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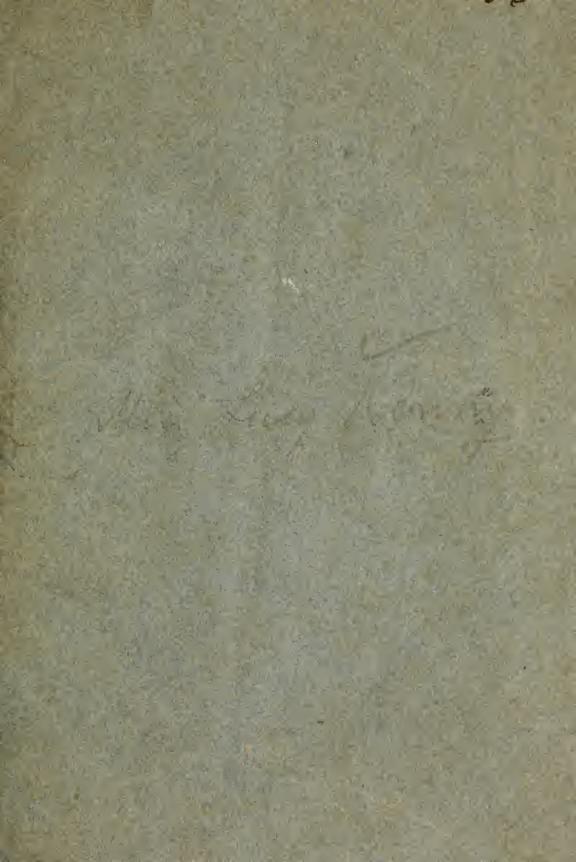
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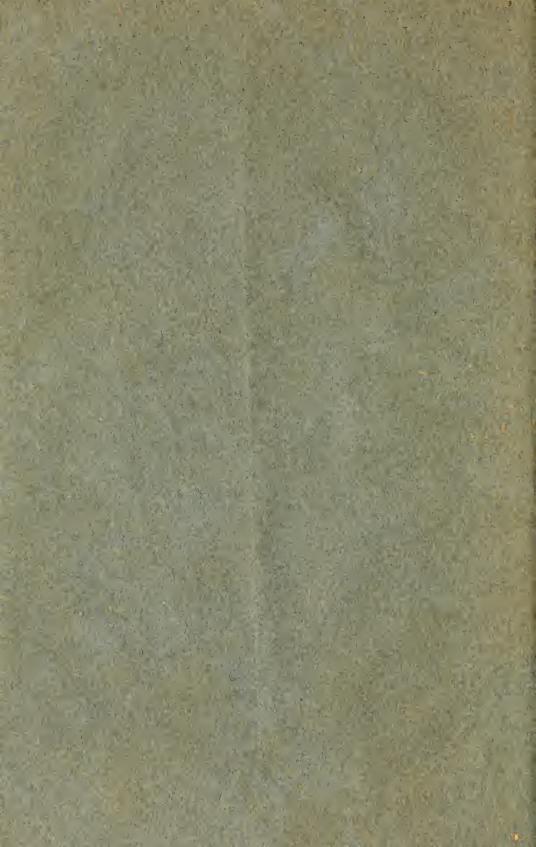












#### A LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

# MARTIN VAN BUREN,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

IN ANSWER TO

## THE LATE ATTACK UPON THE NAVY,

BY THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Sir: I have read with astonishment and indignation the late libel and calumny of the Globe upon the character and standing of the navy, that noble arm of our national defence. My astonishment is not that the official organ of the Government should originate and circulate such a base tissue of falsehoodsfor of its fitness for any low purpose, and its utter recklessness of principle, I have long been persuaded-but that the whole article should be so much at variance with all the messages of the late Executive, as well as the different communications from the late heads of the Navy Department upon the same subject. No act of inconsistency, however, of the present party now in power should excite my wonder or call forth an expression of surprise, as their whole course, since they have had the management of the affairs of state, has been entirely opposed to their precepts when candidates for public favor. But, sir, I am proud to perceive that this foul-mouthed slander has found but little favor with the people and press generally. The odium and contempt which it has vainly endeavored to fix upon our gallant navy have but recoiled upon itself, and it is now writhing under their effects. It is not my purpose to attempt to repel any of the infamous and degrading charges which they have impudently and wantonly advanced. The character, the honor, the deeds of noble daring, of this high-minded and chivalric body, are too well known and highly appreciated by the Ameri-

can people to be tarnished by the filthy outpourings of this foul vehicle of slander. I shall merely notice some of its more opprobrious epithets and comparisons, and may, perhaps, allude to and rebut one or two of the graver assertions; before doing which, however, I will briefly give my reason for addressing this letter to yourself. You have adopted "the maxims and principles" of your illustrious predecessor, pledged yourself to follow in his footsteps, and will consequently do as he did—take the responsibility of the acts and doings of the different Departments, more especially Blair's, as this seems to receive more of the executive attention and supervision than any or all of the others; nothing, at least, can appear in its venal and prostituted columns, without being written, dictated, or sanctioned, by the Executive. The "whole" navy has been the object of this slander and abuse. Old and meritorious officers have been abused, insulted, and vilified, and the faults of the few have been made to attach to the many. It has been charged upon this gallant corps, "that there is a total want of the esprit du corps, without which there is nothing high or ennobling in the profession of arms." Grant this for the sake of argument, (which by no means do I,) to whom are blame and censure attributable? and who should receive condemnation at the hands of the publie? The officers of the navy, or those who have had the control and management of it? Certainly the latter as in their hands has it fallen to its present ebb; for its condition when the present party came into power was sound, efficient, and well organized—admitted to be so by the present dynasty, who were the celebrated reformers of that day. It was the pride, boast, and ornament of the country, and to be one of its members was considered a sufficient passport to the very best society of the day. In those days reputation and fame were gained by merit and service, not by cringing servility to the party in rule, for such was not then the order of the day. But how sadly has this once high-minded and honorable corps fallen since then! It seems by your own showing that they have not been exempt from the corrupting influences of the infected atmosphere at Washington; and, as there can be no effect without a cause, there must be a reason for it. Is it to the force of example in other Departments, or to a new one in their own! If to either, the present administration is unquestionably the source of the evil. It is attributable to the weakness, inefficiency, and dis-

grace, with which the Department has been conducted. New rules and regulations have been introduced, and old, good, and well-tried ones dispensed with. But, in spite of all this, the navy has remained unshaken and true to herself; and it was for this very reason—because she would not bow the knee to Baal—that it has become the object of executive animadversion. and called forth the curses and execrations of that spotless organ, the Globe. Yes, sir, amidst the many temptations to which they have been exposed—the honors paid them at court, and favor shown them—there has been too much spirit and independence in the naval corps to be reduced from the high and enviable stand which they have always occupied, to the condition of fawning sycophants and pliant tools. It was this firm and laudable resistance to encroachments upon their rights and long-established usages that invoked the executive displeasure. and the wrath of the vile and polluted Globe. It is true that some of the officers have strayed from the path of duty, honor, and fame, by the glitter of reward and promise of promotion; but I am pleased to say that these are few, and these few are those who were exculpated by the Globe in the charge it made

upon the whole body.

The next part of the libel which I shall notice is that charging the officers with a "disposition to skulk from duty," as "lazy louts," "hangers on," "Washington campaigners," and "bloodsuckers at the public Treasury." I will answer the charge by asking a question. If such be the case, why is it permitted? What is the duty of the Secretary of the Navy? To notice, and connive at, or correct abuses? The fault, if there be any, is here, as in most other instances, connected with the Departments, at the fountain head. The above comparisons and epithets are too low and degrading to be noticed in any other way than by giving them a place, in order to show the foulness and unworthiness of the source from whence they emanated. with regard to the charge: I deny it, except so far as relates to the exploring expedition. And here, instead of skulking from, they manfully and openly refused to do duty. And why did they refuse? Because it was so miserably mismanaged; because such new rules and regulations were introduced in selecting its officers as to render it justly obnoxious to all highminded and honorable men. When it was first set on foot, the hearts of the oldest and best of the service beat high in anxious expectancy of the appointment to its command; and all were

ready to volunteer, for it was then understood that none but volunteers would be appointed. But this arrangement was soon succeeded by another regulation, which soon brought the expedition into disrepute—that of a commander selecting his own officers. So that, instead of officers asking service from the Secretary of the Navy, they were soliciting it from a post captain; and in consequence, in the language of an officer of the navy, "misrule, confusion, and mismanagement, stalked forth with giant strides. The once popular South Sea expedition was now rendered odious to the officers. Through the mismanagement of the Navy Department, it had become a byword and reproach upon the navy; and when the country, impatient of its protracted delays, was informed that the expedition was at length upon the eve of sailing, it was suddenly left without a commander; and the Secretary, with one hundred captains and commanders subject to his orders, reported that he could not get one to go. At this time the control of the expedition was transferred to another, and the belief was indulged that he would restore it to its former favorable standing; and many officers, whose glorious deeds have won for them an imperishable name, and now occupy the brightest pages in the annals of our country, were waiting, with a modest forbearance and decorum, (which those in power could not value or appreciate,) to be appointed to its command. But they had not kissed the foot, and hence were less fortunate than those who were less worthy. A junior lieutenant, who had no claim to the appointment but a base servility to the ruling clique, and what is so heartily execrated by the Globe, "a campaign at Washington" of six or seven long years, and who had scarcely seen twelve months' sea service in as many years, was, contrary to law and usage, lifted over the heads of laborious and deserving officers. It was doings of this kind, sir, which rendered the expedition so odious and unpopular with the navy. And how was the requisite number of officers obtained at last? By assurances of promotion and increase of salary. This was the recompense for their compromise of dignity; and, moreover, these very men were selected from among the "campaigners at Washington." This expedition, sir, was the cause, the prime cause, of the libel and attack upon the navy, which was made for the purpose of relieving Messrs. Woodbury, Poinsett, and Dickerson, as much as possible from the disgrace which their mismanagement has brought upon them, and saddle it upon the officers of the navy, although the officers remonstrated warmly and severely against the course pursued, and foretold you of the consequences. Instead. sir, of a disposition to "skulk from duty," upon all occasions except the one just alluded to, they have always been very prompt, ready, and anxious to do duty; and, instead of asking extra compensation for services not rendered, as has been alleged, they have protested against, and absolutely refused to be compensated for, extra service. An instance of the kind I will cite, as being fresh in the memory of all: Last spring it was reported that the Susquehanna, a packet ship from Philadelphia was captured, just without the capes, by a piratical schooner; and no sooner had the intelligence reached the cities, than officers of the different stations, with the greatest alacrity, repaired immediately to sea in search of the supposed pirate. Their conduct upon this occasion was honorably mentioned by the Secretary in his message, and extra compensation asked. Against this, however, the officers remonstrated, and said, if it

was granted, they would not receive it.

I shall now pass to the most exceptionable part of the libel, and upon it make a few remarks, which will conclude what I have to say upon the subject. The charge that the officers "had adopted the maxims and principles of tinkers and cobblers." Can it be possible, sir, that, with all your intrigue and cunning, you could no longer disguise your true feelings and sentiments towards the mechanics and working people? Has the great ball of revolution which was started last fall, and has worked reform from Maine to Louisiana, and which is still in motion, so startled and affected you, so thrown you off your balance, that, in a moment of frenzy, you should tear from yourself the hypocritical garb you have so long and successfully worn, and show yourself to "the dear sweet people," whom you have so gulled and duped, in all your blackness and depravity. The charge was certainly made without reflection or consideration; and happily for the country it was so, for the mechanics are now aroused from the deep deception which has been practised upon them, and can perceive by what seeming pretences they have been deluded. It is said that "out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh;" which is more especially the case when the expression can do the speaker no

good, and may do him great injury, as in the present instance. Yes, sir, even policy, for which you are so justly celebrated, could not prevent your giving utterance to the sentiments you have so long concealed and entertained towards this worthy class of the community. When you wished to cover with infamy and disgrace our gallant navy, you could conceive of no means more certain than the assertion that they had "adopted the maxims and principles of tinkers and cobblers;" the very men for whom you once made such protestations of love and affection; and for whose rights you were laboring so diligently and earnestly. Yes, sir, you labored hard and success-They reposed confidence in your promises, and almost, with one accord, contributed to your elevation, thinking that their interests would be safe in your hands. And now, since your acts have been in direct contradiction to your precepts, and that they have been deceived in you, and can no longer be duped into a furtherance of your projects; viper-like, you turn around and sting them to death—they who have warmed you into being, and nourished you. But, sir, the mechanical interest of the country can sustain no injury from your hands; the spirit of free institutions still warms the hearts of the American people. They are not yet prepared to say amen to all executive edicts, and at the coming elections they will rid you of your usurped power; and in the fall of 1840 hurl you from the place you have gained by false pretences, and substitute one more worthy, and one whose time and talents have always been devoted to his country, and whose sentiments are those of the bard, that

> "Honor and shame from no condition rise, Act well your part, there all the honor lies."

One who would never select such an organ to speak his views as would consent to become the calumniator and traducer of cobblers, among whom was Roger Sherman—and tinkers, among whom was General Greene; men who aided greatly in achieving the liberties of our country in those dark days "which tried men's souls;" but, on the contrary, would look upon them as upon all others, as American citizens, and pay them the same respect and attention. It is one of the greatest blessings of our republican institutions that merit will have its reward; and it is well for yourself that such is the case, or the son of an obscure tavern-keeper would now be in the neighborhood of Kinderhook,

and not known out of the precincts of his own county. Such would also have been the case with respect to your opponents, save one; and he, although of illustrious parentage, fought his own way up the ladder, and built up his own reputation. has been very justly remarked by an eminent jurist, "In our country the highest man is not above the people—the humblest man is not below the people." If the rich may be said to have additional protection, they have not additional power. Nor does wealth here form a permanent distinction of families; the richest man amongst us may be brought to the humblest level; and the child, with scarcely clothes to cover his nakedness, may rise to the highest office in our Government. And the poor man, while he rocks his infant on his knees, may justly indulge the consolation, that, if he possess talents and virtue, there is no office beyond the reach of his honorable ambition. I am astonished, sir, that any one springing from the humble place in society that you did, and most of those around you, should speak so degradingly of tinkers and cobblers, honest and hard-working mechanics. You seem to have forgotten your origin, and think the public will do the same, by your attempting to cover with infamy and disgrace all those who occupy the place in society which you once did. But it is well known in the South, that a negro, acting in the capacity of an overseer, always shows less mercy to his fellow-negroes than a white driver, and delights to inflict punishment upon them, in order to show his authority and consequence. Those conversant with history know that when a weak and wicked man is elevated to power, he will always abuse the trust reposed in him, and become a tyrant, if the people will permit it. Such poor misguided wretches always become insufferably proud and overbearing. But, sir, the mechanics of this country can look down with scorn and indignation, in the pride of conscious honesty, on such spoil-pampered aristocrats, who have grown fat and insulting upon the offals of the public Treasury. They know you, sir, and have put a mark upon you; and through the ballot-boxes, at the coming elections, will let you know that you are not to indulge in your invective at their expense.

LUCY KENNEY.

Washington, September 18, 1838.

The following letter, from a distinguished friend, is here appended, as well for the edification of your excellency, as for the gratification of my whig friends throughout the country;

My Dear Madam: It affords me great pleasure to comply with your request for me to give you my opinions concerning your "pamphlet;" for the gift of which you will please accept my warm thanks. To all that you have written, I say, Amen and Amen.

Napoleon expelled Madame de Stael from his empire for her political sins; but it will be impossible for Martin to banish you from his republic.

Shun Van Buren as the dominant spirit of a political hell; but court Clay, as the anxiously looked for restorer of a political

heaven.

Frown upon fanatic abolitionists as public demons. They do not know that slaves in the South are better clad and fed, more

happy, and less burdened, than paupers in the North.

Restore the United States Bank, as the best patron of the "American system" of industry. Jackson pulled her down; not because she was unfaithful to her charter, but because she refused to be made the political machine of his party.

In conclusion, it will be as easy for you to remove Van Buren from the presidential chair, as for you to place Clay in his

stead; and the whigs will deify you.

WM. DARLINGTON.

### Miss Lucy Kenney.

Perhaps it may not be uninteresting to your excellency to be informed that, at the Mechanics' celebration in Philadelphia, (cobblers, tinkers, and all,) of the event of the resumption of specie payments, it was declared that the publications of Lucy Kenney had revolutionized the State of Pennsylvania, and would, in the end, make CLAY the President of the United States.

LUCY KENNEY.

### A SATIRE:

BEING A REJOINDER

#### TO A REPLY BY MRS. E. RUNNELLS

TO MY LETTER

#### IN VINDICATION OF THE NAVY.

I have been induced, after much persuasion and hesitation, to make the following remarks, thereby violating a determination long since made, and by which, I trust, I have always been governed, never to be drawn into a controversy with any one whose place and standing in society did not command the notice and attention of the respectable and intelligent portion of the community. But, it having been intimated that my silence may be misconstrued, I have, upon reflection, thought it advisable to give publicity to the reasons why I have remained silent since the publication of an answer to my last letter, and why, in future, I shall preserve the same silence towards any production of this highly-gifted and talented authoress and biographer: the first and chief of which is, that I would compromise my own dignity as much by condescending to notice this fair and notorious lady, as by refusing to notice him and those whose cause she espouses. As regards this particular publication, however great may be my disposition to answer it, it is almost impossible to indulge it, for, with the perusal of such a tissue of nonsense, I never but once before had my patience so tasked, and that was in reading the Life of this very distinguished character; however, as I have been reluctantly compelled to say so much, I will say a few words upon this reply to my letter to Mr. Van Buren. force of her remarks (if, in the fertile imagination of any, they can be supposed to contain force) is directed against the United States Bank, an institution respecting which, in my letter (to which hers is intended as an answer) I said not a word. This digression, however, is excusable, it happening in one o

the sex whose exclusive attention it is almost impossible to give to any subject save one, and that presenting itself at a time of life long since passed by my honorable disputant. However, as I am always disposed to do justice to merit, even though it should be in an adversary, I am constrained to acknowledge, notwitstanding what I have just said, that her remarks have not been without effect. The bank has felt the blow, and could scarcely withstand its force; it is now tottering under it, and only remains to receive another from the same source in order to be completely prostrated and overthrown. Upon the arrival of this production in Philadelphia, which was sent to the monster, Nicholas, post-haste, by some of his friends in Washington, who felt great apprehension concerning the well-being of the bank after reading it, a messenger was immediately despatched to the several directors, requesting them to meet in their banking-room instanter, to take into consideration some mode in which to meet this able and argumentative document, which so much threatened to annihilate the existence of the bank. Several plans were proposed and discussed; but the only one engaging much attention was the practibility of enlisting the services of this very lady to prop up their falling fortunes, which she had just been engaged in battering down, each one present feeling himself incompetent to the task; and it was unanimously conceded that this would be the most effectual mode of preventing the downfall of the bank, if they could but succeed in employing her aid; but many doubted its feasibility—some upon the ground of her purity of purpose and the impossibility of her being bought up, and others the amount required to do so, as no doubt her pen had been well gilded in a golden stream that flows so profusely from a certain Department. These objections were well weighed and considered; when it was determined, by the meager majority of one vote, to abandon the idea; the others believing it would be better to risk a refusal and consequent exposure than to abandon themselves to the mercy of the public without this strong arm of reason to shield and protect them, their motto being "No venture, no have." And, I am persuaded, if the majority had been gifted with the faculty of prescience, and could have foreseen the consequences of this letter, (to them so much dreaded,) they would have united to a man, and proffered the whole surplus of the bank to obtain her valuable

services, even though there was held out but the faintest prospect of success. It is said that "honesty is the best policy." and I must confess that, after reading her reply to my letter. although the remarks of a personal nature applied to myself were not characteristic of the chaste and immaculate person from whom they came, I was almost compelled to forget my own wrongs and the severe castigation she gave me, and, from the fulness of my heart, cry out, Amen, amen! My natural generosity of soul prompted me to it, and I should doubtless have given utterance to my feelings, but for that innate craving and selfish passion which seems incorporated with my very existence, and to which every other feeling and passion is subject—that passion which is fed by the dazzle and glitter of filthy lucre, the profligate source of vice and corruption. Ah! money, money, how many sins you will have to answer for! At your shrine, how many distinguished and favored friends of the present administration, with whose success the author has identified herself, have fallen martyrs, and the fair places their names once occupied upon the standard of honor and distinction, now so many black spots held out as beacons to deter others, who may be so unfortunate as to possess the same propensity, from like transgression. But, at the same time, as every evil has its good, I must not forget this old friend in whose acquaintance I so much delight, although at times he has been quite refractory and turned his back upon me, for he has some very commendable and good traits of character, the most prominent of which are sincerity and firmness of attachment. When all others have deserted you, he remains firm and unwavering; and, at such times, if you have or can get his acquaintance, he exerts a powerful and peculiar influence in regaining the smiles and favors of lost friends, or acquiring new ones; and, for this very quality, though it be unsupported by others, I am determined never uncerimoniously to cut his acquaintance, but clinch his hand so long as he extends it. Nevertheless, if any thing could have induced me to disregard his favors, it would have been this very answer to that letter, which contributed so much towards our intimacy of acquaintance.

But, aside from the bank, the writer attempts to answer one of my charges—that of gross mismanagement in fitting out the exploring expedition; and, after charging me with ignorance

upon the subject, very candidly acknowledges herself so, and wisely leaves it to others more able than herself to rebut. Before doing so, she remarks, "No doubt every measure was adopted to carry it through with wisdom, honor, and safety, [would that they could adopt some measures to become more wise—then most probably some of the subjects which the lady suggests as being more suitable to my sex would engross much of that time which I conceive it is now my duty to give to these stumblers and experimenters, as it was their interest to do so." Yes, it would be to their interest to adopt measures to carry out their measures with wisdom; but this is the very something which it is necessary to have in order to adopt proper measures. It is wisdom which dictates proper measures; but measures born and nurtured in the very lap of ignorance and impudence cannot be productive of much good or conducted with wisdom, so long as they are intrusted to the care of those with whom they originated, and should any good result from them, it would be by accident, and not the consequence of well-matured plans and design. As another inducement that these measures should be well matured and properly considered before their adoption, she says, with them rested the responsibility. I ask, what responsibility? The responsibility of this act and measure; and it was for this very responsibility that I thought proper to hold them up, in all their blackness and depravity, to the scorn and contempt of the public. In this very same sentence she says, "to err is human, to forgive divine;" the first half of which remark is fully exemplified in the case of the individuals whom she has undertaken to defend; but the latter part, although one of the noblest attributes, does not belong to the American people when they find their servants guilty of gross and culpable neglect and mismanagement. And, as the honorable lady's bosom seems to be the seat of such patriotism, I am astonished to find her possessed of so much mercy and charity when the dearest institutions of her country, for which she professes so much regard, are assailed, and that too by those to whose guidance they had been intrusted. I will here state, for her information and that of others, that I shall in future expose abuse and corruption wherever I may find it in any of the Departments or in any public servant, but only in these, which I consider to be the property of the public and responsible to the public.

In another part of her letter, she alleges that I reflected upon the humble origin of Mr. Van Buren. A greater falsehood could not have been uttered; in proof of which, I refer the reader to my letter in which the charge is said to be contained. It will there be found that, instead of saving aught against that condition in life from which Mr. Van Buren sprung, I upbraided him for attempting to cast reproach upon that very condition; remarking that he should not forget from it he himself arose. It was introduced in speaking of the blessings of the institutions of our country, which gave to none office or distinction on account of wealth or name, but opened alike the road of preferment to the poor and the rich, to the humble in birth, and the high; that they recognised no distinction, or else the present incumbent of the executive chair would be elsewhere than where he now is; and that I thought it ill became him to turn around and attempt to brand with infamy those who occupied the same place in society that he once did, and for no other reason than of that occupancy.

In another part of her reply, she charges me with contradicting in one part of my letter that which I said in another, in attributing in one place the attack upon the navy to the President, and in another to the Globe. When speaking of the Globe, my readers, at least all but those of the most limited comprehension, understood me as meaning the whole clique of those who conduct it, *i. e.* editorially, and him whose views in particular it spoke. Indeed, I distinctly stated that, although he might not have written it, it received his sanction; and, according to the pledge given to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor, took the responsibility. It was upon this ground that I addressed the letter to him, and, in it, held him accountable for the evil doings of his underlings, if, indeed, it

Speaking of this pledge reminds me of another portion of the lady's letter, that charging me with inconsistency in supporting General Jackson and opposing the newly-made hero, Mr. Van Buren, as the latter pledged himself to carry out the measures of the former. In my letter I said not a word about any of the measures of Mr. Van Buren, save the one which called forth the remarks; and I now ask this lady, or others more informed, to point out in any communication of President Jackson, or in any column of the Globe during his ad-

was not his own act.

ministration, one word of reproach upon the character of our navy. If she can succeed in this, I will then confess myself convicted of inconsistency, for the sake of an inducement to make the investigation; for I know well, notwithstanding the lady has been an attentive reader of the Globe, she is as ignorant of what General Jackson said or did, and what has from time to time appeared in the Globe, as she is of the subject of which I treated, and to which she has attempted a reply. However, because I was an admirer of General Jackson is no reason that I should be one of Mr. Van Buren; as the two characters are entirely distinct, the one being honorable and high-minded, the other, low, groveling, and intriguing; and, the mere fact of his pledging himself to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor, instead of recommending him to my favor, would of itself be sufficient to destroy any favorable opinion I might previously have entertained of him, the sentiment being entirely too cringing and subservient to be entertained, much less proclaimed, by an aspirant to the chief magistracy of this Union. Apart from this, there were many of General Jackson's measures which never received any favor at my hands; and it is those measures, in addition to others which have been recommended and introduced since his retirement, that have been most pertinaciously advanced and insisted upon by the present incumbent. Even though I approved of all the late President did or recommended, I should be very loath indeed to rely on a pledge of Mr. Van Buren to move in his footsteps; knowing as well as I do how little dependance is to be placed upon his words and promises, as his whole life, since he entered upon the field of politics, has been made up of inconsistencies. He has availed himself of every political hobby upon which there was a prospect of riding into power, looking only to the end, and not regarding the means by which he attained it; but, as his character in this respect is so well known and understood, I think I would be tasking the patience of my readers too much to say any thing more upon this head.

The remarks of the lady in speaking of me personally are too highly imbued with the spirit of her character—black-guardism—to receive a comment, and go farther than aught I could say to acquaint her readers with the character of the

source from whence they came.

Before concluding this letter, which already covers more

space than I intended it should, I will say a few words upon the subject of democracy, about which the lady, as well as her party, have so much prattle and clatter. There is not a greater piece of humbuggery now extant than this very same democracy. It means any thing and every thing. The most opposite and apparently irreconcilable extremes are brought together and made to unite in harmony under its great latitude of interpretation and construction. It is one of the most charitable and accommodating words in our vocabulary, having a definition keeping pace with the changes and evolutions of a certain class of men who have thought proper to avail themselves of its charm and enchantment of name, and its facility of transmutation, to carry out their purposes. To-day it means leaving all power in the hands of the people, from whence it came; to-morrow, concentrating it in the hands of the Executive. One day condemning the interference of officers of the Government with the freedom of elections; the next day, recommending such interference as being the only passport to favor and office, and as the only proper means of demonstrating their loyalty and fealty. To-day it means the most implicit obedience in office-holders to the will of their constituents; tomorrow, any low intrigue and chicanery, or even violation of oath, to defeat that will. In fine, as I say above, it means any and every thing which will advance or subserve the interest of a particular party, and directly the opposite of what it meant with those with whom it originated. I have now done.

Respectfully,

LUCY KENNEY.

