

My dear Sir

Washn 19th Dec. 1836

I was glad to learn by your favor of the 15th inst. that Mrs Brooker's health is improving, and sincerely hope that it may be soon entirely re-established.

Your objection to the immediate organization of an Opposition, upon the principles stated by me, applies rather to the time of its commencement than the principles themselves. Undoubtedly such an Opposition should avoid itself of the error of the new Admⁿ; but it seems to me that it would acquire greater force by avoiding itself also of that fatal error in its origin, which resulted from the President elect being the designated successor of the present Incumbent. If a President may name his successor, and bring the whole machinery of the Government, including its 100,000 dependents, into the canvass; and if by such means he achieves a victory, such a fatal precedent as this must be rebuked and reversed, or there is an end of the freedom of election. No one doubts that this has been done. And no reflecting man can doubt that having been once done, it will be again attempted, and unless corrected by the people, it will become, in time, the established practice of the Country. Now I think that no wisdom or benefit in the measures of the new administration can compensate or atone for this vice in its origin. Still, this point may be pursued or not, according to circumstances, in different States. As for Virginia, I am afraid another generation must arise before she regains her former high rank. Henceforward, at least during our lives, I apprehend she will be only a

Ms. A. 1. 1. 19

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