

Ashland 1st May 1831

My dear Sir

Prior to the receipt of your favor of the 17th ult. I had written you a long letter which I hope will safely reach you. I infer from your last a determination to accept your recent appointment. I think you ought to accept it, and I should regret that you did not. Under all circumstances it was an honorable testimony. I share with Messrs. Johnson and Hugh in their disappointment in not getting Mr. Standard on the bench; and I concur with them in the superiority which they ascribe to him over his successful competitor.

We live in an age of revolution. Who could have imagined such a cleansing of the Augean stable at Washington? A change, almost total, of the Cabinet. Did you ever read such a letter as Mr. S. B's? It is perfectly characteristic of the man — a labored effort to conceal the true motives, and to ascribe assumed ones, for his resignation, under the evident hope of profiting by the latter. The "delicate step," I apprehend has been taken, because, foreseeing the gathering storm, he wished early to secure safe refuge. Whether that will be on his farm or at London we shall see. Mean time, our cause cannot fail to be benefited by the measure. It is a broad confession of the incompetency of the President's chosen advisers, no matter from what cause, to carry on the business of the Government. It is a full admission of that weakness of those advisers, for their respective stations, which the whole Country felt when they were first selected. And if, as I presume, Ingham and Branch were dismissed, or compelled to resign, further defections must be soon in a party on the verge of dissolution.

How can the injury to his cause be repaired by any successors to the vacant places whom the President may call around him — certainly not by those whom rumor designates. Edward Livingston, to be Secretary of State — a recorded defaulter to an enormous amount — the reviler of Jefferson, whom he pursued, to his retirement, with a malicious and vexatious evil — a man notoriously destitute of all principle. Louis McLane to be Secy of the Treasury — a man who glories in his Federalism, to be appointed by the Republican party. One whose degrading supplications at the Court of London for a worthless privilege must have disgusted every man who was not insensible to the honor and dignity of his Country. &c. &c.

I repeated in my former letter my conjectures as to the course of Mr. Calhoun. Late events leading to show the great probability of the defeat of Jackson may now determine him to take bolder and firmer ground against

1831
Mr. May
Against
Mr. Wright