

CANTON, Mi., July 27th, 1813.

Gen. Price:

Dear Sir—On Saturday last, understanding that the whig candidate for Governor, was to speak at this place, upon proclamation being made by the sheriff, I repaired to the court room, where I found a considerable assembly, composed principally of whigs, and they for the most part, whigs of the town, "their wives, children and friends." On the judgment-seat sat neither a royal Agrippa to judge some modern Paul, *in bonds*, nor Judge Rollins, but a burly portly person of infinite more importance *just now* than either—one Mr. Clayton who is designated by his friends, the whig candidate for Governor; I say designated, for were it not for such designation, no man could ever discover from his speeches whether he was whig or democrat. For one hour he spoke to as intelligent an audience as could be collected in the United States for its numbers, and when he was done, the question might well have been asked of him which side he claimed to belong to, democrat or whig? One thing however he made evident to my humble comprehension, that he is an *old fashioned full blooded aristocrat*: not in the acceptation of that term which some men give it, that it means a man of gentlemanly bearing, one whose deportment shews that he has been accustomed to the best society, (I grant all this to Mr. Clayton,) but an aristocrat according to the meaning attached to the word by democrats, to wit: a man who scorns poor people, and judges a man's worth and integrity by his wealth and ability to pay debts—one of those in whose eyes property "*makes the man, and the want of it the fellow.*" As well as I can recollect Mr. Clayton's speech I will give you a synopsis of it. He commenced by proving the Planters Bank bonds constitutional—this reminded me of the story of the little boy that run by himself; for there was not a human being in the house that had any doubt on that subject. It was just as much out of the way and inappropriate as if a preacher were to commence an argument to *christians*, to prove that there is a God. He then launched out on the Union Bank bonds, declared them constitutional in his solemn opinion as a professional man; after a tissue of mistakes on this subject, (I will not say misrepresentations,) he told an anecdote of an old man in Neshoba, which, from the applause of his whig auditors, and the triumph with which it was announced, seemed to have been regarded as conclusive. It was this: that an old man in Neshoba said, that although the money might have been unconstitutionally obtained, yet we got it, and used it, and it would not be unconstitutional to pay it back. It would certainly not be unconstitutional for men to pay the debt by individual subscription, but as long as the present constitution stands, the pretended debt cannot be paid, either by land or taxation through the action of the State in its political sovereign capacity, but, by robbery, fraud and oppression on the minority, and if there were one single man (and there is one who writes this,) who did not approve of the supplemental charter, he has a right to shoot down the tax collector who will attempt to sell his property for any such purpose, and to claim that the lands remain as a part of the wealth of the State, to avoid taxation for other purposes. After much declamation about honor, character and the opinion of foreigners and democrats in other States, he then detailed Gen. Brown's amount of indebtedness to the Union Bank, how much he had borrowed, how much he had endorsed for, how much he still owed, with mathematical exactness, and kept repeating that it came with a very bad grace from Gen. Brown to set up such a plea as unconstitutionality of the Union Bank bonds! And has it come to this, that a poor man cannot express his opinions on a grave constitutional question, because he has the misfortune to be in debt? Has the day arrived that a man cannot be a candidate for office in Mississippi, free Mississippi, so long as he is in debt to a bank, but at the hazard of having base motives, basely insinuated against him by his opponent? How insignificant is this attack, and that too, in the absence of Gen. Brown? Suppose the State repudiates the bonds, does her doing so, repudiate Gen. Brown's debt to the Union Bank? Have not the Union Bank creditors enough besides the bond holders, to swallow up Gen. Brown's debt? Whether the bonds are repudiated or not, no man can say with justice or truth that that question decided either way, either lengthens or increases the burthens of individual indebtedness to the Union Bank? But suppose it did, is it honorable, is it magnanimous, is it even *gentlemanly aristocratic*, to insinuate so base a motive of action to an opponent, and that too in relation to a high constitutional question, involving the perpetuity of republican institutions, about which there are honorable men who differ, compared to whom even Mr. aristocrat Clayton is a mere Shakespeare justice of the peace to be known as the man "of fair round belly." Is McDuffie dishonorable, is Walker dishonorable, are Linn, Benton, Buchanan, Woodbury and Wright, all dishonorable? They have published themselves to the world repudiators, just as Gen. Brown has, and on precisely the same principle. And what fresh importation is this that strikes so loud the harp of horror, and *insinuates* dishonor against men who have borrowed money of a bank? I am informed that he is the son of Judge Augustin S. Clayton, of Georgia. He boasts that he never borrowed a dollar of any bank—his father saved him the trouble. And now I would ask Mr. Clayton what he would think of Gen. Brown, were he to get up and tell him, that his father was a most violent anti-United States Bank man, a man unmeasured in his wrath against that monstrous institution until a day occurred he borrowed some fifty-four thousand dollars from the same United States Bank, and then his wrath as a member of Congress, as a representative of the people, cooled off, and the great captain of States' Right and anti-Bankism and all his house were converted of a sudden to the bank, and for aught I know to high

tariff and Henry Clay. What, if Gen. Brown were to argue this way, and attribute Mr. Clayton's political course to that fifty-four thousand dollars indebtedness to the United States Bank? Would not Mr. C. be seized with a pious horror, and so far from arguing the point, rather feel like calling Gen. Brown to the field of honor. But there is a great difference in the two cases which I leave to the reflections of all, my only object being to shew the disingenuousness of the attack. Mr. Clayton then read from tables, shewing still with mathematical nicety, that while nineteen thousand voters who were repudiators, paid \$2 50, a head tax—sixteen thousand bond-paying voters in the State, paid \$8 00, a head. He did not state, however, that among these sixteen thousand bond payers nearly all the money was used. But suppose not, has not the poor man as much difficulty in raising his \$2 50 tax, as the rich man has his \$8 00? Indeed, is it not more difficult for the poor man to do so, than the rich man, especially if he has the good fortune to inherit a patrimony, purchased perhaps with *United States Bank paper*? Mr. Clayton has mistaken his region; he brings his aristocracy to an unprofitable market—a most unprofitable market. He will find out before November, and if he does not before, he will after, that the free men of this State will not brook his comparisons between the rich and the poor. That the poor man, though he pays but \$2 50 tax, feels in this State as much right to express his opinions and vote his sentiments, as the rich man. That in Mississippi, we know no distinctions—that we are all equals, absolutely equal peers of the land—and that nineteen thousand poor repudiators, though visited by the scornful comparisons of Mr. Clayton, will yet dare express their opinions, and vote their opinions; and that jeers from him, great as he thinks himself, will have no other effect than to excite universal contempt. Mr. Clayton asked: is it not hard that these nineteen thousand should prevent these sixteen thousand voters from paying the debt? Very hard, certainly. But do they do it? What prevents the sixteen thousand patriots from raising a subscription and paying the debt? Carry a subscription round, Mr. Clayton, and my life for it, you will have more repudiating subscribers than bond paying ones. But the repudiators will never consent, under your denunciations, to break up and repudiate their government, whether to gratify the theiving, bribing James Hamilton, who is doubtless in the pay of the bond holders, or the elegant, polite and very aristocratic Mr. Clayton? Mr. Clayton getting warm, declared, that if Mississippi did not pay her bonds, *he would leave the State—! that he could not raise his children in a State so disgraced.* At this avowal, there was a most ominous silence. There was not a gentleman or lady in the house but upon whose ear this threat of aristocratic vengeance and contempt grated most harshly. No, no, here have we cast our lot—here are our altars and our fireside—here is our *home* and our country, and, however we may differ among ourselves, there was not a heart in that court house but swelled rebellious with the sentiment dear to freemen, “our country always, our county, right or wrong.” The English of Mr. Clayton's threat is this: “If Mississippi does not elect me Governor, I will go back to Georgia.” Unless I am more mistaken than I ever was in my life, Mississippi will say to Mr. C. what uncle Toby said to the fly, “go *poor thing*, there is room enough in the world for me and thee.” Why, it was to escape society composed of just such aristocrats as Mr. Clayton, that one half of the emigrants to this State find themselves here; and since Mr. C. has presented the issue, I think it is their duty to look to it—for if a man can be elected Governor who is to judge of the worth of his fellow-citizens by their freedom from indebtedness, and their ability to pay taxes, then it may become necessary for us to go farther west and hunt elbowroom as old Boone did—I consider this Mr. C's. issue: either he must go back to Georgia, or some fifty thousand emigrants must go to Arkansas, California or Oregon. The greatest good of the greatest number must be consulted, so we ought to vote, since Mr. C. desires it, *that he return to Georgia, and that he have leave to withdraw his children.*

Yours, &c.

CASCA.