to deny that his nomination was obtained with a view of preventing his opposition to the ticket! Who will deny that some of his friends and relatives threatened, that if the Gen. should not be nominated, that they would oppose either of the other two aspirants for that office, should either be nominated? Did they not dare us to nominate either W. C. Ellis or R. Fleming, and say we should see if we could elect either, if nominated!

Under such circumstances what was to be done. The gubernatorial and Presidential elections were to take place, and every true democrat felt disposed to look beyond their own petty interests for the general good of the party. But not so with the General. His democracy had not been accustomed to extend beyond his own selfish views, and this was too well known to hazard any interest of the party; he must be re-united with the main body of the party, or destruction must inevitably follow. Various councils were held as to what ought to be done in the premises, but the important consideration of securing as much strength as possible prevailed with many. The Gen. himself was, of course, the sine qua non of a compromise, and it was agreed, under the full persuasion that the nomination of any other person would entail his uncompromising opposition, and the convention reluctantly consented to nominate him after the other candidates for that office expressed a willingness to waive all their claims for the good of the party, and their most active friends in the convention yielded their preference and voted for the General. And now we find him dressed in the undeserved honors of a democratic nomination for Congress, extorted from a well-disposed but too forgiving delegation. Does he conduct himself as the candidate of the whole party should, or has he still about him his "peculiar ways?" I assert his conduct was unbecomingly and malignant to those who had before opposed him, and his great desire for his election seemed an insufficient inducement to smother it for the time. I should also mention that some of the General's warm friends traded off our democratic candidate for Canal Commissioner, Mr. Hartshorne, by voting for his opponent to get whig votes for the General, and, in retaliation, a very few unwavering democrats, feeling the injustice of rewarding a man for his demerits, could not be induced to vote for him, and he was defeated. But the medicine which he had so often administered to others, became exceedingly nauseous when forced to swallow it himself, and hence the bitter and unavailing complaints which have since been poured forth from his bitter Fig tree, yelped the "Olive Branch."

Submitting the whole case, therefore, to the calm and deliberate investigation of the democratic party, all may confidently rely on the unerring verdict of a just people upon it. We cheerfully submit it to every unprejudiced and disinterested man to say whether a course of conduct as factious as the one I have described,

merits any other reward than that of unqualified retribution. It is a good theory to return good for evil, and it is right and proper, in abstract morals; but the practice of it in politics would be alike dangerous and destructive. It would imply a claim in every disorganizer to party favor, and open a highway to eternal ruin. If Gen. Petrikin hoped to attain a seat in Congress by doing evil, (and he could have had no other prospect,) he has yet to learn that the rewards of democracy are not bestowed upon that principle. He was well aware, when he accepted the nomination, that he had obtained it by intimidating the delegates with threats of disorganization, and not by their free good will and accord; and he ought to have considered whether his own past examples had not made some impression upon a portion of those whose support it was necessary to have to elect him. He was not ignorant of the fact that a large portion of his peculiar friends, his own son-in-law, and perhaps himself had asserted their determination not to support some of the candidates if nominated. Nor can it, with truth, be denied that it was the pre-determination of Gen. Petrikin and his friends, to oppose, as usual, the democratic nominee for Congress, unless that honor should fall upon himself. Mr. A. D. Wilson, who, since the General's defeat, affects such holy horror at the idea of a "Moccasin track," was an open-mouthed denouncer of the ticket in a certain event, but, like the weather cock upon the spire, he faced about with the most felicitous and accommodating disposition to suit the wind. For the truth of all that has been asserted, we appeal to the history of the party and the recollections of all its disinterested members. But if there is not *prima facie* evidence sufficient to establish the charge of disorganization against Petrikin, and the others we have named, we will draw your notice to what has transpired since the election, and what is now transpiring.

The Gen., previous to last September, established at Muncy a paper, evidently to facilitate his own amination for Congress, and the better to deceive the inexperienced, he denounced it the "Olive Branch." This name of itself, under the circumstances, was an acknowledgment of a precarious political apostasy. Thus he pretended to hold out the sacred flag of peace and friendship, implicitly to say to those he had been heretofore persecuting and hunting down "let there be no strife between us in future." But the election is no sooner known to be disastrous to those *Olive Branches*, than the long ears are poked out, and have endeavored to keep up a constant braying since. They have declared an offensive war; they cry, down with those who oppose the ticket; and yet they blame their brother democrats who put down Petrikin, who had so frequently opposed the ticket. Again we hear them exclaim, no democrat will oppose the ticket when once formed on any account, and in almost the same breath they vociferate their determination to oppose every man who opposed Gen. Petrikin, nominated or not. What profound logicians! how very patriotic and pacific!!! With them it is no crime for Petrikin to oppose the ticket, but an unpardonable offence for others. They have threatened and still threaten to destroy the party next fall, and will no doubt attempt it. But the sheep's clothing can no longer conceal the wolf. His Hon., the General, may head "his seven men in buckram" from the support of the ticket, and his Olive Branch may find it convenient to recommend the opposite of what it now supports. It will amount to another Brindle adventure, a perfect hog shearing, "great cry and little wool."

But, Mr. Editor, I have already trespassed too much upon your columns, much more than I intended. You will pardon me, nevertheless, I am sure, for it, when I assure you, that nothing but an imperative sense of duty to many of my fellow democrats and citizens in this county, could have prompted me to write an exposition so humiliating to the political character of our neighbor, Gen. Petrikin.

OLD LYCOMING.
"William, I'm going away to-day, and want you to grind all the tools."
"Yes, sir."
The carpenter came home at night. "William, have you ground all the tools right sharp?"
"All but the *handsaw*," said Bill, "I couldn't get *qu* to all the gaps out of that!"
"My father was one of the framers of the constitution," said a youth of patrician blood, to another day, to another of plebeian origin.
"Who cares for that?" quoth the latter, "my father was one of the framers of the new meeting house."
There is a chap down east so cross-eyed that he courts two girls for one.
A beautiful woman commands our admiration. A virtuous one *deserves* our love.