

**THE NATIONAL CAPITAL IS MOVABLE;  
OR, FACTS AND ARGUMENTS IN  
FAVOR  
OF THE REMOVAL OF THE NATIONAL  
CAPITAL, TO THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY**

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The National Capital is Movable; Or, Facts and Arguments in Favor of the Removal of the National capital, to the Mississippi valley by L. U. Reavis

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**L. U. REAVIS**

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*Let us go to the audience of the people with our facts and our cause,  
told in our own style and language.—Gov. WM. GILPIN.*

*Westward the course of Empire takes its way.*

[BERKELEY.]

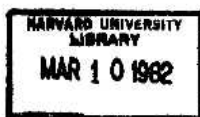
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**Epitaph.**

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**TO WILLIAM GILPIN,**

**A MAN**

**OF RARE GENIUS AND ADVANCED THOUGHT,**

**A PROPHET AND**

**PIONEER OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION,**

**ARE THESE**

**PAGES FRATERNALLY INSCRIBED**

**BY**

**THE AUTHOR.**





THE  
CAPITAL QUESTION.

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AN ARGUMENT FOR THE PEOPLE.

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"Let us go to the audience of the people with our facts and our cause, told in our own style and language."—Gov. WM. GILPIN.

Since the beginning of the agitation for the removal of the National Capital, the discussion has been steadily and vigorously prosecuted in the most satisfactory manner to the friends of the cause. Everywhere the intelligent mind realizes that it is a great question growing up in the hearts of the people—a great national question, which the growth of the Republic and the mightiness of the people have forced upon the country, as by the powerful working of an inherent law of our continental progress. Nor is the question one of a local or sectional character, whose only success depends upon the triumph of a fanatical partisan foe over an equally persistent but defeated opponent. Not so! This question of the removal of the seat of government is in the highest degree a national and a continental question. National, because the whole people are alike interested in the adaptability of a fixed locality for the seat of empire. Continental, because the seat of the National Legislature, fixed in the heart of the nation, gives double assurance to the conception of the continental supremacy of our Constitution.

With this simple statement we at once ascend to the grandeur of the subject, and if its logic and importance could possibly be realized by all the American people, no further argument would be necessary to insure the speedy removal of the Capital from the Potomac to the Mississippi. Knowing, however, that timely as the agitation and discussion may be, it is still neces-

sary, to the success of our cause, that the public mind be made familiar with the various arguments that bear upon the subject, I will present a few as I understand them. But, before I begin my special pleadings, I will ask, is the nation ready for the question? I answer, Yes!

### I. THE RIGHT OF DISCUSSION.

The right to discuss all questions relating to the well-being of this people and nation is inherent; it is a privilege derived from the organic nature of the government, and alike the same in all the States and to all the people. Standing upon this broad basis of political right, you must know that the subject of the removal of the National Capital is a legitimate subject for the American people to discuss

### II. THE BASIS OF DISCUSSION.

At the base of the discussion:

1. It is assumed by the friends of Capital removal that the fathers of the country, in the exercise of the power to remove the seat of the general government from New York to its present place, legislated for themselves as they thought best, and selected for the new seat of government a place central to the then existing States of the young Republic. It was their right to legislate for themselves; they did so according to their judgment and their wants.

2. It is assumed by the friends of Capital removal that this people have the same right to legislate for themselves as our fathers had for themselves, and that it is their right to legislate for themselves according to their judgment and their wants, and that the wants of this people, though the same in principle, are not the same in character.

3. That the Capital which was then suited to the wants of an infant nation, born on a narrow strip of land on the shore of the Atlantic, is not now suited to the wants of a Republic whose territorial relations to the Capital of 1790 are entirely changed, thus making a new Capital for the nation imperative.

4. It is assumed by the friends of Capital removal that the seat of government, at its present place, is not adapted to the national life, nor to the wants of our continental people; that, at every stage of the national growth, Washington City is rendered less fit to be the Capital of this nation, and that therefore

the Capital ought to be removed to some more central and convenient place in the wide domain of this continental commonwealth.

5. It is assumed by the friends of Capital removal that, inasmuch as this is "a government of the people and by the people and for the people," its Capital ought to be central and convenient to the great majority of the people who are to be its guardians and defenders.

6. It is assumed by the friends of Capital removal that the center of human power in this nation will be fixed and organized, at an early date, in the center of the productive energies of the country, and that against the truth of this assumption no argument can be made.

In elaboration of the foregoing propositions as the basis of the discussion, attention is asked to the argument of the question.

### III. THE ARGUMENT.

At the very outset of the presentation of the argument, let me suppose that some opponent to the movement asks, Why do we want the Capital removed? What good will its removal subservise to the general interest of the government? I answer: That the Capital of a nation, in its true relations to government, must serve a double purpose. Not only is it necessary for it to be the seat of the national legislation and the governmental power of the country, but with equal necessity must it be representative in its influence of civilization upon the character of the nation. All history furnishes evidence of the truth of this position. Scarcely was there a nation of antiquity whose Capital was not also its representative city. The middle ages furnish the strongest evidence of this truth in their city States. Where the power is, there is essentially the Capital, and it is a universal law that power is essentially central. It is imperfection alone that establishes it outside the center. All laws, human and divine, are at best only means to regulate the action and tendency of man and things; and if the conventional power to regulate by legislation is fixed within the influence of the absolute power of control, the reciprocal influence of the one upon the other will be most beneficial to the whole people. This is what the friends of Capital removal seek to establish in this great Republic, as the greatest fact of its material life.