

CHAPTER II.

ADMINISTRATIONS OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS AND
ANDREW JACKSON.

Bk. VII. ON the 4th of March, 1825, John Quincy Adams was
Ch. 2. inaugurated President of the United States, and took the
A. D. chair vacated twenty-eight years before by his venerated
1825. father. He selected Henry Clay for Secretary of State,
New Richard Rush for the Treasury, James Barbour for the
cabinet. War Department, Samuel L. Southard for the Navy, and
 William Wirt for Attorney-General.

As we now descend to our own contemporaries a mere chronicle of their deeds will be registered, without entering into the merits of those subjects which they discussed. Party spirit, that necessary evil to free governments, will not enable the clearest minds to see party questions in the light they will appear to future generations.

Com-
mercial
specula-
tion. The year 1825 was marked by a spirit of commercial gambling, produced by the unexampled prosperity of the last few years. Everything rose in value — all kinds of stocks and every variety of merchandise — followed, of course, by a revulsion, both in England and America, which made bankrupts of thousands, and reduced everything to less than its previous value.

1826. The year 1826 was signalized by the deaths of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, the venerable ex-Presidents, on the fiftieth anniversary of the National Independence

(396)

Funeral orations were delivered in every part of the Bk. VII. Union. That delivered by Mr. Webster is perhaps one Ch. 2. of the most eloquent efforts of this greatest of living men A. D. of genius. 1826

Mr. Adams was doomed to experience a fierce and unprecedented opposition in Congress, which deprived him of the opportunity of carrying into execution many important measures, and hence congressional history during this administration is unusually barren. The most important measures related to the tariff. A bill passed the Tariff of
1828. House on the 22d of April, 1828, and the Senate on the 13th of May, which gave but little satisfaction to the country at large. By this bill protection was given to various branches of manufactures, which has since been withdrawn.

Although Mr. Adams, by force of great opposition, was prevented from carrying his plans into operation, still he could, at the close of his administration, in 1829, look back upon his labours with satisfaction. The national debt was still further reduced, and large appropriations were made for objects of lasting public benefit. Five millions were granted to the surviving officers of the Revolution, and one and a half million were appropriated in extinguishing Indian titles.

On the 4th of March, 1829, General Andrew Jackson, Jackson's
cabinet. by a large electoral vote, succeeded J. Q. Adams in the presidency, and chose for his cabinet, Martin Van Buren for the State, Samuel D. Ingham for the Treasury, John H. Eaton for the War, and John Branch for the Navy Department. John M. Berrien was made Attorney-General, and William T. Barry Postmaster-General.

With General Jackson commenced the system of extensive removals from office — a system which has since been Change
of policy

Bk. VII.
Ch. 2 generally adopted, and which was designed to reward political partizans. This course of the President was violently denounced by his opponents, and as strongly justified by his friends. It is not for the author of this history to pronounce upon the wisdom or folly of the policy—it certainly had the merit of being something new in the history of civilized nations: one of those evidences of progress, similar in its spirit to that which appoints judges for a limited time, and selects the young, in preference to the old and experienced, for important and responsible posts.

President's message. In the message of the President to the twenty-first Congress, he recommended a modification of the tariff, the removal of the Indians to the west of the Mississippi, and a consideration of the renewal of the United States Bank—all of which subjects led to violent and angry debates, and finally to the passage of acts in accordance with the wishes of the executive.

New cabinet. General Jackson did not long remain at peace with his cabinet, which resigned in the spring of 1831, in consequence of domestic intrigues. The new cabinet was composed of Edward Livingston as Secretary of State, Louis M'Lane, Secretary of the Treasury, Levi Woodbury, Secretary of the Navy, Lewis Cass, Secretary of War, and Roger B. Taney, Attorney-General.

Bank veto. In 1831, a bill was brought forward for granting a charter to the United States Bank, the old charter being about to expire. The discussion of the bill was angry and animated. It passed only by a small majority, and was vetoed by the President. No one has exercised the power of veto more than General Jackson. During his administration he vetoed no less than ten bills. The other Presidents combined have vetoed but eight.

Indian hostilities. The year 1832 was marked by hostile incursions of the Winnebagoes, Sacs, and Foxes—Indians inhabiting the

Upper Mississippi—under the celebrated Black Hawk, Bk. VII.
Ch. 2 against whom Generals Atkinson and Scott were sent, who in a short time completely dispersed them, and restored tranquillity on the frontiers. A. D.
1832.

But a greater subject of interest marked this year, which was the disposition of South Carolina to secede from the Union. The discontent was caused by the protective duties, which the South Carolinians declared were hostile to their interests and unconstitutional in themselves. It is ever to be regretted that the celebrated John C. Calhoun favoured the agitation. Governor Hamilton even recommended to the legislature the organization of the militia and the collection of munitions of war, with a view of secession. But the President immediately took the most vigorous measures, and issued an ordinance in which he declared his resolution to enforce the laws. The course which the President adopted gave general satisfaction, except to South Carolina, whose government perceived the folly of open contention with the whole power of the land, and gradually withdrew its opposition.

The bill for a new tariff, which had been introduced in 1833. 1832, passed the 3d of March, 1833, and gave satisfaction to no partizans of any school. It was simply a compromise between the North and the South, effected by that great pacificator and patriotic statesman, Henry Clay, whom the whole nation has loved, but never united to honour. New tariff.

General Jackson was re-elected in the autumn of 1832, and on the 4th of March, 1833, entered upon his second term, while Martin Van Buren was elected Vice-President.

One of the first measures of importance which the President took after his second inauguration was the removal

BK. VII. of government deposits from the United States Bank,
 Ch. 2. against which he had waged war. This measure raised
 A. D. one of the most violent clamours ever known in the
 1835. United States, chiefly among commercial men, who pre-
 dicted national bankruptcy; and much embarrassment
 Removal of really resulted. The House of Representatives sustained
 government the President; the Senate condemned the measure as
 deposits. unconstitutional; but the President, with his usual firm-
 ness, maintained his position, and continued the warfare.
 In his annual message he denounced the bank as the
 scourge of the people, and accused it of corruption and
 bribery, and of extending its accommodations for political
 purposes.

Rebel-
 lion of
 Texas
 against
 Mexico.

In 1835, the people of Texas rebelled against the go-
 vernment of Mexico, which had abolished slavery through-
 out its territory. But the people of Texas, chiefly emi-
 grants from the southern and south-western States, wish-
 ing to restore slavery and annex their province to the
 United States, declared war against the Mexican Repub-
 lic. Thousands of volunteers rushed to the standard of
 the revolted province, and among them doubtless many
 citizens of the United States. General Houston com-
 manded the Texan troops, and by his admirable military
 talents, aided by means from the United States, a govern-
 ment was organized, slavery established, and the way pre-
 pared for its ultimate admission into the Union. John
 Quincy Adams was then a member of the House of Re-
 presentatives, and denounced the whole insurrection as a
 project designed to perpetuate and extend slavery. He
 had already commenced the agitation of the slavery ques-
 tion in Congress by the presentation of petitions. With
 the view of allaying the irritation existing in all sections
 of the Union, Congress passed resolutions declaring that
 it had no constitutional authority to interfere with the

institution of slavery in any of the States, and that it ought
 not to interfere with slavery in the District of Columbia. BK. VII.
 Ch. 2.

This was the period when the discussion of this subject
 A. D. was most agitating and general throughout the northern
 1835 States, at which time a great deal of ill-feeling existed
 to between the North and South. 1837.

In 1835, preparations were made for the removal
 Removal of the Seminole Indians from East Florida, which
 led to a brief contest with that unfortunate tribe. In
 1834, a treaty was concluded with them, in which they
 agreed to remove beyond the Mississippi. During the
 three following years a part emigrated, but a large number
 refused to go. They wandered about the country, com-
 mitting depredations, and hiding themselves in swamps
 and thickets, from which they issued to commit new acts
 of violence. Their leading spirit was Osceola. A de-
 tachment was sent against them, under General Clinch,
 who however met with considerable loss. Nor was any
 thing satisfactorily effected against them until after the
 retirement of General Jackson, in 1837, who, after a suc-
 cessful and vigorous administration, resigned his powers,
 which some maintained he had exceeded, into the hands
 of Martin Van Buren. No President, if we may except
 Jefferson, has had such bitter political enemies as Jack-
 son. None have had the misfortune to stem greater
 party animosities than he; and it has been the fortune
 of none to have them so speedily and generally allayed.
 Andrew Jackson will pass down to posterity as one of the
 most remarkable men of his age, successful in war, and
 patriotic as the chief magistrate of a great nation.

Before the administration of General Jackson closed,
 Arkansas and Michigan were admitted into the American
 confederacy (June 15th, 1836).

The north-western States, during this administration,

Bk. VII. rapidly increased in population and resources, and a spirit
Ch. 2. of commercial speculation arose, unprecedented in the
A. D. history of the country. This reached its climax in 1836,
 1836. a year memorable for the absurd extension of credit to

Land
 Specu-
 lation.

all speculators. Speculation was extended to every variety of business, but to nothing so remarkably as to western and eastern lands, which reached a fictitious price. New cities were laid out in the wilderness, and high prices demanded for building-lots, which still remain unsettled. The delusion and mania extended to all parts of the community, and affected the strongest minds. All articles rose in value, and scarcely a man was engaged in business who did not dream of realizing an enormous fortune.

Com-
 mercial
 embar-
 rass-
 ments.

But an end soon came to their dreams, and the revulsions of fortune, in the year 1837, taught the country the inevitable disaster which must sooner or later attend all commercial gambling. Moreover, a great fire in New York destroyed, in 1835, some twenty millions of property — a loss which was subsequently felt by all classes in the community. Many insurance companies failed, and involved in their failure the ruin of many widows and orphans who had invested in these corporations what little property they possessed. These commercial evils were destined to break up for a time, the ascendancy of the democratic party.

CHAPTER III.

ADMINISTRATION OF MARTIN VAN BUREN.

MARTIN VAN BUREN was inaugurated on the 4th of **Bk. VII.**
 March, 1837, and continued the policy of his "illustrious **Ch. 3.**
 predecessor," and made but few changes in the cabinet **A. D.**
 or occupants of official stations. 1837.

The great commercial revulsion of 1837 marked the **Com-
 mercial
 revul-
 sions.**
 first year of his administration — caused, not only by excessive speculation, but also by extravagant importations of European goods. To pay for these, there was abundance of paper-money, but very little gold. Moreover, the specie of the country was gradually collected in the public offices, in consequence of the circular of 1836, which required payment for public lands to be made in gold or silver. Large quantities also had been sent to France and England for useless luxuries. In consequence, the banks were compelled to suspend specie payments in all of the principal cities of the country, and general disaster and bankruptcy followed. All confidence was destroyed. Business was suspended. The sinews of enterprise were severed. Innumerable failures resulted. Property of all kinds declined in value, and those who had the year before fancied themselves rich found themselves penniless. Most persons who owed money to any extent, no matter what their nominal assets, were ruined, for they were unable to sell what they possessed. The year before all

BR. VII. were anxious to buy. This year all were anxious to sell,
 Ch. 3. but purchasers could not be found, except at ruinous
 A. D. prices. "It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good."
 1837. Those who had kept aloof from speculation, and had
 money at command, made large fortunes; but the great
 mass of people were depressed. Trade and manufactures
 stood still. Poor people could not find employment.
 Consternation seized upon every class in society.

Change
 in the
 habits
 of the
 people

In this general calamity a change to some extent was
 gradually wrought in the habits of the nation. The peo-
 ple who had been speculating and trading became farmers.
 The land still remained, capable of unfolding illimitable
 wealth. The agricultural population received a great ac-
 cession of respectability and means. Farms rapidly im-
 proved. Importance was attached to the cultivation of
 the soil, which had been unknown since the Revolutionary
 war — for this kind of employment seemed at least more
 free from reverses of fortune. It was observed that the
 farmers suffered less than any other class in the commu-
 nity. Those who were free from debt felt themselves to
 be rich, and were truly independent; for the land yielded
 its increase, in spite of commercial revulsions. There can
 be no doubt that the embarrassments and misfortunes
 which afflicted the commercial and manufacturing classes
 resulted, in the end, in developing truer sources of wealth,
 inasmuch as habits of industry and economy were again
 formed by a large body of men who had relied on their
 wits for support, and who had indulged in the delusion
 that the exchange of property, and great issues of paper-
 money to facilitate that exchange, would add to material
 wealth. There are no real sources of wealth, in any na-
 tion, except in habits of industry, directed to manufac-
 tures, agriculture, and a limited commerce. After all,
 land is the foundation of wealth, not gold and silver, since

True
 source of
 national
 wealth.

land alone will feed the hungry and clothe the naked. BR. VII.
 Gold is only a medium of exchange, and declines in value Ch. 3.
 in proportion to the ease with which it is obtained, while A. D.
 labour, directed to the improvement of the soil, to the cul- 1837.
 ture of fruits and herbs and vegetables, increases the ca-
 pacity of a country to support a rising population, and
 gives a healthy leisure to those who are doomed to toil.

An extra session of Congress was assembled on the 4th
 of September, 1837, in order to deliberate on the financial
 distresses of the country. The President recommended
 a scheme, called the Sub-Treasury, instead of a national
 bank, the charter of which had expired, and the directors
 of which were now winding up its concerns. This cele-
 brated scheme proposed to place the public revenues
 in the custody of commissioners, instead of banks, sub-
 ject to the control of the Secretary of the Treasury.
 A bill, accordingly, was introduced into the Senate, to
 meet the recommendations of the President, which passed
 that body, 26 to 20, but was lost in the House, 120
 to 107.

The Sub-
 Treas-
 ury
 schema.

The enemies of the administration attributed the exist-
 ing evils to the refusal of Congress to recharter the
 United States Bank, and the consequent distribution of
 the public moneys into local banks, which, unchecked
 and uncontrolled by a great central institution, were in-
 duced to discount bills too freely upon the deposits which
 were transferred to them, and thus to encourage a spirit
 of speculation. The friends of the administration main-
 tained, that the embarrassments were caused by the con-
 traction of a large foreign debt, by a spirit of extrava-
 gance, by over-trading, by vast internal improvements,
 and the great fire in New York, December, 1835. The
 other party did not deny these facts, but still maintained
 that this over-trading and speculation were caused by the

Party
 recrimi-
 nations.

Bk. VII. improper facilities which the banks afforded in consequence of the destruction of the controlling central money power.

Ch. 3.
A. D.
1837. Congress convened again, on the first Monday in December, 1837, and the President again recommended the Sub-Treasury scheme, and the issue of treasury-notes to meet the wants of government. This favourite measure of the President again passed the Senate, and was again defeated in the House.

Reassembling of Congress.
1838. The year 1838 was marked by serious disturbances in Canada, between the inhabitants and the colonial government. A large party had arisen favourable to independence, which was favoured by many Americans on the Canadian frontier, both from sympathy and with the hope of its ultimate annexation to the United States. A party of reckless adventurers took possession of Navy Island, in the Niagara river, and hired a steamboat, called the Caroline, to facilitate their unlawful designs, notwithstanding the proclamations of the President and the governor of New York, enjoining a strict neutrality. But the Caroline was not suffered by the Canadians to be used by these American sympathizers; and an armed party of 150 men proceeded, in the night of the 20th of December, from the Canada side, and burned the vessel, after dispersing the crew.

Specie payments.
On the 13th of August, 1838, the banks resumed specie payments, to the great satisfaction of the mercantile community; but, unfortunately, in the following year, 9th of October, the Philadelphia banks, and consequently those south and west, again suspended their payments in specie.

Theological discussions.
This year was rendered memorable in the theological annals of the country by the divisions of the Presbyterian church into two rival bodies, called the Old and the New

School. The difficulties commenced by an attack on an eminent clergyman in Philadelphia, Rev. Albert Barnes, for heresy. He was accused of preaching certain doctrines, which were fashionable at New Haven, pertaining to free-will and original sin, and which, by many, were thought to have too close a resemblance to ancient Pelagianism. The controversy, which led to the establishment of a theological school at East Windsor, in 1834, in opposition to that of New Haven, also led, in 1835, to the trial of Mr. Barnes, on charges preferred by Rev. Dr. Jenkins, in the Philadelphia Presbytery, and he was acquitted. Dr. Jenkins appealed to the Synod, which reversed the judgment of the Presbytery, and suspended Mr. Barnes from the ministry. Mr. Barnes then appealed to the General Assembly, which sustained him, and restored him to his ministerial standing. Upon this, the Old School party rallied, and, in the General Assembly which met in Philadelphia in 1837, having a small majority, cut off certain synods, in which the new doctrines prevailed, from their body. This led to a separate organization of the New School party, which, as well as the Old School, claimed to be the Presbyterian church, and consequently laid claim to the property of the church. The courts of law, however, gave such decisions that the property remained with the Old School party.

During this controversy the religious world was divided by various other dissensions, arising out of new measures as well as new views, and connected with discussions on various moral questions, especially those pertaining to slavery and temperance. The Episcopal church, both in England and America, was distracted by the famous Oxford tracts and the movement which Dr. Pusey and his followers encouraged, in reference to external forms and ceremonies and symbols, as well as points of faith. This

Bk. VII.
Ch. 3.

A. D.
1834
to
1838.

The Old and New Schools.

Other theological controversies.

Bk. VII. period was the era of benevolent societies and organiza-
Ch. 3. tions to propagate every form of doctrines and every mode
A. D. of moral reformation. It was the golden age of agents
1837 and lecturers, and platform speeches and moral machinery
to to remodel society. Peace and tract, and anti-slavery and
1840. temperance, and moral reform, and missionary societies,
Popular sent out their various lecturers into every city and hamlet
reforms. of the land, and the people were called upon to decide
the great principles of ethics as well as to contribute
money to that great system of public enlightenment
which was destined to produce such magnificent results.
Indeed, this was the era of agitation throughout the civil-
ized world. Great Chartist meetings were held in Eng-
land. O'Connell was addressing discontented Irish com-
munities. The Jesuits were suppressed in Spain; and
debates on the corn-laws were beginning to agitate the
British nation. All these political and moral commo-
tions were considered as the necessary ebullitions of an
age of progress and freedom.

Political Meanwhile the general discontent of the American
agita- people, and the great commercial sufferings which had
tions. been experienced, led to a revulsion in politics, and de-
stroyed faith in the existing political rulers. Great po-
litical agitations ensued, and every thing else was neg-
lected in the heat of the new presidential election.

Conven- A convention assembled at Harrisburg, two days after
tion at the opening of the twenty-sixth Congress, December 2d,
Harris- 1839, which nominated General Harrison, for President,
burg. and John Tyler, for Vice-President. "The election
campaign of 1840 was distinguished for its popular en-
thusiasm, mass meetings, long processions, and song-sing-
ing." A change of rulers, it was asserted, would restore
prosperity. Hope stimulated energy, and Harrison re-
ceived the suffrages of the people.

Congress, during the long session of 1840, did almost **Bk. VII.**
nothing but direct the election campaign. However, two **Ch. 3.**
acts of some importance were passed — one which provided **A. D.**
for the taking of the sixth census of the United States, **1840.**
and the other, which adopted Mr. Van Buren's scheme of
collecting and disbursing the public revenue. The Sub-
Treasury scheme at last became a law, on which the Pre-
sident had staked his political fortune — a stake he was
destined to lose. In his last message, December 7th,
1840, he congratulated the country on the restoration of
public prosperity — an assertion which needed qualifica-
tion. Nothing of consequence was transacted during the **Retire-**
second session of the twenty-sixth Congress; and, at its **ment of**
close, Mr. Van Buren retired to Kinderhook, and has **Van**
since led a life of dignified leisure. **Buren.**