Tuscaloosa Jany. 4th 1831.

Sir,

Your letter through Judge Gayle has been handed to me by that Gent. I have examined its contents, & hasten to reply to such parts of it as appears to be material.

You charge me "with having committed an error in a recent publication made by me addressed to the Legislature of the state of Alabama in reply to one published by Colo. McKinley wherein I state the purport of a conversation between us in the town of Franklin some time during the last summer"

You also inform me "that to prevent being misunderstood or misrepresented, (and at the request of Colo. McK.) you have sent a written statement of the

conversation to Judge Gayle, and you call upon me to come out & say whether that statement is not substantially & strictly correct"

I must be permitted to decline calling upon that Govt. for the statement to which you refer me, I have however as you request reviewed my publication and so far from finding any thing there that requires correction, I am after the most mature reflection convinced that the statement it contains in reference to our conversation is substantially correct—

Colo. McKenley in his publication states "that I sent to him a message by you last summer assuring him that I was satisfied with his course, and that he had nothing to fear from me in the senatorial election and that I would not be a candidate" to his statement I replied in my publication, that, if Genl. Coffee made such a statement to Colo. McK. he was greatly mistaken. To Genl. Coffee's inquiries I only replied, "that I was not a

candidate, that I had not authorised any friend to announce me as such, nor did I expect to be"

This reply was made by me not without reflection, it was agreeably to my recollections of the conversation at the time it was made, and I have only to add it still continues to be my recollection after reviewing with no ordinary attention

You admit that the above statement contains the first conversation between us which was sought by you as I have stated, but you say, "that after I had an interview with the president we had another conversation in which I informed you that the president had satisfied me that Colo. McK. had recommended my Nephew to be appointed Marshal of North Alabama, and for the residue of this conversation you refer me to the statement in the hands of Judge Gayle. I have not forgotten the purport of this second conversation, nor the feelings under which it was held, and I distinctly recollect

the substance of the expressions I made use of. Long before it took place Colo. McK. promised to support the nomination of this young gentleman to that office. Finding he had deceived me, my indignation was roused by his infidelity, and in the first moments of irritation I spoke of his conduct in such terms as his duplicity inspired, these expressions I had made publicly in the presence of his friends, and I presumed that he as well as yourself had heard them. After the friendly conversation with the president to which you refer, my feelings towards him I admit were softened, but my opinion of the man remained unchanged - and I told you that had the conversation occured at an earlier period of time, I should not have spoken of his conduct in such harsh terms as I had on many occasions made use of, I may have added, that you were at liberty to to tell Colo. McK. what I said, but of this

I have no recollection, and nothing certainly was more distant from my intentions, than to charge you with the pages of friendship to him.

The best memory as you observe is liable to err, and to honorable minds it yields a pleasure to correct error, I would if convinced that I had mistated our conversation most cheerfully correct the statement, but my recollection of it is neither dim nor doubtful, and whatever impressions it made on your mind, there is not on mine the slightest doubt that I did not inform you that I was satisfied with the conduct of Colo. McK. nor that I should not become a Candidate, nor that he had nothing to fear from my opposition to him.

My friendship to the President it is true, had in some degree softened the asperity of my feeling towards him, and I was willing he should know that the intemperate expressions his conduct had called forth were the result of passion

But to have sent messages of friendship to him or to have used expressions on which he could have founded a hope that I would support him or that I would not myself become a candidate, in any manner except as referred to in the first conversation & as have been previously intimated in this letter, I must first have forgotten that he had acted deceitfully & treacherously towards me.

You express astonishment that my recollection of our conversation do not agree with your own, yet you admit that the memories of man are frail. Did it not occur to you sir, that yourself was included in this admission of fallibility, and that my recollection of what I said was probably as correct as your own? But it seems that in your own opinion, fallibility can only be predicated of others, and that you are exempt from the mistakes & errors that disturb the course of ordinary men. Had you made this reflection your letter to me I make no doubt would have been couched in a less imperious tone, & you would not have

required me in terms better adapted to an inferior than an equal, to call on Judge Gayle & correct an error I had made, & to which you uncourteously add a hope that it had not been intentionally made.

That expression sir was unworthy the station you occupy in society, & the relation that has heretofore existed between you and myself. Your mind was disturbed by passion, or you could not have been lead so far beyond the rules that regulate the intercourse of gentlemen. And whence did this passion arise? If I had made a mistake and you sought only its correction, did this afford any reason for passion? The manner of your communication and its language compell me to the conclusion that your judgement of your own motives in making it is as incorrect as your recollection of the conversation that has given rise to it.

You assure me that in addressing me on this subject & in sending me a written

a written statement to Judge Gayle of our conversation, your only object was the cor=
=rection of an error, and "that you had no intention to attempt to interfere in the election for which I was then a candidate". As you have requested me to review my statement of our conversation, permit me sir in return to re=
quest you to review the statement you have made on this subject, call to your mind that when you wrote, the election was pending, that the result was doubtful, that it was at the request of my opponent your personal & political friend, that you gave the written statement, and that you sent it not to me to whom it should have been sent if your object had been the correction of an error, but to Judge Gayle one of the electors, himself an influential friend of my opponent, and that, to use your own expression it was to be delivered to him with a request "that he would shew it to such members of the legislature & others who might wish to

know the facts therein stated" Recall these facts to your mind, and if they do not convince you that you have been actuated by less friendly motives towards me than a desire to set me right in an error, the frailty of your judgement is only to be equalled by the frailty of your memory.

In conclusion permit me to admonish you to be less arrogant & more regardful of the feelings of others in future, & should you hereafter at any time differ from a friend in your recollection of a conversation and wish the difference adjusted between you, do not insinuate against his motives, and if you write statements send them to him, and not to his political enemy, lest he believe and the world believe that you

that you are actuated by feelings
that you are not willing to avow

I am Sir
Your
Obt. Servt
Gabriel Moore

General
John Coffee