

ary sages had gradually fallen out of the ranks of leadership; and the influences of the Revolution were not any longer distinctly felt in the decision of national questions. Even the war of 1812, with its bitter party antagonisms, its defeats and victories, and its absurd ending, was fading out of memory. New dispositions and tastes arose among the people; new issues confronted the public; new methods prevailed in the halls of legislation. Old party lines could no longer be traced; old party names were reduced to a jargon. Already the United States had surpassed in growth and development the sanguine expectations of the fathers. But the conflicting opinions and interests of the nation, reflected in the stormy debates of Congress, gave cause for constant anxiety and alarm.

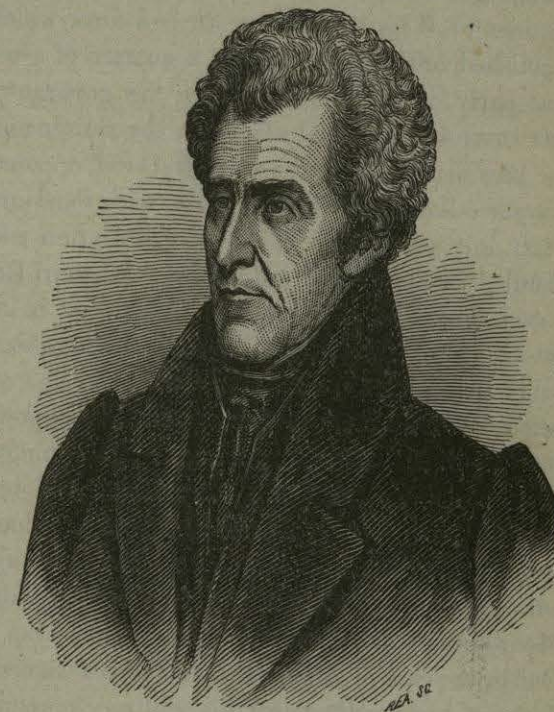
With the fall of 1828 came another presidential election. The contest was specially exciting. Mr. Adams, supported by Mr. Clay, the secretary of state, was put forward for re-election. In accordance with an understanding which had existed for several years, General Jackson appeared as the candidate of the opposition. In the previous election Jackson had received more electoral votes than Adams; but disregarding the popular preference, the House of Representatives had chosen the latter. Now the people were determined to have their way; and Jackson was triumphantly elected, receiving a hundred and seventy-eight electoral votes against eighty-three for his opponent. As soon as the election was over, the excitement—as usual in such cases—abated; and the thoughts of the people were turned to other subjects.

#### CHAPTER LIV.

##### JACKSON'S ADMINISTRATION, 1829-1837.

THE new President was a native of North Carolina, born on the Waxhaw, March 15th, 1767. His belligerent nature broke out in boyhood, and his mother's plan of devoting him to the ministry was hopelessly defeated. At the age of thirteen he was under arms and witnessed Sumter's defeat at Hanging Rock. He was captured by the British, maltreated, and left to die of smallpox; but his mother secured his release from prison and his life was saved. After the Revolution he began the study of law, and at the age of twenty-one went

to Nashville. In 1796 he was elected to the House of Representatives from the new State of Tennessee. Here his turbulent and willful disposition manifested itself in full force. During the next year he was promoted to the Senate, where he remained a year, *without making a speech or casting a vote.* He then resigned his seat and returned home. His subsequent career is a part of the history of the country, more particularly of the South-west with which section his name was identified. He came to the presidential office as a military hero. But he was more than that: a man of great native powers and inflexible honesty. His talents were strong but unpolished; his integrity unassailable; his will like iron. He was one of those men



ANDREW JACKSON.

for whom no toils are too arduous, no responsibility too great. His personal character was strongly impressed upon his administration. Believing that the public affairs would be best conducted by such means, he removed nearly seven hundred office-holders, and appointed in their stead his own political friends. In defence of such a course the precedent established by Mr. Jefferson was pleaded.

In his first annual message the President took strong grounds against rechartering the Bank of the United States. Believing that institution to be, both inexpedient and unconstitutional, he recommended that the old charter should be allowed to expire by its own limitation in 1836. But the influence of the bank, with its many branches, was very great; and in 1832 a bill to recharter was brought before Congress and passed. To this measure the President opposed his veto; and since a two-thirds majority in favor of the bill could not

be secured, the proposition to grant a new charter failed, and the bank ceased by the original limitation.

It was in the early part of Jackson's administration that the partisan elements of the country, which for some years had been whirling about in a chaotic condition, was resolved into the two great factions of *Whig* and *Democratic*—a form which remained as the established order in politics for a quarter of a century. The old Federal party, under whose auspices the government was organized, had lost control of national affairs on the retirement of John Adams from the presidency. Still the party lingered, opposed the war of 1812, and became odious from its connection with the Hartford Convention. In 1820 only enough of the old organization remained to be severely handled in the great debates on the Missouri Compromise. Then followed, during Monroe's second term, what is known in American political history as THE ERA OF GOOD FEELING. Partisanship seemed ready to expire. On the other side, the line of political descent had begun with the anti-Federalists who after opposing the National constitution and the administrative policy of Washington and Adams, became under the name of *Republicans* the champions of France as against Great Britain. But this name was soon exchanged for that of *Democrats*; and under that title the party came into power with the administration of Jefferson. Then followed the administrations of Madison, Monroe, and John Quincy Adams under the same political banner. But in the case of Adams the new forces were already at work. When Jackson became President his arbitrary measures alarmed the country and drove all the elements of the opposition into a compact phalanx under the leadership of Clay and Webster. To this new party organization the name of *Whig* was given—a name taken from the old Scotch Covenanters and English republicans of the seventeenth century, worn by the patriots of the American Revolution to distinguish them from the Tories, and now adopted as the permanent title of the opponents of Jeffersonian Democracy.

The reopening of the tariff question occasioned great excitement in Congress and throughout the country. In the session of 1831-32 additional duties were levied upon manufactured goods imported from abroad. By this act the manufacturing districts were again favored at the expense of the agricultural States. South Carolina was specially offended. A great convention of her people was held, and it was resolved that the tariff-law of Congress was unconstitutional, and therefore null and void. Open resistance was threatened in case the officers of the government should attempt to collect the revenues in

the harbor of Charleston. In the United States Senate the right of a State, under certain circumstances, to nullify an act of Congress was boldly proclaimed. On that issue occurred the famous debate between the eloquent Colonel Hayne, senator from South Carolina, and Daniel Webster of Massachusetts, perhaps the greatest master of American oratory. The former appeared as the champion of State rights, and the latter as the advocate of constitutional supremacy.

But the question was not decided by debate. The President took the matter in hand and issued a proclamation denying the right of any State to nullify the laws of Congress. But Mr. Calhoun, the Vice-President, resigned his



DANIEL WEBSTER.

office to accept a seat in the Senate, where he might better defend the doctrines of his State. The President, having warned the people of South Carolina against pursuing those doctrines further, ordered a body of troops under General Scott to proceed to Charleston, and also sent thither a man-of-war. At this display of force the leaders of the nullifying party quailed and receded from their position. Bloodshed was happily avoided; and in the following spring the excitement was allayed by a compromise. Mr. Clay brought forward and secured the passage of a bill providing for a gradual reduction of the duties complained of until, at the end of ten years, they should reach the standard demanded by the South.

In the spring of 1832 the Sac, Fox and Winnebago Indians of Wisconsin Territory began a war. They were incited and led by the famous chief Black Hawk, who, like many great sachems before him, believed in the possibility of an Indian confederacy sufficiently powerful to beat back the whites. The lands of the Sacs and Foxes,

lying in the Rock River country of Illinois, had been purchased by the government twenty-five years previously. The Indians, however, remained in the ceded territory, since there was no occasion for immediate occupation by the whites. When at last, after a quarter of a century, the Indians were required to give possession, they caviled at the old treaty, and refused to comply. The government insisted that the Red men should fulfill their contract, and hostilities began on the frontier. The governor of Illinois called out the militia, and General Scott was sent with nine companies of artillery to Chicago. At that place his force was overtaken with the cholera, and he was prevented from co-operating with the troops of General Atkinson. The latter, however, waged a vigorous campaign against the Indians, defeated them in several actions, and made Black Hawk prisoner. The captive chieftain was taken to Washington and the great cities of the East, where his understanding was opened as to the power of the nation against which he had been foolish enough to lift his hatchet. Returning to his own people, he advised them that resistance was hopeless. The warriors then abandoned the disputed lands and retired into Iowa.

Difficulties also arose with the Cherokees of Georgia. These were the most civilized and humane of all the Indian nations. They had adopted the manners of the whites. They had pleasant farms, goodly towns, schools, printing-presses, a written code of laws. The government of the United States had given to Georgia a pledge to purchase the Cherokee lands for the benefit of the State. The pledge was not fulfilled; the authorities of Georgia grew tired of waiting for the removal of the Indians; and the legislature passed a statute by which the government of the Red men was abrogated and the laws of the State extended over the Indian domain. With singular illiberality, it was at the same time enacted that the Cherokees and Creeks should not have the use of the State courts or the protection of the laws. This code, however, was declared unconstitutional by the supreme court of the United States. The Indians then appealed to the President for help; but he refused to interpose between them and the laws of Georgia. He also recommended the removal of the Cherokees to lands beyond the Mississippi; and with this end in view, THE INDIAN TERRITORY was organized in the year 1834. The Indians yielded with great reluctance. More than five million dollars were paid them for their lands; but still they clung to their homes. At last General Scott was ordered to remove them to the new territory, using force if necessary to accomplish the work. The years 1837-38 were oc-



LAND OF THE SEMINOLES.

cupied with the final transfer of the Cherokees to their homes in the West.

More serious still was the conflict with the Seminoles of Florida. The trouble arose from an attempt on the part of the government to remove the tribe to a new domain beyond the Mississippi. Hostilities began in 1835, and continued for four years. The chief of the Seminoles was Osceola, a half-breed of great talents and audacity. He and Micanopy, another chieftain, denied the validity of a former treaty by which the Seminole lands had been ceded to the government. So haughty was the bearing of Osceola that General Thompson, the agent of the government in Florida, arrested him and put him in irons. The red warrior dissembled his purpose, gave his assent to the old treaty, and was liberated. As might have been foreseen, he immediately entered into a conspiracy to slaughter the whites and devastate the country.

At this time the interior of Florida was held by General Clinch, who had his headquarters at Fort Drane, seventy-five miles south-west from St. Augustine. The post was considered in danger; and Major Dade with a hundred and seventeen men was despatched from Fort Brooke, at the head of Tampa Bay, to reinforce General Clinch. After marching about half the distance, Dade's forces fell into an ambush, and were all massacred except one man who was left alive under a heap of the dead. On the same day Osceola, with a band of warriors, prowling around Fort King, on the Ocklawaha, surrounded a storehouse where General Thompson was dining with a company of friends. The savages poured in a murderous fire, and then rushed forward and scalped the dead before the garrison of the fort, only two hundred and fifty yards away, could bring assistance. General Thompson's body was pierced by fifteen balls; and four of his nine companions were killed.

On the 31st of December General Clinch fought a battle with the Indians on the banks of the Withlacoochie. The savages were repulsed, but Clinch thought it prudent to retreat to Fort Drane. In the following February General Scott took command of the American forces in Florida. On the 29th of the same month General Gaines, who was advancing from the West with a force of a thousand men for the relief of Fort Drane, was attacked near the battle-field where Clinch had fought. The Seminoles made a furious onset, but were repulsed with severe losses. In May some straggling Creeks who still remained in the country began hostilities; but they were soon subdued and compelled to seek their reservation beyond the Missis-

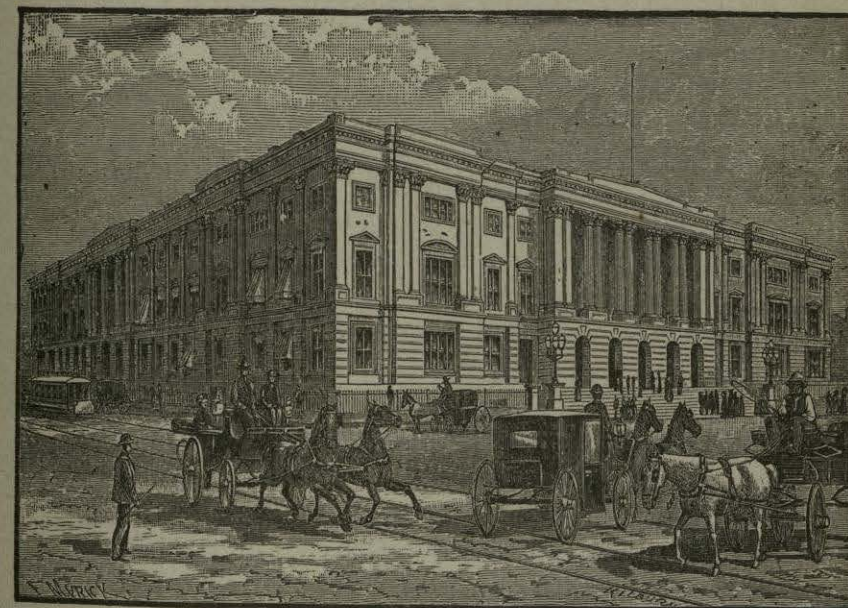
issippi. In October of 1836 Governor Call of Florida marched with a force of two thousand men against the Indians of the interior. A division of his army overtook the enemy in the Wahoo Swamp, a short distance from the scene of Dade's massacre. A battle ensued, and the Indians were driven into the Everglades with considerable losses. Soon afterward another engagement was fought on nearly the same ground; and again the savages were beaten, though not decisively. The remainder of the history of the Seminole War belongs to the following administration.

In the mean time the President had given a final quietus to the Bank of the United States. After vetoing the bill to recharter that institution, he conceived that the surplus funds which had accumulated in its vaults would be better distributed among the States. He had no warrant of law for such a step; but believing himself to be in the right, he did not hesitate to take the responsibility. Accordingly, in October of 1833, he ordered the accumulated funds of the great bank, amounting to about ten million dollars, to be distributed among certain State banks designated for that purpose. This action on the part of the President was denounced by the opposition as a measure of incalculable mischief—unwarranted, arbitrary, dangerous. In the Senate a powerful coalition, headed by Calhoun, Clay, and Webster, was formed against the President; and the new officers, who had been appointed to carry out his measures, were rejected. A resolution censuring his conduct was then introduced and carried; but a similar proposition failed in the House of Representatives. For a while there was a general cry of indignation, and it seemed that the administration would be overwhelmed; but the President, ever as fearless as he was self-willed and stubborn, held on his course, unmoved by the clamor. The resolution of censure stood upon the journal of the Senate for four years and was then expunged from the record through the influence of Senator Thomas H. Benton of Missouri. The financial panic of 1836-7, following soon after the removal of the funds, was attributed by the opponents of the administration to the President's arbitrary action and the prospective destruction of the national bank. To these strictures the adherents of his own party replied that the financial distress of the country was attributable to the bank itself, which was declared to be an institution too powerful and despotic to exist in a free government. The President was but little concerned with the excitement: he had just entered on his second term, with Martin Van Buren for Vice-President instead of Mr. Calhoun.

In 1834 the strong will of the chief magistrate was brought into



THE NEW PATENT-OFFICE AT WASHINGTON.



THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE AT WASHINGTON.

conflict with France. The American government held an old claim against that country for damages done to the commerce of the United States in the wars of Napoleon. In 1831 the French king had agreed to pay five million dollars for the alleged injuries; but the dilatory government of France postponed and neglected the payment until the President, becoming wrathful, recommended to Congress to make reprisals on French commerce, and at the same time directed the American minister at Paris to demand his passports and come home. These measures had the desired effect, and the indemnity was promptly paid. The government of Portugal was brought to terms in a similar manner.

The country, though flourishing, was not without calamities. Several eminent statesmen fell by the hand of death. On the 4th of July, 1831, ex-President Monroe passed away. Like Jefferson and Adams, he sank to rest amid the rejoicings of the national anniversary. In the following year Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, died at the age of ninety-six. A short time afterward Philip Freneau, the poet of the Revolution, departed from the land of the living. The patriot bard had reached the age of eighty. On the 24th of June, 1833, John Randolph of Roanoke died in Philadelphia. He was a man admired for his talents, dreaded for his wit and sarcasm, and respected for his integrity as a statesman. In 1835 Chief-Justice Marshall breathed his last, at the age of fourscore years; and in the next year ex-President Madison, worn with the toils of eighty-five years, passed away. To these losses of life must be added two great disasters to property. On the 16th of December, 1835, a fire broke out in the lower part of New York City and laid thirty acres of buildings in ashes. Five hundred and twenty-nine houses and property valued at eighteen million dollars were consumed. Just one year afterward the Patent Office and Post-Office at Washington were destroyed in the same manner. But upon the ruins of these valuable buildings, more noble and imposing structures were soon erected.

Jackson's administration was signalized by the addition of two new States. In June of 1836 Arkansas was admitted, with an area of fifty-two thousand square miles, and a population of seventy thousand. In January of the following year Michigan Territory was organized as a State and added to the Union. The new commonwealth brought a population of a hundred and fifty-seven thousand, and an area of fifty-six thousand square miles. The administration was already within two months of its close. The President, following the example of Washington, issued a patriotic farewell address.

The dangers of discord and sectionalism among the States were set forth with all the masculine energy of the Jacksonian dialect. The people of the United States were again solemnly warned, as they had been by the Father of his Country, against the baleful influence of demagogues. The horrors of disunion were portrayed in the strongest colors; and people of every rank and section were exhorted to maintain and defend the American Union as they would the last fortress of human liberty. This was the last of those remarkable public papers contributed by Andrew Jackson to the history of his country. Already, in the autumn of the previous year, Martin Van Buren had been elected President. The opposing candidate was General Harrison of Ohio, who received the support of the new Whig party. As to the vice-presidency, no one secured a majority in the electoral college, and the choice devolved on the Senate. By that body Colonel Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky was duly elected.

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CHAPTER LV.

VAN BUREN'S ADMINISTRATION, 1837-1841.

MARTIN VAN BUREN, eighth President of the United States, was born at Kinderhook, New York, on the 5th of December, 1782. After receiving a limited education he became a student of law, and before reaching his majority was recognized as an influential democratic politician. In his thirtieth year he was elected to the Senate of his native State; and six years afterwards, by supplanting De Witt Clinton, became the recognized leader of the Democracy in New York. In 1821, and again in 1827, he was chosen United States Senator; but in the following year he resigned his office to accept the governorship of his native State. He also, in 1831, resigned his place as secretary of State in the first cabinet of President Jackson, and was appointed minister to England. But when, in December of the same year, his nomination was submitted to the Senate the influence of Vice-President Calhoun assisted by the Whig leaders, Clay and Webster, procured the rejection of the appointment. Mr. Van Buren returned from his unfulfilled mission; became the candidate for the vice-presidency, and was elected in the fall of 1832. Four years later he was called by the voice of the powerful party to which he belonged, to succeed General Jackson in the highest office of the nation.

One of the first duties of the new administration was to finish the Seminole War. In the beginning of 1837 the command of the army in Florida was transferred from General Scott to General Jessup. In the following fall Osceola came to the American camp with a flag of truce; but he was suspected of treachery, seized, and sent a prisoner to Fort Moultrie, where he died in 1838. The Seminoles, though disheartened by the loss of their chief, continued the war. In December Colonel Zachary Taylor, with a force of over a thousand men, marched into the Everglades of Florida, determined to fight the savages in their lairs. After unparalleled sufferings he overtook them, on Christmas day, near Lake Okeechobee. A hard battle was fought, and the Indians were defeated, but not until a hundred and thirty-nine of the whites had fallen. For more than a year Taylor continued to hunt the Red men through the swamps. In 1839 the chiefs sent in their submission and signed a treaty; but their removal to the West was made with much reluctance and delay.

In the first year of Van Buren's administration the country was afflicted with a monetary panic of the most serious character. The preceding years had been a time of great prosperity. The national debt was entirely liquidated, and a surplus of nearly forty million dollars had accumulated in the treasury of the United States. By act of Congress this vast sum had been distributed among the several States. Owing to the abundance of money, speculations of all sorts grew rife. The credit system pervaded every department of business. The banks of the country were suddenly multiplied to nearly seven hundred. Vast issues of irredeemable paper money stimulated the speculative spirit and increased the opportunities for fraud.

The bills of these unsound banks were receivable at the land-offices; and settlers and speculators made a rush to secure the public lands while money was plentiful. Seeing that in receiving such an unsound currency in exchange for the national domain the government was likely to be defrauded out of millions, President Jackson had issued an order called THE SPECIE CIRCULAR, by which the land-agents were directed henceforth to receive nothing but coin in payment for the lands. The effects of this circular came upon the nation in the first year of Van Buren's administration. The interests of the government had been secured by Jackson's vigilance; but the business of the country was prostrated by the shock. The banks suspended specie payment. Mercantile houses failed; and disaster swept through every avenue of trade. During the months of March and April, 1837, the failures in New York and New Orleans amounted to about a hundred and fifty million dollars. A committee of business men from the former city besought the President to rescind the specie circular and to call a special session of Congress. The