

Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections

<http://archives.dickinson.edu/>

Documents Online

Title: Letter from Joseph Trumbull to James Lanman

Date: March 9, 1840

Location: I-SpahrB-1960-5

Contact:

Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

Washington City March 9th 1840

My Dear Sir,

Your very acceptable letter reached me by due course of mail and I am much obliged to you for the suggestions which it contains - You have been in this City long enough to learn many of the interests & considerations that operate in its vicinity, but which do not make their appearance in public -

I am convinced that as a nation we are not improving in politics a sword, nor do I perceive how we can unless a better example shall be set by rulers - Our house is a perfect Bedlam and the Senate seems to me to have degenerated since you had the honor of a seat in it - Mr. Buchanan has within a few days been quite exasperated with Gov. Davis at what he calls misrepresentations of his remarks in Mr. Davis's published speech. Mr. Davis avows that he wrote it out with an intention to state what he said in answer to Mr. B. in the senate - and those who were present did not hesitate to state that it was according to their recollection -

Mr. Buchanan did not at the time complain & it is the general opinion, so far as I know, that he had no cause of complaint then or since - The truth is Mr. B.'s remarks as to the redemption of price for labor have been handled rather indignantly by the people & he would like to modify a little. -

Mr. Walker took part in the same debate & both of them were understood to take the ground that the banks must not be permitted have the control of the currency - Mr. Walker was rather the most violent but there seemed at the time to be but little difference of sentiment - Mr. Walker's speech is in the hands of the public, though it is said that an attempt has been made to suppress it - certain it is that I have found great difficulty in obtaining a single copy, which I was requested by a friend to send to Hartford - He uses language that fully justifies Mr. Davis in all he has said by way of answer. —

The New Jersey matter is not yet fully disposed of, but the adminⁿ. party have the power, with the aid of Nullifiers to place the five Low members in their seats - & probably will do so within a few days - They will then be able to pass the Independent Treasury Bill as was done by the Senate —

They are now asking for \$5,000,000 Treasury notes & it is that they will want as much more before Congress adjourns -

So you see the paper currency is needed to help on the hard money project - and thus the cunning & the juggling of the whole plan is developed - The truth is, they intend to get control of the money power & then they will attempt, & perhaps successfully, to bring into subjection all the banks that will not submit to orders - If Mr. Van Buren succeeds in his designs we shall have a strong government. We shall be permitted to go through with the forms of voting

and in some instances without restriction; but when a President is to be elected - or any measure important to the administration is needed - the result of a struggle at the ballot boxes, will be known as well before & after the contest is ended -

Our only hope is in the fight which is now in progress & which will terminate in Nov. Both parties duly estimate its importance, and Mr. Benton says it will be a tight fight.

The Whig party feel in good spirits, & nothing hitherto has occurred to lessen their hope of success - It is now evident that Harrison was the strongest candidate the Convention had before them at Harrisburg - and I do not know of a single man who would have sustained either of the other candidates that will not vote for Harrison - We are all united in opposition to Mr. Van Buren, & thus far the temper of the opposition indicates all we can wish - With hard fighting we may probably succeed, but without it we shall certainly fail; for we have to contend with fearful odds - Our Whig & Non-Whig friends are exceedingly anxious for Connecticut, on account of its influence without the State, as well & within - We know that Mr. Giles has written here, that the Whigs will be defeated next month & that Com. is safe for Mr. Van Buren in the fall - Our accounts are very different, & we trust the event will be different from his prediction - & that he will not be Gov. this year - However we must urge our friends to the utmost exertions

as every powerful influence will be used by the Ent. Govt to
bring little Government under the yoke —

I don't doubt you will put to your shoulder & we put
great confidence in all our Norwiche friends —

Remain with much respect

Your Obed. Servant

Jos. Turnbull

M.C. Cowen

Washington City March 9th. 1840

My Dear Sir,

Your very acceptable letter reached me by due course of mail and I am much obliged to you for the suggestions which it contains - You have been in this City long enough to learn many of the interests & considerations that operate in its vicinity, but which do not make their appearance in public - I am convinced that as a nation we are not improving in politics or morals, nor do I perceive how we can unless a better example shall be set by rulers - Our house is a perfect Bedlam and the Senate seems to me to have degenerated since you had the honor of a seat in it - Mr. Buchannon has within a few days been quite exasperated with Gov. Davis at what he calls misrepresentations of his remarks in Mr. Davis' published speech. Mr. Davis avers that he wrote it out with an intention to state what he said in answer to Mr. B. in the senate - and those who were present did not hesitate to state that it was according to their recollection -

Mr. Buchannon did not at the time complain & it is the general opinion, so far as I know, that he had no course of complaint then or since - The truth is Mr. B's. remarks as to the reduction of price for labor have been handled rather indignantly by the people & he would like to modify a little. -

Mr. Walker took part in the same debate & both of them were understood to take the ground that the banks must not be permitted have the control of the currency - Mr. Walker was rather the most violent but there seemed at the time to be but little difference of sentiment. - Mr. Walkers speech is in the hands of the public, though it is said that an attempt has been made to suppress it -

Certain it is that I have found great difficulty in obtaining a single copy, which I was requested by a friend to send to Hartford - He uses language that fully justifies Mr. Davis in all he has said by way of answer. -

The New Jersey matter is not yet fully disposed of, but the admin. party have the power, with the aid of Nullifiers to place the five Low members in their seats - & probably will do so within a few days - They will then be able to pass the Independent Treasury Bill as was done by the Senate -

They are now asking for \$5,000,000 Treasury Notes & it is thot. they will want as much more before Congress adjourns - So you see the paper currency is needed to help on the hard money project - and thus the cunning & the juggling of the whole plan is developed - The truth is, they intend to get control of the money power & then they will attempt, & perhaps successfully, to bring into subjection all the banks that will not submit to orders - If Mr. Van Buren succeeds in his designs we shall have a strong government. We shall be permitted to go through with the forms of voting and in some instances without obstruction; but when a President is to be elected - or any measure important to the administration is needed - the result of a struggle at the ballot boxes, will be known as ^ewill before & after the the contest is ended -

Our only hope is in the fight which is now in progress & which will terminate in Nov. - Both parties duly estimate its importance, and Mr. Benton says it will be a tight fight.

The Harrison party feel in good spirits, & nothing hitherto has occurred to lessen their hope of success - It is now evident that Harrison was the strongest candidate the Convention had before

them at Harrisburg - and I do not know of a single man who would have sustained either of the other candidates that will not vote for Harrison - We are all united in opposition to Mr. V. Buren, & thus far the temper of the opposition indicates all we can wish - With hard fighting we may probably succeed, but without it we shall certainly fail; for we have to contend with fearful odds - Our Whig & Conservative friends are exceedingly anxious for Connecticut, on account of its influence without the State, as well as within - We know that Mr. Niles has written here, that the Whigs will be defeated next month & that Conn. is safe for Mr. Van Buren in the fall - Our accounts are very different, & we trust the event will be different from his prediction - & that he will not be Gov. this year -

However we must urge our friends to the utmost exertion or very powerful influences will be used by the Genl. Govt. to bring little Connecticut under the yoke -

I do not doubt you will put to your shoulder & we feel great confidence in all our Norwich friends -

I remain with much respect

Your Obedt. Servant

Jos. Trumbull