

Washington February 11th 1824

Dear Sir

Not being able to wait on you as I intended, for the purpose of conversing on the subject of yours of the 9th inst, I am reduced to this less desirable mode of answering it. In doing so, no considerations, except those of a publick nature will influence me; and these are considerably weakened by my ignorance, and your superior information, as to the claims and capacities of those who are candidates for the appointment you mention; so that my impressions are nearly the same as those communicated to you on a former occasion. I still entertain no desire to interfere in the present case, and harbour no anxiety in relation to any individual except the gentleman formerly mentioned to you, whose fine talents and valuable qualities are so covered and suppressed by a heavy weight of debt, that there is imminent danger of their being lost to the publick, to his family and to himself, unless he is speedily snatched from impending ruin. — If therefore a vacancy should occur in any office worth his acceptance, and to which he was competent (and there are few as to which this would not be the case) it would give me very great pleasure to see him placed in it.

As to the present case, I know none of the applicants, except Edwards and Brown, if the Governor Brown you mention is the senator from Ohio. If he is so, I have no hesitation in saying, that the former appears to me to be the best qualified for the office. Indeed, so far as my observations have extended,

July 1824
W. Poynter

These qualifications, appear to be of that order, as to throw in
the back ground those of most competitors, and to challenge a
comparison with any. From your letter I collect that they are
only opposed by the A B occurrence, and that the question is,
whether, supposing you are from other considerations inclined
to prefer this gentleman, you ought to be deterred from doing
so from that affair. To me, I confess, it does not seem to consti-
tute an objection of any weight, because I believe that no body ~~thinks~~
thinks that the president should pay any regard to anonymous
news paper publications, and because, as you observe, it would
probably be impossible to find a fit man who had not expressed
a preference for one of the competitors for the presidency. Why should
the mode of expressing this preference affect your determination?
The news papers have abounded with publications, above assumed
signatures, ten fold more objectionable than those of A B. Why should
the president fix that on a particular man, and not others? Or have
you any reason for observing more delicacy towards the candidate
concerned, than towards the others? For my part I think that the
events at the time of your first election, do not afford any grounds for
such an expectation, nor do I know that they have been expiated
by subsequent conduct. Besides, as you justly observe, the A B
story is forgotten; indeed it was never known to the mass of the
community; and therefore that it should be considered as gone
to the tomb with the rest of the anonymous publications. Indeed,
after having paid all the attention in my power to the A B
affairs, I could not think that it was devoid of merit, or moderation;

on the contrary it seems to me that the writer might have
pushed the enquiry much further, that it was useful so far
as it went as a check, that the excitement it produced was
factious and arose from prepossession, and ^{that} the writer prudently
yielding to prejudices not to be removed, abandoned much
stronger ground than he occupied.

All these observations however, are founded upon the
idea that you prefer Edwards to his competitors, and intended
to sustain my opinion, that should this be the case, the A B
affair ought not to constitute any objection to the exercise of
that preference. They are not intended in the remotest degree
to meddle with your superior information as to the qualifi-
cations of the applicants for the office in question. I am with
esteem, respect and friendship, Sir,

Your mo: ob^d serv^t

John Taylor