

to say, that many of the most striking and praiseworthy features of his administration were enstamped upon it by the labor and influence of the former. His success in maturing and carrying into execution his most popular measures must be attributed, in no small extent, to the ability and faithfulness of his eminent Secretary of State. And the historian may truly record that to John Quincy Adams, in an eminent degree, belongs a portion of the honor and credit which have been so generally accorded to the administration of James Monroe.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. ADAMS' NOMINATION TO THE PRESIDENCY—SPIRITED PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN—NO CHOICE BY THE PEOPLE—ELECTION GOES TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—MR. ADAMS ELECTED PRESIDENT—HIS INAUGURATION—FORMS HIS CABINET.

JAMES MONROE was the last of the illustrious line of Presidents whose claims to that eminent station dated back to the revolution. A grateful people had conferred the highest honors in their gift upon the most conspicuous of those patriots who had faithfully served them in that perilous struggle, and aided in constructing and consolidating the union of these States. This debt punctually and honorably discharged, they looked to another generation, possessing claims of a different description, for servants to elevate to the dignity of the presidential chair.

In the midst of a large class of public men who had in the mean time become conspicuous for talents and services of various descriptions, it is no matter of surprise that the people of the United States should entertain a diversity of opinions in regard to the most suitable individual to fill a station which had hitherto been occupied by men whose virtues and whose patriot-

ism had shed the brightest lustre on the American name and character throughout the world. Candidates for the presidency were nominated in various sections of the Union. The eastern States turned their eyes instinctively towards JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, as one, among all the eminent competitors, the most fitted, by character and services, for the office of President of the United States. The members of the Legislature of Maine resolved—

“That the splendid talents and incorruptible integrity of JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, his republican habits and principles, distinguished public services, and extensive knowledge of, and devoted attachment to, the vital interests of the country, justly entitle him to the first honors in the gift of an enlightened and grateful people.”

The republican members of the Massachusetts Legislature adopted the following resolutions :—

“Resolved, That the ability, experience, integrity and patriotism of JOHN QUINCY ADAMS; his manly efforts to defend the principles of that government under which, in God’s providence, we hope to die; his unshaken fortitude and resolution in all political exigencies; his long, faithful, and valuable services, under the patronage of all the Presidents of the United States, present him to the people of this nation, as a man eminently qualified to subserve the best interests of his country, and as a statesman without reproach.

“Resolved, That a man who has given such continued and indubitable pledges of his patriotism and capacity, may be safely placed at the head of this nation. Every impulse of his heart, and every dictate of his mind, must unite promptly in the support of the interests, the honor, and the liberty of his country.

“Resolved, That JOHN QUINCY ADAMS is hereby recommended by us to the people of the United States, as the most suitable candidate for the office of President, at the approaching election.”

A meeting of the citizens of Rhode Island passed the following among other resolutions :—

“Resolved, That, although we duly acknowledge the talents and public services of all the candidates for the presidency, we have the fullest confidence in the acknowledged ability, integrity and experience of JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, the accomplished scholar, the true republican, the enlightened statesman, and the honest man; and we are desirous that his merits should be rewarded with the first office in the gift of the people of the United States—that his future services may continue unto us those blessings which, under the present administration of the General Government, we have so abundantly enjoyed.”

These were high encomiums. But who among the American people, now that the patriot has departed from earth, can survey his life, his character, and his services, and not acknowledge they were justly and richly deserved? Similar resolutions were passed in all the eastern and many of the northern States.

The west brought forward HENRY CLAY, one of the most popular orators and eminent statesman of the day. GEN. JACKSON, who had earned a splendid military reputation, was nominated in the southwest, and WM. H. CRAWFORD was selected as the candidate representing the southern portion of the confederacy. These were all men of eminence and of acknowledged talents. They were worthy competitors for the highest honors of the Republic.

The friends of Mr. Adams rested his claims for the presidency on no factitious qualities. They urged that his characteristics were such as to commend him

to the confidence of every true republican and well-wisher of his country. While his attainments were not of the showy and popular cast possessed by many public men, they yet were of that solid, practical and valuable description which must ever receive the sanction of intelligent and reflecting minds.

The qualifications on which his supporters depended, and to which they called the attention of the American people, as reasons for elevating him to the head of the General Government, may be summarily enumerated as follows:—1. The purity of his private character—the simplicity of his personal habits—his unbending integrity and uprightness, even beyond suspicion. 2. His commanding talents, and his acquirements both as a scholar and a statesman. 3. His love of country—his truly American feelings, in all that concerned the welfare and honor of the United States. 4. His long experience in public affairs, especially his familiarity with our foreign relations, and his perfect knowledge of the institutions, the internal condition and policy of European nations. 5. His advocacy of protection to domestic manufactures, and of a judicious system of internal improvements.

In regard to internal improvements by the General Government, there was a difference of opinion between Mr. Adams and President Monroe. The latter was strongly impressed with the beneficial tendency of a well-digested system of internal improvements; but he believed the constitution conferred no power on Con-

gress to make appropriations for such a purpose. It was in this view of the subject that he vetoed a bill which assumed the right to adopt and execute such a system, passed by Congress during the session of 1820–21. But anxious that internal improvements, confined to great national purposes, and with proper limitations, should be prosecuted, he suggested that an amendment of the constitution to that effect should be recommended to the several States.

Mr. Adams, however, had no doubts that Congress already possessed a constitutional power to prosecute such internal improvements as were of a national character, and calculated to benefit the Union, and to levy duties for the protection of domestic manufactures. During his entire political career he had deemed these to be two great points toward which the American Government and people should turn their especial attention; and he ever gave them his faithful advocacy and support. With consummate wisdom, he foresaw that the more completely our internal resources were developed, and the less dependent we were on foreign powers, the greater would be our public and private prosperity. He insisted that by an adequate protection of domestic manufactures, there would be an increased demand for our raw materials at home, and thus the several productive and manufacturing sections of the Republic would realize the benefits of a dependence on each other, and the Union would be consolidated and perpetuated for ages to come.

While a candidate for the presidency, Mr. Adams received a letter inquiring his views on the subject of internal improvement. The following is an extract from his reply:—

“On the 23rd of Feb., 1807, I offered, in the Senate of the United States, of which I was then a member, the first resolution, as I believe, that ever was presented to Congress, contemplating a *general system* of internal improvement. I thought that Congress possessed the power of appropriating money to such improvement, and of authorizing the works necessary for making it—subject always to the territorial rights of the several States in or through which the improvement is to be made, to be secured by the consent of their Legislatures, and to proprietary rights of individuals, to be purchased or indemnified. I still hold the same opinions; and, although highly respecting the purity of intention of those who object, on constitutional grounds, to the exercise of this power, it is with heartfelt satisfaction that I perceive those objections gradually yielding to the paramount influence of the *general welfare*. Already have appropriations of money to great objects of internal improvement been freely made; and I hope we shall both live to see the day, when the only question of our statesmen and patriots, concerning the authority of Congress to improve, by public works essentially beneficent, and beyond the means of less than national resources, the condition of our common country, will be how it ever could have been doubted.”

On another occasion, Mr. Adams expressed himself on the subject of internal improvements in the following manner:—

“The question of the power of Congress to authorize the making of internal improvements, is, in other words, a question whether the people of this Union, in forming their common social compact, as avowedly for the purpose of promoting their general welfare, have performed their work in a manner so ineffably stupid as to deny themselves the means of bettering their own condition. I have too much respect for the intellect of my country to believe it. The

first object of human association is the improvement of the condition of the associated. Roads and canals are among the most essential means of improving the condition of nations. And a people which should deliberately, by the organization of its authorized power, deprive itself of the faculty of multiplying its own blessings, would be as wise as a creator who should undertake to constitute a human being without a heart.”

In addition to other claims, the friends of Mr. Adams urged his elevation to the presidency on the ground of *locality*. During the thirty-six years which had passed since the adoption of the constitution, the General Government had been administered but four years by a northern President. It was insisted with much force that the southern portion of the Republic had thus far exerted a disproportionate influence in the executive department of the nation. While the north, although far the most populous, and contributing much the largest portion of the means for defraying the national expenditures, would not claim to monopolize an undue degree of power in controlling the measures of administration, yet it could justly insist that its demands for an equitable share of influence should be heeded. These suggestions unquestionably possessed a weight in the minds of the people, favorable to the prospects of Mr. Adams.

The Presidential campaign of 1824, was more spirited and exciting than any that had taken place since the first election of Mr. Jefferson. It was novel in the number of candidates presented for the suffrages of

the people, and was conducted with great zeal and vigor by the friends of the different aspirants. Strictly speaking, it could not be called a party contest. Mr. Monroe's wise and prudent administration had obliterated party lines, and left a very general unanimity of sentiment on political principles and measures, throughout the Union. The various candidates—Adams, Jackson, Clay, Crawford—all subscribed, substantially, to the same political creed, and entertained similar views as to the principles on which the General Government should be administered. The struggle was a personal and sectional one, more than of a party nature.

It had long been foreseen that a choice of President would not be effected by the people. The result verified this prediction. Of two hundred and sixty-one electoral votes, Gen. Jackson received ninety-nine, Mr. Adams eighty-four, Mr. Crawford forty-one, and Mr. Clay thirty-seven. Neither of the candidates having received a majority in the electoral colleges, the election devolved on the House of Representatives. This took place on the 9th of Feb., 1825.

On the morning of that day, the House met at an earlier hour than usual. The galleries, the lobbies, and the adjacent apartments, were filled to overflowing with spectators from every part of the Union to witness the momentous event. It was a scene the most sublime that could be witnessed on earth. The Representatives of the People, in the exercise of the highest right of

freemen, were about to select a citizen to administer the Government of a great Republic.

All the members of the House were present, with the exception of one, who was confined by indisposition. The Speaker (Henry Clay) took his chair, and the ordinary business of the morning was attended to in the usual manner. At 12 o'clock, precisely, the members of the Senate entered the hall, preceded by their Sergeant-at-arms, and having the President of the Senate at their head, who was invited to a seat on the right hand of the Speaker. The Senators were assigned seats in front of the Speaker's chair.

The President of the Senate (Mr. Gaillard) then rose, and stated that the certificates forwarded by the electors from each State would be delivered to the Tellers. Mr. Tazewell of the Senate, and Messrs. John W. Taylor and Philip P. Barbour on the part of the House, took their places, as Tellers, at the Clerk's table. The President of the Senate then opened two packets, one received by messenger and the other by mail, containing the certificates of the votes of the State of New Hampshire. One of these certificates was then read by Mr. Tazewell, while the other was compared with it by Messrs. Taylor and Barbour. The whole having been read, and the votes of New Hampshire declared, they were set down by the Clerks of the Senate and of the House of Representatives, seated at different tables. Thus the certificates from all the States were gone through with. At the conclusion,

the Tellers left the Clerk's tables, and, presenting themselves in front of the Speaker, Mr. Tazewell delivered their report of the votes given.

The President of the Senate then rose, and declared that no person had received a majority of the votes given for President of the United States: that Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and William H. Crawford, were the three persons who had received the highest number of votes; and that the remaining duties in the choice of a President now devolved on the House of Representatives. He further declared, that John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, having received 182 votes, was duly elected Vice President of the United States, to serve four years from the 4th of March next. The members of the Senate then retired.

The Speaker directed the roll of the House to be called by States, and the members of the respective delegations to take their seats in the order in which the States should be called, beginning at the right hand of the Speaker. The delegations took their seats accordingly. Ballot-boxes were distributed to each delegation, by the Sergeant-at-arms, and the Speaker directed that the balloting should proceed. The ballots having all been deposited in the boxes, Tellers were named by the respective delegations, being one from each State, who took their seats at two tables.

Mr. Webster of Massachusetts was appointed by those Tellers who sat at one table, and Mr. Randolph

of Virginia by those at the other, to announce the result. After the ballots were counted out, Mr. Webster rose, and said:—

“Mr. Speaker: The Tellers of the votes at this table have proceeded to count the ballots contained in the boxes set before them. The result they find to be, that there are for John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts, thirteen votes; for Andrew Jackson, of Tennessee, seven votes; for William H. Crawford, of Georgia, four votes.”

Mr. Randolph, from the other table, made a statement corresponding with that of Mr. Webster.

The Speaker then stated this result to the House, and announced that JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, having a majority of the votes of these United States, was duly elected President of the same, for four years, commencing on the 4th day of March, 1825.

A committee was appointed to wait upon Mr. Adams, and announce to him the result of the election, of which Mr. Webster was chairman. On performing this duty, they received from Mr. Adams the following reply:—

GENTLEMEN:—In receiving this testimonial from the Representatives of the People and States of this Union, I am deeply sensible of the circumstances under which it has been given. All my predecessors have been honored with majorities of the electoral voices, in the primary colleges. It has been my fortune to be placed, by the divisions of sentiment prevailing among our countrymen on this occasion, in competition, friendly and honorable, with three of my fellow-citizens, all justly enjoying, in eminent degrees, the public favor; and of whose worth, talents and services no one entertains