

**Amos Kendall to Andrew Jackson, August 28, 1844,
from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by
John Spencer Bassett.**

class=MsoNormal>AMOS KENDALL TO JACKSON.

Washington, August 28, 1844.

. . . . I felt a mortification, no doubt in common with yourself, at the manner in which Mr. Van Buren was treated. I may not be right; but I look upon that misfortune as the result of bad policy not intermingled with injustice in some of his most ardent friends. He was incomparably the strongest candidate for nomination; he could not have been superseded but by a combination of weaker interests against him. To my mind, it was the obvious policy of his friends to treat all the minor interests with marked courtesy and forbearance, not doubting that as the course of their respective favorites became hopeless, as, one after another it certainly would, they would successively fall in to his support, and in the end he would be nominated and reelected by acclamation. But Mr. Tyler and his friends were made inveterate enemies by open and violent denunciation, and Mr. Calhoun and his friends by indirect attacks, not undeserved, but ill-timed. Of themselves, these parties were not strong enough to effect any great object; but they had power through numberless channels to weaken Mr. Van Buren. Extensive distrust in reference to his political strength had been created before the Texas question arose, and his course upon that furnished an opportunity to give him a finishing blow. It was not until then that I despaired of his election if nominated and became at all willing that another should be substituted in his place. I verily believe, however, that had a mild course been pursued towards the friends of Tyler and Calhoun from the beginning, the mischief-makers would have found themselves powerless throughout, and that Mr. Van Buren would have been reelected.

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It was fortunate that after the surrender of Mr. Van Buren, the convention concentrated on one so unexceptionable as Mr. Polk. How little the real mischief-makers are satisfied with him, we may judge from the course of Mr. Rhett and his friends in South Carolina. That man, more than any other, was at the botton of all the quibbling about the manner of constituting the convention and of all the attacks on Mr. V. B. about the Tariff, etc. his object being apparently to break up the Democratic Party with a view of breaking up the union itself. I am happy to say, however, that Mr. Calhoun and his best friends, do not give countenance to these traitorous movements. "A burnt child dreads the fire." Mr. Rhett, I hope and believe, will stand alone in Congress as the advocate of any thing which looks like disunion.