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LIFE OF THURLOW WEED

INCLUDING

HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

AND

A MEMOIR

EMBELLISHED WITH

*SEVERAL STEEL PLATE ILLUSTRATIONS*

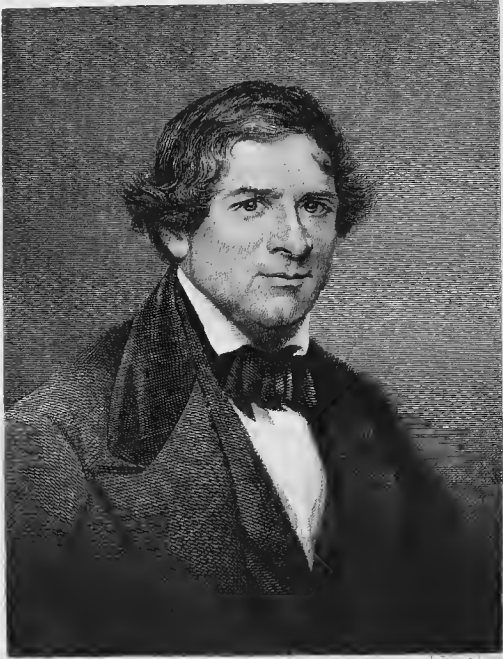
COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME II.









Ætate 27.

1840

*Richard D. Webb*

1840







MEMOIR  
OF  
THURLOW WEED

BY HIS GRANDSON  
THURLOW WEED BARNES



BOSTON  
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New York: 11 East Seventeenth Street  
*The Riverside Press, Cambridge*  
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To  
MY MOTHER  
EMILY WEED BARNES  
This Volume  
IS  
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED



## PREFACE.

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THE reader, as he lays down the first volume of this work, will say, "After all, there can be no picture of a man's life so vivid as that which is drawn by his own hand." And it is a matter of regret that Mr. Weed left unfinished the record which he began; that he was prevented, by various causes, from continuing the story of his youth, with the same freedom and minuteness of detail, down through years which witnessed the contest in Kansas; the collapse of the old Whig party and the birth of its successor; the dissolution of "the firm of Seward, Weed & Greeley," and the war for the Union.

In devoting the ensuing pages largely to the period between 1840 and 1882, and more particularly to that between 1850 and 1867, the writer is but carrying out the purpose which his grandfather cherished. When possible, — as it has been often, — Mr. Weed's own words, in well-remembered conversations, in newspaper articles, or in unpublished fragments of autobiography, have been employed. As frequently, the narrative is carried on by selections from the letters which passed between him and other public men. Written without reserve, and of course without a thought of publication, these letters illumine with wonderful distinctness and fidelity, not only the characters of those who wrote them, but the times in which they lived.

NO. 12 WEST TWELFTH STREET,  
NEW YORK, *December*, 1883.



# CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER I.

1630-1818.

	PAGE
JONAS WEED AND HIS DESCENDANTS. — THEIR SERVICE IN TWO WARS. — BIRTH OF THURLOW WEED. — HIS CHILDHOOD. — APPRENTICED TO A PRINTER. — STATE NEWSPAPERS IN 1810. — THE WAR OF 1812. — ON THE FRONTIER. — AT WORK IN ALBANY. — A JOURNEYMAN IN NEW YORK. — FIRST EDITORIAL ARTICLES. — THE GOSPEL OF LABOR . . . . .	1

## CHAPTER II.

1818-1821.

MARRIAGE. — CATHERINE OSTRANDER. — IN CHENANGO TWO YEARS. — EARLY RECORD ON IMPORTANT QUESTIONS. — INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS. — THE COMPROMISE OF 1820. — NORWICH REVISITED. — THE MANLIUS EXPERIMENT. — MAJOR ANDRÉ. — GENERAL VAN RENSSELAER. — RIVAL STAGE LINES. — CANAL NAVIGATION. — STRUGGLING AGAINST POVERTY. — A NEW VENTURE. — ADDISON GARDINER . . . . .	8
--	---

## CHAPTER III.

1822-1829.

AT ROCHESTER. — EVERARD PECK. — THE STATE ADMINISTRATION. — ITS PLACE IN HISTORY. — TWITTING A JOURNEYMAN. — HIS REPLY. — MNEMONIC EXERCISES. — DANIEL WEBSTER'S ELECTION TO THE SENATE. — THE CHARACTER OF WASHINGTON. — ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE. — DEATH OF DE <sup>W</sup> WITT CLINTON. — GEORGE DAWSON'S REMINISCENCES. — LETTERS FROM ALBERT H. TRACY. — FREDERICK WHITTLESEY. — CHANCELLOR LANSING . . . . .	22
--	----

## CHAPTER IV.

1830-1837.

AT ALBANY. — THE DEMOCRATIC REGENCY. — EDWIN CROSWELL. — THE "EVENING JOURNAL" FOUNDED. — FRANCIS GRANGER. —	
--	--

"THE GLORIOUS WEST."—WILLIAM H. SEWARD.—HIS PUBLIC CAREER BEGUN.—GEORGE W. PATTERSON.—ADOPTING A NAME FOR OPPONENTS OF GENERAL JACKSON.—BUSINESS DEPRESSION.—MR. CALHOUN'S PURPOSE.—PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANTS . . . . . 36

CHAPTER V.

1837-1838.

MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.—"I WILL TURN THE CORNER YET."—THE RIGHT OF PETITION DEFENDED.—A HARRISON MEETING.—"OUR FRIENDS IN NEW YORK."—SEWARD FOR GOVERNOR.—"A YEARLING NOT WANTED."—MILLARD FILLMORE.—"THE PHILISTINES ARE UPON US."—GOVERNOR MARCY'S "THREE-WALLED HOUSE."—"POLITICAL DRILL OF THE STATE OFFICERS" . . . . . 53

CHAPTER VI.

1839-1840.

WHIGS AND DEMOCRATS.—WILLIAM KENT TO MR. WEED.—"THE BEST MAN IN THE DISTRICT."—A TRACY-SEWARD INCIDENT.—MR. WEBSTER AND THE PRESIDENCY.—MAGNANIMITY OF HENRY CLAY.—GENERAL HARRISON NOMINATED.—SPIRIT OF THE CANVASS.—"IN SIGHT OF LAND."—"A KNOCK-DOWN FOR THE LOCOS."—LETTERS TO FRANCIS GRANGER . . . . . 71

CHAPTER VII.

1841-1843.

CHEERFUL PROSPECTS.—LETTERS TO THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL.—HENRY CLAY FOR PRESIDENT.—MR. GREELEY'S PROGRESS.—HIS OPINIONS ON SEVERAL QUESTIONS.—THE RURAL PRESS.—PENNSYLVANIA POLITICIANS.—DEATH OF GENERAL HARRISON.—"THESE VIOLENT PROCEEDINGS."—WHIG DEFEATS.—CLOSE OF MR. SEWARD'S SECOND TERM.—AN OLD STORY RETOLD . . . . . 88

CHAPTER VIII.

1843.

SCENES IN EUROPE.—BISHOP HUGHES.—MR. SCHOOLCRAFT.—FATHER MATHEW.—POVERTY IN IRELAND.—DANIEL O'CONNELL.—A MASS MEETING ON DONNYBROOK GREEN.—SIGHTS IN LONDON.—ST. PAUL'S.—FIRST GLIMPSE OF ROYALTY.—FRANKLIN'S BOARDING-HOUSE.—SCOTLAND.—ABBOTSFORD.—MELROSE.—PARIS.—THE TOMB OF LAFAYETTE.—LETTERS TO WIFE AND DAUGHTER . . . . . 102



## CHAPTER IX.

1843-1844.

	PAGE
EXTENDING SLAVERY INTO TEXAS. — WASHINGTON HUNT'S SCHEMES FOR UNITING THE PARTY. — THE GOVERNORSHIP. — IRISH REPEAL. — MR. WEED TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR. — NATIONAL CONVENTION OF 1844. — "MY OPINION ON THE TEXAS QUESTION." — EDITORIAL FUSILLADES. — MR. HUNT ON POLITICAL PROSCRIPTION. — "OLD FATHER FILLMORE." — "MISRULE AND MISERY" . . . . .	111

## CHAPTER X.

1844-1846.

A WINTER IN THE TROPICS. — MR. WEED'S BOOK. — DR. FRANKLIN'S RULE. — WASHINGTON HUNT ON POLITICAL CORRUPTION. — RETURN TO ALBANY. — THE STATE CANVASS. — GOVERNOR YOUNG. — "MONEY WELL LAID OUT FOR OUR CONCERN." — TEXAS JOINS THE UNION. — WAR WITH ENGLAND THREATENED. — "NATIVE AMERICANISM." — LETTERS FROM BISHOP HUGHES, DANIEL WEBSTER, AND MR. GREELEY . . . . .	127
---	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

1846-1862.

THE BUSINESS OF SWINDLING EMIGRANTS. — HOW IT ONCE FLOURISHED IN NEW YORK. — REFORM EFFORTS. — ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF EMIGRATION. — NON-PARTISAN GOVERNMENT. — OTHER CITY COMMISSIONS. — A PIER LINE ESTABLISHED. — CHARITIES AND CORRECTION. — CENTRAL PARK. — METROPOLITAN POLICE. — ALVAH HUNT. — EVENTS AT WASHINGTON. — A TOUR THROUGH THE NORTHWEST . . . . .	138
--	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

1847-1882.

FATHER MATHEW. — THE TOTAL ABSTINENCE QUESTION. — MISTAKES OF THE PROHIBITION PARTY. — THE USE OF LIGHT WINES. — GOSPEL METHODS OF INCULCATING SOBRIETY. — THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT IN MR. WEED'S CHARACTER. — HIS CHARITY. — RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES. — MISSION WORK. — DR. BOOTH'S REMINISCENCES. — PRACTICAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIANITY. — DUTY OF THE SECULAR PRESS. — THE LORD'S PRAYER . . . . .	150
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIII.

1848-1850.

	PAGE
RALLYING THE WHIGS FOR GENERAL TAYLOR. — LETTERS FROM WASHINGTON HUNT. — A USELESS PILGRIMAGE TO MARSHFIELD. — “MANAGING” A MASS MEETING. — RESULTS OF THE CANVASS. — HAMILTON FISH FOR GOVERNOR. — “MY SUFFERINGS IS INTOLERABLE.” — MR. SEWARD SENATOR. — THE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION. — A PRESIDENT AFTER MR. WEED’S OWN HEART. — “STAND FIRM, WE HAVE DISUNION MEN TO CONTEND WITH” . . . . .	165

## CHAPTER XIV.

1850-1851.

THE MAYORALTY DECLINED. — CALIFORNIA. — “OMNIA NON POSSUMUS OMNES.” — DEATH OF GENERAL TAYLOR. — EFFORTS TO “CRUSH” MR. WEED. — THE WHIG STATE CONVENTION OF 1850. — BOLT OF THE SILVER GRAYS. — WASHINGTON HUNT FOR GOVERNOR. — A TRIANGULAR CANVASS. — THE COALITION DEFEATED. — GOVERNOR FISH ELECTED SENATOR. — H. J. RAYMOND. — GOVERNOR MARCY AND THE PRESIDENCY . . . . .	182
--	-----

## CHAPTER XV.

1851-1852.

MR. WEED’S SECOND EUROPEAN TOUR. — CHANGES NOTED IN GREAT BRITAIN. — LONDON’S PECULIARITIES. — KOSSUTH. — PROTECTION AND FREE TRADE. — FRANCE AND THE COUP D’ÉTAT. — PARIS SIGHING FOR A RESTORATION. — PROVENCE. — MARSEILLES. — GENOA. — FLORENCE. — NAPLES. — ROME AT EASTER-TIDE. — THE APENNINES. — VIENNA. — FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAIN. — RETURN TO ENGLAND . . . . .	200
---	-----

## CHAPTER XVI.

1852-1854.

THE WHIG NATIONAL CONVENTION AT BALTIMORE. — GOVERNOR HUNT’S MISTAKE. — BUOYANCY OF THE WHIG CANDIDATE. — COLLAPSE OF THE PIERCE ADMINISTRATION. — THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA CONTEST. — REPEAL OF THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE. — SHIFTING POLITICAL FORCES. — THE KNOW NOTHING PARTY. — NEW YORK WHIGS IN COUNCIL. — MR. GREELEY DISAPPOINTED. — ELECTION OF MYRON H. CLARK . . . . .	215
---	-----

## CHAPTER XVII.

1845-1855.

	PAGE
A TRANSITION PERIOD. — DEATH OF MR. WEBSTER AND MR. CLAY. — READJUSTMENT OF PERSONAL RELATIONS. — PARTING WITH FRANCIS GRANGER. — KNOW NOTHING OPPOSITION TO MR. SEWARD. — AN INCIDENT IN THE SENATORIAL CANVASS. — FUSION OF WHIGS WITH FREE SOIL DEMOCRATS. — MR. WEED'S WISH TO RETIRE FROM JOURNALISM. — "NO. 11" AT THE ASTOR . . . . .	229

## CHAPTER XVIII.

1854-1856.

THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA CONTEST. — ORGANIZATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY. — THE PITTSBURG CONVENTION. — ITS PURPOSE. — PROGRESS OF THE MOVEMENT IN VARIOUS STATES. — MR. WEED A REPUBLICAN. — HIS CONSISTENT RECORD AGAINST SLAVERY. — AN "OLD LINER'S" DOUBTS AND FEARS. — THE PRESIDENTIAL QUESTION. — MR. SEWARD. — MR. FILLMORE. — JOHN A. KING. — RESULTS ANALYZED . . . . .	239
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIX.

1857-1859.

MR. WEED'S READINESS TO ABDICATE. — PROGRESS OF THE KANSAS CONTEST. — DECISION IN THE DRED SCOTT CASE. — THE REPUBLICAN STATE CONVENTION OF 1858. — NOMINATION OF E. D. MORGAN. — GOVERNOR HUNT'S DECISION. — MR. SEWARD'S TRIP TO EUROPE. — LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT NATIONAL CAMPAIGN. — ELECTION RESULTS. — JOHN BROWN . . . . .	249
--	-----

## CHAPTER XX.

1860.

THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION AT CHARLESTON. — PLAN OF THE SECESSION LEADERS. — MR. WEED AND THE SEWARD CANVASS. — LETTER FROM MR. BOWLES. — THE CHICAGO CONVENTION OF 1860. — WITHDRAWAL OF MR. CAMERON. — NOMINATION OF MR. LINCOLN. — THE DECISIVE BALLOT IN DETAIL. — POSITION OF PROMINENT DELEGATES. — HANNIBAL HAMLIN FOR VICE-PRESIDENT . . . . .	259
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXI.

1860.

"GREELEY AT THE TREMONT: WEED AT THE RICHMOND HOUSE." — GOVERNOR SEWARD TO MR. WEED. — THE VISIT TO IOWA. — "NOW
--

	PAGE
I AM EVEN WITH GOVERNOR SEWARD."—RAYMOND'S REVIEW OF THE CONVENTION.—DISSOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL "FIRM" OF "SEWARD, WEED & GREELEY."—MR. GREELEY'S LETTER TO GOVERNOR SEWARD.—MR. WEED'S REPLY . . . . .	268

## CHAPTER XXII.

1860.

"THE RAIL SPLITTER CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY."—HIS CANVASS BEGUN IN 1859.—THE ILLINOIS STATE CONVENTION AT DECATUR.—LEONARD SWETT'S RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CHICAGO CONVENTION.—"THE CHANCE LAY IN PENNSYLVANIA."—MR. WEED AT SPRINGFIELD.—EFFORTS IN NEW YORK.—LETTERS FROM MR. LINCOLN, JUDGE DAVID DAVIS, AND MR. SWETT . . . . .	291
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXIII.

1860.

THE FREE STATES NOT UNITED AGAINST DISUNION.—SECESSION ADVOCATES AT THE NORTH.—A NEW EPOCH IN MR. WEED'S LIFE.—HIS WILLINGNESS TO ABIDE BY A PEACEABLE ADJUSTMENT.—WILLIAM H. SEWARD SECRETARY OF STATE.—AFFAIRS AT WASHINGTON.—MR. LINCOLN TO MR. WEED.—POSITION OF THE PRESIDENT-ELECT . . . . .	303
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXIV.

1860-1861.

THE CRITTENDEN PROPOSITION.—RETURN OF "NATIONAL PRODIGALS" TO ENGLAND.—"A SECRET OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE."—EFFORTS TO SAVE THE BORDER STATES.—A. T. STEWART TO MR. WEED.—GENERAL DIX SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.—MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.—"THE CONSEQUENCES AND RESPONSIBILITY MUST FALL UPON THE AGGRESSORS" . . . . .	312
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXV.

1860-1861.

INCONGRUOUS REPUBLICAN ELEMENTS.—THE SENATORIAL CANVASS OF 1861.—WM. M. EVARTS.—MR. GREELEY.—DEFEAT OF THE RADICALS.—"JUSTICE TO ALL."—MR. LINCOLN'S FIRST INAUGURAL.—ITS TONE AND PURPOSE.—CABINET SELECTIONS.—APPOINTMENT POLICY.—FORT SUMTER SURRENDERS.—DUTY OF THE GOVERNMENT.—"OUR COUNTRY, RIGHT OR WRONG" . . . . .	321
---	-----

CHAPTER XXVI.

1860-1861.

	PAGE
EFFORTS TO CONFINE REBELLION TO THE EXTREME COTTON REGION. — A PLOT IN THE CABINET. — GOVERNOR CHASE. — SECRETARY CAMERON. — MONTGOMERY BLAIR. — EDWIN M. STANTON. — MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED. — GENERAL SCOTT'S PROGRAMME OVER- RULED. — SCENES AND INCIDENTS CONNECTED WITH THE WAR	329

CHAPTER XXVII.

1861.

THE "TRENT" AFFAIR. — HOW MASON AND SLIDELL WERE CAP- TURED. — MR. WEED'S FOREIGN MISSION. — ARRIVAL AT PARIS. — CONSULTATION. — MR. BIGELOW. — MR. SANFORD. — IN LONDON. — THE VISIT TO PEMBROKE. — EARL RUSSELL. — LORD KINNAIRD. — SIR HENRY HOLLAND. — MR. PEABODY. — LETTER TO THE LONDON "TIMES." — EDITORIAL COMMENT . . . . .	348
--	-----

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1861.

A RECEPTION AT LORD KINNAIRD'S. — MR. WEED AND GEORGE PEABODY. — CAUSES OF THE WAR REVIEWED. — POSITION OF THE MILLIONAIRE PHILANTHROPIST. — MR. BIGELOW TO MR. WEED. — GENERAL SCOTT'S RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES. — ENGLISH SOL- DIERY EN ROUTE TO CANADA. — LETTER IN REPLY TO LIEUTENANT MAURY . . . . .	362
--	-----

CHAPTER XXIX.

1861.

DESPATCHES TO LORD LYONS. — "A PEEP INTO THE BAG." — RELEASE OF THE REBEL COMMISSIONERS. — HOW THE NEWS WAS RECEIVED IN LONDON. — JOHN CASSELL. — EDWARD ELLICE. — SIR HENRY HOLLAND. — HIS CALL ON COMMODORE VANDERBILT. — LETTERS TO MR. WEED. — JOSEPH PARKES. — THE "JUNIUS" QUESTION. — AN APT ANECDOTE. — SIR CURTIS LAMPSON . . . . .	376
---	-----

CHAPTER XXX.

1862.

THE BLOCKADE AT CHARLESTON. — HOW IT WAS REGARDED IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND. — THE EMPEROR'S SPEECH. — MR. WEED	
--	--

AND M. LOUBAT. — INTERVIEW WITH THE DUC DE MORNAY. — CITING THE TREATY OF UTRECHT. — PRINCE NAPOLEON. — THE EMPEROR'S MESSAGE MODIFIED. — AN AFTER-DINNER CONVERSATION REPORTED BY MR. SENIOR, OF ENGLAND . . . . . 390

## CHAPTER XXXI.

1862.

RETURN TO LONDON. — APPEALS TO THE ENGLISH MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS. — THE EFFORT IN PARLIAMENT TO SECURE FOREIGN INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF THE REBEL STATES. — ARRIVAL OF THE CONFEDERATE EMISSARIES. — AUGUST BELMONT. — MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED. — THE FREEDOM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK. — LETTER TO THE MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES . . . . . 403

## CHAPTER XXXII.

1862-1863.

THE WAR FOR THE UNION. — STATE ELECTIONS OF 1862. — ATTEMPTS TO MODIFY THE NATIONAL ISSUE. — LETTERS FROM BISHOP McILVAINE, AUGUST BELMONT, AND GENERAL DIX. — DEFEAT OF GENERAL WADSWORTH. — GOVERNOR SEYMOUR AND GENERAL McCLELLAN. — MR. McELRATH TO MR. WEED. — GOVERNOR MORGAN ELECTED SENATOR. — WITHDRAWAL FROM JOURNALISM . . . . . 418

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

1863-1864.

GOING TO NEW YORK. — RAISING MONEY FOR THE PRESIDENT. — THE GLOOMY PERIOD OF THE WAR. — MR. WEED'S PLAN FOR PUTTING AN END TO HOSTILITIES. — RADICAL EFFORTS AGAINST MR. LINCOLN'S RENOMINATION. — A PREDICTION WHICH WAS VERIFIED. — THE PUBLIC DEBT AND THE PUBLIC DOMAIN. — NOMINATION OF MR. FENTON. — ISSUES OF THE NATIONAL CONTEST . . . . . 433

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

1865-1867.

"WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE." — MR. LINCOLN TO MR. WEED. — THE ASSASSINATION. — ANDREW JOHNSON. — MR. RAYMOND'S VISITS TO THE WHITE HOUSE. — ATTITUDE OF CONGRESS. — THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION. — LETTER FROM GERRIT SMITH. — RETURN TO JOURNALISM. — A POLITICAL RÉSUMÉ. — NOMINATION OF GENERAL GRANT . . . . . 449

CHAPTER XXXV.

1868-1882.

	PAGE
THE NATIONAL CANVASS OF 1868. — MR. WEED'S HEALTH FAILS. — HE GIVES UP SMOKING. — MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED. — A VISIT TO EUROPE. — GOING TO AIKEN. — POLITICAL GOSSIP. — LETTERS OF GOVERNOR MORGAN AND MR. BLATCHFORD. — RECONCILIATION BETWEEN TWO OLD FRIENDS. — CIVIL SERVICE REFORM. . . . .	459

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1868-1872.

APPROACH OF OLD AGE. — LETTER ON THE DEATH OF GENERAL LEE. — SOCIAL LIFE IN OLD NEW YORK. — THE KENT AND HONE CLUBS. — REPUBLICAN STATE CONVENTION OF 1872. — NOMINATION OF GENERAL DIX. — MR. WEED NOT IN FAVOR OF RENOMINATING GENERAL GRANT. — MIDSUMMER PROSPECTS. — REASONS FOR DECLINING TO VOTE FOR MR. GREELEY. . . . .	475
---	-----

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1873-1875.

RESUMPTION OF SPECIE PAYMENTS. — GAMBLING IN GOLD AND GRAIN. — THE "EIGHT HOUR LAW." — DEGENERATION AT WASHINGTON. — AN ALARMING SIGN OF THE TIMES. — GOVERNOR DIX TO MR. WEED. — THE INEFFICIENCY OF CONGRESS. — ELECTIONS OF 1874. — CAUSES OF THE REPUBLICAN REVERSE. — MR. WEED TO GOVERNOR DIX. — A POLITICAL RÉSUMÉ . . . . .	498
---	-----

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1876-1879.

PRESIDENTIAL CHANCES. — HOW TO MAINTAIN REPUBLICAN ASCENDENCY. — MR. WEED TO MR. BLAINE. — REPUBLICAN STATE CONVENTION OF 1876. — GOVERNOR MORGAN NOMINATED. — MR. WEED AND THE TICKET. — ELECTION OF PRESIDENT HAYES. — LETTER TO THE STATE PRESS ASSOCIATION. — CIPHER DESPACHES. — STATE CONVENTION OF 1879. — NOMINATION OF MR. CORNELL . . . . .	518
---	-----

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1873-1879.

A DEFENSE OF BIMETALISM. — NO STEPS TAKEN BY CONGRESS EXCEPT IN THE INTEREST OF BONDHOLDERS. — HOW SILVER WAS DEMONETIZED. — FRAUDS PERPETRATED TO KEEP GOLD AT A PREMIUM.	
--	--

— A CONVENTION OF BANKERS. — “EVENTS WHICH CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE.” — “NOT GOLD ENOUGH IN THE WORLD TO DO THE WORLD’S BUSINESS” . . . . .	529
--	-----

## CHAPTER XL.

1874-1880.

THE EFFORT TO RENOMINATE GENERAL GRANT FOR A THIRD TERM. — NEW YORK AND PENNSYLVANIA DEVELOPMENTS. — A SENTIMENT NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH. — “THE FIRST STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF A MONARCHY.” — AN EDITORIAL ANNIVERSARY. — ELECTION OF GENERAL GARFIELD. — MR. WEED’S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED. — SPEECHES AND LETTERS . . . . .	542
--	-----

## CHAPTER XLI.

1872-1881.

SCATTERED UTTERANCES ON PUBLIC THEMES. — CONTRASTS IN JOURNALISM. — DEVELOPMENT OF EDITORIAL ENTERPRISE. — DEMAGOGUES ; THEIR METHODS AND THEIR OPPORTUNITIES. — INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT GARFIELD. — HIS DEATH. — SELECTIONS FROM MR. WEED’S LETTERS . . . . .	559
--	-----

## CHAPTER XLII.

1872-1882.

OLD AGE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS. — AN UNDEVIATING ROUTINE. — HOURS FOR MEALS. — READING THE NEWSPAPERS. — ATTENDING TO BUSINESS. — HOW MR. WEED’S TIME WAS DIVIDED. — THE CLUB. — WHIST. — THEATRES. — RAILWAY MEETINGS. — READING DICKENS. — THE STUDY. — NO ONE TURNED AWAY WITHOUT A HEARING. — AFTERNOONS WITH CHILDREN . . . . .	568
--	-----

## CHAPTER XLIII.

1882.

THE FINAL ILLNESS. — THOUGHTS FIXED ON THE WORLD TO COME. — KINDNESS OF FRIENDS. — MR. WEED’S EIGHTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY. — HIS DEATH . . . . .	574
--	-----

---

MR. WEED’S WILL . . . . .	577
INDEX . . . . .	581



## LIST OF STEEL PLATES.



THURLOW WEED . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
DE WITT CLINTON . . . . .	Page 28
HENRY CLAY . . . . .	" 120
WILLIAM L. MARCY . . . . .	" 198
DANIEL WEBSTER . . . . .	" 229
WINFIELD SCOTT . . . . .	" 367
ABRAHAM LINCOLN . . . . .	" 450



# MEMOIR.



## CHAPTER I.

1630-1818.

JONAS WEED AND HIS DESCENDANTS. — THEIR SERVICE IN TWO WARS. — BIRTH OF THURLOW WEED. — HIS CHILDHOOD. — APPRENTICED TO A PRINTER. — STATE NEWSPAPERS IN 1810. — THE WAR OF 1812. — ON THE FRONTIER. — AT WORK IN ALBANY. — A JOURNEYMAN IN NEW YORK. — FIRST EDITORIAL ARTICLES. — THE GOSPEL OF LABOR.

AMONG emigrants to America from Yorkshire, England, in the year 1630, was Jonas Weed, the first member of the family of whom I have any authentic information. He took the oath of a freeman in the colony of Massachusetts Bay in 1631. Until the month of May, 1635, he lived at Watertown, near Boston, with his wife Mary. Then he went, "with other church members," to Wethersfield, Connecticut, where he took a prominent part in a certain doctrinal controversy. High ecclesiastical authorities were sent to Wethersfield to arrange a settlement, but no satisfactory result could be reached, and in 1642 Jonas and his friends went to live at Stamford, each receiving a house-lot by vote of settlers already located in that town. Jonas died in 1676, leaving three sons and five daughters. It is believed that Thurlow Weed was his lineal descendant, through Nathan, who lived at Stamford about 1785.

The early history of Stamford bears witness to the patriotism no less than to the piety of the Weed family. In 1675 Daniel Weed was in charge of the stockades which had been constructed under his care to ward off attacks from the Indians. "When the demands of the Crown grew oppressive," says an old chronicle, "this family was foremost in asserting the rights of the colonies." That their services might be fitly recognized,

the church voted, in 1757, that "Capt. Weed and Lt. Weed be ordered to set in the fore pew in the meeting-house." In 1775, no less than twenty-three Weeds, from the town of Stamford alone, among them Nathan Weed, Thurlow's grandfather, enlisted in the Continental Army. No family contributed more liberally of its sons to aid the cause of American independence.

It was their custom to name children after the prophets. Jonas found good Bible names for his immediate descendants, but the usage was disregarded when a son was born to Joel Weed and Mary Ells, and by them named after Edward, Lord Thurlow, of Ashfield, High Chancellor of England. It was only for a year or so, however, that he went by the name of Edward. At an early age, dropping the first part, he called himself simply Thurlow Weed, — a strong, sonorous name, for which no one ever invented contraction or diminutive.

After the close of the Revolutionary War, Joel and Mary "went west" from New Haven, where they were married, to Dutchess County, and then to Greene County, New York. They were living near a small settlement called Acra, in what is now the town of Cairo, Greene County, when Thurlow Weed, on the 15th of November, 1797, was born. I reached the place, in the winter of 1883, by driving over a fine turnpike road, which, starting at Catskill, pushes up into the mountain region, and winds down on the other side to the valley of the Delaware. Ten miles away from the Hudson, the turnpike breaks into its Durham and Windham branches; and on the latter, a mile or so west from Cairo, stood the old homestead, — a rude log-cabin, one story high, with a door facing to the north, and a stunted pine-tree growing by the side. Although he worked hard and honestly, Joel Weed was unable to provide a more comfortable habitation for himself and family. Perhaps Thurlow's better success was owing in some measure to the fact that he inherited many of his mother's peculiarities. She was a woman of noteworthy intellectual and executive capacity.

When he was eight years old Thurlow felt the necessity of doing something towards his own support. In 1805 he found employment in a blacksmith's shop. The next year he shipped as cabin-boy on a sloop sailing to New York. When navigation closed he became boy-of-all-work at a tavern, and in the spring of 1807 went as cabin-boy on another sloop. In 1808 his par-

ents moved to Cortland County, and he was employed on a farm. In 1809 they moved to Onondaga, where he worked alternately in a furnace and on a farm until given a situation under Jasper Hopper, receiving as wages his board and four months' schooling. In 1811, through Mr. Hopper's influence, he was installed as apprentice in the office of the "Lynx," at Onondaga Hollow, and from that moment until his death no music was so delightful in his ears as the click of type and the thud of the printing-press.

"Since I was an apprentice in Onondaga," he wrote in 1861, "the wilderness north and west of Ohio has been converted into nine enterprising, wealthy states. Upon territory then unexplored, not to say unknown, has sprung up a population far greater than that of the states then forming the Union. Canals run through New York. Railroads connect every city and almost every village with the metropolis. Steam has driven canals from rivers, lakes, and oceans. Out of a tangled and almost impenetrable swamp, inhabited only by frogs, snakes, and owls, has grown the large and beautiful city of Syracuse. Instead of the lumbering stage-wagon that passed either way once in twenty-four hours, with its six or eight passengers, half a dozen trains, with a thousand passengers, rush through with thundering noise and lightning speed. Most wonderful of all, we can whisper to a friend not only throughout our own country, but in England or France, and receive his response before we sleep. And all these wonders have been accomplished during the last fifty years, — wonders compared with which, as it seems to me, the world was barren for the two or three preceding centuries."

But the changes which he witnessed in New York city were even more impressive. There was no Canal Street when he first visited "the metropolis," and all above that line was common. There was no Jersey City nor Williamsburg, and Brooklyn had not even become a village. The Park Theatre and Scudder's Museum were the only places of amusement. There was no public garden; there were no omnibus lines nor carriage-stands, nor was there occasion for either. There were only two good-sized hotels, the "Tontine" and the "City." There were no concerts nor lectures. There were but three steamboats on the North River, and none ventured outside of Sandy Hook. Polit-

ical caucuses were addressed by men of high standing ; candidates for the common council, the mayoralty, or the legislature were almost uniformly men of established reputation and approved integrity.

In the year 1811 Azariah C. Flagg started his newspaper at Plattsburgh ; William L. Stone was beginning journalistic work at Herkimer ; John C. Spencer was writing editorials at Canandaigua, and Mackey Crosswell, the father of Edwin Crosswell, at Catskill. New York city had five newspapers, but two of which, the "Commercial Advertiser" and the "Evening Post," survive. The now flourishing and prosperous Hudson River and interior counties were so sparsely settled that their newspapers were few in number, and not usually published oftener than once a week. Rochester, Waterloo, Palmyra, Lyons, Albion, and Lockport had not been dreamed of, nor was there any Oswego, Wayne, Monroe, Orleans, Niagara, Chautauqua, Livingston, Chenango, Tompkins, Yates, or Schuyler County.

Many pleasant acquaintances were made by the young apprentice during his connection with the "Lynx" establishment. James Geddes, Joshua Forman, Azariah Smith, and Victory Birdseye, whom he came to know at this time, were then laying the foundation for careers of usefulness and honor. Throughout their lives he was closely allied with Amos P. Granger, Vivus W. Smith, Judge Lawrence, and Lewis H. Redfield, of Onondaga County. "I have known you for nearly fifty years," wrote General Leavenworth, of Syracuse, in 1881, "intimately for more than thirty. Through all my public life I have fully appreciated your many kindnesses. Perhaps they have been owing in some degree to your strong attachment to this locality, about which there must cluster in your memory a thousand pleasant recollections. We all still regard you as an Onondaga. The name of no one now a resident is more frequently or more kindly mentioned by our citizens than your own. . . . I am often reminded of you by various localities mentioned in the story you told to all of us one evening at your house, at a supper, in 1855, when you spoke of catching a salmon below Wood's milldam : how the fish was struggling to get over the rift into the deep water above when you saw it stranded, jumped into the water, and seized it ; the sale of it to Judge Forman ; the silver dollar he gave you for it, etc., etc. I never pass any of these places without calling to mind that event in your boyhood."

In the fall of 1812, with all his worldly goods wrapped up in a handkerchief, which he carried in his hand, young Weed walked from Onondaga to Union Springs and back, and then from Onondaga to Utica, seeking employment. Although not subject to military duty when the war with England began, he offered his services, and was accepted as a volunteer. During the first campaign he was quartered at Sackett's Harbor. In 1813 there was an alarm that the British were crossing from Canada, and he entered upon another brief term of militia service. Returning to Utica, he resumed work as a compositor; but "when drums and fifes were passing up and down the street every day I could not stand and set type," he says, and so he went a third time to the frontier. In 1814, when appointed quartermaster sergeant, he was only seventeen years of age.

Peace was declared in 1815, and after brief employment at Auburn and Cooperstown he drifted to Albany, where he was given a place in the "Register" office by Solomon Southwick. Then he went to New York, where he held good positions as a journeyman, working for some time with James Harper. "He and I," he used to say, "were both emulous to be first at the office in the morning. Daylight always found one of us cleaning the balls upon which we inked the forms. Often after we had done a good day's work James would say, 'Now, Thurlow, let's break the back of another token, — just break its back.' I would generally reluctantly consent just to break the back of the token, but he would beguile me or laugh at my complaints, and never let me off until the token was completed, fair and square. It was a custom with us in summer to do a half day's work before the other boys and men got their breakfasts. James and I would meet by appointment in the gray of the morning, and go down to John Street. We got the key of the office by tapping on the window, when Mr. Seymour, the proprietor, would take it from under his pillow and hand it to one of us through an opening in the blind. A pressman who could do twenty or even ten per cent. more than usual was always sure of a situation. Harper, a man named Kennedy, and I made the largest bills in the city. We often earned as much as \$14 a week, — liberal wages when you remember that good board could be obtained for \$10 a month."

At the age of twenty he established himself again on the Al-

bany "Register," of which he was made half-way editor. The views which he held on state and national topics were now first printed in the leader column. One of the earliest referred to the American Indians. "These aborigines," he wrote, "are becoming objects of profound sympathy. . . . For many years they have been beset by greedy and unprincipled advisers. The wrongs they received they could not explain; consequently they were unredressed. If by the instigation of bad men they are induced to plunder or kill our citizens, avengers return more than twofold retaliation; and if they meet in council with our countrymen, debate invariably ends in the abrogation of some right or privilege, or the ceding of additional territory. . . . The condition of the Six Nations residing within this State is truly lamentable. Their reservations have become very valuable, and every species of intrigue is put in operation to wrest these lands from the confiding occupants. . . . A few years will undoubtedly drive them from these possessions."

In an article which appeared on the 11th of August, 1818, he condemned the practice of kidnapping free negroes for the purpose of transporting them to the South to be sold into slavery. "It is but rarely," he wrote, "that the perpetrators of this crime are brought to punishment. Such temptations are held out to the avaricious that an occasional exemplary sentence does not deter others from seeking to amass wealth by the same means. . . . As the law stands it is a mere dead letter. But if it were enforced, it would simply divert the price of human blood from the coffers of the speculator to those of the federal government. What! shall it be said that a nation whose government is based on freedom deals in human flesh with as little feeling as a jockey has for horses or horned cattle? Such is the fact. And a disgraceful fact it is, too. . . . The law ought to be repealed. The traffic is carried on in the Southern States on a most extensive scale, in defiance of all decency and religion. Within a short time eight vessels with over three hundred blacks from the Northern States have entered the port of New Orleans."

1818.—Thus Mary and Joel Weed's boy entered upon responsible life not without certain advantages often denied by inexorable conditions to the offspring of the rich. He was ambitious, resolute, and self-reliant. His frame was large and pow-



erful. He was blessed with perfect health, and his own contact with poverty and labor aided him vastly in the disposition of many questions with which, in the editorial and political career now about to begin, he was called upon to deal.

“The first great duty of philanthropists and reformers,” he wrote in 1881, “is to impress upon rising generations in this country the divine law that by the sweat of a man’s brow shall he earn his bread. Let every boy be taught at his mother’s knee, by his father, in his school, in his academy, in college, that he must work for a living; that to become useful and honored he must exert either his mental faculties or his physical forces diligently. . . . In our country thousands of poor boys, by industry, honesty, and ambition, have not only acquired wealth, but become useful and honored citizens. If the present generation realized the lesson which this fact conveys, the number of office-seekers who beleaguer Washington, throng the corridors of our Custom-House and Post-Office, and infest the City Hall would be greatly diminished. Benjamin Franklin was an apprentice and journeyman printer. Roger Sherman was a shoemaker. Henry Wilson, Senator in Congress and Vice-President of the United States, was also a shoemaker. Andrew Johnson, Senator in Congress and Vice-President of the United States, was a tailor. Lieutenant-Governor John Tayler, a successful and influential citizen of Albany, worked for several years by the day or month, first in a brickyard, and then in paving State Street. Abraham Lincoln was a farmer. Andrew B. Dickinson, an intelligent and prominent member of both houses of our legislature, worked out by the month until he was of age, and learned to write after he was married, his wife being his teacher. Stephen Allen, James Harper, and Isaac L. Varian, honest and honored Mayors of New York, were first journeymen and then master-mechanics.”

## CHAPTER II.

1818-1821.

MARRIAGE. — CATHERINE OSTRANDER. — IN CHENANGO TWO YEARS. — EARLY RECORD ON IMPORTANT QUESTIONS. — INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS. — THE COMPROMISE OF 1820. — NORWICH REVISITED. — THE MANLIUS EXPERIMENT. — MAJOR ANDRÉ. — GENERAL VAN RENSSELAER. — RIVAL STAGE LINES. — CANAL NAVIGATION. — STRUGGLING AGAINST POVERTY. — A NEW VENTURE. — ADDISON GARDINER.

DURING his boyhood and youth Mr. Weed worked for a blacksmith, and as cabin-boy, furnace-hand, farmer, compositor, and assistant-editor. He was connected with a dozen different public journals, and was a volunteer in the army. We can hardly wonder that when he went to Cooperstown, in 1818, to claim the hand of Catherine Ostrander, her prudent relatives warned her to think twice before she threw herself away upon this strolling journeyman.

Catherine belonged to a family of some position. Her mother, Clarissa de Montford, came to America from France. Her father was Moses Ostrander, of Utrecht, Holland. The Ostrandens lived in Dutchess County, New York, until early in the present century, when they moved to Cooperstown. Catherine was nineteen and Thurlow barely twenty-one when they were married. Soon afterwards they went to live at Norwich, Chenango County, where Mr. Weed established the "Republican Agriculturist."

This enterprise was almost certain to end in failure. Its projector had all the energy and fire which should characterize a man at his time of life. Ten years of "knocking about" had taught him many useful lessons. He was happy in his marriage, and had every incentive to labor. But he was not adapted to editing an agricultural newspaper. He devoted a large share of attention to that department at first, urging the formation of agricultural associations, and dwelling upon the dignity and importance of the farmer's calling. Through his zealous efforts,

indeed, a farmer's club was organized in Norwich, which, on the 22d and 23d of September, 1819, rejoiced in the success of the first agricultural fair ever held in Chenango County. But he kept drifting into politics, although the position which he took was sure to provoke local antagonism. Governor Clinton's canal policy was bitterly opposed in Norwich, which lay some distance south of the proposed water-way; and when Mr. Weed championed the cause of the state administration, as he did, many subscribers indignantly withdrew their patronage. Thus matters soon came to a crisis, and the "Agriculturist" went under, with the Clinton flag still gallantly flying.

There were, however, firm friends to Mr. Weed in Norwich, and many of them were active in his behalf. He had been in the village only a short time when several residents who sided with him in politics drew up a statement setting forth some of the circumstances under which the "Agriculturist" was started. This statement, which was issued in the form of a circular, ran as follows:—

NORWICH, *February 3, 1819.*

"We take the liberty of soliciting your influence in favor of the 'Republican Agriculturist,' a newspaper printed in this village by Mr. Thurlow Weed. For this gentleman we feel the highest respect, and place entire confidence in his integrity and in the correct political course of his paper.

"The reason of our interference in behalf of Mr. Weed is the unwarrantable abuse that he has received from Mr. Hubbard, editor of the Norwich 'Journal,' and the faithless course that has been hitherto pursued, and is still pursued, towards him in this connection. Last October, Mr. Clark, the editor of the Albany 'Register,' was on a visit to this county, and among others called on Mr. Hubbard, who had formerly been a journeyman in his office. Mr. Weed, then foreman in Mr. Clark's office, having lately married, wished to purchase a press and establish himself in the county, and Mr. Hubbard expressed to Mr. Clark a wish to sell. A bargain was accordingly struck between Mr. Clark as agent, and in behalf of Mr. Weed, for Mr. Hubbard's establishment. The value of it was about \$350; but as it was represented by Mr. Hubbard to be very profitable and the advertising custom good, it was agreed that \$800 should be the price,—payable half in one and half in two years, with good security. Mr. Hubbard was to let him have the press, types, and everything pertaining to the office; was to give him the profits of publishing out the

advertisements then in the paper, amounting to about \$62; and was to leave the county and not establish another paper in it, thus giving to Mr. Weed all the support that he then had, and all that might be expected from having no other paper in the village.

“Mr. Weed then came with about \$200 worth of new type, when Mr. Hubbard declined fulfilling the bargain, and left Mr. Weed out of employment, after having expended about \$300. Under these circumstances he was advised to procure General German’s notes, who was perfectly responsible, so that no objection could be made to the security, and tender them on his part and demand a fulfillment of the contract. He did so. Hubbard reluctantly complied, and on the delivery of the papers ratified anew the contract as above stated.

“Now after having obtained from Mr. Weed the sum of \$400 more than the establishment was worth, under the understanding that he would not start another paper in the county, Mr. Hubbard, in violation of that agreement, has set up another press, and has directed Mr. Weed to discontinue the advertisements that he had purchased and paid for. Mr. Weed is a stranger among us, and depends upon his talents and industry, and upon the liberality and justice of the citizens of Chenango, for his support. Under these circumstances, we feel it a duty, as far as we can, to aid an injured man, and check in their course the operations of injustice and dishonesty.

“We trust you will aid in this object so far as to become (if not one already) a subscriber for his paper, and to circulate in your neighborhood the enclosed subscription, and then return it to him.”

The Clintonian policy of internal improvement was through these years a well-defined basis for political division. “This most important and enlightened feature of our governmental policy,” wrote Mr. Weed on the 11th of February, 1819, “ought to command the admiration of the republic. The information communicated through the Governor’s speech is peculiarly gratifying. It appears that a project, for the completion of which a half century, and by many even a century, was anticipated, now promises, with a confidence amounting almost to certainty, to be accomplished in less than two years. The most sanguine friends of the undertaking never expected such rapid progress.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The first boat to traverse the Erie Canal was the “Seneca Chief,” which left Buffalo on the 26th of October, 1825, reaching New York on the 4th of November. The passengers were Gov. Clinton, Joshua Forman, Col. W. L. Stone, Chancellor Livingston, Mr. Weed, and Gen. Stephen Van Rensselaer. See Stone’s *History of New York City*, pp. 390-411.

When, in July, 1819, Thomas J. Oakley, by a revolution in politics, succeeded Martin Van Buren as Attorney-General of New York, this step was sustained by the young editor at Norwich, as warranted by the strictest principles of republican justice, and indeed imperiously called for as a means of protection to the administration. "Rotation in office," he wrote, "is the most striking and brilliant feature of excellence in our benign form of government. No person who claims to be republican can question the correctness of an equalized distribution of public favors. Granted that sometimes a phenomenon in political duplicity, after contending stubbornly for this doctrine until he gets himself into a snug berth, may then refuse it allegiance. That does not invalidate the principle. Both bad and good men make profession of their faith; good men exemplify their professions by consistent practice. . . . By this doctrine, bottomed as it is upon the Magna Charta of our liberties, and rendered politically sacred by the examples of Washington and Jefferson, the removal of Mr. Van Buren was not only sanctioned, but was absolutely required."

As the year was about to close it was natural to indulge in reflections upon its record.

"We have had a squally and by no means a profitable voyage," he wrote in December, "but we shall endeavor to repair damages and make sail again. All cannot expect to go before the wind, and we are not disposed to wrangle with the fates for sending us a share of adverse gales. Every one should be willing to fish in troubled waters occasionally. 'Man wants but little here below.' Give us but health, rye coffee,<sup>1</sup> buckwheat cakes, and a clean conscience, while others riot in luxuries, bask in pomp and splendor, or count their hoarded thousands, we can hail cheerful contentment, and bite our thumb at all their follies. . . . We must gratefully thank those persons whose patronage has enabled us to survive thus long the frauds of a knave and the malice of faction. We should do extreme violence to our feelings not to pay this humble yet truly sincere tribute to those friends who have supported our establishment. Although our patronage has been very limited, yet it has afforded us a living,

<sup>1</sup> In some parts of the South and West, poor people still roast grain just as coffee is roasted, grind it, put in sugar or molasses, whichever they have, and drink it for breakfast and dinner.

and this, considering the industry of our enemies to prevent it, is all we could reasonably expect. Three, six, and nine months were the different periods some new-light prophets confidently asserted, would bring our valedictory; but they have missed a figure, for we now complete twelve months, and, if kind Heaven spares us life and ability to labor, we shall commence and complete another year."

"Who will not rejoice," he wrote, still later in December, "at the intelligence from Washington that the veterans of the Revolutionary War are to be placed on the pension list at eighteen and twenty dollars per month? Although Congress deals out this relief with a sparing hand, it gladdens the hearts of four thousand four hundred and twenty-two of our Spartan band of Revolutionists. Although the balm was limited, it has healed many languishing wounds. . . . Would to Heaven the pittance were more bountiful, and that some good genius would whisper to the kindred spirits of their departed fellow-patriots that the nation is not ungrateful."

[A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.]

NORWICH, *December 21, 1819.*

GENTLEMEN, — Mr. Thurlow Weed, owner of the establishment and editor of the "Agriculturist," in this place, is wishing to procure some additional type and printing materials. Should he apply to you to purchase, I have no doubt of his promptly meeting any engagement he may make. The earnings of Mr. Weed since he has been here have been very considerable and his receipts small. He has undoubtedly much more due to him than would cover any purchase he may wish to make. Mr. Weed, though not wealthy, may, as a man of the strictest integrity, have full confidence placed in his representations without danger of disappointment.

Yours truly,

JAMES BIRDSALL,

MESSRS. SEWARD & WILLIAMS, Utica.

In the year 1819 slavery began to darken the political horizon in the United States. The people of the Territory of Missouri applied for permission to form a state government. It was proposed in the House, by General Tallmadge, to grant their request, with the express proviso that involuntary servitude, except for crime, be not permitted. Members from the Free States voted for this proposal, but members from the Slave

States voted against it, and it was defeated. Congress adjourned in March, and the subject was dropped until the assembling of the next Congress, which met in December, 1819, and in the following March enacted the famous "Compromise of 1820," which remained in force until 1854. "The South," wrote Mr. Weed, while the great Missouri compact was pending, — "the South is making alarming exertions to pollute and curse the soil of the new states by the legalization of slavery. This monstrous proposition is now before Congress. The advocates for trafficking in human flesh are going to great and dangerous lengths. The question is assuming a character of more consequence than any other which has agitated national councils since the Revolution. Philanthropy and virtue call loudly upon the friends of liberty to declare against the further extension of slavery. This foulest stain upon our character already blurs and degrades too large a portion of our otherwise exalted country."

It was not until toward the close of the year that he began to realize how dubious were his prospects in Chenango, and to look about for more congenial journalistic connections. On the 14th of September, 1820, he took leave of his readers in an article full of genuine regret at parting from those with whom he enjoyed friendly relations, but reiterating with new emphasis the political convictions which brought him to the support of Governor Clinton. "My interest in this establishment," he wrote, "ceased on the 7th instant. . . . The dissolution of those ties which have associated the proprietor of a newspaper with his patrons is not inaptly compared to the separation of kindred. The constant interchange of sentiment, the daily social intercourse, and the many kind offices which patrons render their publisher, soon create sentiments and affections which cannot be interrupted without exciting the liveliest regret. On this occasion, when taking leave of those persons who have bestowed upon me these highly-prized favors, I feel more than I shall attempt to express. . . ."

"I retain undiminished confidence in our state government. The unprecedented prosperity of the Commonwealth, under the guidance of De Witt Clinton, is an unerring evidence of the wisdom of his policy and the republicanism of his administration. The years 1817, 1818, 1819, and 1820 are proud and distinguished in the history of New York. These, however,

with the smiles of ever-directing Providence, are but mere precursors to bounties of immense value, which await our happy, highly-favored State. There can be no apprehensions for the virtue and integrity of an administration which numbers among its efficient friends such men as John Tayler, John Jay, Archibald McIntyre, T. A. Emmet, Henry Huntington, C. D. Colden, P. A. Jay, T. J. Oakley, and their colleagues. . . .

“In the progress of improvement for the last three years, this State has outstripped the bounds of fancy. Our canal, the proudest monument of munificence and enterprise ever erected within our borders, has progressed with a rapidity which astonishes its friends and confounds its enemies. The canal route from Utica to Montezuma exhibits a scene which rejoices the heart of every good citizen. All who visit this grand work return exclaiming, in the language of the Queen of Sheba, ‘The half was not told me.’ Valuably laden boats are now constantly plying through a section of country which, three years ago, could be traversed only by beasts of the forest. Villages are shooting up in every direction on the borders of the canal, and what was then a howling wilderness is now converted into fertile fields.”

The house in which Mr. Weed lived at Norwich is no longer standing, but many of the older residents remember it well, and the next neighbor’s house, which his resembled, remains as it was sixty-five years ago. I visited these scenes in 1883. The town lies in a prosperous portion of the State, and is built in a valley surrounded on all sides by rugged hills. Jedediah Wheeler told me that he settled there in 1815. He remembered Mr. Weed’s coming as an event of some importance. He also remembered that the agreement had been that Mr. Hubbard would not start another paper. “You see that the old printing-office,” he said, as he pointed out the place, “has degenerated into a cabinet-shop and wagon-house. It was pushed back from the main street to make room for the brick Bank of Norwich.” Mr. Wheeler went into Mr. Weed’s office, one day, thinking that he would like to become a printer; but he gave it up, he says, when he saw how rapidly compositors work at the “case.” Charles Thorpe, the oldest living graduate of Hamilton College, which he entered in 1812, told me that Norwich has been “made over” since 1820. Mrs. Lewis, aged eighty-six, lived near the Weeds. “Their



house was very small," she said, "and it was a poor sort of house, too, sir, — begging your pardon. I do not know that it was even plastered. The walls were just planked up. Mrs. Weed used to go to Mrs. Oviatt's house, where there was a great brick oven, to do the family baking. There were very few stoves in those days. The oven was built into the chimney, and the baking was placed on a long-handled shovel, so as to get it in as far as the back end of the oven. Ah, but those shovels were great things for brown bread! It stayed in over night, and came out smoking like a pudding for breakfast." All this Miss Cary, who lived next door to Mr. Weed, corroborated, adding that "he was a good neighbor." Mr. Raynsford, born in 1802, told me that Norwich people made their own clothing up to 1820. He remembered when the forests all about were frequented by wild deer. Another old resident furnished me with an anecdote. "One day," he said, "Mr. Weed published an article reflecting upon Lot Clark, who thereupon became so exasperated that he took a horsewhip and went out to chastise the offender. He met Mr. Weed, who seized the whip, and applied it to Mr. Clark to his satisfaction."

Late in August, 1872, Mr. Weed spent a few days in revisiting Chenango County.

On Monday of last week [said the local paper] Mr. Weed, his daughter Harriet, who was born in this place, and two grandchildren arrived on the Midland from Sidney, after spending a few days in Cooperstown, where, in his younger days, he had worked as a journeyman printer. The party stopped at the Eagle, and the news soon reached the remaining old residents who lived here in 1820 and knew Mr. Weed, and some who have since formed and retained his acquaintance and friendship. Among the former we may mention the Hon. John F. Hubbard, Sen. These two venerable journalists were all their active years opposed in politics, and those who suppose that political battles fifty years ago were less sharp than now are seriously mistaken; but, after long lives spent in advocating the respective policies to which they were attached, they lay aside political armor, meet in their declining years, and greet each other with a friendship which is not likely to be severed. Mr. Weed, while evidently affected by these meetings, was also highly gratified to greet those whom he had not seen in half a century, and to look upon the hills, the valleys, the streets, and the buildings with which he was once so familiar.

The celebrities of Norwich Mr. Weed vividly remembered.

He spoke a few years ago of one of the village oracles, whose name was Joshua Aldrich, and who was as impatient of contradiction as all well-regulated oracles should be. Aldrich's dogmatic assertions were the admiration of the Eagle tavern. He was rarely pushed into a corner in debate; but in case that occurred, would exclaim, "'Who steals my purse steals trash,' as Robert Boyle says;" and this quotation, eloquently delivered, with the addition of that part about robbing a man of his good name, would silence opposition. But finally, on one occasion, Benjamin Chapman, a storekeeper, quietly observed that Mr. Aldrich had plainly mistaken the paternity of the extract quoted; and that Shakespeare was really the author, not Boyle. "Uncle Josh" instantly resented this assertion, and the next day substantiated his accuracy by producing the "Works of Boyle," printed in a small volume, on the title-page of which ran the quotation in question. The merchant endeavored to show that the lines were borrowed, in accordance with a common usage, but neither "Uncle Josh" nor any of the spectators was prepared to accept this as a satisfactory explanation.

Jesse Brown was another idler at the tavern. He was especially addicted to politics. When Daniel D. Tompkins was running against De Witt Clinton for Governor there were many animated disputes. Jesse was an ardent and loquacious Clintonian. One day he engaged in high debate with an equally zealous Bucktail, whose name was Snow. Brown expatiated on the talents and learning of Clinton. Snow extolled Tompkins for his patriotic services during the war. "My candidate," he exclaimed, "after borrowing all the money the banks would lend, spent his own fortune besides in furnishing clothes and food for the soldiers who fought the British. You talk about Clinton's great ability, but I want to know what he has ever done for the country or the State." "I am prepared," retorted Brown, "to meet you on that point. And if you want to know what Governor Clinton has done for his country, I advise you to look at his future conduct." This caused a laugh at the expense of Clinton and his admirer, in which even the Governor's friends joined.

1821. — Mr. Weed's attention was turned to Manlius, Onondaga County, early in 1821, as a town at which there might be a favorable opportunity for engaging in the newspaper business,

and he wrote to a friend there, requesting him to look over the prospect.

[H. L. GRANGER TO MR. WEED.]

MANLIUS, *January 25, 1821.*

DEAR SIR, — Conformable to your request, I called upon Mr. Clark, at present owner of the printing-office in this village, as soon as I received your letter, and he informed me that he would sell on reasonable terms.

I should feel highly gratified in having a well-conducted paper in this place, and am confident that much good would result from it. The opposition are growing daily more abusive and violent, and had we a paper edited with ability and candor I should not doubt of a majority for the administration at the next election.

Yours, etc.,

H. L. GRANGER.

Not long after this Mr. Weed gave up the "Agriculturist," and, after an unsuccessful start at Albany, began to publish the "Onondaga Republican" at Manlius.

An early occasion for press comment was found in the announcement that the British government had determined to remove the remains of Major André to Westminster Abbey. "This project," he wrote, on the 15th of August, 1821, "has been discussed with commendable delicacy by the New York papers generally. But there is one exception. The 'American' has treated the character of 'that accomplished man and gallant officer,' as General Washington called André, with unfeeling harshness and contumely. . . . This attack upon the memory of a virtuous but unfortunate soldier is an exemplification of the worst of feelings. The character of Major André, as is acknowledged by all, was above reproach, his morals correct, and his honor unstained. Devotion to the cause of his monarch induced him to engage in a perilous adventure. He was captured, tried, and executed, and the 'American' says his remains 'lie where they ought to lie, in a dishonored grave.' Major André's offense was not a venal one. He committed no crime which dishonors his memory. An ignominious death atoned for his violation of the usages of war. Let us respect his virtues and his magnanimity."

"General Stephen Van Rensselaer," wrote Mr. Weed in another article, "has been put in nomination for the seat in Congress of General Solomon Van Rensselaer, which became

vacant by the appointment of the latter gentleman to the office of Postmaster at Albany. It is consoling, in these times of general and almost total political depravity, to see men of sterling worth, like General Van Rensselaer, in positions of responsibility. That singularly exalted man stands preëminently first among the few politicians<sup>1</sup> of this State who remain worthy of trust. He will be elected by an overwhelming majority, and will serve his constituents with fidelity. We rejoice to see such men in high places."

The most prosperous citizens of Central New York in 1821 lived upon incomes which would now be thought entirely inadequate. Judge Tousley and Nicholas P. Randall were the only residents of Manlius who kept carriages for their own pleasure. Azariah Smith had one horse, which he sometimes let to a young man who wanted to take his sweetheart sleigh-riding. Mr. Randall probably lived on less than \$1,500 a year. When a man bought a hat it was expected to last twelve months, at least; and to buy more than two suits of clothes in a year would have been deemed wasteful extravagance. Few houses had carpets. But in 1821 Manlius was far more interesting than it is to-day. It was then a stage-line centre, and picturesque coaches, as they swept past the old tavern and printing-office, made the streets resound with their cheery tally-ho and the voices of travelers. One route ran to Albany by the Cherry Valley road, and another to Albany and Buffalo by the Seneca turnpike. The "Pioneer Stage Line" was not what its name might imply, but was started as an opposition enterprise, because the old company ran on Sundays. In the end the "Pioneer" was worsted, although clergymen all favored that company. From 1810 until 1821, this village was the principal place of business in Onondaga County. The people of Cazenovia, Chittenango, and the northern country went there to trade. The town had several citizens distinguished for ability and public spirit. It was the residence of the county judge and sheriff. But when the stage-coach was supplanted by the canal boat, Manlius began to decline, and subsequently, when it was left off the great routes of railway transportation, it sank into a state of indifference from which it has never rallied.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Weed never regarded this word as a term of reproach.

The house in which Mr. Weed lived and the office in which he worked are still standing. The former — a small frame dwelling, located at the intersection of two side streets, one of which was called “Clinton,” in honor of the Governor — cannot have looked very differently in 1821. “I knew Mr. Weed over sixty years,” said Peter Wormood, the blacksmith, as he stood reflectively on the doorstep of the old dwelling, “and I never knew anything bad of him.” Arnold Remington, ninety years old, added kindly reminiscences.

[MR. WEED TO A FRIEND.]

MANLIUS, *September 23, 1821.*

DEAR SIR,— It was imperatively necessary that I should make a start somewhere, in order to support my family. They were actually in want of things which it was beyond my power to obtain. The outlook here is better, so far, than I had expected. I think I can do something. The “Republican” takes well. The villagers are well pleased with it. Subscribers increase. If I am so fortunate as to be prudent and discreet, I think I can acquire a little influence. But politics are strangely entangled. I hardly know what to touch. What is to come out of the schism in New York? I feel partial to the new lights.

A Bucktail paper was offered to me. It is much better supported than this, but I could not take it. It would be palpably inconsistent with my former course, although a liberal overture.

I hope a change is at hand. Whenever the iron is hot, I stand ready to strike; or if any assistance is wanted in heating it, I will be the first hand at the bellows.

I had barely two dollars in my pocket when I got here with my family. We lived eight days without tea, sugar, or meat — on bread and butter only, with cold water. It is pinching times, but I am determined to stand it.

Yours faithfully,

T. WEED.

It was natural that Mr. Weed should foresee some of the changes which the construction of the Erie Canal was destined to bring about. He could not but realize that it would be much easier to establish a paying newspaper in a town destined to advance. He discussed the inevitable limitations of Manlius with his friend Addison Gardiner, then just beginning the practice of the law in that village. Without much hesitation Gardiner de-

cided to seek his fortune in the West, fixing upon Indianapolis as a good place in which to make a start. Arrived at Geneva, he found that the stage-route was temporarily blocked, and concluded to visit Niagara Falls, which he had never seen. On the way thither he passed through a village which appeared so delightful to the young barrister that he determined to make it his permanent residence.

This chance in 1822 gave Rochester a citizen who remained one of her foremost gentlemen for sixty-one years. He opened an office in a building owned by Everard Peck, proprietor of the Rochester "Telegraph,"<sup>1</sup> with which Mr. Weed was subsequently associated. He was the first Justice of the Peace elected in Rochester, and was successively chosen to be District-Attorney, Circuit Judge, Lieutenant-Governor, and Judge of the Court of Appeals. "I was always urging Mr. Weed to leave Manlius," once said Judge Gardiner, "and I think I may add that but for that accident at Geneva he never would have become a resident of Rochester. . . . How curious it seems that circumstances which we regard at the time as scarcely worthy of notice often change the entire current of our lives!"

Judge Gardiner survived his old friend but a few months. He died at Rochester in June, 1883.

[WILLIAM KENT TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *November 20, 1849.*

MY DEAR WEED, — Good-by to you, old fellow. We are destined never to meet except in railroad cars, or in Broadway, or on the wheel of a steamboat. Still, I have a romantic sort of regard for you, which is more provoking, as you do not appear to care a straw for me. But I can't help the soft impeachment. Albert H. Tracy (whom I saw in Buffalo) says there are some natures — frequent in women, not uncommon in men — who are attached all the more for careless treatment and a little tyranny. I acknowledge this spaniel disposition, and admit that at any time, with a whistle, you can summon back the regard of yours ever,

WILLIAM KENT.

P. S. I met Addison Gardiner in Buffalo. I tried hard to be-

<sup>1</sup> Telegraphs were in use long before the electric telegraph was invented. They had long arms for displaying signals or lanterns, and usually stood on headlands. There was one at Sandy Hook to signal vessels approaching New York.

come acquainted with him, but he gave no sign, and looked rigid as a Puritan, grave and hard; yet I admit your good taste. There is deep thought in his brow, and he seems to be in earnest in being so severely Christian. This may make him better for the next world, but not so interesting as a sinner like Thurlow Weed is, in this.

## CHAPTER III.

1822-1829.

AT ROCHESTER. — EVERARD PECK. — THE STATE ADMINISTRATION. — ITS PLACE IN HISTORY. — TWITTING A JOURNEYMAN. — HIS REPLY. — MNE-MONIC EXERCISES. — DANIEL WEBSTER'S ELECTION TO THE SENATE. — THE CHARACTER OF WASHINGTON. — ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE. — DEATH OF DE WITT CLINTON. — GEORGE DAWSON'S REMINISCENCES. — LETTERS FROM ALBERT H. TRACY. — FREDERICK WHITTLESEY. — CHANCELLOR LANSING.

THERE used to run northward from what was Buffalo Street in old Rochester a rough, swampy thoroughfare, skirted by narrow footpaths on either side, with huge logs lying in the middle, to keep wagons or stage-coaches from sinking in the mud. Such was the Fitzhugh Street of sixty years ago, upon which Mr. Weed took a house when he went to live in Rochester. The thriving village of that day has now become a prosperous, beautiful city, but the "march of improvement" yet leaves intact what was a "poor printer's" home from 1822 to 1830.

Now, for the first time since beginning editorial service, his surroundings became thoroughly congenial. Aside from the social, business, and political advantages of his new place of residence, he had an influential friend in his employer, Mr. Peck, proprietor of the "Telegraph," with whom he enjoyed while life lasted unbroken relations of respect and confidence. Mr. Peck was a Clintonian, but disinclined to take any active part in politics, and thus the political direction of his paper fell upon its junior editor, — an arrangement, it need hardly be said, exactly to the liking of Mr. Weed, though not perfectly satisfactory to the Bucktails of Monroe County.

[MR. PECK TO MR. WEED.]

ROCHESTER, *January, 27, 1847.*

DEAR SIR, — Yours of the 22d has relieved me of an apprehension I felt lest you might think I made too free use of your name at



the festival. But I knew that you possessed so much of the nature of old Franklin as not to feel in the least degree mortified at having the stormy period of your life brought out to public notice.

The occasion seemed so opportune and the moral so calculated to be useful that I could not resist the impulse to say what I did; I might have said more, I could not say less, and I felt happy that the remarks appeared to be so well received, as it showed an interest was felt by the gathered throng in the subject of them. Your letter would, I assure you, have been most acceptable, and its not appearing as was expected, was regretted.

You speak of the aid rendered you when so much needed. The advantages of our connection were mutual. If I was of any service to you, I was amply repaid at the time, and the satisfaction I have felt at your success since then is so much clear profit.

I love to dwell upon examples of indomitable energy and true philosophy under misfortune and difficulty. Wm. Bush paid for his newspaper in advance by chopping wood for the "Telegraph" office. C. F. Jones, when first coming to manhood, chopped wood and hauled it to the village at sixty-two and a half cents a cord, to support a mother and her family, who were thrown upon a friendless youth.

If men of that sort ever turn their backs upon the claims of humanity, I will give up my theory, which is that one such is worth more to the world than a regiment of bandbox gentlemen.

Yours truly,

E. PECK.

"The administration of Governor Clinton," wrote Mr. Weed, in one of his first Rochester articles, "has secured to us incalculable benefits. Agriculture, manufactures, literature, science, and the arts have each received protection and encouragement from an enlightened executive. His works are monuments which will secure for him the gratitude and veneration of posterity. The feeble attempts of blind and impotent malevolence to deprive him of honors so nobly earned serve only to confirm his claims. When his enemies hoped to ruin him by checking the progress of internal improvement, their motto was, 'Clinton and his canals are indissolubly connected. He must sink or swim with them.' That was the language of the 'National Advocate.' And he does 'swim' with them. And his fame will remain 'indissolubly connected' with them. When those who are strutting their brief hour upon the public stage are shuffled off and forgotten, the name of Clinton will brighten into a second life, and assume its place upon the scroll which immortalizes Franklin,

Rittenhouse, and Fulton. . . . In attempting to blast his reputation and destroy his influence, his infatuated enemies have been instrumental in procuring for him honors as unfading as the evergreen. His errors in the paltry concerns of office will be forgotten, while his bold measures in the cause of national advancement will live as long as Erie and Champlain shall mingle their waters with the Hudson."

When an effort was set on foot, in 1823, to revive the caucus system of presidential nominations, Mr. Weed ably defended the right of the people to choose their own electors. The following criticism and reply, called out in that controversy, are worthy of preservation:—

When we noticed the Rochester "Telegraph," a few weeks ago, we supposed we were dealing with Mr. Peck, the man in whose name it is published. We have since learned that the editorial department of that paper has been committed to the hands of a journeyman, who has no character to risk or lose. A hireling, who knows no other duty than his master's bidding, can feel little interest in the more important concerns of the country. The summit of his ambition is to see the great and good brought down to his own level, and it is wholly immaterial to him what means are used to accomplish the purpose. Our only surprise is that Mr. Peck should suffer to appear in a paper bearing his imprint such an article as that in the last "Telegraph." The cause of John Quincy Adams must be desperate indeed to require such support. — *Ontario Freeman.*

The preceding paragraph is in reply to an article of ours on the presidential election, and may perhaps be regarded as a pretty fair specimen of the arguments which Mr. Crawford's agents adduce in support of that gentleman's pretensions. We are not anxious to deprive Mr. Crawford of any advantage that he derives from such productions. If efforts of this description can elevate him to the presidency, it must be confessed that all other competitors are contending against fearful odds; for with a party organized and led by Binns, Noah, Van Buren, and Spencer, a man of exalted mind and unspotted character will always find it most difficult to contend.

Nor is it a matter of surprise that politicians like these, with whatever excess of malignity they may have hitherto contended against each other, should now unite in support of Mr. Crawford. A community of principle will necessarily produce a harmony of effort among men whose interests are the same. With Mr. Adams politicians of this cast of character stand no chance of advancement; but in the Sec-

retary of the Treasury they have a man who can appreciate their merits, and who is disposed to reward their efforts. He, therefore, is worthy of such adherents, and they of such a patron.

Mr. Spencer, it seems, has but just been informed that Mr. Peck has committed the editorial department of the "Telegraph" to the "hands of a journeyman." We say Mr. Spencer, because his journeymen have been in possession of this important information for the last six months. Neither of those men, therefore, could have written the article which adorns the head of this column; for we will not believe, however loose their habits may be, that they would have forced an untruth into the first sentence, merely for the purpose of retaining a consistency throughout the article, when the truth would have answered every purpose. Mr. Spencer, then, must have written the paragraph; and we make the distinction with the view of adding another sprig to the numerous editorial laurels which cluster around his brow.

To the crime of being a "journeyman," the person alluded to in Mr. Spencer's dignified article stands fully convicted. Nor will he attempt to palliate his offense before an accuser who regards poverty as a high misdemeanor. Never having been in fortune's way, or acquired that knowledge which enables its votaries to "live by their wits," he is compelled, for the sake of his family, to labor in his vocation as a journeyman printer, — a calling which, he regrets to learn, Mr. Spencer holds in profound contempt. The person in question has made two efforts to rise to the more reputable walk of proprietor, in a small way, of a newspaper, but his experience has satisfied him of a total deficiency in all the qualifications which are essential to newspaper success in these latter times of disinterested republicanism. Binns's proverbial disregard of all descriptions of truth and decency, Noah's convenient line of demarkation between moral and political honesty, Stevens's meek reliance upon Providence, and Barnum's readiness to abandon one cause and espouse another as often as his interest indicates the expediency of apostatizing, are each, in their way, powerful recommendations to the patronage of Martin Van Buren and Ambrose Spencer. Nature, in pity or in anger, has withheld from us all these rare gifts, and hence the necessity of being a journeyman. But our humble station, after all, is not a matter for mortification. The proprietorship of a newspaper can at all times be purchased by sacrifice of principle, which Mr. Spencer's printers have promptly made, but which we cannot reconcile with our feelings of independence. We will sell the labor of our hands, but the spirit, free as the air it inhales, would shrink from the proposition of self-abasement that Mr. Spencer's men accepted, and which, to the

amusement of all who know the fullness of their humiliation, they dignify with the name of republicanism. . . . Mr. Stevens has so unreservedly committed his concerns to the supervision of Mr. Spencer that it is almost impossible to distinguish his identity. The other fellow, Mr. Barnum, has given early hopes of future usefulness. Few persons, we believe, in their youth, have furnished more distinct indications of what may be expected from them when experience shall have added its finish to a work upon which Nature seems to have exhausted her skill. He is now in the springtide of experiment, with principles fashioned after the best model, and deriving instructions from a master whose precepts are always illustrated by example. The friends, therefore, of this growing, hopeful youth may indulge confident expectations of his ultimate attainment to the summit of political worthlessness and depravity.

Mr. Spencer says that we have "no character to risk or lose," by reason, doubtless, of our being a journeyman; for this is the only evidence he condescends to offer in support of his modest assertion. But these gratuitous denunciations never affect our equanimity. In passing, however, we must be permitted to remark that we have no character to "risk" in the support of Mr. Crawford, or to "lose" by association with Binns, Noah, and Spencer. Were this charge true, our case would form a singular exception to a rule which we had supposed absolutely inclusive; we should find great difficulty in imagining a person destitute of principle and character neither an instrument of Van Buren, a colleague of Noah, nor a supporter of Crawford.

We owe Mr. Spencer's freemen an apology for neglecting to notice a column of words that they bestowed upon us some three or four weeks ago. We trust they will not construe the omission into a disrespect for their attentions. Circumstances forbade our noticing subjects of minor importance at that time. In future we shall endeavor to reciprocate any little civilities, like those which call for our present acknowledgments, that Mr. Spencer or his freemen may have occasion to offer either to Mr. Peck or his journeyman.

It was at this period of his life that Mr. Weed began to cultivate his memory. "Some of my Rochester friends," he says, "used to think that I was 'cut out for a politician.' But I saw at once a fatal weakness. My memory was a sieve. I could remember nothing. Dates, names, appointments, faces,—everything escaped me. I said to my wife, 'Catherine, I shall never make a successful politician, for I cannot remember, and that is a prime necessity of politicians. A politician who sees a man once should remember him forever.' My wife told me

that I must train my memory. So I spent fifteen minutes trying silently to recall the events of the day. I could remember little at first; I could not even tell what I had had for breakfast. Finally I found I could recall more. Events came back to me more minutely and more accurately. After a fortnight or so of this, Catherine said, 'Why can't you tell me everything that has happened? My interest in your affairs would make it pleasanter and easier.' Then I began a habit of oral confession, as it were, which I followed for almost fifty years.<sup>1</sup> Every night, the last thing before retiring, I told my wife everything that I could recall that had happened to me or about me during the day. I generally recalled the very dishes I had had for breakfast, dinner, and tea; the people I had seen, and what they said; the editorials I had written, and an abstract of them; the letters I had sent and received, and the very language used, as near as possible; when I had walked or ridden,—everything, in short, that had come within my knowledge. I found I could say my lesson better and better every year, and, instead of growing irksome, it got to be a pleasure to run over the events of the day in review. I am indebted to this discipline for a memory of somewhat unusual tenacity, and I recommend the practice to all who expect to have much to do with influencing men."

1827. — "The election of the giant Webster to the United States Senate," wrote Mr. Weed, "is alike honorable to Massachusetts and to the Union. It will do much to redeem the lost dignity and reputation of that once august body. Faction will stand rebuked by his frown, and intrigue shrink from the quailing influence of his reproach. His presence will restrain the intemperate, his watchfulness expose and his talents confound and overwhelm the boisterous and corrupt leaders of the opposition. He goes to Washington shielded in the armor of truth and fidelity: his motives pure and lofty, his reputation unsailable. The withdrawal of Mr. Randolph from, and the election of Mr. Webster to, the Senate is a twofold gain, which cannot be too highly estimated."

Reviewing a "Life of George Washington," which appeared in 1827, he took occasion to eulogize the "father of his country" in language no less glowing than sincere.

<sup>1</sup> After Mrs. Weed's death, in 1858, he took his daughter Harriet into these confidences.

“View this illustrious patriot,” he wrote, “in all the relations which he bore to his friends, his country, and his God, and we find more virtues to imitate and more worth to admire than were ever bestowed upon any other mere man. The rigid test of scrutiny vindicates every act of his life, whether private or public. The unerring decisions of truth hallow all the impulses of his heart and all the suggestions of his head, while the mellowing hand of time freshens the laurel which encircles his brow. The wisdom which distinguished him in his Cabinet, and the patriotism which nerved his strong arm on the battle-field, after giving liberty to this land, now go abroad through the nations of Europe, enlightening and encouraging the subjects of despotism to assert and obtain the blessings which we enjoy.”

The Fourth of July was the gala day of the year in Mr. Weed's calendar. He observed it invariably in the good old-fashioned manner, not admitting the propriety of ordinances which abridge rights formerly held by American boys. Indeed, on one occasion, after he had passed his eightieth year, he publicly rebuked the silence of New York city on the birthday of our national independence; and when he learned that the police were instructed to arrest any person who started a bonfire, caused a tar-barrel to be set up in front of his residence, and applied the match to it with his own hand, in solemn protest against what he regarded as modern degeneracy.

“Of all the lion-hearted worthies who signed the Declaration,” he wrote in 1827, “one only remains to celebrate this anniversary. The venerable Carroll, who hazarded the then largest estate in America upon the result of the contest, still survives, and will to-day be gratefully remembered by twelve millions of freemen.”

1828. — “The sables with which our paper is this day draped,” he wrote on the 19th of February, “announce the death of a great man, the chief magistrate of our Commonwealth. De Witt Clinton was a native of this State, whose destinies he has so long and so triumphantly wielded. His name is associated with, and his fame will be cherished by, all the beneficent and enlightened institutions of New York. The State has literally grown with his growth, and strengthened with his strength. His history is familiar to us all. We have seen him rise in the majesty of intellectual light, and, after









*De Witt Clinton*



reaching his meridian, shed abroad lustre upon the age, and then suddenly shoot from his sphere, leaving all darkness and gloom. The heart of every citizen is a tablet, upon which the deeds of Clinton will be engraved and his memory enshrined."

There arrived in Rochester one day, during Mr. Weed's editorship of the "Telegraph," a poor emigrant, seeking employment. He had recently reached America from Scotland. Becoming interested in the case, Mr. Weed gave the man's fifteen-year-old son a place in his newspaper office and a home with his own family. Soon the boy developed promising qualities. He rose to the position of foreman in 1830, and accompanied Mr. Weed to Albany. As time went on he became an expert editorial writer, possessing a certain powerful originality. In 1836 there was a vacancy in the directorship of the Rochester "Democrat," and Mr. Weed's associate accepted that post. But the "Western fever" carried him to Michigan after a year or so, and he was next heard from as on the stump for Harrison, for whom he rendered effective service. Then the emigrant's son became state printer to Michigan, and one of the Whig pillars in that rapidly advancing community. He had grown up under Mr. Weed's eye, however, and the old influence hung over him with irresistible fascination. In 1846 he went back to Albany, and there was a restoration of former relations. For years afterwards he was a force in state and national politics; and when he died, in 1883, New York might well ask, "Who is left among us to take the place left vacant by George Dawson?"

It is a remarkable illustration of his wonderful power over men [writes Mr. Dawson, referring to Mr. Weed], that nearly every one of those with whom he was brought in conflict while he lived at Rochester was afterwards reconciled to him. Many became his warmest personal friends. The venerable Judge Sampson was an exception. Mr. Weed found it hard to forgive him. He had been a relentless enemy, who manifested his hostility in many cruel ways. The interposition of friends to effect reconciliation was unavailing, but when the judge sought it himself, on his death-bed, Mr. Weed surrendered.

Another illustration of his readiness to forgive, when it seemed right to him to do so, was the case of a gentleman who was excessively offensive in his opposition. I remember a certain election day, for example, on which Mr. Weed was particularly potent at the polls. Just after I had handed him a bundle of tickets from the office, the twelve o'clock bell rang out from the old Court House. At that moment Mr.

Weed, his tall form looming up above the surging crowd, with his arms elevated high above his head, and his hands filled with anti-Masonic ballots, was vociferating, "There is no blood on these tickets, gentlemen!" when I saw this offensive Jack come up to Mr. Weed, and, shaking a handful of pennies in his face, cry, "Here, Weed, take these, and go and buy your family something to eat!" Mr. Weed made no reply, but he evidently felt the insult keenly; for it is no discredit to him to confess that at that time his larder was not always overstocked. I felt implicated in the slur myself, somehow; but being only a very small chap, could do nothing more than mentally strike out from the shoulder with the unspoken thought, "Take that; for what business is it to you whether we have or have not anything to eat at our house?" Years afterwards this old enemy came to Albany as a Whig member of Assembly. Mr. Weed received him as kindly as possible, but it always seemed to us that he could never be very cordial with him, whether because of this particular incident or not I never knew. Indeed, I do not even know now that Mr. Weed remembered it; but I have never seen the gentleman, from that day to this,—and he is now a hale and hearty old man,—without feeling my elbow twitch, and hearing the jingle of those coppers, the twang of the old Court House bell, and Mr. Weed's voice assuring the free and independent electors of the old town of Gates that "there is no blood on these tickets, gentlemen!"

In 1828 an election was held at the Mansion House. . . . The political fever was at its height, and Mr. Weed, as well as his opponents, was as busy as possible distributing tickets at the polls. There were many active and noisy electioneerers on the Masonic side, among them a large number of men who were not Masons themselves, but who were pushing about in defense of an institution about which they knew nothing, and in denunciation of the anti-Masonic party. In order to shame and provoke them just at the very crisis of the contest, Mr. Weed arranged for the appearance of a live donkey in front of the polls, and the beast was paraded back and forth in solemn silence, to the great delight of "the boys," and the rage and chagrin of the fellows for whose special benefit the exhibition was intended.

Chancellor Whittlesey was very active at this same election. Although a fine writer, an excellent organizer, and a most zealous and efficient politician, he was not adapted for work at the polls. In those times and for many years thereafter, Mr. Weed could mix with the most excited crowd all day. He could be jostled and jammed from morning till night without losing his temper, or being diverted from his work even for a moment. He was always efficient, but I do not remember that he was ever personally assailed. Mr. Whittlesey had not the same flexibility of temper. When impudently spoken to, he

had not the "soft answer" that "turneth away wrath." Upon this particular occasion, a massive blacksmith by the name of Cavanagh was determined to knock down somebody. It would have afforded him peculiar pleasure, as well as those who were egging him on, had Mr. Weed been made the recipient of a blow from his sledge-hammer fist. But at every approach Mr. Weed would blow him off with a "word fitly spoken," and compel him to seek elsewhere for a subject. Mr. Whittlesey was finally made the victim. Cavanagh felled him to the ground with one blow, breaking his nose, so that not a bone remained intact, and he carried the deformity to his grave.

[ALBERT H. TRACY TO MR. WEED.]

BUFFALO, December 17, 1827.

DEAR WEED, — I was extremely pleased to hear from you. I had been neglected so long that I thought you had forgotten me, especially as a letter I wrote you some three weeks ago remains unanswered. Your absence from Rochester explains it. The subject of my communication was anti-Masonry: to let you know that a few of us, and a very few, too, having become tired of continual suppression or perversion of the truth, made an arrangement by which one of our papers — the "Patriot" — should publish the other side of the controversy. Our object was in no respect political, but the mere gratification of moral sentiment. The measure, however, has produced incredible excitement in our village. Let me hear your views. . . . We shall find the path of duty a rugged one, but it is a consolation to know that the same causes which make it arduous also make it plain.

I am bothered to know what you are at Washington for. It is no place for visit except to exercise or obtain office, and it seems your object is neither. Pray, what is it?

I was not surprised that the opposition elected their speaker. I have known the event to be certain since the Kentucky election; and, indeed, *entre nous*, I have regarded it as equally decisive of the *main* question. But of that anon. I know Stevenson very well. He is a man of parade, —

"One who for his excellence  
In heightening words and shadowing sense"

has few equals, even in the great theatre of babblers over which he is called to preside.

I am pleased to know that you are somewhat intimate with Mr. Clay. You seem to appreciate him. He is, indeed, a thorough politician, — one of whom it might, in rather a sinister sense, be said, —

“Turn him to any course of policy,  
The Gordian knot of it he will unloose  
Familiar as his garter.”

. . . But it is ungracious to pick out defects, for, on the whole, I like him much, and the cause he supports is dearest to my heart. In the utmost stretch of my conception as to what is right and what wrong, I could not contrast them more completely than they are in the present controversy. . . When I think of it I am almost frantic at the stupidity and corruption of the people. If Jackson succeeds, — and God knows there is danger enough of it, — I doubt if I shall have virtue to lament the curse which the example will inflict upon our country. . . .

You lament that I am not in Congress, but, if events have the downward direction I fear, I shall rejoice that I am not. While I could serve my country it would be my greatest happiness, but, as things are now, I “find the blessedness of being little.” Possibly I despair of the republic too soon. I pray God that it be so. Can there be a reasonable hope of Virginia? She alone can save us. But I have not the least confidence of the votes of any Southern State.

Wherever this shall reach you let it provoke you to an immediate answer. If anything can be done to save this State from the devouring gulf of Jacksonism, it is time we were about it. It is time to determine on some course, —

“More than a wild exposure to each chance  
That starts i’ the way before us.”

Very truly yours,

ALBERT H. TRACY.

BUFFALO, *June 19, 1828.*

DEAR WEED, — I received yours of the 15th yesterday, and was delighted to find your views of matters and things precisely those which I have been forced to entertain for weeks past. The administration party in this State<sup>1</sup> is in the hands of men not able to steer it to a successful issue. This I have long known, and were it not for anti-Masons they would not have a loop to hang a hope on. Yet such is their fatuity that they are determined to use us to clear the way for their progress. This I will never consent to. Let them go on with their state conventions. I am for Adams and against Jackson, but their candidates shall not have my support unless they are exactly of my choice, independent of their nominations.

But what shall we do in the mean time? There’s the rub. Are we strong enough for an independent ticket? I confess I have doubts. Again, there is difficulty in finding suitable candidates.

<sup>1</sup> The party which looked to John Quincy Adams as its leader.

Could we put up one that the other side would adopt, provided the administration candidate is not worthy of our support? It has always been my determination not to sacrifice our party to the presidential contest; but strong as my feelings have been on the latter subject, they are now almost totally merged in the former. A few months, nay, a few weeks, will decide the question between Adams and Jackson; but years, and I sometimes fear ages, will transpire before Masonry is exterminated. This institution has taken deep root in our country, and Heaven only knows whether it won't maintain itself in spite of the few who have honesty and firmness enough to persevere in opposing it. But let the result be what it may, my course is determined, and I shall pursue it.

Your friend,

ALBERT H. TRACY.

[FREDERICK WHITTLESEY TO MR. WEED.]

ROCHESTER, *September 17, 1829.*

DEAR WEED, — I have seen our friends here about the Albany project. Fitch and Taggart think well of it, and feel an interest in it. Works and Ely don't like to lose our good editors. But I say, let them go; all they can do here is to maintain ground already won, and that any printer's boy can do, etc. I hope you will succeed in getting your two hundred subscribers at fifty dollars each. It will enable us to effect a vast amount of good.

T. C. Strong, of Albion, is here, and is desirous of getting a paper somewhere else. He thinks Albion is not giving him a support. I hope you will look for some place where he can get a living and do good. I told him to go back until you had a talk with Tracy, when he could go down, judge for himself, and make his arrangements. He is an editor of some talent.

W. J. Wood, the only anti-Mason in the land office at Batavia, — where he has been a clerk for fourteen years, — has been removed. The pretext is that they have too many clerks. I like to see this proscription. It will serve to keep our blood up, and urge us on for the contest before us. I want to see a daily paper soon started in New York. That unwavering confidence which we have all along held in our cause seems now about to be justified. Elwood says we can never carry the State. "We can try," as Miller said at Lundy's Lane.

Yours truly,

WHITTLESEY.

On the 12th day of December, 1829, Chancellor John Lansing, of Albany, one of the most distinguished Americans of his time, walked out of the rotunda of a prominent hotel in the city of New York, to take the boat for Albany, and the

hall-boy who brushed the dust from the coat of that eminent man, as he went away, was the last person known to have seen him alive. Chancellor Lansing studied law in the office of Robert Yates, afterwards Chief Justice. Subsequently he became a member of the military family of General Philip Schuyler, and served with distinction as a member of the state convention which conducted the civil and military operations of New York during the Revolutionary War. Soon afterwards he was Mayor of Albany, and in 1787, with Chief Justice Yates and General Hamilton, was delegated by the State to attend the convention which framed the Constitution of the United States. "It is well known," says Joel Munsell, in his "Annals of Albany,"<sup>1</sup> "what part those gentlemen took in the discussions connected with that subject. Chief Justice Yates and Chancellor Lansing withdrew from the convention, and were known as anti-Federalists. They opposed the adoption of the Constitution principally because it did not more effectually secure the rights of the individual States; and to those men and their co-patriots we are indebted for the ten amended articles which were subsequently made a part of that Constitution."

Close and keen investigation failed to uncover the slightest clue as to the Chancellor's fate, and nobody could furnish a plausible explanation for his disappearance. There was nothing in his character, temperament, or antecedents to warrant the belief that he had committed suicide, or fallen a victim to the snares of a great city. At the time, the excitement was intense. "No event," says Munsell, "had caused a deeper sensation in the city since the death of De Witt Clinton." But year after year has gone by without any light on the subject, and now this most extraordinary episode is almost entirely forgotten.

In Mr. Weed's nature there was a certain wonderful quality which invited sympathy and confession. Children, as well as men and women, made him their confidant. He was, in his day, a sort of "father confessor" for the greatest and the least among the people of New York. Presidents, governors, diplomats, speculators, clergymen, doctors, and lawyers sought him, when yearning to speak freely of their errors, perplexities, or expectations. Years after that event, the mystery surrounding

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ix. p. 197.



Chancellor Lansing's fate was communicated to Mr. Weed, by a gentleman of high position, who submitted also certain papers, not only showing that, and by whom, the Chancellor was murdered, but explaining the motives which led to the crime, and describing the circumstances under which it was committed. At the same time an injunction was added that he should make all the facts public in case he survived those whom his information implicated, — men who lived useful lives, and died with unblemished reputations.

By a literal construction of Mr. Weed's promise the contingency upon which it was to go into effect occurred in 1870. His informant and the persons whom his proofs directly implicated had then gone to their final account. But Mr. Weed found that to make known the facts would reach further than his informant contemplated. "While it is true that the parties named are beyond the reach of human tribunals and of public opinion," he said, "yet others, immediately associated with them and sharing in the strong inducement which prompted the crime, survive, occupying high positions and enjoying public confidence. To these persons, should my proofs be submitted, public attention would be irresistibly drawn."

Not knowing exactly how to act, he submitted all the facts to his friends R. M. Blatchford and Hugh Maxwell, on whose joint judgment he felt that he could place unquestioning reliance. These gentlemen, after carefully considering the question in all its aspects, came to the conclusion that if Mr. Weed's informant were living he would revoke his request for publication. Impressed by this decision, Mr. Weed felt it to be his duty to keep inviolate the information which was in his possession. When he died, therefore, the secret of Chancellor Lansing's fate died with him, for except to Mr. Blatchford and to Mr. Maxwell, whom he survived, it never passed his lips.

## CHAPTER IV.

1830-1837.

AT ALBANY. — THE DEMOCRATIC REGENCY. — EDWIN CROSWELL. — THE "EVENING JOURNAL" FOUNDED. — FRANCIS GRANGER. — "THE GLORIOUS WEST." — WILLIAM H. SEWARD. — HIS PUBLIC CAREER BEGUN. — GEORGE W. PATTERSON. — ADOPTING A NAME FOR OPPONENTS OF GENERAL JACKSON. — BUSINESS DEPRESSION. — MR. CALHOUN'S PURPOSE. — PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANTS.

THE Democratic party was never so strongly entrenched in this country as in the year 1830, when Mr. Weed left Rochester and went to live at Albany. Andrew Jackson was President of the United States, and Martin Van Buren controlled the politics of New York. The National Republicans would probably have been better off, politically, if John Quincy Adams, their candidate for President, had not been elected in 1824. By right of political capacity and former lines of division, Henry Clay was entitled to be their leader; but his authority was disputed by a powerful minority, which would trust no man who affiliated with a secret society.

In Mr. Edwin Croswell, the Albany Regency, so first called by Mr. Weed, had an adviser and spokesman of rare ability. He was made editor of the "Argus" in 1823, at the suggestion of Governor Van Buren. Owing largely to the fact that he enjoyed the zealous editorial coöperation of Governor Marcy, Silas Wright, John A. Dix, and Azariah C. Flagg, his paper became the leading organ of the Democratic party in the United States, retaining that position easily until 1848, when the party divided. It was a curious circumstance that Mr. Weed and Mr. Croswell, born in the same year and boys together in the same town, should now turn up in the same city at the head of bitterly antagonistic enterprises; nor was it less singular, after each had carried the war to such lengths that personal intercourse became impossi-

ble, that one of these men should be the means of protecting the property and reputation of the other.

While Mr. Weed was working hard for small wages, Mr. Croswell became wealthy. But in 1840, when the tables turned and Mr. Weed became state printer, he wrote a note to Mr. Croswell, giving a construction of the law which made a difference of several thousand dollars in his rival's favor. At this time they had not recognized each other in years.

Mr. Croswell was a director in the Albany Canal Bank, which failed at a time when popular feeling was very strong against him. He was in nowise himself dishonest or responsible for this disaster, but suspicion was thrown upon him, and, taking advantage of a technicality, his enemies clamorously expressed their determination to make the utmost of this opportunity. When all other avenues of escape closed, Mr. Croswell went to Mr. Weed, and implored assistance. "You may return to your duties," said Mr. Weed, "and have no more anxiety on this subject. You will not be indicted." Nor was he.

Again, after he went to live in New York, Mr. Weed learned with regret that Mr. Croswell, who had also become a resident in New York, had been prostrated by a paralytic shock, and had requested that his dwelling-house be taken to cancel a mortgage, on which he was unable to pay interest. He had been compelled to sell his furniture, for some small debts, and had to live with a married daughter in New Jersey. Immediately Mr. Weed called upon wealthy friends, from whom, with his own subscription, \$10,000 were received. With this money government bonds were purchased, and handed to Mr. Croswell as a New Year's testimonial.

[MR. WEED TO MR. CROSWELL.]

NEW YORK, *January 1, 1871.*

DEAR MR. CROSWELL, — Some of your old friends and neighbors, availing themselves of the festive season, have united in a testimonial expressive of their sense of your public services and personal character, which, together with their best wishes for your restored health, will be presented to you by our mutual friend, Mr. Augustus Schell.

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

[MR. CROSWELL TO MR. WEED.]

PRINCETON, N. J., *February 7, 1871.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — Our mutual friend, Mr. Augustus Schell, handed me yesterday your highly esteemed favor of the 1st January ultimo, together with the valuable testimonial by which it was accompanied and to which it refers. I find great difficulty to command fitting terms of acknowledgment of this generous and liberal offering. Large as its pecuniary worth is, and as such a source of grateful thanksgiving, it is especially precious in my eyes as an expression of approval of my public services and personal character, coming from a body of intelligent and enlightened friends, whose good opinion and favorable judgment are of inestimable value.

To you, my dear Mr. Weed, allow me to say that I feel a particular consciousness of your voluntary kindness and action in this matter, springing from the emotions of an ever generous nature; and I beg you to convey to my friends, in your own good time and manner, my cordial and grateful acceptance of their testimonial.

Very truly yours,

EDWIN CROSWELL.

When urged by Rochester friends to return to the Assembly, to which he had been chosen from Monroe County in 1824, Mr. Weed yielded to their advice, and in the fall of 1829 was re-elected. He took only subordinate interest in the work of the session, however, occupying himself in an effort to concentrate elements which were opposed to the state and national administrations. In a letter to a friend he describes his life at this period.

[MR. WEED TO A FRIEND.]

ALBANY, *January 21, 1830.*

DEAR SIR, — I received a letter from Childs yesterday announcing his arrival at Washington and covering yours to him, in which I am so affectionately remembered. It is a source of equal pride and satisfaction to know that I enjoy so much of your esteem. I desire little else in this world, save the kindly regard of a few valued friends.

Poor Tim is in a wretched state. I accompanied him to New York, from whence he went on South leisurely.

I am roomed alone at the Eagle,<sup>1</sup> and live the life of a hermit. I

<sup>1</sup> A famous hotel in South Market Street. The great fire which destroyed this building led to the straightening of the street, and the change of its name to Broadway.

have not had an hour's relaxation since the session began. When not engaged at the House, I am, as usual, busy as a bee in a tar-bucket, writing political letters and editorial matter for nearly a score of papers, of our kidney, in various parts of the State. We shall, as you conjecture, push the Regency hard next fall.

It is uncertain whom we shall run for Governor: probably Granger; perhaps Tracy; possibly Judge Spencer. Frank occupies the highest seat in the House, and Tracy holds a corresponding position in the Senate. Judge Spencer is getting at the head of the New York delegation in Congress. Throop will be the opposing candidate.

Everything relating to the presidency seems to be unsettled. I think old Jackson will run again, in the teeth of all his professions. This will unite a force, which, divided between Van Buren and Calhoun, would enable Mr. Clay to cut in successfully. But upon this subject there is great coyness. Men are unwilling to talk out until their political horoscope shall indicate whose star is in the ascendant.

Either Albany is remarkably dull this winter, or I am thrown entirely without the circle of her gayeties. Theatricals are at a low ebb. I have made but one appearance there this season — when I was attracted by Hackett, whom I had not seen before. I may go to Boston next summer. The desire to do so is increased by the reflection that it would afford me an opportunity to take you by the hand.

Faithfully yours,

THURLOW WEED.

JOHN BRADLEY, ESQ., NEW LONDON.

The first number of the Albany "Evening Journal," Mr. Weed's new paper, appeared on the 22d of March, 1830. There was a general feeling among his party friends that there should be an organ at the state capital reflecting their views, and that he was the man to establish and edit it. Six months after the paper was founded, the first national political convention ever held in the United States, that of the anti-Masonic party, convened at Philadelphia. Francis Granger had been nominated for Governor of New York a month before this meeting assembled. Subsequently he was elected a delegate to Philadelphia, where, on his arrival, he was designated to preside. "This is a mistake," wrote Mr. Weed from Albany, to his friend Granger. "The men from New York who urged it are stark mad. More than 50,000 electors are now balancing their votes, and half of them want an excuse to vote against you. Will one doubtful man be gained by this step? May not one, two, or three thousand be lost by it?"

At the election in November, Enos T. Throop, the Jackson candidate, defeated Mr. Granger by eighty-four hundred majority.

“A despotic Regency rules the people with a rod of iron,” wrote Mr. Weed. “The government is administered with a direct view to the interests of office-holders, while popular rights and the State’s prosperity are wholly disregarded. . . . But the West, the great, enlightened West, has again done her whole duty. The emphatic vote which her electors have recorded against misrule and outrage is truly a proud achievement. . . . There is a moral beauty and a political grandeur in the constancy of our western friends which elevates our cause above the reach of circumstances, and gives assurance of ultimate triumph.”<sup>1</sup>

[MR. WEED TO FRANCIS GRANGER.]

ALBANY, *November 6, 1830.*

DEAR GRANGER, — You were wise. I was a fool. Against the Regency, with its money, backed by 20,000 Masons, with their zeal, organization, and influence over men who cannot understand motives, how could there have been any other result?

I cheated myself into a belief that, hereabouts, Masons politically with us would not join the Regency. But old Cruttenden and even Mather voted against you. This is intolerable. Two days before the election Mather swore to me that Masons could not be so drilled. I began to fear them all, and expressed my apprehensions to him. He said hundreds of Masons felt as he did, and they would not be influenced. Sunday night J. O. Cole fixed him. . . . But, thank Heaven, Canandaigua has sustained you, and I hope and believe the district stands firm.

All is gone in this quarter. . . .

Yours ever,

T. WEED.

1831. — It was expected that the Philadelphia convention would prevent the National Republicans from renominating Mr. Clay. But when it failed in that, — for Mr. Clay became the National Republican candidate in 1831, — it was decided to hold another anti-Masonic convention, at Baltimore, and put a straight ticket in the field. To confer with members of the

<sup>1</sup> Referring to the Eighth District, in which the vote stood: Throop, 13,433; Granger, 26,385. This district elected Trumbull Cary and Philo C. Fuller to the Senate.

party in that section, William H. Seward visited New England in September. He and Mr. Weed had met each other at Rochester in 1824, and there was forming between them a friendship without a parallel in the annals of our politics. "While I was stopping at Albany," Mr. Seward writes, "on my way to attend the Philadelphia convention [of 1830], Thurlow Weed for the first time made some friendly but earnest inquiries concerning my pecuniary ability, — whether it was sufficient to enable me to give a portion of my time to public office." Mr. Seward then had neither wish nor expectation to hold official station, but was so situated as to be able to accept a nomination, and on his return from Philadelphia found that he had been named for the State Senate.

[WILLIAM H. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

BOSTON, *September 14, 1831.*

MY DEAR WEED,—I have just returned from a visit to Quincy, where I had a long and free conversation with Mr. Adams. The declaration has been drawn from him that he did not desire to be nominated; that a harmonious choice at Baltimore was vastly more important than a personal question, etc., etc. He leaves it with us to determine what would be the best nomination, with this injunction: that it shall be made on the above principle, and that his name shall not be pressed, except it be for the best interests of the party. If nominated, he will not decline. This, in substance, was communicated to me by Dr. Phelps before I saw Mr. Adams.

Rhode Island and Massachusetts will go to Baltimore in favor of Adams, in spite of anything I or any other person can say or do. But there will be no ultra-assertion of this preference; it will yield to reason. We must argue solely upon the indiscretion of that nomination upon our cause in New York, — the argument I have used all along here. The spirit of New England is jealous of McLean, because he is a protégé of Calhoun's. I have not erred in believing that this jealousy is grounded upon conversations with Mr. Adams touching McLean. . . . About the vice-presidency I say nothing.

I shall be at Albany Sunday. I still think that if Rush declines McLean is our man for President, and a New York man for Vice-President. Cadwallader wants John C. Spencer, but he is too apt to go off on a tangent. I think Tracy the best man. Whittlesey's day has not come. . . . There is a great deal of the "blessed spirit" here.

Yours ever,

WM. H. SEWARD.

[HENRY CLAY TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *April 14, 1832.*

DEAR SIR, — I received your favor of the 9th inst., as I did the previous ones, communicating the progress of measures to produce coöperation between the anti-Masons and the National Republicans in the State of New York. I most earnestly hope that such coöperation may be cordially produced, to the satisfaction of both parties. If it could be secured, and if, as the necessary consequence, the Jackson party could be defeated in New York, there is only wanting a perfect persuasion of that result, throughout the Union, to insure a signal overthrow of Jackson at the approaching election. You see, then, how important the movement is in your State.

And was there ever an occasion which should prompt true lovers of their country to more vigorous exertions? It is not merely some measures of public policy at hazard; but, I verily believe, the purity of the government and the existence of the Union are involved in the struggle. The party or parties, therefore, that shall save the country, in this its greatest peril, will deserve thanks, gratitude, and honor.

I am extremely happy to learn, as I have from several quarters, that Mr. Maynard, for whose character and talents I have long entertained very high respect, has taken a course so decided and efficient in bringing about union and concert. I regret that, having no acquaintance with him, I cannot express to him personally how much I have been gratified with his firm and patriotic conduct. It seems to me that if, by the efficient aid of anti-Masons, the dangers can be averted which now threaten the liberty, the institutions, and the union of our country, they will establish themselves strongly in the public confidence; they will evince the sincerity of the paramount article in their creed, which ought to be the paramount article in the earthly creed of all associations and of all men, — our country first, our country always.

Should the measures to which I refer be consummated, it seems to me that a convention, on the part of our friends, would be still desirable, some time or other during the summer, in order to insure harmony and unity of action. With great deference, I think that was the error committed in your last canvass for Governor. There was no concert, no united exertions, among our friends.

A scene, disgraceful to the place, occurred here yesterday. The ex-Governor of Tennessee, General Houston, made a brutal attack upon a member of the House of Representatives from Ohio, for words in debate, thus realizing a prediction as to the consequences of Jackson's election made to me by Colonel Benton eight years ago. The



papers will give you a detail of the affair, and of the proceedings of the House of Representatives.

I think the apportionment bill will be decided next week.

With great regard, your friend and obedient servant, H. CLAY.

[JOHN C. SPENCER TO MR. WEED.]

CANANDAIGUA, *July 13, 1832.*

DEAR SIR,— I see the Nationals are yet pushing for their state convention. They are very unwise thus to show their hand when it displays so much weakness. They will not have representatives from twenty counties, and it will be altogether a tame and meagre business. What are they to do when assembled? Some of them, I know, are tenacious upon having a separate ticket throughout; but probably they will quarrel about it, and finally renominate ours, or a part of it. If they select a part, the consequence will be that those taken by them will be struck off by anti-Masons; and if they nominate the whole, then so they will furnish evidence, which it will be difficult to withstand, of a coalition. I have no fear of that cry upon the public at large. All that I apprehend from it is that our anti-Mason friends will doubt whether all of our electoral candidates will go for Wirt. I am persuaded we can do better without a nomination from the Nationals than with one. Certain it is that no possible good can be accomplished, for their convention will not induce a single man to vote our ticket who is not already prepared to do it, and while there is danger of mischief why not avoid it? I really wish you would do your utmost to prevent the assemblage at Utica.

I received a queer letter from our anti-Masonic friends at Boston; similar, I understand, to one you got from them. I wrote my friend Hallet that we have a difficult game to play, which we are sure of winning if let alone; but if by-standers insist upon looking into our hands and proclaiming their contents, we can do nothing. I begged him to abstain from all comments, for he might do mischief when he does not intend it. I hinted that their Jackson friends in Boston might be very willing to embroil us with the National Republicans of the State, but that I trusted our anti-Masonic friends there would not be accessory to any such design. . . .

Yours truly,

J. C. SPENCER.

CANANDAIGUA, *September 21, 1832.*

DEAR SIR,— I have a longing to hold communion with you on political subjects, although I have very little worth communicating. Everything in this quarter looks well. Our anti-Masonic friends stand firm, and treat with contempt the cry of coalition. Still we

have judged it expedient to furnish them occasionally with anti-Masonic matter. This seems to keep them satisfied, and shows the friends of Mr. Clay that we hold on to our instinctive principles. I know the delicacy of your situation, but I am persuaded you can lose nothing and may gain much by avowing firmly our anti-Masonic principles. The great object we have in view — the destruction of Freemasonry — will be promoted even by a defeat, now, provided we are careful to keep the object distinctly before the people. It depends upon ourselves, in my opinion, whether the result of the election, be it what it may, shall place anti-Masonry upon impregnable ground.

We have to-day heard of the nomination of Marcy and Tracy, and we heartily rejoice. With respect to Marcy the ground is preoccupied. Public disgust is excited towards him before he comes into the field. We shall give him a broadside concerning his inconsistency in admitting one Masonic juror, after deciding that Masonry was a disqualification in the case of a previous juror. If you have not already "overslaughed" him, I think you will do it. As to Tracy, the policy doubtless is to enlist the friends of the Chenango Canal, with a view at all events to distract us and get split tickets, if they cannot do any more. It seems to me that it would be very useful to have a letter from our candidate, Stevens, expressing his views on the subject. I shall write to John A. Collier to address Mr. Stevens, and, in the mean time, will you prepare Stevens for it, and let him do the handsome thing?

The veto message has certainly had some effect upon a class of men who do not stop to think. An article has been prepared headed "The Controversy about the Banks," the authorship of which is unknown, and intended to be kept so. It is calculated, I think, to turn the tables on the money-changers. I have seen it, and like it much. You will see it in a few days. I want you to republish it. Such things derive much of their effect from the trumpeting with which they are ushered into the world. If you can do so consistently, will you give it a *shove*?

The cry of aristocracy takes with certain folks, and there is no way to meet it but to clamor louder than our adversaries, which we can do in this case, having so much better ground than they have.

What an awful rent you have made in Neddy's<sup>1</sup> hypocritical morality cloak! You will hear no more of juvenile indiscretions. You have ungowned him more effectually than it was ever done before. But spare him not. He deserves no mercy at your hands until he repents and asks forgiveness of his sins. Remember that a good thing

<sup>1</sup> Edwin Crosswell was often called "Neddy," "Eddy," or "Miss Edwin."

will bear repeating. His influence through his paper is unparalleled, and while it is so corruptly employed it is a high act of duty to unmask him and paralyze his exertions.

Turn the efforts of our friends towards the counties on Lake Ontario, Oneida, Herkimer, Montgomery, and the northern counties, as requiring more attention than any other quarter. The great West will take care of itself.

Yours truly,

J. C. SPENCER.

[MR. WEED TO FRANCIS GRANGER.]

ALBANY, *November 5, 1832.*

DEAR GRANGER, — I have just been able to hobble upon a crutch and a cane to our poll, but could not get near enough to vote. Friends say it has gone well so far. They are at their posts in sufficient force to protect the weak and timid. . . .

*November 7, 1832.*

I am housed up, and have heard nothing this morning. I find it went harder than I was aware of in the Fourth yesterday. Sixty illegal Irish votes were sworn in against us, which puts them ahead in the ward. Our friends hope to bring up to-day, but I doubt it. The Fourth will probably give a small majority against us, and if, as I fear, the Regency have got the Irish sufficiently excited to go to the different wards, swearing in votes, our prospect will be bad enough.<sup>1</sup> . . .

*November 9, 1832.*

I need not say to you that, in addition to my physical infirmity, I am now sick at heart. "A wounded spirit who can bear?" I might have written you yesterday, but ill news has wings, and will have reached you soon enough. . . .

It is thought \$20,000 were bet yesterday on your election. A western man was offering \$10,000 here on you yesterday. I sent for him and stopped him after he had bet \$700. Judge Spencer and others were provoked at me for giving up in yesterday's paper, but I was anxious to save our friends from utter ruin. They are now offering on 5,000, 7,000, and a few on 10,000, so that they will get back something.

*November 11, 1832.*

We are in a pretty boat. Our friends say we should have done better on our own hook; but this is not so, for the result would have been the same, and the opprobrium of producing that result would have been charged to obstinacy. Everybody would have exclaimed

<sup>1</sup> It used to be said in New York, "As goes the Fourth Ward of Albany so goes the State."

that Jackson, Van Buren, and Marcy owe their elections to anti-Masons. Now we have done our duty to the country, and without wronging anybody. . . . It is a great calamity, so far as anti-Masonry is concerned. It seems peculiarly unfortunate that we have not the power of vindicating ourselves to the world by giving the electoral vote of the State to Wirt.

The cause of our defeat is to be found in the deep and dark delusions which pervade the country in relation to Jackson. We have been grossly deceived in supposing that his huzza strength was in the least weakened. Had the contest been between you and Marcy, — the People against the Regency, — the 10,000 majority would have been reversed. As it is, Jackson has carried everything that clung to him. . . . I almost despair of the country. The yoke is on and must be borne, — how long? Local bank politicians will hereafter rule the State. I could endure Jacksonism until it spends itself, but am shocked at the thought of Van Burenism in succession; and this seems inevitable, unless McLean comes out and takes hold of Pennsylvania and the Western States. . . .

The Regency are as utterly amazed as we are. They had n't the slightest hope of defeating you. Had they dreamt of this result, our whole party would have been made paupers on bets. Three days before the election, Regency men left large sums of money at Chauncey Johnson's that our majority in Chenango and Broome would be cut down one half. Our friends wanted to take them, but I protested.

Ever yours,

WEED.

[FRANCIS GRANGER TO MR. WEED.]

ROCHESTER, *November 13, 1832.*

Well, Weed, as I thought the morning after the election, we have suffered a perfect Waterloo defeat. Thank Heaven, Jersey follows in the train, and I hope Kentucky also. I hope that every electoral vote in the nation will be cast for old Hick. The general result has not surprised me in the least, but the issue in certain counties is beyond parallel. . . .

In a few days we will look about to see what is to be done. I fear that you are in total despair. For myself, while I have no doubt the world considers this the "be all and end all" of my political career, I do not so consider it, and if I did, should not fret about it for an hour. When the returns are all in, if it appears that I lead the electoral ticket, just put that fact in full relief. . . .

This is about as hard for you as anybody, and in the present state of your health I greatly fear its effect upon you. The blow is severe, but take it calmly. I shall go home in two days. Let me know all the world says of this matter.

Yours,  
FR. GRANGER.

No man ever had a more loyal friend than George W. Patterson was to Mr. Weed for half a century. "Governor" Patterson, as he was called, in conformity with New York usage, which confers this title upon those who have held the second highest executive position in the State, entered public life as a member of Assembly from Livingston County, in 1832. His ancestors emigrated from Scotland to New England shortly after the Revolutionary War. He served several terms in the Assembly; was Lieutenant-Governor in 1848, and subsequently went to Congress. He lived an entirely blameless as well as an eminently useful life. After the defeat of Wirt and Granger he wrote freely to Mr. Weed, foreshadowing the disbandment of the anti-Masonic party, and alluding to the necessity of finding some new name by which to designate opponents of Jackson.

[GOVERNOR PATTERSON TO MR. WEED.]

GREIGSVILLE, *November 15, 1832.*

DEAR WEED, — Election is over, and the result is bad enough. . . . When I last wrote you I supposed there had been little or no effort made in this county to bring electors to the polls; but I find that I was mistaken. In many towns everything was done that could be done, but to no purpose. Voters stayed home. We say they would have voted right had they been there, but the important question is, *Why were they not there?*

Is it because Masonry is actually dead, and therefore there is no more necessity for anti-Masonry? Or is it because the people have labored long enough in the cause to become satisfied that they can never succeed as a party, and are therefore determined to give it up? These are important questions, and such as require older political heads than mine to solve.

The principle of anti-Masonry is an honest principle, and the cause a just cause; but a question arises whether anything more can be done politically to put down the institution. If not, we are spending our strength for naught. These are subjects which, without doubt, have long since presented themselves to your mind, and I would like to have your views.

If there is no prospect of doing any good by retaining our present name, we may as well abandon it, always keeping in view the principle. Another presidential election is approaching, and I feel as though there was a duty to our country to exert ourselves to the utmost to prevent the election of Martin Van Buren. In what way can we most effectually accomplish that object? By continuing under the name of anti-Masonry, or by sailing under a different flag? . . .

I wish it distinctly understood, if it is thought best by our friends to continue under the name of anti-Masonry, I do not desert the ship, not even if she sinks, nor when she is sinking.

Yours truly,

GEO. W. PATTERSON.

The use of the word "Whig," to cover the scattered political forces alluded to in the above letter, was first suggested by General James Watson Webb, of New York. "In writing to my paper, the New York 'Courier and Enquirer,'" says General Webb, "I gave an account of the Baltimore convention, and commented upon the folly of General Jackson's opponents in running so many candidates against him, concluding my letter by recommending that anti-Jackson men adopt the title of 'Whigs,' and call their opponents 'Tories.' On the evening of the day on which this letter appeared, the great meeting of anti-Jackson men took place at Masonic Hall, in New York city. Philip Hone presided, and, on taking the chair, read my letter to the meeting, after which the suggestion which it contained was put to vote and adopted."<sup>1</sup>

1833-1837. — Mr. Weed worked against wind and tide through these years. General Jackson began his second term in 1833, after carrying nearly all the States, and Mr. Van Buren, now promoted to the vice-presidency, still kept his wary hand upon the Regency in New York. Governor Marcy's first term expired in 1834, whereupon he was reëlected by twelve thousand majority over William H. Seward. In 1836 he ran for Governor a third time, and was reëlected, receiving an increased majority over a scattering opposition. During this period the most prominent political issue was the question as to where national funds should be placed on deposit. For sixteen years they had been kept in the Bank of the United States, but in 1833, by order of the President, they were intrusted to various state institutions. General Jackson's famous edict making this disposition of the funds is usually ascribed as the direct cause of the financial depression which immediately followed.

<sup>1</sup> These facts, gathered in conversation with General Webb, are here recorded with his permission.

[ALBERT H. TRACY TO MR. WEED.]

BUFFALO, June 10, 1833.

DEAR WEED, — I forgot when writing my last to mention a conversation which Mr. Webster had with me about a newspaper in this State, which may in some measure affect your establishment. In the first place, he is infatuated with the notion, that you see every now and then put forth, that the great approaching political division of the whole country is to be between Unionists and anti-Unionists. I tried to persuade him that it could never exist, for the obvious reason that Van Buren would never commit himself against the strong side. But he seemed to think otherwise, without being able to explain why he thought so.

Now, a plan which he suggests is that there be established at Utica a paper devoted to this question almost exclusively, and which he said could be made very strong and interesting by regular contributions from the Massachusetts delegation in Congress, which you know embraces a number of ready and powerful writers. I was unwilling to be committed to any such arrangement, — certainly not without first consulting you; and even then there may be found in the progress of the business, vexations and embarrassments, not at first clearly to be seen. I wish you would reflect on this matter, and let me know what you think of it. Mr. Webster returns to Boston about the 1st of July, and I can make some arrangement with him if it shall be thought advisable.

My standing objection to the whole of it is that it inevitably looks to Webster's being a candidate for the next presidency, which, notwithstanding my warm attachment to the man and exalted estimate of his talents, I regard as utterly unwise and hopeless. I believe I expressed my views on this point in my last; but I wrote that so hastily that I hardly know what it contained, more than that I would not

“Contaminate our fingers with base bribes,  
And sell the mighty space of our large honors  
For so much trash as may be grasped thus.”

But whether I gave my views or not, I cannot now, for the bearer hereof is about starting. . . .

Very truly yours,

ALBERT H. TRACY.

P. S. I need not remind you of the propriety of keeping Webster's suggestion a profound secret. Stow it away with the ten thousand and odd secrets which you keep so well.

More P. S. Put Millard Fillmore on your list for the Semi-Weekly.

The Whigs were not slow in pointing out the responsibility of the Democrats; but before voters fairly comprehended the

state of affairs, General Harrison was defeated in the national canvass of 1836 by Mr. Van Buren. There was a reduction of one hundred thousand on the majority recorded for Jackson in 1832, but this change was of no practical importance, inasmuch as the opposition divided its vote between Daniel Webster, Hugh L. White, of Tennessee, and W. P. Mangum, of North Carolina. Mr. Weed's letters to his friend Granger refer to the financial crisis and its probable bearings on the approaching presidential canvass.

[MR. WEED TO FRANCIS GRANGER.]

ALBANY, *February 3, 1837.*

DEAR GRANGER,— . . . The banks are making trouble for "the party," — all of which and more they deserve. Those who open the dance will have to pay the piper.

The Regency have had at least a half bushel of trouble for three or four days. They found, to their astonishment, a formidable opposition to Wright's election. The bolters had forty-nine men counted and pledged against him. Sam Birdsall was their candidate. Marcy, Flagg, Dix, Crosswell & Co. took the field. Birdsall was pushed out. The bolters then determined to go for Butler. There was no time to get his declension, and therefore the screws were applied. Vengeance dire was threatened against every man who should vote against Wright in caucus. . . . He will get the nomination, but there will be many votes against him.

The Regency is in the utmost danger. I think the rascals will be shipwrecked, as they ought to be, on the bank question. The people are greatly excited. . . .

*February 14, 1837.*

I am satisfied that Calhoun and others intend to separate the Union. They are determined to push on to their fate. I was prepared by your letters for the result on Vice-President.<sup>1</sup> . . . They will hasten the crisis, which I had hoped was farther off.

There is a fearful war going on here against the state banks, which have really provoked it themselves. The feeling is more bitter against them than it was against the United States Bank.

*May 15, 1837.*

. . . The times pinch so many that it is scarcely worth while to designate those who are not pinched. Few have had the wisdom to place themselves beyond the reach of the storm. The banks say they

<sup>1</sup> Richard M. Johnson was elected by the Senate in February, 1837.



cannot hold out much longer. Some of our business men must soon stop. Flemming loaned \$250,000 to Bullock, Lyman & Co., which is a dead loss. They say that General Gansevoort loses heavily. . . .

This sort of thing cannot go on. We shall march from the extremes to the centre. The Regency will be defeated in the next general fight.

Yours ever,

THURLOW WEED.

The Whigs made significant gains in the fall elections of 1837, and although the time for a presidential nomination was still two years distant, movements to secure the success of this or that aspirant were set on foot by over-zealous partisans. Mr. Weed had as strong personal predilections as any member of his party. It was a profound pleasure to him to see those of his friends whom he knew to be fitted for public life chosen to high official stations; it was his great ambition to promote vast public interests by the elevation of enlightened and trustworthy men to positions of responsibility. But through all his career he never thrust personal friendships or personal grievances into a political canvass. Among the Whigs of 1837 he stood almost alone in refusing to agitate the presidential question.

“We must postpone the selection of candidates,” he wrote, “until the fitting time for designating them shall arrive. We can all act with more effect eighteen months hence than now. Patience is a high political virtue. The few who have the wisdom to practice it are most richly rewarded. . . . The overwhelming triumphs which spangle the Whig banner display the efficiency of united efforts. For the last four months we have battled not as the partisans of Webster, of Harrison, or of Clay, but as the opponents of misrule and corruption. And what has been accomplished? Four states which gave their electoral votes to Van Buren have been disenthralled. In three states Whig candidates for Governor have displaced Democratic incumbents. In nine states overwhelming majorities are recorded against the administration. Shall we now, in full view of the glorious consummation of all the hopes of patriotism, be diverted from the great object by premature discussion of distracting issues? We hope and believe not. Let us for the next twelve, as we have for the last six, months exert all our

faculties to rescue state and nation from Loco-Foco<sup>1</sup> and Regency desecration. The whole question of presidential candidates should by common consent be referred to the national convention."

<sup>1</sup> This curious word came into general use to designate the Democrats shortly after the adoption of the word Whig to designate opponents of Jackson. It originally meant a kind of self-igniting match, but as no other sort of matches are known, in this sense it soon became obsolete. At a gathering in Tammany Hall, New York, in 1835, the Varian faction extinguished the lights, fearing that the Curtis men had control of the meeting, whereupon matches were produced by the Curtis side, and business proceeded. The Whig papers took advantage of this incident to fasten the term "Locos," or "Loco-Focos," upon the Democratic party.

## CHAPTER V.

1837-1838.

MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED. — "I WILL TURN THE CORNER YET." — THE RIGHT OF PETITION DEFENDED. — A HARRISON MEETING. — "OUR FRIENDS IN NEW YORK." — SEWARD FOR GOVERNOR. — "A YEARLING NOT WANTED." — MILLARD FILLMORE. — "THE PHILISTINES ARE UPON US." — GOVERNOR MARCY'S "THREE-WALLED HOUSE." — "POLITICAL DRILL OF THE STATE OFFICERS."

LONG before the lines were drawn for the presidential contest of 1840, Mr. Weed was busied in preparations for that memorable campaign. He made arrangements in 1837 for the establishment of a new Whig paper, of which Horace Greeley was to be editor.

[HORACE GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *December 29, 1837.*

MY DEAR SIR, — Your favor of the 27th is this moment at hand, and is the first line or word I have had from you or any one else at Albany since you left. I have been unable to see Willis Hall or Blatchford since the meeting, twelve days since, and had concluded, from these indications, that the project was virtually abandoned. Your letter is the first contrary symptom that has reached me.

It will be utterly impossible for me to come to Albany immediately. I have not heard from any proposed partners yet. I am not disappointed, exactly; for you know what an unlucky sinner I have always been in everything, except getting plenty of hard work to do, and no pay for it, — nor credit either. You would say that is all a matter of course.

When you first came here I thought it impossible that I could go to Albany at all, as I had already done when several of my friends offered to urge my nomination for the Assembly. While you were here, however, I made such arrangements as seemed to insure me liberty for the winter. I sold one fourth of my paper to a young man for one thousand dollars, and he set out immediately to visit his friends in Massachusetts, to whom he had written, and who had promised him money. He left me, promising to send me money in a week, and to

rejoin me in a fortnight, prepared to take charge. He was a young man of known integrity and excellent character. Sixteen days have now passed, and I have not heard a whisper from him. My luck!

Another, Mr. John Adams, of the Portland "Advertiser," wrote, proposing to engage with me, and manifesting great eagerness. I answered him while you were here, offering him half of my concern for two thousand dollars: one half down, the remainder on time. He answered me that my terms were very reasonable, and he would not fail of engaging with me, but he could pay nothing for six months. I cannot get through the winter without money, so I was obliged to forego the bargain, though he is a first-rate business man.

A third man with whom I have been treating is Mr. P., of Winchester, Va. He is a young man of property. He is eager to engage with me, but his property is included in an undivided estate, which he is making an effort to withdraw. Part of it is bank stock, of which he owns one third (733 33-100), which he thinks he can sell, at any rate. I wrote him a week ago to join me instantly, if with only five hundred dollars. I hope to hear from him to-morrow.

Thus I am; and you will see the absolute absurdity of my entering into new engagements, such as you kindly propose, until I have made some arrangements to fulfill those already incurred. These have a sacred prior claim upon me, which I must not disregard.

Give me all the time you can, my friend, and I will turn the corner yet. Give me advice frequently. I have again, indirectly, advertised my concern this week, and will give it away if I cannot sell it the coming week. Have patience with me, and I will try to beg a loan of some friend to put my concern in a shape to leave it for a time.

Yours perplexed,

HORACE GREELEY,

127 Nassau.

During the session of Congress which began in December, 1837, petitions for negro emancipation were sent to Washington. Pending the disposal of these papers, Mr. Weed wrote:—

"Inherent and inalienable rights, to establish which cost the best blood of the Revolution, have been called in question in the House of Representatives, by an attempt to reject a petition praying for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and more recently by the adoption of a resolution of a most extraordinary character, in favor of which many members from this State gave their votes. This resolution establishes principles and will produce consequences of such vital importance that we will not trust ourselves to speak of it, or of those who

voted for or against it, without first giving the resolution itself, with the votes of the Representatives from this State upon the question of its passage, and also upon the previous question, which cut off all debate. The resolution was offered by Mr. Patton, of Virginia, on the 21st of December, in the following words: —

“*Resolved*, That all petitions, memorials, and papers touching the abolition of slavery, or the buying, selling, or transferring of slaves in any State, District, or Territory of the United States, be laid upon the table, without being debated, printed, read, or referred, and that no further action shall be had thereon.’ . . .

“We ask the friends of constitutional liberty to look at the manner in which the resolution was passed, and at the tenor of the resolution itself, and then say whether as American citizens they can approve it. In expressing our most unqualified disapprobation of the manner in which this tyrannical law was forced upon the House, and the more than Turkish despotism to which it subjects the right of petition in this boasted land of liberty, we desire to strip it of all extraneous circumstances, and present it to our insulted people in its own naked deformity. With the freedom of speech and the right of petition we mingle not the discussion of other topics. These are the very essence of a free government, . . . the Promethean fire that gives it vitality and life. Without these, it is the cold, unfeeling mass of despotism.

“What, then, is the right of petition under this resolution? It is to have Representatives crawl up to the Speaker’s table, and lay upon it in humble silence the prayers of fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, and brothers and sisters, of all political parties and of all religious denominations, and then to leave them unopened and unread. Will the freemen of New York submit to this? Will they permit their petitions to be treated with silent contempt by their own Representatives? Will they suffer their petitions to be consigned to the tomb of oblivion, unread and unheard? Will they permit their Representatives to sell this birthright of freemen for a mess of pottage? Will they sanction a time-serving, slavish subserviency which strikes at the foundation of our freedom? Has the spirit of independence at the North sunk so low that the degenerated sons of a noble ancestry will submit to be gagged and bound

hand and foot, and spurned from the national legislative hall? Then let us

“ ‘Peep about  
To find ourselves dishonorable graves.’

“Look at the language of our forefathers. Look at the Constitution they gave us. It declares that ‘Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for the redress of grievances.’

“The spirit, if not the letter, of this part of the Constitution was grossly violated by the adoption of that resolution. It abridges the freedom of speech. It renders the right of petition but a solemn mockery. It rejects without hearing; nay, further, it warns the petitioner, before he approaches, that he is not to be heard. . . .

“Freemen of New York, if this step be tolerated by the American people, a precedent so fraught with danger to constitutional liberty is established, that whenever the interests or the prejudices of faction may render it expedient, all other petitions, in like manner, will be treated with contumely and contempt. We call upon the American people, everywhere, to pause before they sanction a doctrine so monstrous. We call upon the patriots of all parties to stand by the Constitution of the common country, and shield it from these grievous wounds. We warn them to watch with jealousy this attempt to violate that sacred charter of liberty. We call upon them to resist, firmly, this bold invasion of their rights. We summon all to mark this law abridging the freedom of speech. And finally, we proclaim to those who now represent the freemen of New York in Congress that the sacred right of petition and of free debate may not, with impunity, be made the sport of gaming politicians; that they are dealing with principles too dear to every lover of his country to be for one moment jeopardized in the party squabbles of the day.”

1838. — “The friends of General Harrison,” wrote Mr. Weed, in January, “by a large and enthusiastic meeting at Cincinnati, have again nominated that distinguished and patriotic statesman and soldier as a candidate for President. Judge

Burnett, formerly a Senator in Congress, presided. The proceedings throughout evince an honest devotion to their candidate and to the Whig cause. . . .

“It is known that, from the beginning, we have deprecated these premature movements. It is but an act of justice, however, to the friends of General Harrison to admit that they have been forced into this position. They were willing to submit the whole question to a national convention, where everything should be decided. But with that too many impatient gentlemen were dissatisfied. Demonstrations in favor of other candidates were made, and the friends of General Harrison must either see him jostled off the course, or do as others have done. Thus we are hurried into a scuffle about men, when the entire energies of our party should be exerted to arrest and defeat the destructive measures of the administration. For one, we are utterly opposed to the infatuated project of jarring among ourselves about a candidate for President three years before the election, and when our single and united efforts are required to save the country from the miseries inflicted by the present executive.”

[FRANCIS GRANGER TO MR. WEED.]

CANANDAIGUA, *March 14, 1838.*

DEAR WEED, — . . . Fillmore sees the presidential question just as I do. I suppose you observe the fire that the Abolition batteries are making upon Clay. They are gaining converts by the regiment. Patton's resolution has made more than 20,000 Abolition votes already. They will have one fourth of the votes of the states before the grand contest of 1840, and before that day men who now say, “D—— 'em, put 'em down!” will beg not to be put down by them. They are engaged in it with the same honest purpose that governed the great mass of the anti-Masons.

*May 1, 1838.*

I returned yesterday from Rochester, where I saw a great many of the intelligent men of that county, — among the rest George Brown, of Chili, whom you know to be an exceedingly sensible man. I asked him to say candidly what he thought of Clay, and what the people think and say. He replied that in the winter, when everything looked well, he had hoped that we would have more of a man than H., and, although there were a good many things to get over, still he was for C., and so were his neighbors; but that latterly the most active papers for him seemed rather the Slave-State papers than those which belonged

to us; that he was glad when he saw your article, for when he saw that the Conservatives had taken up Clay, and that you rather seemed to like it, he was afraid, for he thought that these Conservatives were only a set of Van Buren men, who had come to us because their folks would not give them what they wanted, and that we were to be deceived. That farmer spoke the feelings of a vast majority in Western New York. . . . A Clay flag raised here would ruin everything.

Yours,

FR. GRANGER.

Early in May, Mr. Weed went to New York to restrain the ardor of certain officious friends of Mr. Clay, who, foreseeing a probable Whig victory in 1840, and imagining that Mr. Clay would be the candidate, were anxious to make it appear that they were responsible for his selection. "Don't let our friends in New York act like fools," wrote Mr. Seward. "When such a nomination as Clay's or Harrison's is to be made, it will be most effectual if it seems spontaneous, and begins like the Clintonian meetings at the West in 1824." In New York Mr. Weed met some twenty patriotic gentlemen, who were making preparations for a demonstration. There was a long, sharp talk. "Hall, Noah, and Selden," he wrote to Granger, "were determined on the meeting, assigning as reasons for it such as told loudly against it, and almost accusing me of lethargy. They think Clay will surely be nominated." No Clay meeting was held.

The time for holding the Whig state convention was now approaching, and friends of Mr. Granger, who had twice led a forlorn hope against the Democrats, felt that he was entitled to the nomination for Governor. When Mr. Granger ran in 1832, he had fallen ten thousand votes below Governor Marcy, whereas Mr. Seward had been defeated by Governor Marcy in 1834 by nearly thirteen thousand majority. This fact was urged by the Granger element as the canvass progressed. Friends of Seward, on the other hand, held that inasmuch as Mr. Granger had been already twice nominated, equal consideration at least should be shown to their favorite. With the idea that a third candidate might slip in between these contestants, Luther Bradish entered the field.

Mr. Granger, Mr. Seward, Albert H. Tracy, George W. Patterson, and Trumbull Cary were constantly in communication with Mr. Weed, either at his house in Albany or by letter; and



as they looked to him for a decision, his position became somewhat embarrassing. But, for reasons which were wholly of a public nature, he finally announced that he was in favor of Mr. Seward.

“I deeply regret,” wrote Governor Patterson before a settlement was reached, “that our friends Granger and Seward do not come to an amicable agreement about who shall be the man. I fear that it will embarrass the convention very much, and the result may cool, if not alienate, some of the friends of the unsuccessful candidate. We need all our strength, and I will say to you that with our whole force in the field I think the chances two to one against us. Then why fight among ourselves to know who shall be beaten? It is a miserable business. . . . I know you did not say that Seward would be nominated; but it was a fair inference for me to draw. You said you could not ascertain that Granger had much strength, except in a few counties. It was fair, then, for me to presume that Seward was to be the man, and hence my inquiry about Lieutenant. I understand that the friends of Bradish are determined he should not play ‘second fiddle’ to any one. This should not be. He must not refuse. It would be perfect death to go to New York for a Lieutenant, if the whole people think of the Yorkers as I do. There is an almost entire destitution of political genius in that locality. Where would the Whig party have been to-day, had the New York delegation ruled last winter? If Stevens, or any other New Yorker who would not pay for the ‘Jeffersonian,’ is put in nomination, he may get my vote, but that will be all. I don’t go their kind of republicanism. Should Bradish chance to be named for Governor, Fillmore is my man for Lieutenant, and I think you will say the very man.”

“You have succeeded to your liking,” wrote Governor Patterson when the convention had finished its labors. “Now let us all put our shoulders to the wheel. As soon as the result was known in this vicinity there was a general feeling of disapprobation among old anti-Masonic farmers, who with one accord were for Frank; but all within my reach have been quieted and will go the ticket. I started immediately for Genesee in order to see our printer and put him straight. He was strongly in favor of another nomination, but will proclaim this ‘the best that could have been made.’ . . . It was reported by

some of the state delegates who passed through Genesee that there was some doubt about Bradish's accepting.<sup>1</sup> He must accept. Should he decline, and old Gid. Lee be nominated, we are gone, hook, line, and sinker. We of the West must have something more than a 'yearling' to vote for, or we will bolt. We will not consent to pass by old friends, and take one who still carries a hickory cane."<sup>2</sup>

Governor Marcy was renominated by the Democrats, and the campaign was pushed vigorously on both sides. Whig newspapers bristled with scathing reviews of "Loco-Foco" mismanagement, to which were ascribed the "hard times," now even more oppressive, under Mr. Van Buren, than they had been under President Jackson. There was some inclination to reproach Mr. Weed for turning his back upon Mr. Granger, but it quickly subsided. This feeling Mr. Granger himself never shared. Great as was his disappointment, there was not for a moment any interruption of the most cordial relations which existed between him and Mr. Weed. Than he no one supported the ticket more zealously. Men like Francis Granger, William H. Seward, and George W. Patterson, when personal preferences were sacrificed, never faltered in allegiance to the principles which they espoused.<sup>3</sup>

"Dear Weed," wrote Millard Fillmore from Buffalo, in October, "I fear we have lost Ohio, and I think it apparent that we shall not gain Pennsylvania. This has thrown a wet blanket over our cause here. Unless something can be done this county will not give 2,000 majority. I see but one thing now that gives the least hope of success. Those interested in the banks may see their danger, and again burst the shackles of party and come to our relief. If not, all is gone. I regret that the Harrison flag was not nailed to our mast. It would have saved Ohio and gained Pennsylvania, and this State would have followed; but I

<sup>1</sup> He was nominated for Lieutenant-Governor.

<sup>2</sup> The Democrats chose this wood for their sticks and flagpoles, in honor of General Jackson, familiarly known as "Old Hickory."

<sup>3</sup> On the day of the Whig convention it was reported at Mr. Seward's home that Mr. Granger had been nominated. Hearing this, Mr. Seward at once told his friends that Auburn must be the first town in the State to hold a ratification meeting. He began himself to write a set of resolutions, to be submitted to the meeting, when a second messenger announced that Seward was the Whig candidate.

now regard all as lost irrevocably. It is too late to retrace our steps. The Philistines are upon us. We shall never be able to burst the withes. Thank God, I can endure it as long as they, but I am sick of our Whig party. It can never be in the ascendant. But I will say no more. Old Erie shall be the last spot that shall yield. We will stand alone amid the general desolation."

"We are on the eve of the contest," wrote Mr. Seward on Sunday, the 4th of November, "and I fear that the State is lost. This conclusion was forced upon me strongly by news from the southern tier of counties, and is confirmed by an analogy in Ohio. . . . But I will not stop to reason on the causes. Your own sagacity has doubtless often considered them earlier and more forcibly than mine. I go through the election with a cheerful countenance, and have dissipated every apprehension of failure that has been indulged in by any one here. If it could happen that success should crown our efforts, my wife and my sister would be the only witnesses of what would be regarded as despondency. I do not expect now to speculate upon the causes and responsibilities of the evil I apprehend, or its consequences on my future action. . . ."

"When the hurly-burly is over, and the battle lost or won, I shall gird myself up for the excitement and the duty. Can't you steal away from the office for three or four days, and spend them here? Such a meeting as we had here last night I never saw before. They dragged me in among them. I made my bow to them and an apology for not making a speech. The spirit of our friends in town and county is at its height."

"I was struck dumb," Mr. Seward continues, after the result, "when the election commenced. I have scarcely recovered speech since it was over. It is a fearful post I have coveted. I shudder at my temerity, and have lost confidence in my ability to manage my own private affairs preliminary to the new year. . . . I waive all expressions of acknowledgment to you. Indeed, I feel just now as if your zeal had been blind; but I may perhaps get over this. God grant, at all events, that I be spared from committing the sin of ingratitude. I hate it as the foulest in the catalogue.

"I want to see you, and believe I must go East for that purpose. Tell me by return mail whether you will come here, or I

shall go to you, or we shall meet at Syracuse or Utica. Heaven knows what I shall do. Must I keep house? Can't I take more or less of the Eagle? There is not the least prospect of Mrs. Seward's being able to go to Albany this winter. I don't know how to keep the house alone. I think, if you can, you had better come here. Our friends burned an immense amount of powder in honor of Chautauqua. I hope you will dwell upon this in the 'Journal' until it becomes as familiar as Croswell's three-walled house.<sup>1</sup> . . . There is an application from some one in Albany for 'anything high or low.' Of course I answer nothing of that kind. Judge Conkling, before election, applied for the appointment of aid for his son in New York. What do you say of L. Benedict for private secretary? I have had many applications for office and other letters to answer. I hope I have learned to do it discreetly."

"I am glad you were in New York," wrote Mr. Seward, a month later, "to save the Conservatives from so fatal an error as that which they were prepared to commit. Strange, — is it not? — how few minds are found with sufficient stays and braces for times of success! I expect you will be continually busy in averting just such madness. How strong a propensity men have to dictate public opinion! I was on Tuesday at a celebration of the Whig victory at Fredonia. There was a man there who fastened himself upon me for the whole day, and the burden of his discourse was the presidential nomination. I thought he ought to be satisfied when I referred the whole matter to his better judgment. But he insisted upon my agreeing with him, and, having at last settled national politics, he proceeded to the state ticket for next year, inflicting upon me for hours his views, hopes, and fears in relation to that subject. . . . Your letter admonishes me of a habit of action that I cannot conveniently adopt. I love to write what I think and feel as it comes up. Mrs. Seward read your letter in which you announce your arrival and departure. She says you will kill yourself. If you do, you shall have a glorious burial."

<sup>1</sup> During the administration of Governor Marcy, under an act passed by the legislature, intended to provide an Executive Mansion, Mr. Croswell's house on Elk Street was purchased in behalf of the State. Subsequently it came to Mr. Weed's knowledge that the house, which stood in the middle of a block, had but three walls. Governor Seward refused to occupy it when he went to Albany.

“My dear Weed,” wrote Mr. Seward on the 14th of December, “the sweetness of his temper inclines me to love my tyrant. I had no idea that dictators were such amiable creatures. I am reminded of old Hassan’s expression, ‘My dear, terrible son-in-law,’ in ‘Blue Beard.’ . . . I would like to go forthwith to Albany, but a message I must have and will have before I leave Auburn, for the reason that if I were let alone at Albany I could not get my books, papers, and habits fixed before the 1st of January; and as to being left alone, how could I? I devote to-day and to-morrow to the message, and Sunday to church for the last time here. I shall reach the capital next week.”

[MILLARD FILLMORE TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *December 6, 1838.*

DEAR WEED, — I have received a letter from Tracy. He declines being a candidate for Comptroller, as we both apprehended he would. But he manifests a desire that I should take it, and says if I will he will do what he can to aid my success, and to insure it would withdraw any application on his part for the senatorship.

All this is very kind. I cannot, however, bring my mind to an idea of abandoning my profession, and subjecting myself to the caprice of popular favor and official patronage for a support. In other words, I cannot well afford to make the pecuniary sacrifice which is required. I made up my mind when I entered political life never to go so far as to feel for a moment that I depend upon any office or popular favor for a livelihood. That moment I should lose my independence, I fear my integrity. He is miserable whose happiness “hangs on prince’s favors.” But he is not only wretched, but infinitely degraded, whose means of support depend on the wild caprice of the ever-changing multitude. I cannot become a slave to such a master.

But enough; I will give the subject a candid consideration, and whether I accept or decline I cannot but feel flattered that I am thought worthy, and I shall ever retain a grateful recollection of those who have manifested this kindness. There is no man with whom I should be more willing to be associated politically and socially than Mr. Seward. I have entire confidence in his competency and integrity; and if the other state officers are such men as I doubt not they will be, it would be an honor, to which my humble ambition has never aspired, to mingle in the councils of such an association.

Truly yours,

M. FILLMORE.

WASHINGTON, December 23, 1838.

. . . It is hardly necessary to mention reasons, as you know them all and can explain them to any who desire to hear them; but I may be pardoned for saying to you that I am very diffident of my ability to discharge the duties of this delicate and difficult trust. I fear that I might lack the requisite financial skill and the high unbending firmness which alone can guide our new banking craft safely through the breakers and quicksands. I fear that the partiality of my friends has induced them to look with too favorable an eye upon my qualifications for this station.

But if I were ever so confident of my ability, I find it utterly impossible to break up all my professional relations and business without doing great injustice to my clients and sustaining a pecuniary loss to myself, which I am utterly helpless to bear. Were I wealthy, or if I had not a family to sustain, I would not mind the sacrifice. . . .

How would Bates Cook or Abner Hazeltine answer for Comptroller or Secretary of State? You must give one of these important offices to the West and to the old anti-Masons, or our folks will swear that this administration is "stuck in the Clay," and that the anti-Masons are to be cast off. This rock must be avoided. . . .

Truly yours,

M. FILLMORE.

1838.—Thus for the first time the Whig party carried the State of New York. William H. Seward was chosen Governor, and a new set of state officers were inducted into executive positions, with the duties of which they were supposed to be unfamiliar. It was the popular conviction that Mr. Weed's political shrewdness had much to do with the result, and the Albany Regency fell back upon the sarcastic reflection that the "Dictator" would now have his hands full, for he must needs drill all the state officers, so as to fit them for their new stations.

The feelings of the Regency were voiced by the Albany "Argus," a few days after the election, in an exceedingly clever pasquinade written by ex-Governor Marcy.

THE POLITICAL DRILL OF THE STATE OFFICERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ARGUS:—

I do not accuse you of intentional misrepresentation, but you occasionally misconceive the motives of action of the new state administration by not being fully acquainted with the facts of the case. The refusal of his excellency to occupy the Executive Mansion has been

imputed to him as an act of subserviency to the designs of Weed, and a coöperation in his scheme to become state printer.

If this were literally true, his excellency could offer an apology which generous minds would think of considerable weight. He owes all he is to the "Jolly Drummer's"<sup>1</sup> kind partiality, and should he not be grateful? There is nothing that could serve him that Weed has not stooped to, and he should not refuse to stoop to anything which will be of service to Weed.

I have lately discovered another reason for the preference which the Governor has given for his present residence over the one provided by the State, or any other that could be found in the city. You are acquainted with the locality of the mansion selected for him, and will recollect that there are spacious grounds about it. In a retired corner of the purlieus of his excellency's present residence, I discovered, in an accidental manner, what may be properly denominated the administration "*parade ground*," the convenience of enjoying which, I am disposed to believe, must have influenced him in declining to occupy the house provided for him by the State, and induced Weed, in justification of this choice, to labor as lustily as he has to batter down one of its walls, and convert, as suddenly as he did the body of old Timothy Munroe into a "good-enough Morgan," what he represented as a splendid "marble palace" into a miserable "three-walled house," as soon as it was purchased for an "Executive Mansion."

It may not be unacceptable to you to hear something more of this "*parade ground*," and the "training" or exercises which I chanced to witness there a few days since. Wandering in the southwest part of the city, not far from his excellency's abode, I heard the sound of the drum and the voices of certain persons. My curiosity led me to ascertain what was going on. I espied in a retired spot, sheltered from public view, a small band of what I at first supposed to be a company of boys recreating themselves by a mock training. On a nearer view, I perceived that it was not an assemblage of idle urchins, but our new state officers, *under drill*.

The first and most conspicuous figure in the group was Weed, with a drum hanging by a broad strap about his neck, — each hand armed with a drumstick under rapid motion, — making more noise than music, and moving off with long, loping strides.

Close in his rear followed his excellency, making a painful effort to

<sup>1</sup> We think our correspondent, in view of the qualities which it is said characterized the "Drummer's" frontier campaigning, should have applied the epithet *valiant*, in the present instance; but he doubtless had in his eye the old ballad, —

"Jack, the jolly drummer,  
Went to do his duty," etc. — ED.

keep regular pace with his file leader. So intent was he to conform to the movements of the "Jolly Drummer" that he not only trod exactly in his footsteps, but with his arms imitated sometimes the motions of those which wielded the drumsticks. There was a general conformity in his step, motion, and bearing with those of the musician, except his excellency carried his head much higher and seemed, his stature considered, much more expanded with conscious self-importance. His excellency's immediate rear was brought up by the Adjutant-General<sup>1</sup> in complete uniform.

The next in the marching train was the Secretary of State.<sup>2</sup> His movements were much more irregular, and his apparent anxiety to imitate much less than his immediate predecessor and his valiant appendage. Occasionally his imitations were very servile, but at the same time quite awkward. He would sometimes lose the step and get the left foot forward; now he crowded hard upon the Governor, then he would lag far behind. He appeared sometimes much diverted with the manner in which the Drummer handled the sticks; but for the most of the time he seemed to perform his duty reluctantly, with indications of dislike towards the music and him that made it; nor did he seem well pleased by the devotedness with which the Governor regarded and imitated the action of the Drummer. Now and then he threw himself wholly out of gear, folded his arms, tossed up his head, and strutted along in a sort of sovereign contempt of not only his associates, but the whole affair of the drill. As the *corps* passed near the concealed position I occupied, the Drummer threw round his eye, and, observing the Secretary in one of his inattentive moods, — out of time, and loitering behind, — he cried out to him, "Jack Factotum, change your step — right foot forward — close up to your file leader." The Governor seemed alarmed at this rude salutation and the magisterial tone in which it was uttered, and said in a low, soothing voice, "Friend Weed, don't speak so peremptory. Remember the unfortunate temper of Jack: he can be coaxed and cajoled, but don't attempt to drive him; if you do you will rouse his anger." To this the Drummer replied, "He must submit to discipline; if he will not, he will be worse than useless to us. You may attempt to tame the tiger, but you will feel his claws by and by," and thereupon fell to beating his drum most furiously.

Closely behind the Secretary followed a large, phlegmatic-looking personage, whose attention was absorbingly fixed on the Secretary, and he moved after him like his shadow. When the Secretary lost

<sup>1</sup> General Rufus King, afterwards Minister to Rome.

<sup>2</sup> John C. Spencer, afterwards Secretary of War.



his step, or stumbled, or lagged behind, his pursuer did the same. I was for a time at a loss to discover what this strange conjunction meant, and who it was that seemed to derive all his motions and his very ability to move from the Secretary; but, at length, as they passed me, I perceived it was the "quondam President of the Suspension Bridge Company," who now holds, by the grace and favor of the Drummer, the office of Comptroller.<sup>1</sup>

I also discovered, across the area of the parade ground, a portly-looking man, who seemed to have become fatigued with the drill, and had seated himself on a large stone to recover his breath and strength. From some remarks I heard, I learned that this man was the Treasurer, who had a peculiar inaptitude for active life, and had become quickly exhausted in his efforts to keep up with the motions of the Drummer.<sup>2</sup>

Looking around, I perceived at a short distance from me a full-faced man, with slightly blanched locks, apparently about fifty years of age, sitting under a large tree, with a book in his hand, as busily engaged in his study as an ambitious schoolboy. The Secretary left the marching trail, and approaching the student addressed him as follows: "Well, Attorney-General,<sup>3</sup> have you got your lesson?" "I believe I have, sir," was the reply.

*Secretary.* What is the first grand division of law?

*Student.* Law is divided into real and personal.

*Sec.* I did not ask you how property was divided!

*Stu.* I beg your pardon. I mistook the question. Law — law is divided into principles and practice.

*Sec.* What book have you there?

*Stu.* Blackstone's Commentaries, and I find it a very hard book to understand. It divides and subdivides law into so many little parcels that I cannot comprehend any of them. It tells in one place here about *scripta* and *non scripta*, but I don't know where to find the *non scripta* laws. They are not in *your* Revised Statutes, for I have looked them through and did not find them. If they are there, they are not referred to in your index. You told me that the index would show me anything I wanted to know about the laws.

*Sec.* I am sorry to say, sir, you are not so well founded in the principles as you ought to be.

*Stu.* I may not know as much about all the courts as you do, for I have had no great acquaintance with any but justices' courts and the marine courts; but as to principles, sir, mine are as good as yours. I may not know as much about the principles of anti-Masonry or Abolitionism as yourself, Weed, or the Governor. The result of the elec-

<sup>1</sup> Bates Cook.

<sup>2</sup> Jacob Haight.

<sup>3</sup> Willis Hall.

tion in the city of New York shows you that I was right when I told the Cabinet there was no principle or use in setting the Governor to courting the Irish. They know when people are talking blarney to them. Did I not tell you that it would displease the old Federalists and Native Americans, — our real friends, — and that the Governor's chaff would catch no birds?

Here the Secretary interrupted him by saying, "Pshaw, you don't comprehend my meaning;" and he began to explain as the Drummer led round his train near us, and with his rubba-dub-rubba-dub-dub prevented me from hearing what was the nature of the explanation.

After standing at ease a short time, the line was formed again, with a view, as I understood, to practice the old Federal Grand March. The Governor observed that it was Friend Weed's opinion that we must perfect ourselves to that march, and in this, he said, "I concur, as I always do in his ideas of popular measures. If we don't get so as to practice this movement pretty well, we shall march into a minority next fall." The Adjutant-General volunteered to act as *Fugleman*; the Governor approved of the suggestion, and the Drummer gave his consent. In giving his directions for executing the manœuvres, the Adjutant-General made frequent mention of what his father and grandfather had taught him. He had been instructed, he said, to avoid direct movements as much as possible; and to practice certain countermarches to guard against foreigners, and a variety of echelon movements to counteract and overcome Democratic tendencies. Weed told him that he thought skill and celerity in the practice of changing front was "all important in the day of battle." "Our little-bill manœuvre," said he, "gained us the last grand victory." The Governor hastily replied that he did not like that term, "Little Bill;" but when he rightly apprehended the Drummer's remark, and found that it was not used in an offensive sense, he said *that* was a capital *ruse*, and Friend Weed was entitled to much credit for it. He was anxious that they should teach him the evolution of passing *defiles*. The Secretary, who had not apparently listened with much complacency to these various suggestions, observed to them, with a sardonic smile, that it would be well, perhaps, to know how to make a graceful retreat. At this point of time the Surveyor-General<sup>1</sup> made his appearance. The Drummer said to him, "You come as usual, Joseph Surface, after the exercises are nearly over. Your pieces are always handed in, if they come at all, after the paper has gone to press; you might learn a profitable lesson in regard to promptness from the Secretary. This is not the first time you have been pricked for absence at roll-call." The Surveyor replied, "Stick your pin, Whiskerando, when and where

<sup>1</sup> Orville L. Holley.





THE POLITICAL DRILL OF THE STATE OFFICERS.

you will, I shall not forego my dinner, nor the pleasure of taking a few social glasses of wine with my friends, in order to attend your summons. Besides, what use in my earlier attendance? Have you not met to perfect yourselves in Federal tactics? I already know them well. Though like the rest of you, I have occasionally practiced others, I have not lost a whit of what I learned in my youth. I need no instruction to teach me my vernacular tongue." Weed said something about lazy men always having a ready excuse for their indolence. "They are generally," said he, "on the spot in season when the matter in hand is the division of spoils."

These remarks seemed to nettle the Surveyor, who muttered something about his right to promotion, with a reproof to his friends for his failure; and he concluded by observing that some men's intermeddling activity was more mischievous than another's idleness could be. "If a man assumes," said he, "to be the organ of a party, and has not character enough to authenticate its official edicts, he has very little cause to plume himself upon his industry or usefulness." This last remark was accompanied with a significant look towards the Governor and Secretary. The Governor said, "Come, come, that matter has been explained, and I hope satisfactorily." The Surveyor-General remarked, with evident bitterness, there was one movement he should wish to be excused from practicing; and when asked to specify, he said it was *the Jolly Drummer's retreat from the U. S. service*. Weed then said that when a man was all show and no substance, when he had no practical talent to cut his own fodder, and the whole of his ability lay in cracking a joke and perpetrating a pun, his desertion would never be regarded as a loss to any cause or party. The Governor began to exhibit symptoms of alarm at the rising spirit of mutiny among his troops, and gave a signal to the Fugleman to recommence the drill. The gentleman with epaulets promptly ordered the men to their posts, the Drummer to play the tune of the Black Cockade, and the exercises were resumed. The Surveyor-General refused to fall into line, and said he would take a seat "with that same *learned Theban*" (pointing to the Attorney-General), and smoke a cigar. After going through several Federal manœuvres, all of which required the dexterous use of the *oblique step*, the band was ordered to halt, received a compliment from the Fugleman, and was dismissed. The Drummer beat the *tattoo*, and they retired in an orderly manner to their several quarters.

A LOOKER-ON.

On the evening of the day on which this article appeared Mr. J. E. Freeman, the artist, then a young man of much promise, happened to be visiting at the residence of Comptroller Flagg. Miss Flagg read the "Argus" diatribe to a little circle of inti-

mates assembled in the drawing-room. After she had finished it, finding pen, ink, and paper by his side, Mr. Freeman tried to embody, in a hasty, boyish way, some of the most impressive points in the picture so well outlined by ex-Governor Marcy.

While thus amusing himself, as well as the young ladies, who were watching every scratch of his pen, the ex-Governor entered the room, and, approaching Mr. Freeman, bent his head over the artist's shoulder to see what was provoking so much merriment. "Do you not know, young man," he exclaimed, "that what you are doing is libelous?" "Possibly it is, Governor," replied the youth; "but what do you think of the villain who wrote the article from which the sketch is taken?" The Governor laughed heartily, and forgave the impertinence.

Some of the visitors present at the Flaggs' when this incident occurred purloined the rude sketch, and shortly afterwards a lithographic print of it appeared in New York.

Many years afterwards, when Mr. Weed was in Rome, Mr. Freeman left his studio to pay his respects to the traveler. During the visit, the artist indirectly alluded to the caricature, and Mr. Weed said that he had preserved a copy, which he treasured highly. "Do you know," asked Mr. Freeman, "who perpetrated that likeness of you?" "No," said Mr. Weed, "I do not. I should like to know very much. It has afforded immense amusement." "Would you treasure any resentment against the author of it, if I should tell you who he was?" Mr. Freeman asked. "Certainly not," said Mr. Weed. "I might like him all the better for it." "Well, then," the artist pursued, "it was myself who did it." Mr. Weed was true to his word. He shook Mr. Freeman warmly by the hand, saying he could have no idea of the enjoyment which his sketch had caused to Whigs as well as Democrats.

## CHAPTER VI.

1839-1840.

WHIGS AND DEMOCRATS. — WILLIAM KENT TO MR. WEED. — "THE BEST MAN IN THE DISTRICT." — A TRACY-SEWARD INCIDENT. — MR. WEBSTER AND THE PRESIDENCY. — MAGNANIMITY OF HENRY CLAY. — GENERAL HARRISON NOMINATED. — SPIRIT OF THE CANVASS. — "IN SIGHT OF LAND." — "A KNOCK-DOWN FOR THE LOCOS." — LETTERS TO FRANCIS GRANGER.

IN 1839 Mr. Van Buren entered upon the third year of his presidency, and William H. Seward began his administration as first Whig Governor of New York. The country still suffered from financial disorders, and the federal government constantly lost popularity. Warned of approaching danger by continuous Whig successes in the House of Representatives, the great men of the Democratic organization redoubled their vigilance and activity. Their forces were disciplined and compact, and it was plain that they would wage a stubborn contest. The Whigs were unused to power. Called to the control of New York as a rebuke to Democratic government, no sooner had Mr. Seward taken his seat than disintegrating elements in his own political household set on foot impracticable and mischievous agitations.

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *March 15, 1839.*

DEAR SIR, — I received a line from you last Sunday morning, and meant to have thanked you for your attention to my wishes and interests at once, but the hurry of business, which occupies me every minute, has hindered.

I trust that, with your good aid, everything will go just right as regards the "Jeffersonian." The fact is that the work will be more efficient and useful if a suspension shall have demonstrated its necessity. The "Weekly Journal" is all sufficient, so far as our own tried soldiers are concerned. The "Jeff." is only needed to carry war into the enemy's camp and the doubtful. If started again, there should be

the right sort of preparation to make it effectual. A right man should be employed in every county or region, with a bound volume of last year's as a specimen, quietly picking up the names of all who will take it, — especially of those who ought to take it: young men coming of age, laborers, men of no particular or settled politics, etc. With a proper coöperation on the part of our active friends throughout the State, the paper might be made a most efficient auxiliary, taking just the ground which the "Journal" cannot so well occupy, and, withal, incurring or occasioning little or no expense, except of exertion, to the Whig party. I do dread and battle these repeated calls for money to aid political operations. They drive our rich men out of politics, when they should, and naturally would, be most active in and devoted to the good cause. Please think of this; and let our friends who are so anxious to start soon direct their attention and anxiety to the point of starting right.

I mean to come up to Albany either the last of this month or the first of next, to take a look at things. I shall calculate not to stay more than a day or two, for I have my hands full at home.

One word of entreaty to the Governor: I pray that there be no premature committals on the subject of these cursed medical offices, which make so much trouble in this city. I wish they were all in the bottom of the Red Sea. As they are to be filled, however, let them remain perfectly open till after the fall election, and that will be something gained. Then let the very best men, as medical men, be selected. Any other course will expose the Whig cause to popular odium here, as the incumbents seem to be men of good medical character. I have been bored by several on the subject of these appointments, and I do not pretend even to guess who ought to be appointed. But I know on what principles the appointments should be made, and I trust will be. In that confidence I am content. Yours truly, H. GREELEY.

P. S. Mrs. Greeley, now on a sick-bed, would be kindly remembered to Mrs. Weed and family. May we not hope to see Mrs. Weed here before we break up in the spring?

[WILLIAM KENT TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, July 28, 1839.

How I should like to see you now, Mr. Dictator! The whole State is on your shoulders.

You must remember that you are acting what will be a page of history. I take it, some future chronicler, in reciting the annals of New York during this period, in every respect equal to England in the time of Elizabeth, will devote his brightest colors to "the celebrated Thurlow Weed, who so long filled the office of Governor Seward



during his lengthened and prosperous administration." It behooves you, therefore, to act circumspectly, and particularly in the advice you give the Governor as to appointments to office.

And this leads me, very naturally, and of course without the least previous intention, to speak of the appointment of Surrogate. You are, it seems, holding up both hands for David B. Ogden. Do you remember writing me a letter, when David was nominated for the Assembly, earnestly recommending our big friend to stay at home? I recollect striving to overcome your repugnance, and to induce esteemed friendship, but I really never meant that you should look on David in this way. You will call to mind the old fable of the shepherd who prayed for water, and the Ganges was turned upon him.

Now, Dictator, Administrator, or whatever other title is agreeable, David B. is unchanged, save in your estimation. He is still the same good, pompous kind of a man that he ever was, and your appetite for him is not justified by his qualities. To speak seriously, . . . perhaps in the outset the nomination of Ogden would be the best. His name is distinguished, and the other competitors will yield to him better than to another. But here ends his superiority. Johnson would be a better officer, and, what is more, would give his whole time to the work. He is young and indefatigable. Depend upon it, the same chronicler we spoke of will say, "The fatal fault of Governor Seward's policy was his neglecting vigorous, enterprising, industrious young men," etc. Now, Cardinal Richelieu, Prince Metternich, Talleyrand, — I am trying different titles to hit upon the right one, — ponder on all this before you advise his excellency.<sup>1</sup>

One word more. I hear there is great opposition to Willis Hall, and I am sorry for it. He has a great heart, and a great head, too. It has been his misfortune, but our good fortune, that his time and talents have been devoted to advancing the Whig party, while those who oppose him were taxing costs and filing demurrers. How can there be any hesitation between him and —? Shades of Dodson and Fogg, what a question! Why, you might as well dig up General Ten Broeck or Judge Benson. The extreme Webster men in New York have formed a combination against Willis. It is dog in the manger, too, for no man from New York is a candidate.

But let us return to private life. Do you read novels? Have you any pleasure in Nicholas Nickleby, Smike, and Kate? If you have not, there is no pleasure in ambition to compensate for the deprivation. I suppose you never go to the theatre, are fierce upon a funny joke, and thirst not for sherry cobblers. Fatal preëminence! How you will, when it is too late, regret the happy old valley you have left for

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ogden was appointed.

the keen blasts of the hill-top and the mountain! Shall I ever see you again? As for Seward, I give him up entirely. The iron has entered his soul. But give my love to Seward; tell him my nightly prayer is that his shoulders may be broad enough for his task.

Yours ever,

W. KENT.

P. S. I have resumed smoking cigars especially to qualify myself for your company. I have no office to ask for; I desire nothing but the privilege of hearing you talk. You give a turkey on Thanksgiving Day to every "devil" in your office; I am something of a devil myself, and only ask to give you a turkey. Is that unreasonable? Why is Sim. Draper, grand and tall fellow though he be, the only recipient of your smiles?

Is your head turned by the idea of being Lord Mayor of Albany?

There was a vacancy in the vice-chancellorship in April, and while Governor Seward was considering the question of an appointment to the place, Mr. Fillmore took pains to explain his position.

[MR. FILLMORE TO MR. WEED.]

BUFFALO, *April 10, 1839.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — There is a mystery about this appointment that is to me perfectly inexplicable. The responsibility of the executive forbids that I should embarrass him by urging any claims for myself or Buffalo; indeed, I have no claims to proffer anywhere. It was with unfeigned resistance that I consented to become a candidate; but having consented, I must confess that I have felt a little mortified at the cavalier manner in which I have been treated.

I am first informed that when the Governor was notified that the Erie County bar would present my name he said he had concluded to nominate Mr. Whittlesey, and no papers could change that determination. It is now rumored here that the Governor has said that if the Senate do not confirm Mr. W. he shall not nominate me; that he does not admit that Buffalo has any peculiar claims to the office, but he means to take "the best man in the district." That is all very well. I certainly do not aspire to the office. I have not the vanity to suppose that I am the "best man in the district," and certainly shall be the last one to complain if I am passed over for the sake of arriving at so desirable and praiseworthy a result. All should desire that the "best man in the district" should be appointed, whether recommended or not. I am only curious to know if you can inform me who will be likely to receive the nomination, if Mr. Whittlesey is not confirmed.

I trust the intimacy of our relations, and the frankness due to it

will justify me in soliciting from you — if you know it — the reason of so determined a hostility to my nomination. It strikes me there is something about this matter that I do not know, that it would be satisfactory to understand. It may be all right, or I may have been misinformed. But please to let me know the length and breadth of this matter. . . .

Yours truly,

MILLARD FILLMORE.

BUFFALO, April 23, 1839.

Yours came to hand while I was attending the circuit at Rochester. The question of the vice-chancellorship is ended. Personally I rejoice at the result. I can say truly I did not desire the office, and I doubt not Mr. Whittlesey will discharge the duties in a manner creditable to himself and satisfactory to the community. But in saying this I should disguise my own feelings and give a false impression to others if I did not add that there was a strong desire to have the office located here. It is a mortifying reflection that we must yet continue to pay tribute to Rochester in all our professional and judicial business. It is peculiarly humiliating that this county, for the last fifteen years, during all the mutations of political parties, has never been able to furnish an acceptable candidate for this office, while Rochester and Lockport have each furnished two. It is calculated to make us think that we are but a province of the powers at Albany, courted and flattered for a moment (when our votes are wanted), and then treated with the utmost indignity and contempt. . . .

I shall be happy to hear from you, and, regardless of whether the political wheel, in its revolutions, carries me up or down, I am ever most sincerely and truly,

Your friend,

MILLARD FILLMORE.

The Whigs were first in the field for the presidential canvass of 1840. They held a national convention at Harrisburg on the 4th of December, 1839. Mr. Clay, who had already been twice defeated for the presidency, was the favorite candidate, but Mr. Weed did not believe that Mr. Clay could carry New York, or be elected if nominated. Reference has been made to the intimate social relations which existed between Mr. Weed, Mr. Seward, Mr. Granger, Mr. Tracy, and other prominent Whigs. When the gubernatorial nomination went to Mr. Seward in 1838, Mr. Tracy was one of those who felt a certain degree of chagrin. Not long afterwards Mr. Seward discovered that Mr. Tracy had spoken slightly of his candidacy, and, in a letter to Mr. Weed, expressed himself as greatly disappointed

at "Tracy's pettishness," adding a paragraph or two not complimentary in their nature. A few evenings later, Mr. Weed was visited by Mr. Tracy, who said, in the course of conversation, "Is there anything new going on?" Forgetting the reference to Mr. Tracy, Mr. Weed tossed Mr. Seward's letter across the table, saying, "Very little; there is a letter from Seward which came this afternoon." After reading it Mr. Tracy's temper was by no means improved. He had grown into an ugly political factor by 1839, when Mr. Weed feared he would lead a bolt of old anti-Masons in case Mr. Clay was nominated. And thus a cherished personal friendship — for such was that between Mr. Clay and Mr. Weed — was severely tested. Their conversation at Saratoga, while matters stood in this shape, was something of an ordeal.

Few people are aware how near Daniel Webster came to the presidency on two separate occasions. Had he not twice rejected Mr. Weed's suggestions, he would, without a doubt, have reached the summit of his political ambition. In the spring of 1839 Mr. Weed went to Washington, and called Mr. Webster into the cloak-room at the Capitol. "I think I shall be the Whig candidate," Mr. Webster said. Mr. Weed expressed doubt. "Who, then, will be?" asked the Senator. "It looks to me like Harrison," said Mr. Weed. Mr. Webster declared that Harrison stood no chance. "You are misinformed," he said. "The party will choose a man with longer civic experience, who is better adapted to the place." "The question is," said Mr. Weed, "who will poll the most votes?" "Well," said Mr. Webster, "very well; but what does this mean? You are going to choose a Scott delegation in New York." That, Mr. Weed explained, was to keep New York away from Mr. Clay. Then he went on: "You do not see me here to argue about that. What I came for and what I want is for you to be willing to accept the support of New York for the vice-presidency in case my prediction about General Harrison is verified." As Mr. Webster would not listen to this, Mr. Weed's thoughts turned upon Mr. Clayton, of Delaware, as a candidate for Vice-President, and Mr. Clayton would have been nominated had not his name been withdrawn at the last moment. When the convention was about to be held, and Mr. Webster's friends saw that he stood no chance for the first place, they were free to support

either General Harrison or Mr. Clay. Two years later, when General Harrison was dead and Mr. Tyler was President, Mr. Webster, as Secretary of State under the late Vice-President, had abundant leisure to reflect upon his conversation in the cloak-room at the Capitol.

Just before the assembling of the national convention of 1839, Mr. Fillmore, in letters to Mr. Weed, described the feeling at Washington. "An informal meeting of our delegation was held yesterday," he wrote on the 2d of December, "and each individual, upon being called upon for his opinion, gave it that Mr. Clay could not carry the State of New York, and that it could not be carried for him. Mr. Mitchell said he communicated the fact to him, and he received it in kindness, and said he would make a communication to the Kentucky delegates, expressive of his desire that the strongest man should be nominated, and promising cordial and hearty support. This is magnanimous; it is worthy of Henry Clay."

Hoping that its selection would appease all elements, the Whig Convention nominated William H. Harrison, of Ohio, for the presidency. To pacify a dissatisfied minority, John Tyler, of Virginia, was named for Vice-President. "The nomination of General Harrison," once wrote Mr. Weed, "so offended the friends of Mr. Clay that the convention was thrown entirely in the dark on the question of Vice-President. Several delegates devoted a whole night to the adjustment of that question. The Kentucky delegation was asked to present a candidate, but they declined. Then Mr. Clayton was fixed upon, but Reverdy Johnson withdrew his name. Watkins Leigh, of Virginia, and Governor Dudley, of North Carolina, were successively designated, but they declined. . . . While this was passing, the vice-presidency was repeatedly offered to New York, but we had no candidate. If Mr. Tracy had not previously left us, he would have been nominated. Mr. Tyler was finally taken because we could get nobody else to accept. . . . Mr. Tracy was eminently qualified for usefulness in public life. He entertained a high and strict sense of official responsibility, and but for causes which need not be dwelt upon, his career would have been a brilliant success."

1839. — "Political signs, indications, and demonstrations are all auspicious," wrote Mr. Weed, upon his return to Albany,

after the Harrison ticket had been placed in nomination. "Everything promises success. We have never opened a presidential canvass with such assured convictions of a triumphant result. Indeed, since 1825, we have never entertained any hope of success. The Whig party, for three successive presidential contests, has been in a false position. We have been forced into the fight upon wrong issues. Nor have we in our past campaigns presented a solid front. Not until recently have the delusions of Jacksonism been dispelled.

"All is right now. The great and powerful Whig party is at last united. Every incumbrance has been thrown off. There is no United States Bank upon our shoulders. That incubus, thank fortune, has passed into Van Buren's hands.

"Our candidate stands upon elevated and enviable ground. He has been embroiled in none of the vexing questions which Van Burenism has generated. Up to the period of Jackson's election, General Harrison had continued in the public service, discharging high civil and military duties with honor to himself and usefulness to his country. He then fell under the ban of proscription; and having failed to act upon the modern 'spoils' principle, by stealing a portion of the immense treasure which he disbursed, the old hero has been for twelve years obtaining a living from his farm in North Bend, on the Ohio River.

"In 1836, when General Harrison was a candidate, there was no reasonable hope of success. His nomination then emanated from the people, and in many portions of the Union never received even the assent, and much less the support, of leading politicians. But the people then gave him, spontaneously, a support which showed how emphatically he was their candidate.

"Now we unfurl his banner with higher and brighter hopes. He was nominated, with the most gratifying unanimity, by a national convention distinguished for its wisdom and patriotism. The entire Whig party, throughout the Union, is giving itself, hand and heart, to his support. His competitor, the presidential incumbent, after a three years' war upon the people, is reeling in his seat. The country is sick of Mr. Van Buren. There is a pervading conviction that he is as unworthy of as he is unfit for the high place which he has desecrated. His four years of misrule approach their close, and William Henry

Harrison, as his successor, will proceed to Washington amid the acclamations of disenthralled freemen. . . .

“The reëlection of John Quincy Adams was opposed by the present Van Buren party, on the ground that the purity of elections and the welfare of the country required that a President should serve only one term. General Jackson was elected with the universal expectation that he would set this example. But he proved false to that as to all his professions.

“Mr. Van Buren is equally false to the professions of his friends. The moment he was seated in the Executive Mansion, the campaign for a reëlection was opened, and it has been pushed thus far with an unscrupulousness and profligacy heretofore unknown. Every duty to the people has been disregarded. All the interests of the country have been sacrificed, and all the powers of the government prostituted. The President himself, lost to all that gave dignity and conferred renown upon his station, has devoted an entire summer to a degrading personal electioneering tour.

“The public welfare, the integrity of our government, and the safety of its institutions, equally demand that a President should serve but one term. If such an amendment of the Constitution cannot be effected, let public opinion, the paramount law of a free people, accomplish the object. While two terms of service are allowed, to use the language upon which General Jackson refused to act, ‘corruption will be the order of the day.’ The moment a President is chosen, he begins to intrigue for a reëlection. The power and patronage of the government are employed, not to protect the rights and interests of the people, or to advance the prosperity of the country, but to secure a reëlection. These scenes of corruption are sapping the foundations of the Republic. Unless the one-term principle shall be sustained, they will overthrow the government.”

Mr. Weed went to Quincy during the summer to invite ex-President Adams to take the stump in favor of Harrison. He arrived there on Saturday, and enjoyed for dinner a large fresh codfish, supplemented by baked pork and beans. An old gentleman who came in before the meal was announced, and who remained to dinner, was introduced to Mr. Weed as “my neighbor.” Who the guest was Mr. Weed had no idea, but it was soon apparent from his language and manner that his mind was

stored with all kinds of useful knowledge. After dinner the stranger withdrew, and Mr. Weed asked Mr. Adams who his "neighbor" was. "Why," said he, "I supposed you knew it was Quincy. We dine together often." Mr. Weed had been listening for more than an hour to the elder Josiah Quincy.

The Democrats met at Baltimore in May, 1840, and renominated President Van Buren. A few months before, a little band of anti-slavery men began to discuss the desirability of naming a third national candidate, on the simple "Abolition" issue. Of course it was not supposed that such a candidate could be elected. There was, indeed, no reason to believe that such a candidate could secure a single electoral vote. It was equally plain that if Abolitionists made an independent nomination, the only actual effect would be in adding to Mr. Van Buren's strength. Ignoring these considerations, or boasting disregard of them, anti-slavery men nominated Mr. Birney, of Ohio, for President, and thus for the first time there was drawn a distinct line between ultra and conservative friends of negro enfranchisement in the United States. Not unfrequently in his life Mr. Weed was denounced as a radical, and with reason; but he never was one of the sort which, through Mr. Birney, supported a pro-slavery candidate for President.

The taunt in a Virginia newspaper<sup>1</sup> that General Harrison would be contented in a log-cabin, with plenty of hard cider, was a god-send to the Whigs of 1840. They made it their watch-word. They put the question to the voters whether a man was to be ostracized because he lived in an unpretentious house. In every city cabins were built of rough logs, to serve as Whig head-quarters, and hard cider was to be had for the asking. The country has never seen another such contest. Political activity was universal. Ringing songs and soul-stirring speeches electrified popular meetings, which were attended by thousands. The Whig state convention was held at Utica, and after Mr. Seward had been nominated for Governor the assemblage broke out in a rollicking Harrison song. Even Mr. Weed, carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, joined lustily in the chorus. On no other occasion after he had reached mature years was he known to sing. His editorials caught the

<sup>1</sup> The Richmond *Enquirer*, edited by Thomas Ritchie.



spirit of the canvass. They were hopeful, pungent, clean-cut, convincing.

“The language in which the common mind of the nation is beginning to express its sentiments,” he wrote, “is unintelligible to Croswell and his coadjutors. Accustomed for years to manufacture public opinion, they are disposed to look upon it as the mere production of political contrivance. They mistake the free and impetuous mountain torrent for the ripple of an artificial cascade. They sneer at ‘log cabin enthusiasm’ because they cannot comprehend it. The log cabin is a symbol of nothing that Van Burenism knows, or feels, or can appreciate. It tells of virtues that dwell in obscurity, of the hopes of the humble, of the privations of the poor, of toil and danger, of perseverance and patient endurance, of hospitality and charity and frugality. It is the emblem of rights that the vain and insolent aristocracy of federal office-holders have lost sight of, or crushed and trampled on. It is an emblem of the simplicity that should characterize republican institutions, and which the people have determined to bring back to the administration of their affairs. Let our opponents scoff at the device which the untutored sagacity of the masses is painting upon their banners. It will be found ere long that there is a meaning in it that will convey to them a salutary lesson. . . .

“A Democratic paper says that we have recently made a visit through the western part of the State, and returned ‘dissatisfied with political prospects.’ That we have just returned from a delightful western excursion is true, but that we saw or heard aught that is inauspicious to our cause, we deny. On the contrary, the Whig party, in ‘that portion of our State more decidedly Democratic than any other,’ was never so strong in numbers, zeal, and confidence. It is refreshing to sojourn among a people imbued, as they are, with the pure sentiments of Whig democracy. It quickens and etherealizes the spirit that has been enervated by Loco-Foco associations. No man can cross Cayuga Lake without feeling the grateful influences of a more benign atmosphere. There is an agricultural, physical, and intellectual improvement in all one sees. Human nature seems to lift itself up in a region which the ‘blessed spirit’ purified. In passing through that highly-favored country, where the soil, in the palmiest state of cultivation, yields its teeming abundance

of every conceivable luxury, one no longer wonders that the political sentiments of its cultivators are pure and chastened. There is industry, intelligence, and patriotism in the West. Her people are enlightened and independent. And this explains their political condition. Such men are always Whigs. . . .

“In the counties of Seneca, Wayne, and Yates the contest will be close, and the result is doubtful. The Whigs are, however, doing their whole duty in each of these counties. Nor are they doing battle alone. Their efforts are seconded by a strong conservative sentiment. In the Whig counties of Cortland and Tompkins our majorities will be handsomely increased. Ontario will give a majority worthy of her freemen in their best days. Livingston, always true as steel, will push its majority to the highest point. Allegany and Cattaraugus are good and sure for 1,200 majority. . . .

“And this takes us into the Eighth District, — the free, uncollared, indomitable, glorious Eighth District. There the watch-fires of Freedom burn bright and high. There the eyes of the nation turn. There the hopes of freemen rest. And those hopes will be abundantly realized. The Whigs of that section will make one concentrated, mighty effort to redeem the Republic. They kept their own soil free in the worst of times. To their fidelity and perseverance the State is indebted for its disenfranchisement. On them rest now the hopes of the Union. The vote of that District will determine the political character of the Empire State. The State will determine the presidential question. This is a high and sacred trust. But, thank Heaven, the trust is in safe hands. We have known the West long and intimately. She is as true to duty as the needle to the pole. Let none distrust her faith. For twelve successive years, amid continued defeats and disaster, when ‘Freedom shrieked’ in every other part of the Union, the Eighth District stood proudly out from the political canvas relieving a picture otherwise dark and cheerless. The Whigs of the West are now in sight of land. They discern the presidential harbor. One strong, noble effort brings them safely into port. That effort will be made — triumphantly made. We speak confidently of the West. Under a conviction that the official canvass will verify our opinion, we unhesitatingly estimate General Harrison’s majority, in the six counties of Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Monroe, Niagara, and

Orleans, which compose the Eighth District, at more than eleven thousand. With equal confidence we predict that the fifteen counties west of Cayuga Lake will give a Harrison majority of fifteen thousand. And with this overwhelming Whig vote, we leave the Loco-Focos to 'crow' out a majority for Van Buren — if they can."

[GOVERNOR PATTERSON TO MR. WEED.]

GREIGSVILLE, *May 21, 1840.*

DEAR WEED, — Saturday evening found me at home with my "wife and bairns," and a happy place it seems after my Albany life. What is there about a political career that should induce a man to leave all that is worth living for, to meet and mingle with such scamps as sometimes find their way into our legislative halls? Strange as it may seem, there are those among us who are guilty of just such folly.

I rejoice that we have got through the session without committing any blunders. I do not now think of an act that has been passed that will injure us politically; but I do know of very many, which, if they had been, would have used us up. We now stand well, and, with good management, can carry the State. . . .

Our friends are in good spirits, and say that they will give a majority for "Old Tip" in November.

Ever yours,

GEO. W. PATTERSON.

[MR. FILLMORE TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *June 1, 1840.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — Unearthly efforts are now making by the administration party to turn the current in their favor. They have constantly prophesied that the enthusiasm which showed itself in favor of Harrison was evanescent and ephemeral, and that it would be succeeded by deadly apathy.

Is there not much reason to fear this may be the case? My information is that they are much better organized and more active in our State than the Whigs. Many of our folks seem to think the work already accomplished. This is a great mistake. The foe is vigilant and unprincipled beyond all former example. . . . Try to arouse our folks to a sense of their danger. Let every country town and school district be organized, and see that they are supplied with proper intelligence to counteract all the fabrications with which the administration press now teems. It is our only security; it is the only security of the country. . . .

I am happy to know that my confidence in and frankness to you are duly appreciated. The former has had its growth in a long and well-

tried friendship, — a source of gratification and pride to me, — and the latter is its natural fruit. Yours, etc., MILLARD FILLMORE.

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *July 27, 1840.*

FRIEND WEED, — I am glad to hear of your return, and shall probably come up on Saturday, if you are to be at home. I feel sure everything is going right in this quarter, so far as the general progress of the cause is concerned, though there are a good many dirty little intrigues and eddies in this city not worth talking about.

I attended a meeting of the Tippecanoe Club of Sing Sing on Friday evening. All is activity and enthusiasm there. I saw Wells among others. Every man believes that they will carry the county this fall, except the members of the legislature. Three hundred for Harrison electors is their estimate.

Kings, Queens, and Richmond will give us a small majority. You have seen the Rockland paper; one will appear in Richmond next week. The printer went down with his materials on Saturday.

I am sending more "Log Cabins" into Suffolk than were ever circulated there before of all Whig papers put together. I think fully three hundred now, and increasing almost daily. They cannot have one thousand majority there this fall — our friends say not eight hundred.

There is some feeling here for and against putting R. C. Wetmore on the electoral ticket. I understand his friends are pushing it hard. I should like to see some workingman — like John C. Brout, for instance — on that ticket, but am not tenacious. I suppose two old men like Bogardus and Robert Smith, or Robert C. Cornell, must go on.

Do see that Hoffman and White get out Ogle's<sup>1</sup> speech [criticising the Van Buren administration] as soon as possible. I have calls for it daily, having advertised it before I heard that it was not yet printed. They must not wait for a perfect copy, — it would fill a Bible, and could not be afforded at the price advertised. What you have published is all that is contained in the pamphlet copy published at Washington, and is enough. I shall give a further dose of it this week, with comments and illustrations.

I wish you would do me the favor to see Benedict and Henry, and say to them that the extra "Log Cabins" ordered by them respectively will almost certainly go up by to-morrow's boat. I have had bad luck

<sup>1</sup> Charles Ogle, of Pennsylvania. He was in Congress from 1837 to 1841.

with my form, having broken a plate, etc., etc., and have had almost constant calls for them to supply new subscribers, and for sale, but I shall get off a new edition to-night. They take well as a reply to Duncan's speech, though Giddings's ought to have been printed. I published only half of it; mean to publish the rest if I ever get room.

I now print sixty-two thousand regular of the "Log," and mean to have them all taken up by Saturday. I printed five thousand extra last week for Clay's speech. We have some complaints yet of failure, but nothing to what we have had. Yours, H. GREELEY.

[GOVERNOR PATTERSON TO MR. WEED.]

GREIGSVILLE, *September 28, 1840.*

DEAR WEED,— The news from Maine is a perfect knock-down for the Locos, but joy beams in every Whig countenance. It is glorious news.

I met Mr. Barnard at Nunda Valley on Thursday and heard him make a most classical speech. We went to see the Genesee Tunnel on Friday and came to Mount Morris at two o'clock. He spoke about two hours and a half, when Bissell, of this town, told him that the Locos wished to reply. Barnard soon wound off, and the Locos set a man from Angelica to reply to him. He was so coarse and vulgar that Barnard would not condescend to notice him. Fitzhugh spoke on our side, and Stevens, of New York, formerly a horse-racer at Batavia, but in his deportment and discussion a gentleman, spoke till after eleven o'clock, when I obtained the floor and felt in better trim for talk than I ever did in my life. I did not forget or neglect to say a single thing I wanted to say, and at half-past one o'clock wound off.

The Locos are welcome to all they made out of the meeting.

Yours, etc.,

GEO. W. PATTERSON.

[MR. FILLMORE TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *December 27, 1840.*

DEAR MR. WEED,— I may as well say that I find a very general opinion prevailing here that none of our old anti-Masonic friends, especially of the West, with the exception of Mr. Whittlesey, have the confidence of the state administration.

This jealousy, whether well or ill founded, is working an alienation in that hitherto fruitful portion of the political vineyard, which, if not attended to, will produce bitter fruits another year. I know you are right. I know you can appreciate the importance of allaying these suspicions by a just and generous confidence towards some men in the

West. I do not ask it myself. I saw that I committed the unpardonable sin when I consented to stand as a candidate for the office of Vice-Chancellor against Mr. Whittlesey. But no person has less reason to complain of that result than myself.

Yours, etc.,

MILLARD FILLMORE.

[MR. WEED TO FRANCIS GRANGER.]

ALBANY, *February 20, 1840.*

DEAR GRANGER, — Clay is truly a noble fellow. If Webster comes cordially up to the work, we shall carry Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island and, I believe, New Jersey. Things look better than at any former period.

*March 15, 1840.*

Things are getting easier here, but there are a great many disappointed, disheartened friends. Times are so sadly out of joint, that hundreds of men, who, as you say, would have rejected office three years ago, are now compelled to ask public employment. It has been a tremendous winter. The distribution of patronage, but for the presidential question, would have greatly distracted and weakened us. As it is, old Tip will carry us safely through the woods.

*March 24, 1840.*

But for the presidential question, which will absorb all other things, the appointments would tear us to pieces. The State is sound, and if the legislature leaves things wisely, there is not a shadow of doubt about the result. There is far more virtue and vim in log cabins and hard cider than there ever was in hickory poles. I dread the registry question. It is a Federal measure, and will be regarded as a restriction of the elective franchise. Still the bill contains many wholesome and popular provisions. Small election districts and one day<sup>1</sup> would give voters a fair chance. Tell me in sacred confidence how it would do for Seward to veto the registry feature, and recommend the passage of the bill with its acceptable provisions. The Whig party in the State is almost unanimously for the registry. They know it is just, and think it will be useful. The veto would raise a thousand devils, but when the smoke cleared away, what would be the sober second thought?

*April 1, 1840.*

Seward signed the Registry Law not only against every sentiment of his heart, but against his convictions as to what was wise and safe. I was against the bill, but on Sunday saw a condition of things which

<sup>1</sup> Until 1842 state elections in New York occupied three days.

assured me of the immediate breaking up of the Whig party in New York, and of fatal dissensions in the legislature. I then urged him to sign. Spencer recommended a qualified veto, which would have destroyed the bill without reason, and sent Seward to the people defenseless. The middle course was as fatal as the dead veto. The Whig Senators sent a committee to Seward Sunday night. He would not abandon his ground. The Whigs sent others here Monday morning. He satisfied them that he was right. Monday evening we had a long sitting. I urged earnestly the precise reasons which I was so rejoiced to find in your letter. This morning they prevailed, but Seward was miserable all day. I showed him your letter as he was going to the Capitol this morning. That satisfied him that he had done right. . . .

This is all, as you sometimes say, "within four walls."

*November 10, 1840.*

The North has done nobly. But the glorious West! . . . The "blessed spirit" has finally redeemed the Republic. . . . By the redemption of this State first, courage was given to the Whigs of other states, who have gone to work and saved the country. Seward will be 4,000 behind old Tip . . . 1,500 on account of Abolition, Catholic, and Fee Bill voters, and 2,500 because Van Buren was so much behind his ticket. . . . I think of going to Washington by your train. It is the first time that I ever wanted to see the Capitol.

*December 11, 1840.*

I have this moment read your long, kind letter, and will not rise from my chair until I render you the thanks of a grateful heart, after which I shall go home, read it to my family, and be guided by your counsel. The years of miserable old age and poverty endured by Southwick shall admonish me.

I have had, the first time in two years, a few quiet days, which have been delightfully passed in reading Perry's *Life*, "Two Years Before the Mast," and "Master Humphrey's Clock."

I have an instinct which leads me to expect that you will receive a call from General Harrison. Webster expects to take the State Department. There is a custom which seeks Secretaries of the Navy from New York and New Jersey. I think it will be followed as respects New York now, and I hope it will not be declined.

Yours faithfully,

THURLOW WEED.

## CHAPTER VII.

1841-1843.

CHEERFUL PROSPECTS. — LETTERS TO THE POSTMASTER GENERAL. — HENRY CLAY FOR PRESIDENT. — MR. GREELEY'S PROGRESS. — HIS OPINIONS ON SEVERAL QUESTIONS. — THE RURAL PRESS. — PENNSYLVANIA POLITICIANS. — DEATH OF GENERAL HARRISON. — "THESE VIOLENT PROCEEDINGS." — WHIG DEFEATS. — CLOSE OF MR. SEWARD'S SECOND TERM — AN OLD STORY RETOLD.

1841. — There was every prospect that President Harrison's administration would prove beneficial to the country. He received nearly four times as many electoral votes as Mr. Van Buren; he carried nearly all the states, and the entire Whig party, as well as many Democrats, were ready to confide in his motives and policy. After supporting Mr. Van Buren for Governor in 1828, for Vice-President in 1832, and for President in 1836, the State of New York now gave an emphatic Whig majority. It was Mr. Van Buren's first defeat on his own soil. The vote polled for Mr. Birney was so trifling that it attracted no particular attention. In letters to Mr. Weed, Governor Patterson expressed the hope that Gerrit Smith, who, by running as a "one idea" candidate for Governor in 1840, drew some two thousand votes away from Mr. Seward, would try the experiment again, or else be brought forward as the Democratic candidate. "Had the Regency taken up Smith this year," Governor Patterson wrote, "we should have beaten them 15,000 or 20,000." Mr. Weed's friends were everywhere hopeful and jubilant. There was good ground for the belief that, with wise guidance, the Whig party might now enter upon a long lease of power. "Rejoice with us," wrote R. M. Blatchford to Mr. Weed. "We are all crazy in New York. Such a prospect rewards us for all our sleepless and untiring efforts."

[MR. WEED TO FRANCIS GRANGER.]

ALBANY, *February 8, 1841.*

DEAR GRANGER, — I never wanted to see you half so intensely as now. There are a dozen things I want to talk about. . . .



Bloodgood has been here frequently and has told me many things. He is as queer as I have always supposed him. In a few days he goes to Washington, and if not taken into the fullest confidence, will be disappointed. If you should find out that he is opposed to your going into the Cabinet, remember I did not tell you so. . . . I "guess" that efforts have been made to induce a belief that you were not in favor of General Harrison's nomination.

So we must go to the extra session. What is to become of us, if it fails to bring us relief . . . if the party is unable to carry out its measures?

ALBANY, *February 19, 1841.*

So you are to turn your attention from the marine to the mail department? Well, except that it smacks of "low descent," it is as it should be. If you are as well satisfied as the people with the arrangement, all is right. Our State is deeply interested in the Post Office, and your administration of the affairs of that department will be sure to give satisfaction. . . . But you will experience upon a broad scale the miseries which have been endured here in a small way for two years.

*February 22, 1841.*

Now that you are to be more than ever a man of letters, pardon me for inflicting a brief one upon you. . . .

We are exceedingly delighted here to know that General Harrison's Cabinet will neither distract the harmony nor impair the usefulness of his administration by struggles for the succession. We have been happy in the prospect of uniting our energies at once in favor of Mr. Clay, by the general consent of the party. But it has been apprehended for some time that Curtis would encounter the determined opposition of Mr. Clay. In talking with General Porter and other friends, I was induced to hope that this apprehension was unfounded. Curtis assures me that, although Clay expresses himself warmly against him, magnanimity and wisdom will prevail. Curtis is the right man for Collector.

If some other good man is appointed for reasons different from those which excite Mr. Clay's hostility, it would do little harm, but should Curtis fail, it will be because he opposed Clay's nomination. I need not say to you that such a condition of things would destroy us. You know New York Whigs. You know that in the West, where our strength lies, Clay's nomination was opposed, not that the party did not want to see him President, but from an honest conviction that causes over which they had no control would make his election impossible. And they were right. With any other man than Harrison for our candidate last year, Van Buren would have been reelected. . . .

For fifteen years I have most ardently hoped to see Mr. Clay President. I as ardently, and with much more confidence, still hope to see him in the executive chair; but if he unwisely exerts his power to punish a Whig who opposed his nomination in 1839, but who I know has been efficiently engaged in clearing the course for 1844, Mr. Clay must not look for aid to the Empire State. The Whigs who thought and acted with Curtis in the campaign which has terminated so gloriously will say and know that the blow which strikes him down will not spare them. I have implored Mitchell to warn Clay of the evil which there is danger he may inflict upon us and upon himself. If the man who is most interested in preserving the harmony of the party gratuitously distracts it, he must take the consequences. . . .

I trust in Providence that the inaugural is not to breathe sentiments which will kindle opposition. The President should avoid shoals and rocks. It is enough to characterize the measures of the last administration, and to promise reform. . . . There is a world of anti-slavery feeling to be aroused by gratuitous provocation. For God's sake, don't incense such an element.

I am beset for letters to you. Will they embarrass you? Shall I write for everybody, or for nobody?

*March 7, 1841.*

Well, Granger, I have read the inaugural carefully. I know not how it will be received by the people, for I have not ventured out to-day. There are excellent things in it. All is honestly intended.

But there is at least one dangerous paragraph in it. I refer to the defense of aristocracy. To throw our political shield around "wealth and aristocracy," to say nothing of the bad taste of dragging "false Christs" into such an address, is giving too great an advantage to our enemy. . . .

But enough of this. It is to you only that I give words to thoughts which cost me a sleepless night. It may be that I am nervous and that my judgment is distempered. If so, all is well. I shall endeavor to do my duty in any case.

Van Buren and his gang are beaten. There is joy in that. . . . It was done by the honest uprising of an injured people. The President is honest and patriotic. He has misjudged in not submitting this document to the correction of his Cabinet. It required the supervision of men who belong to the present generation, and who would have adapted it to the occasion. . . . This error can be retrieved. The President has wise men in his counsels. If he inclines to their advice, all can be redeemed. . . . The question of non-interference with the domestic institutions of the respective states is admirably discussed.

March 9, 1841.

The inaugural does not meet expectations. It is not what was needed. It gives the administration no strength. We can lean on it a few weeks, but there must be action then, or we sink. There must be something accomplished on which the people can fasten their hopes. . . .

If Congress is called and does not carry out measures required, we are dished. If that is to be our fate any how, why not take the plunge at once? The hemlock will be as palatable in May as in December. Congress impracticable early will not be less so late. We cannot stand eight months. The government must move forward or it will fall back.

The Troy appointment could be made easier now than at any future time. . . . A wrong appointment now would go down better than the best a month hence. You know I think Clowes the best man. If it is not to him, let the other be appointed, but *push ahead*. While one fever rages so hotly another cannot be got up. Derrick Sibley tells me he wants to travel. He is efficient and intelligent, as well as right politically. . . . I inclose a line from General King in relation to one of your travelers. I am of opinion that the chap ought to travel on his own hook, or at the expense of the gentleman from Kinder-hook.

Yours faithfully,

THURLOW WEED.

Under Mr. Greeley the "Log Cabin" was a great success as a campaign organ. While the excitement lasted it was, indeed, even more popular than Mr. Weed's paper, as it was intended that it should be. Mr. Greeley won a good deal of deserved reputation for his connection with the enterprise, and, for the first time in his life with cash in bank, now began "to feel quite snug and comfortable."

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, January 27, 1841.

DEAR WEED, — I am doing better now. In fact, I begin to feel quite snug and comfortable, and am able to look bank cashiers full in the face. If I mind my business pretty thoroughly hereafter, I think I shall get along.

I suppose you and Benedict, with others at Albany, thought it wrong that I went on with the "Cabin," but I wanted to print the paper a single year for my own sake. I feel that my honor and character — what there are of them — are pledged to this thing: that the Whigs will act in power as they have talked out of power; that they will honestly reform abuses, abolish useless offices, retrench exorbitant salaries, and show by their whole conduct that they are not Tories. . . .

As for the country press, two thirds of it is a nuisance and a positive curse, — a mere mouthpiece for demagogues, who are ravenous for spoils. This is a sad truth, but it is a truth none the less. What good have such papers as —, —, —, and many more of that stamp done us? None at all, unless it be an advantage to be reduced to a level with the lowest of our opponents. I do believe they are all a positive injury, — that any paper in bad or injudicious hands is so. I know this is not the common opinion, but I have not hastily adopted it. The jealousy about the “Log Cabin” is not so much induced by its circulation as its character; it is in that respect that comparisons are most “odorous.” These same jealous gentlemen all aid to flood our State with medleys of murder, rape, and rascality, all much lower than the “Cabin” at its lowest price (\$1 by the quantity), of which ten times as many are taken in this State as of the “Cabin.” Every one of these not only does us no good politically, but is morally unsound, and tends to unfit its readers for earnest consideration of public affairs.

I received this morning a flattering letter from Mr. Sterritt, of the Pennsylvania Senate, saying that he believed a bill could readily be passed, creating the office of state printer for that State, and that I could be made such printer, if I would consent, — which he urged me to do. I have declined his offer, or rather the prospect held out to me. I know some of the Pennsylvania politicians too well. They are more rapacious and unprincipled, if possible, than politicians in general.

I wish Seward could begin his life as Governor once more. I think with his present experience he would start just right: inquire who was most deserving of office, instead of who was most importunate; deal frankly with all men, and never give a promise or encouragement of office until he had resolved to fulfill the expectation. I am more and more convinced that this is the only policy, however hard to abide by. . . . I did not know that the “Cabin” was not regularly sent to you, until I received yours this morning. I did think you had forgotten me, but that I do not cry about. I send on the “Cabin,” as I had ordered it sent from the beginning.

NEW YORK, *February* 19, 1841.

I assure you that the doctrines of Fourier — I mean his fundamental position with regard to the Economics of Association — have received the assent of some of the strongest and most practical minds of this city and elsewhere. Clerk Garland of the U. S. House, General Keim, M. C. from Berks, G. A. Worth, cashier of City Bank, Alderman Phoenix, and many other sound men, are favorably impressed with it.

I think you take the wrong view of the political bearing of this matter, though I act without reference to that. Hitherto all the devotees of social reform of any kind, all the advocates of a higher destiny for labor, all the combatants against unjust and false social principles, in short, all the social discontent of the country has been regularly repelled from the Whig party and attracted to its opposite. This forms a heavy dead-weight against us. It strikes me that it is unwise to persist in this course, unless we are ambitious to be considered the enemies of improvement and the bulwarks of an outgrown aristocracy in the country. But I will not ask you to think as I do. I only want a chance to think for myself.

We have nothing new here in politics, but large and numerous swarms of office-hunting locusts sweeping on to Washington daily. All the rotten land speculators, broken bank directors, swindling cashiers, etc., etc., are in full cry for office, office, and even so humble a man as I am is run down for letters, letters. "None of your half-way things. Write strong." Curse their nauseous impudence! Some of them I give such a blessing as will stick in their crops these many days; some of them, God knows most reluctantly, I give letters, because I can't help it. I've a good mind to advertise in the "National Intelligencer" that all persons are forbid harboring or trusting office-seekers on my account after this date. Shall we never be rid of this infernal rush for spoils? My soul is sick of it.

Yours,

H. GREELEY.

Immediately after his election General Harrison sent for Mr. Weed to discuss the formation of the Cabinet and the advisability of an extra session, at which measures might be framed to meet existing problems. On the 4th of March, 1841, General Harrison began his presidential term. One month later, on the 4th of April, he died, and Mr. Tyler became his successor.

The death of General Harrison was a blow from which the Whig party might have rallied easily, had Mr. Tyler accepted the presidency as a trust to be administered in conformity with the policy of his predecessor. The country had no doubt at first but that such would be Mr. Tyler's inflexible determination. Congress met in special session in May, under a call issued by President Harrison in March. The Whigs, who were in a majority, sought at once to carry into operation relief measures proposed in their platform and demanded by the people. The first of these was signed by the President. The second he vetoed.

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *May 10, 1841.*

FRIEND WEED, — I am getting ahead very well, but thus far I have not had thirty dollars' worth of advertising from Whigs, as such, though I had expected to have.

I do think I ought to have, especially, their patronage. I don't want to beg any of it and shall not, but it might do to keep me alive till the best kind comes. I think you might be willing to ask Granger to give me some of his printing for this city, if no one has a stronger claim. He might give me his blanks. I would do them as cheap as anybody else. I won't ask him for this, and I hate to have anybody else, but I shall have a hard fight to live through the summer without some help of the kind. I ought to have the lists of letters and trust I may yet.

I was offered fifty dollars if I would move into Wall St. It would give me advantages, but probably not increased popularity for my paper. I think I shall not try it.

Between us, Webster can't hold on till December; mark my words. You have heard of his appointment of a Mr. — as inspector here, and possibly of his making — forwarder of dispatches, and raising the salary from \$800 to \$1,200. He owes \$100,000 to the U. S. Bank and has overdrawn his account \$28,000. ♦

NEW YORK, *June 20, 1841.*

. . . I am getting on as well as I know how with the "Tribune," though not so well as I expected or wished. Stone's paper had the lists of letters yesterday. That is the unkindest cut of all. It is worth \$1,000 a year, and would be a clear advantage of so much. I shall try hard to get it when we have a Whig Postmaster. Who has a better claim?

Yours,

H. GREELEY.

The Whigs were now beginning to realize what a costly mistake they made when Mr. Tyler was nominated. It seemed impossible for the President to shake off his factional affiliations at the South and act for a party, narrow and timid in certain ways, it must be granted, but still embodying a great share of the liberality and enlightenment of the nation. Preliminary outcroppings of his political tendencies caused grave anxiety. Conservative Whigs called on Mr. Tyler and suggested that it might be well for him to outline a financial measure which would receive his approval. He outlined such an act, it was

passed by the Whig majority in Congress, and then it was vetoed. Thus things went on from bad to worse, until, finally, the President openly abandoned principles which he had been elected to advance and typify. All the members of the Cabinet, except Mr. Webster, resigned, and Mr. Tyler was indignantly repudiated, first by Whigs and then by Democrats. "Some of our friends," wrote Mr. Weed to the Postmaster General, "are hopeful that things will come out all right, but I am forced to contemplate the other alternative. Pray close up department business as far as is proper. Give Calhoun of Oswego his place. Arrange Hudson, Troy, Utica, Syracuse, Oswego, Auburn, Ithaca, Rochester, and Buffalo. Do this without fail and soon. There is much and increased irritation, to allay which we must have time before the election." So long as there was a living chance of saving the administration and the party, it was embraced by Mr. Weed and by those with whom he acted. But when it became plain that the President had ceased to be a Whig, to all intents and purposes, Mr. Weed attacked the administration savagely.

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *September 15, 1841.*

DEAR WEED, — I am distressed at the sight of your paper. Every number seems to proclaim that we are lost. I pray you give us a good, rousing leader, calling on the Whigs of doubtful counties to rally desperately for the saving of the State. . . . Ulster is not lost. \$200 well applied might save it. Richmond and Kings are secure. . . .

Do look over one of your old files of 1837, 1838, or 1839, and give us something in the same spirit. The Assembly may even yet be saved. I have great hopes of six members here, if the Irish are true.

In haste, yours,

H. GREELEY.

[THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *September 20, 1841.*

DEAR SIR, — Blatchford has sent me your letter.

These violent proceedings will ruin us — ruin us most unmercifully. Two days ago your letter to Lyman was read to the President and highly approved. And now — your Paper!

Well, we shall stand steady here, let the storm beat ever so hard. All was going well, as you will see by appointments announced to-

morrow. Other things were in the same train. I fear now all are thrown back.

What do you mean by Barker's appointment? He is appointed to nothing and nominated to nothing nor intended to be nominated to anything.

Pray, have people all lost their senses?

Yours truly,

D. WEBSTER.

1842. — Thus the triumph of the Whigs was short lived. After sweeping the country like a whirlwind in 1840, they found themselves in 1841 under a President whose power for harm was far greater than that ever possessed by Andrew Jackson or Martin Van Buren.

"We are in a bad fix" wrote Mr. Fillmore to Mr. Weed, in January. "I fear the party must break up from its very foundations. There is no cohesive principle, — no common head. Tyler and the Locos have been coquetting for a long time. They do not want him yet, but simply keep up the breach between him and the Whigs. I think they will succeed." In June Mr. Fillmore continued: "Captain<sup>1</sup> Tyler, in his recent unnecessary and fool-hardy veto, has broken the last link that bound him to the Whigs, and has gone over soul and body to the Locos. . . . I have just received the two inclosed slips in which I am very unexpectedly named for the vice-presidency. Of course I regard them only as a passing compliment from an unknown hand."

Mr. Weed watched as with a parent's solicitude the development of the young editor whose capacity for usefulness he had been first to appreciate. Through these years Mr. Greeley was engrossed in building up the New York "Tribune," founded by him in the spring of 1841. His industry was marvelous; but he lacked judgment. Mr. Weed labored with all his power to counteract some of the unfortunate tendencies in his friend. He exposed the folly of "table-rapping," "Brook Farms," and various "isms," by which Mr. Greeley was from time to time misled. Sometimes their interviews led to happy results, but oftener Mr. Greeley declined to be "controlled." In one of his letters he says: "Coming from you, this seems like the correc-

<sup>1</sup> For a long time this was the derisive title applied to the President by his opponents in the Whig party.



tion of a school-boy by his master. Coming from another, I would think it insufferable impudence." His letters are earnest and pathetic. It seems to have given him real pain to feel that he and Mr. Weed were so differently constituted.

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *September 10, 1842.*

FRIEND WEED, — I rise early from a bed of sleepless thought to explain my position to you. I trust it is now understood, as I thought it had been before, that we differ radically on the Bank question, and I begin to fear we do on the general policy and objects of political controversy.

But this is not the main point on which I am moved to address you. You have pleased on several occasions to take me to task for differing from you, however reluctantly and temperately, as though such conditions were an evidence, not merely of weakness on my part, but of some black ingratitude, or heartless treachery. I cannot realize that there have been any series of obligations between us which render it proper in you to assume so complete a mastery over my opinions and actions. I believe there never were any pecuniary transactions between us, and that you have never suffered by me in any way. I have surely never desired offices of distinction, avenues to fortune, at your hands.

You sought me out for our first interview, and if I have not since been as useful to you as you to me, the fault has been through my want of ability. I have given, I have ever been ready to give you any service within my power; but my understanding, my judgment, my consciousness of convictions, of duty and public good, these I can surrender to no man. You wrong yourself in asking them, and in taking me to task like a school-boy, for expressing my sentiments respectfully when they differ from yours. However deep my obligations, I cannot pay in these. I am ever ready to defer to your superior experience and judgment, — only convince me that I am wrong on any point, but do not assume to dictate or lecture me. Do not ask me to forget that I, too, am a man; that I must breathe free air, or be stifled.

Let me now hope that for the future we understand each other better. I would hope, also, that we may be still friends, in spite of the significant intimation you gave me, at the close of our conversation; but if I can only enjoy your friendship on terms of humiliation, let us be strangers henceforth. I trust we can never be enemies, but better anything than I should feel the weight of chains about my neck, that I should write and act with an eye to any man's pleasure, rather than to the highest good.

I am weary enough of my excited life. I long for rest and a kind-

lier atmosphere, but while I remain where I am, I cannot afford to despise myself. Besides, I owe what little chances for usefulness I may have to the impression that I do no man's bidding, but speak out my own honest thoughts.

Henceforth, I pray you, differ from me when you see occasion, favor me in nothing, treat me as you do others.

Frankly, sadly yours,

H. GREELEY.

[MR. CLAY TO MR. WEED.]

ASHLAND, *September 12, 1842.*

MY DEAR SIR, — I am sorry that I cannot accept the invitation which you did me the favor to transmit, and to which the inclosed is an answer.

My friends in Indiana would take no denial to their demand that I would fulfill an old engagement to visit the capital of their State, to which I go on the 5th of October. And in the mean time the Whigs of Ohio have fixed one of the two days of your fair for a barbecue to the Whigs of Kentucky, at Dayton, which I have promised to attend, as an humble citizen of the latter State.

They are very confident of success in Ohio in October, and I think with much ground of hope. Should the Whigs achieve a triumph there, and your anticipations are realized in New York, the victory of 1844 will eclipse that of '40.

Do me the favor to present my respects to Governor Seward.

With constant regard and esteem,

H. CLAY.

Demoralized and distracted by Mr. Tyler's mismanagement, the Whig party was easily overcome in the fall elections of 1842. In New York William C. Bouck, Democrat, became Mr. Seward's successor.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

ALBANY, *December 31, 1842.*

MY DEAR WEED, — The end has come at last. My successor and the new year are here together. He has the keys and the seal, and I have recollections and reflections. Those which crowd upon me are different from what I anticipated. I looked for *ennui*, if not for regret, but there is nothing of this. The thousand perils through which I have passed, the thousand enemies by whom I have been opposed, the hundreds by whom I have been hated, and the men whom I have unavoidably or imprudently offended rise up before me; and yet, if friends who never flattered when I had power are not false now when I am powerless, I am more than safe. My public career is honorably

closed, and I am yet young enough, if a reasonable age is allotted me, to repair all the waste of private fortune it has cost. Gratitude to God, and gratitude and affection toward my friends, and most of all to you, my first and most efficient and most devoted friend, oppresses me.

What am I to deserve such friendship and affection? Without your aid how hopeless would have been my prospect of reaching the elevation from which I am descending. How could I have sustained myself there; how could I have avoided the assaults to which I have been exposed; how could I have secured the joyous reflections of this hour, what would have been my prospect of future life, but for the confidence I so undenyngly reposed on your affection?

I have need of many things. Yet it is not in my heart to ask for anything but blessings on you and yours, and for myself that I may be saved from the crime of ingratitude.

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Shortly after the close of his second term, Governor Seward wrote: —

AUBURN, *January 13, 1843.*

MY DEAR WEED, — All excesses leave a train of penances. Those Rathbone notes fall due about this time. I am ashamed to confess that as to one of them I don't know when or where, any more than I can tell how, it is to be paid. If you will arrange the matter, and advise me of the manner in which the blanks, etc., are filled, I will endeavor hereafter to relieve your slate of the charge. Sad as the times are and huge the undertaking, I will try to pay them all off, with as long a time to work in as Walter Scott had to pay his creditors.

Faithfully yours,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

How significant these few lines, sent in private to a friend, just after the writer had been Governor of the State for four years!

In connection with Mr. Seward's executive service there used to be told a good story, which had wide circulation, and which was enjoyed by no one more than by the Governor himself.

While journeying about the State Mr. Seward was fond of accosting all sorts of people, with whom he discussed public measures, without disclosing his own identity. It was safe to resort to this in districts removed from the ordinary route of travel.

On one of his trips the Governor was passing through a far

western county, and, as was his custom, rode on top of the stage, by the side of the driver. He took a lively interest in all that was passing, and constantly plied his companion with questions. He wanted to know about the crops, facilities of transportation, the population of each hamlet, who kept the taverns, who were the leading politicians, what was the condition of churches, schools, poor-houses, etc.

Finally it came the driver's turn to ask questions, and, inflamed with curiosity to know who this inquisitive passenger was, he began: —

“ You are a merchant, I suppose ? ”

“ No, sir,” said the Governor, “ I am not a merchant.”

“ A lecturer, then ? ”

“ No, sir, I am not a lecturer.”

“ A minister ? ”

“ No, sir.”

After a few minutes, the driver said, “ You must be a big grain buyer.”

“ No, sir, I am not.”

“ Then I know what you are ; you must be a lawyer, or you would n't ask so many questions.”

“ That is not my business at present.”

“ Who are you, then ? ” finally exclaimed the driver, unable longer to restrain the direct inquiry.

“ I am Governor of this State.”

It was asking a good deal of the driver to expect him to believe that. He showed his incredulity.

“ Well,” said Mr. Seward, “ suppose you wait until the stage gets to the next town. I know the landlord there, and he can identify me.”

“ He won't say you 're the Governor, I 'll bet a dollar.”

Soon afterwards the stage drew up in front of the next tavern, and walking up to the landlord, who stood among a crowd of loungers on the steps, Mr. Seward said: —

“ See here, Mr. Tompkins, you know me, do you not ? ”

“ Yes, sir, I do.”

“ Well then, this driver is not willing to believe that I am Governor of New York.”

“ Stick to it, John,” said the tavern-keeper. “ I don't believe it either.”

“What!” exclaimed Mr. Seward, in astonishment. “Then who is Governor?”

“Thurlow Weed!”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Though this incident never occurred, the story was so accordant with his habit of riding outside to smoke, and with the popular understanding of his relations with Mr. Weed, that it was generally accepted as true. Seward himself used laughingly to relate it, and say that, though it was not quite true, it ought to be. — F. W. Seward's *Life of Wm. H. Seward*, p. 395.

## CHAPTER VIII.

1843.

SCENES IN EUROPE. — BISHOP HUGHES. — MR. SCHOOLCRAFT. — FATHER MATHEW. — POVERTY IN IRELAND. — DANIEL O'CONNELL. — A MASS MEETING ON DONNYBROOK GREEN. — SIGHTS IN LONDON. — ST. PAUL'S. — FIRST GLIMPSE OF ROYALTY. — FRANKLIN'S BOARDING-HOUSE. — SCOTLAND. — ABBOTSFORD. — MELROSE. — PARIS. — THE TOMB OF LA-FAYETTE. — LETTERS TO WIFE AND DAUGHTER.

WEARIED by twenty-five years of incessant political activity and thoroughly disheartened by the demoralization of his party, Mr. Weed determined, early in 1843, to gratify his love for travel by making a visit to Europe.

He wrote to his friend Alvah Hunt, afterwards State Senator, asking him to join in the project. Mr. Hunt replied that he was unable to go, adding, "but this invitation from you is worth more to me than a seat in Congress."

After engaging passage, Mr. Weed called upon his friend Bishop Hughes<sup>1</sup> for letters of introduction. Learning the name of the vessel in which rooms had been engaged and the day of sailing, the Bishop replied that such letters as he had to give would be sent to the ship. On the 7th of June, when Mr. Weed stepped upon the deck, he was both surprised and delighted to find the Bishop among the passengers. Father De Smet, of the Society of Jesus, the late Archbishop Purcell, and Mr. John L. Schoolcraft,<sup>2</sup> completed the party.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Weed has told how his intimacy with Bishop Hughes began. It remains only to add that the school hill, in support of which they united with Governor Seward, has been in salutary operation for forty-three years, conferring the blessings of education upon thousands of destitute and neglected children, who have grown to be useful citizens, instead of becoming inmates of almshouses and penitentiaries.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Schoolcraft was a leading merchant in Albany, and for many years president of the Commercial Bank. Somewhat younger than Mr. Weed, he was always a close political follower and a warm personal friend. In 1846 he was elected to Congress, and reëlected in 1850. His good sense, sound

Toward evening, on the 28th of June, as the packet lay-to off the Irish coast, a row-boat came alongside, and Mr. Weed left the ship with his friends, reaching Courtmacsherry at sunset. Of course the arrival in this obscure town of so many strangers, with a formidable array of luggage, created quite a stir. When it was known that bishops from America were among the visitors, local agitators gathered about the group, and the constabulary were highly excited. But, after an examination, no concealed weapons were discovered, and the tourists were permitted to go to supper. The night was spent by the bishops with the resident priest; Mr. Weed and Mr. Schoolcraft accepted the invitation of the commandant of the coast-guard to occupy a bed in his house.

Early in the morning the party set out in a jaunting car for Cork, which was reached after driving thirty miles. Thence Mr. Weed went to Dublin, where he met Daniel O'Connell, whom he accompanied to a great demonstration at Donnybrook Green. He then went to England, and afterwards visited Scotland and France.

"At Cork," he wrote, "I hastened to pay my respects to the Rev. Theobald Mathew. There were a large number of people assembled in his rooms, waiting to take the pledge. In about ten minutes Father Mathew arrived. When introduced as an American he gave me both hands cordially and kindly. . . . Both sexes, old and young, knelt around the reformer, who in the most persuasive and affectionate manner enjoined upon them to abstain from intoxicating drinks. They rose, joy and gratitude beaming from their eyes, received their certificates and medals, and went their way rejoicing. I looked upon this scene with deep emotion, and would not exchange the luxury of feeling it inspired for a view of the proudest pageant Europe can present. After the people were dismissed, Father Mathew entered warmly into conversation about the United States. When informed that Bishop Hughes was my fellow-passenger, he took my arm, and started immediately for the hotel, where he remained with us for an hour.

judgment, and unswerving fidelity rendered him a useful member of the House and a valued adviser in party councils. Reserved in conversation, and modest even to diffidence, only his intimate friends could fully appreciate his many estimable traits of character.

“By far the most painful scenes I have witnessed are in the crowds of wretched poor who surround and beleaguer strangers, imploring charity by every gesture of supplication. Whenever our coach stops it is beset by the miserable and the maimed, whose piteous appeals for relief would melt adamant. Nor are these cases of unreal suffering. The distress is as appalling as the supplications are eloquent; and the bestowal of a penny or even a half-penny confers so much happiness that it is a luxury to give. At one place, after my copper coin was exhausted, half a dozen women, in whose faces want and sickness had made deep furrows, were so importunate that I told them I could give them no more for the want of change. In reply they said: ‘If you can spare sixpence we will divide it among ourselves.’ One of them received the bit, got it changed, and as the coach was starting all came to give me their blessing. If, as I believe, these small alms go to feed the famishing in squalid hovels, it is a cheap way of mitigating human misery.”

Mr. Weed reached Dublin on the 22d of July. Daniel O’Connell arrived in the city the next day, and sent word that he would be happy to see Bishop Hughes and friends at his residence in Merrion Square. This invitation was promptly accepted.

“Our interview with Mr. O’Connell closed with an invitation to dine with him that evening. In the mean time he was to receive the trades of Dublin in review, and address a meeting on Donnybrook Green. He urged us to join him in these demonstrations. . . . We therefore returned to his house, and for nearly three hours watched the procession from his balcony. . . . Then the vast multitude, like the waving of a wheat-field, moved forward to Donnybrook Green, filling the air with its shouts. The streets through which we passed were wedged full of human beings. In the doors and windows, and upon the balconies and roofs, bright eyes beamed and handkerchiefs waved. When the way narrowed, it seemed impossible that such masses could be squeezed through, but by care and forbearance all passed on without the slightest injury. . . . A staging, with seats and an awning, had been erected in the centre of the Green, around which an immense multitude had assembled before we arrived. ‘Make way for the Americans,’ shouted those nearest our carriage, and immediately a passage



was opened through which we were cheered to the platform. . . . Mr. O'Connell and Father Mathew are elevating their countrymen to an intellectual and moral quality that will prove far more effectual in the great work to be accomplished than physical force. Arguments and reason, rather than flint and bayonets, are the weapons which Ireland should wield in the contest for her restoration to nationality. I have always sympathized warmly with this country, but never knew, nor can any one know without coming here, how grievously oppressed her people are."

After spending a few days in Liverpool, Mr. Weed went on to London. He wrote:—

"At half past ten o'clock I visited St. Paul's Church, into the gallery of which we were ushered by a sort of beadle with a black gown and staff. A clergyman was drawling out the impressive morning service of the Church of England, in a manner and tone so cold and unimpassioned that it would have thrown an American congregation into an ague fit. The effective devotional chants were executed by two lazy choristers and nine boys, without animation, harmony, or melody. The sermon of twenty minutes was as inanimate and vapid as imbecility and sloth could make it. . . .

"I have seen Queen Victoria! She seems to be a nice young woman, of whom the people think the better now that she nurses her own baby. The Queen was in deep but plain mourning for the Duke of Sussex. . . .

"We went yesterday to the review in Hyde Park, which, to us, was a brilliant affair. The Dukes of Wellington and Cambridge were in the field. I posted myself early nearly opposite Hyde Park Gate, through which the Field Marshal was to pass. This gave me a good view of the hero of Waterloo. The Duke shows that old age has no respect for rank. He did not sit erect in his saddle, and his head and hands were both tremulous; but when I saw him afterwards in the sham fight receiving and dispatching aids to different divisions, he seemed two or three inches taller, and twenty years more youthful. . . .

"We devoted the morning to searching for the building in which Benjamin Franklin boarded, while at work in London as a journeyman printer, and I had the satisfaction of standing under the roof which sheltered that illustrious statesman, patriot, philosopher, and philanthropist."

“Scotland,” wrote Mr. Weed, in August, “the birthplace of Burns and Scott, the land of lake and mountain, is revealing her beauties to my admiring eyes. Nor in her case does the expectation surpass reality. Scotia’s bards have scarcely taken a poet’s license in their descriptions of her scenery.” After a day or so on Loch Lomond and Loch Lochy, his letters describe visits to Ayr, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. He took great pleasure in identifying localities with which close reading of Scott and Burns had made him familiar.

“We followed Sir Walter from Abbotsford, the theatre of his glorious achievements, to Dryburgh, whose ruined abbey is hallowed by his dust. How appropriately chosen for the final repose of such precious remains!” From Melrose he wrote: “No brighter sun ever rose to bless and beautify the earth than that which dawns upon us this Sabbath morning. Nor is it possible to breathe an atmosphere more balmy and bracing than that which refreshes and gladdens our spirits. . . . Every object within the vision’s reach has been made classic by the inspirations of poetry and romance. Beyond the Tweed, the hills of Ettrick and Yarrow are seen. Upon its banks the ruined abbeys of Melrose and Dryburgh lift up their broken towers and crumbling walls. . . . In every direction are objects with which the imagination has been made familiar either in ‘Marmion,’ ‘The Monastery,’ or ‘St. Ronan’s Well.’”

He returned to England in August, and visited York, Newcastle, Hampton, Sheffield, Newgate, and other localities. He then crossed the Channel.

“I strolled out,” he wrote from Paris, “into the garden of the Tuilleries, where thousands of people were enjoying the grateful shadé. . . . Children in joyous groups were at their gambols under the eyes of their governesses; belles were promenading with gallants in large moustaches; young women in great numbers were engaged with their needle-work, while old ladies without number were fondling their lap-dogs. . . . In other parts of the garden numerous families of the humbler class were sitting under the trees and cheerfully partaking of their frugal repast, — bread and wine. . . . Nothing about Paris so strikes a stranger as the quiet manner in which business is conducted. . . . You see little or nothing of the noise and bustle of other great cities. Neither the hum of commerce

nor the din of manufactures is heard. We are strangers to the rigid economy which prevails here. New York throws away enough every day to feed a hundred thousand Parisians. . . .

“Near Père La Chaise, in a humble, sequestered spot, under a simple tomb, hallowed by virtue and patriotism, by the side of his wife and surrounded by his children, repose the precious remains of our beloved Lafayette. What a world of grateful recollections his name brings back! Where shall we look for another so bright, so pure, so unsullied? Who else lived so long, amid convulsions and revolutions, with unstained hands, uncontaminated principles, and untarnished fame? Who else resisted all the temptations of ambition, — all the seductions of power? What soldier, what statesman, what other mere man, after sacrificing fortune and shedding blood in the cause of human liberty, steadily refused all honors and rewards? None. His name and character stand out upon the world’s canvas alone in their own perfections and sublimity. Living, he won sceptres and diadems, but he would not wear them. Dead, with a consistency which jeweled his whole life, his remains were deposited in a humble, secluded vault, where no footsteps are heard but such as are guided thither by affection, patriotism, and gratitude.”

[MR. WEED TO HIS ELDEST DAUGHTER.]

EDINBORO’, August 9, 1843.

MY DEAR HARRIET, — I left my friends at Glasgow, and hurried up here for letters, where I had the happiness to find those that came by Dr. Greason and by the Great Western, with liberal supplies of newspapers, for all of which I had a keen relish. When assured that you were all well, I sat down leisurely, and had a long, delightful afternoon and evening, and left off at twelve o’clock only because my eyes gave out. It is a source of inexpressible enjoyment thus to come near to family and friends from whom I am separated by a wide ocean.

I am very glad that the mails which brought information of your mother’s illness relieved all anxieties by the gratifying assurance that she had recovered. Suspense in such a case would have been most painful.

I am glad you write me long letters, and hope you will embrace every opportunity that offers to continue them. Dreary indeed would be my wanderings abroad but for the conviction that there are hearts at home whose pulsations are in sympathy with my own.

Amid the glare and gorgeousness of palaces and castles, my thoughts constantly go back to Albany, where only there is any abiding enjoyment for me. There are many occasions when I wish you were all with me, to participate in the view of particular objects; but the difficulties and obstacles to be encountered are not overrated. Every pleasure is mixed with toil. In America ladies travel much more than in England. Women who travel in second-rate conveyances and on the outside of coaches, and put up at ordinary inns, are accustomed to rough fare. A gentleman cannot travel with a lady in England, Ireland, or Scotland without adding nearly or quite double the amount that it costs two gentlemen. If you have a lady, you must take a parlor at all the inns, there being no ordinary tables here, and no coffee-rooms for ladies. A parlor costs three dollars, and at some of the hotels five dollars, per day. This is in addition to the charges for meals and lodging.

We went from Dublin to Belfast, from which latter place Watrous, Leitch, and Schoolcraft went, to the Giants' Causeway. As I dared not undertake the walking that would be necessary, I took the steamer from Belfast to Greenock (Scotland), and after visiting the lakes, highlands, Burns's birthplace, etc., waited for them at Glasgow.

*August 11.*

I have been all the morning and until now (two P. M.) in the public libraries here. That of the Advocates is second only to the library of the British Museum. Edinboro' is a very enlightened city. They think a great deal here of science and literature and of the refinements of literary society.

I hope you have all been to the Mountain House. Such a retreat from heat and dust would be extremely pleasant. People yesterday and to-day are saying, "How very hot it is!" and yet the thermometer is only at 80 or 81, and it seems like the first of October.

Emily's ode is very well. Several of the lines could not be improved. I hope she will continue to cultivate and discipline her mind. I am quite anxious to know about her examination.

*MELROSE, August 13.*

We came here yesterday, and visited Abbotsford, where Sir Walter Scott lived, and Dryburgh Abbey, where his remains repose. To-day we have attended church in the ruined Abbey of Melrose, where, eight hundred years ago, a splendid monastery, with abbots, monks, and friars were worshipping in their dark, austere way, at altars now broken and crumbling.

I sent by Mr. Newton slips from two rose-bushes in the garden of Abbotsford, which I hope you can make germinate. If those he takes

for his sister should do better than yours, you are to have slips of hers and *vice versa*.

LONDON, August 17.

We arrived here late last evening. This morning I had the happiness of hearing that you were all well at home. I had two long letters from Mr. Seward.

I hope you have been to the mountains, and that your mother has gone to New Berlin. I have sent a box of one thing and another by Mr. Newton, who sails in the Patrick Henry from Liverpool, on the 25th inst., and who will bring it to Albany. I send by him, also, a piece of linen I bought at Belfast for your mother, yourself, Maria, and Emily. I wish I were with you to see all there is in and about No. 100 Hudson Street.

YOUR FATHER.

I inclose a rose-leaf from the garden at Abbotsford.

[MR. WEED TO HIS WIFE.]

PARIS, September 7, 1843.

MY DEAR CATHERINE, — Your long, affectionate letter was the source of truest happiness. I needed the support it gave me. I have been so long from home, and there is such a wide ocean between us, that my heart is often weary and my spirit faint. Should a kind Providence restore me to my family, the Atlantic will not again separate me from them.

I have now been more than a week in Paris, but have seen little of its wonders. I have used my leg too much, and dare not go about as I want to, and must, if I see anything of the hundreds of objects of interest here. Paris differs from London in everything as much as it differs in the language spoken. Those who do not speak French are most awkwardly situated here. I am embarrassed and mortified every step I take.

I am anxious to hear from Emily. Should her illness have assumed an unfavorable aspect, I shall return immediately. I am sorry you did not know she had such unfavorable symptoms before she left home. . . .

. . . We dined yesterday with the American Consul (a brother of Mr. Draper's), and are invited to dine with the American Chargé d'Affaires (Governor Cass's son-in-law), to-morrow. I have a fashionable dress coat and pantaloons, in which I feel most uncomfortable. I shall keep quiet to-day until six o'clock, when we go out to dinner at Mr. Ledyard's.

I am anxious for letters by the steamers which ought to be in to-day. My letters will be forwarded from London. My thoughts and anxieties all tend homewards, but I have not told Schoolcraft how

strongly I am inclined to set my face towards New York. I can imagine how much you have improved the house, garden, barn, etc., and you can imagine how anxious I am to see those improvements. Harriet writes that the grapes are to be saved for me. This is very kind, but it must not be. I shall be happy to have you pick and eat them yourselves. Save a few bunches, that I may compare them with those I get here. So far I have only had small ones, but those of a better quality are about ripe. They have large, delicious-looking peaches here at from two to four cents each, but in flavor they are much inferior to the American peach. We have very sweet strawberries for dinner every day. We have our breakfast for a franc and a half, and our dinner for three francs. I cannot tell more than half the time what the dishes are, but so long as there are plenty of tomatoes I get along well enough.

Removed as I am, thousands of miles from the society of friends and the accusations of enemies, I have abundant leisure for sweet and bitter fancies. I find so much more of enjoyment than of regret in the remembrance of the past, that it would be ungrateful to complain either of the misapprehension or the injustice which almost necessarily attaches to those who have been connected with the political affairs of our country. In positions of responsibility it is impossible to escape censure, even with motives purer and more lofty than I presume to claim as my rule of action. And yet the consciousness of a sincere desire to promote worthy men as the representatives of right measures, is a compensation for all the ill-will my efforts have caused. Conscious of an unfitness for public service, I have ever labored to advance others rather than myself; and if it be an offense to have accumulated, as the result of more than thirty years of toil, a moderate competency, I can say with truth that it came unsolicited, and that instead of the hundreds I possess, it might easily have been thousands.

Affectionately yours,

THURLOW.

## CHAPTER IX.

1843-1844.

EXTENDING SLAVERY INTO TEXAS. — WASHINGTON HUNT'S SCHEMES FOR UNITING THE PARTY. — THE GOVERNORSHIP. — IRISH REPEAL. — MR. WEED TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR. — NATIONAL CONVENTION OF 1844. — "MY OPINION ON THE TEXAS QUESTION." — EDITORIAL FUSILLADES. — MR. HUNT ON POLITICAL PROSCRIPTION. — "OLD FATHER FILLMORE." — "MISRULE AND MISERY."

DURING Mr. Weed's absence in Europe there was a temporary lull in American politics. "The cauldron does not boil in your absence, dear Mr. Dictator," wrote General Rufus King, who was left in charge of the Albany paper. "I see nothing more promising than when you left. In the street to-day a gentleman asked me if I had heard from Bishop Weed? So you see the people think that Hughes has already converted you into a Catholic. Captain Tyler's friends tried to get up a reception for him in New York, but it was 'stale, flat, and unprofitable.' The truth is, Tyler is about used up. He means to 'cut' Albany, as our common council refused to invite him hither. But to this calamity we are all resigned." In another letter General King says, "We are enjoying the most beautiful weather imaginable. Even Captain Tyler can't cheat us out of that."

"I think Fillmore is our man for Vice-President," wrote Mr. Greeley. "I feel our embarrassment on account of Talmadge, but why should we throw away a chance for a mere matter of delicacy? We must be slow and cautious about Governor. Nott will say that I spoke to him favorably of Stevens, but not so. I told him we would consider, and that I would just as soon support him as anybody, if I thought he would poll as many votes. I wish Mark Sibley had not botched somehow on the railroad question, for he is a superb demagogue, and would help greatly on the stump. I think the Locos will make a dead set on the tariff, and give us a pretty fair issue. How can we fail on that in New York?"

It was plain when Mr. Weed returned to Albany, in December, 1843, that "the Locos" would give the country "a pretty fair issue," but not by "making a dead set on the tariff." The question of admitting Texas to the Union was the controlling topic in the elections of 1844. True to his new affiliations, Mr. Tyler labored zealously for the extension of slavery in the Southwest. He was opposed in Congress by Whigs and supported by Democrats. One of his most unrelenting critics was Washington Hunt, of New York, then in the House, who became noted for opposition to slavery and all forms of political proscription. Mr. Hunt remained in Congress until 1850, when he was called to a still more distinguished position. For many years he and Mr. Weed were intimate friends.

[WASHINGTON HUNT TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *December 19, 1843.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — Allow me to congratulate you on your safe return. I also congratulate your friends and your country. I hope you come fully invigorated and prepared for another great political struggle.

It is now settled that Mr. Van Buren is to be the candidate against Mr. Clay in 1844, and whilst I consider it fortunate for us that our opponents are to be led by a defeated General, who cannot excite the enthusiasm of his own forces, yet we must not expect too easy a victory. We can hope to gain the field only by a great and well-directed effort.

Since coming here I have reflected much on the posture of affairs in our own State. It is very obvious in my mind that we have no time to lose in laying out the ground and commencing a well digested plan of operations. It appears to me very important that efficient steps be taken to scatter tracts and other useful reading amongst the people now, whilst the winter is passing. A thousand dollars judiciously laid out at the present time will produce larger results than many thousands a few months hence. I consider the Junius tracts<sup>1</sup> well calculated for effect, and I want to see them liberally scattered. I have done something in our county from my own purse, and I am ready to contribute something more for the State at large, if necessary. In addition to this we need more thorough organization and better concert through the State. I believe it is our true policy to take Fillmore for the vice-presidency; it will give satisfaction to other states besides our own. At the same time it will produce some sore-

<sup>1</sup> Written by Colton, author of a *Campaign Life of Clay*.



ness on the part of Talmadge and his friends, and we must take timely and judicious steps to conciliate him and secure his coöperation.<sup>1</sup>

I make these suggestions in confidence, and with a desire to unite and harmonize every portion of our party. I can say nothing of interest about matters here, which you do not already know. In the House we have an all-powerful, and, I may add, an overbearing majority against us.<sup>2</sup> But, though weak in numbers, the Whigs are strong in purpose and fearless in spirit. I never met a more noble band, and I am proud to belong to such a minority. I would be glad to hear from you, and still more happy to see you here. When are you coming? When you come we must have a full and free consultation as to the best means of defending the country and Constitution from the ravages of Loco-Focoism.

Sincerely yours,

WASHINGTON HUNT.

While Mr. Weed was away, several of his active friends set on foot a movement to nominate him in the spring of 1844 for Mayor of Albany, and in the fall for Governor of the State. Friendly papers greeted him on his return, by "raising a ticket" for the next campaign, composed of Henry Clay for President, John Sargeant of Pennsylvania, for Vice-President, and Thurlow Weed for Governor of New York. The latter nomination would have met the wishes of a large number of Whigs. "Mr. Weed," said one of the journals which urged his name, "has for many years been among the most prominent advocates of our party's principles, and his talents have been of invaluable service to our cause. We should rejoice to see him occupying the seat so ably filled by Tompkins, Clinton, and Seward." And another paper said: "We are free to admit that we do not believe a better choice could be made. If there is a man in this State to whom the party is indebted, that man is Mr. Weed. To him more than to any other leader we owe the turn of the tide in 1838."

By these flattering suggestions Mr. Weed was not beguiled. "We are not," he wrote, "and never shall be, a candidate for Governor, or for any other office. Though not insensible, as the Searcher of Hearts knows, to the kindness of friends, we ask nothing of them but their coöperation in electing others."

<sup>1</sup> New York could not be carried for Clay without this adjunct.

<sup>2</sup> House, 142 Democrats, 81 Whigs. Senate, 24 Democrats, 28 Whigs.

1843-1844. — During this period evidences were frequently furnished of the sympathy felt by the American people with the cause of Irish nationality. The desire to coöperate with Daniel O'Connell was strong, but when he began to make anti-slavery speeches the repeal movement received a serious check. Forthwith auxiliary associations in the South were broken up, and their funds distributed among various charitable societies.

On his return to Albany Mr. Weed was the recipient of complimentary messages from local "Repealers," in acknowledging whose courtesy he wrote : —

[MR. WEED ON IRISH REPEAL.]

ALBANY, *January 15, 1844.*

DEAR SIR, — The very flattering resolution which the Albany Irish Repeal Association did me the honor to adopt, and a copy of which you have kindly transmitted to me, demanded an earlier acknowledgment. My answer has been delayed with the hope that I should find leisure to indulge at length the impulses of my heart, in free, frank communion with you about Ireland.

I was fortunate in my recent visit to the Old World, in seeing much of your native country. I was most fortunate in having for my traveling companions, two of Ireland's gifted and estimable sons (Bishop Hughes, of New York, and Bishop Purcell, of Cincinnati) whose names were a key to unlock all doors, and a passport to all hearts. I was made acquainted with Daniel O'Connell and Father Mathew, and shall cherish through life a grateful remembrance of the attentions received from a Liberator and Philanthropist, whose patriotism and virtues command the world's admiration.

Nor was I less fortunate, or scarcely less happy, in making the acquaintance of very many of Ireland's yeomanry — her sons and daughters of severe toil and yet more severe suffering. I conversed with them upon the corners of the streets and by the road-side. I visited their deserted work-shops and wretched cabins. I saw husbands and fathers unemployed, whose wives and children suffer for raiment and languish for food; and saw, too, what is apparent to every observer, and what no man with manly feelings or human sympathies can witness without indignant emotion, that these wide-spread and accumulating miseries were the certain results — the forced, hot-house fruits of their government.

Ireland was intended by nature and designed by Providence to take rank among the nations of the earth. It is impossible to view her position and advantages, to contemplate the number and character of her

people, or to review her history, and resist the conclusion, that, though she unfortunately is not, she "of right ought to be, free, sovereign, and independent."

America dissolved the union with England and raised the standard of rebellion to redress but a tithe of the wrongs which have been inflicted upon Ireland. And yet Ireland, though "crushed to earth" for nearly half a century, does not rebel! She asks only the repeal of a corrupt and fatal union. Her statesmen and clergy labor, and her monster meetings assemble,

"Not to break peace, or any branch of it ;  
But to establish here a peace instead,  
Concurring both in name and quality."

And may not an oppressed, down-trodden, starving people rightfully and lawfully endeavor to obtain the blessings of good government? Why were governments instituted but to protect the rights, redress the wrongs, and promote the welfare of the governed? And what is a government worth that refuses or neglects or fails to accomplish these objects? England has withheld all these enjoyments from Ireland. In her case, therefore, government has proved a curse rather than a blessing.

But this much-wronged people, imbued with the peaceful spirit of the age, calmly and patiently appeal to that sense of justice which ought to distinguish the British Government. In this appeal they invoke our coöperation. They seek the approval and sympathy of liberal, generous, Christian "men and brethren" throughout the civilized world. Nor will they appeal, here and elsewhere, in vain. A wave of free, enlightened opinion is now rolling onward, which in its resistless course will either subdue or overwhelm their oppressors.

I am rejoiced, in returning to our own eminently favored Republic, to find so many sound heads and warm hearts engaged in the cause of Repeal. I became an "Associate" of Repealers at the Corn-Exchange in Dublin, and hope to prove myself neither unfaithful to the duties imposed, nor unworthy of the distinction conferred upon me.

In conveying, as I beg you will, my grateful thanks to the members of the Association for their kind and cordial greetings, pray assure them of my readiness and desire to act with them, on all occasions, and in every mode that tends to strengthen Ireland or promises to benefit her people.

Accept, also, for yourself, assurances of the respect and regard of  
Your obedient servant, THURLOW WEED.

To Matthew Jordan, Esq., Secretary of the Albany Repeal Association.

1844. — As the time for holding national conventions approached, Mr. Tyler adopted every means in his power to distract the Whig party and secure his own nomination by the Democrats. While denouncing this apostasy, Mr. Weed sought to prevent its duplication. “It ought to be understood,” he wrote, “that the presidency for one term is the ‘be all and end all’ of official ambition in America, and we should soon experience the good effects of such a change. Men would continue to struggle for the presidency, stratagems would still be resorted to during the canvass, but when elections were over and the prize obtained one great motive for misrule would be obliterated. A President, knowing that he could have but one term of service, instead of perverting his power and patronage to gain a reelection, would seek to administer the government honestly; that in his retirement he might live respected, and leave his name untarnished to posterity. . . . Even John Tyler, poor, miserable imbecile that he is, but for his profligate and disgraceful, though impotent, efforts for a reelection, would have passed at least decently through his official term, instead of going from the presidential chair, as he does, the scorned of all parties.”

Of course Mr. Weed had no wish to visit Washington while Mr. Tyler was President. The administration might have saved itself the trouble of informing him, as it did, through Christopher Morgan, that he would not be a welcome guest at the seat of government. As Secretary of War, and supporter of the President, Mr. Weed’s old friend, John C. Spencer, felt called upon to go further. While in office at Albany, Mr. Spencer had been on very cordial terms with Mr. Weed, to whom he confided more information about his affairs than to any other person, not excepting his own family; but political differences enforced a readjustment of personal relations.

[THE SECRETARY OF WAR TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *February 13, 1844.*

SIR, — In consequence of seeing a preamble to certain resolutions introduced at a Whig county convention held in Albany, by Mr. Rufus King, in which he had charged me with having given a pledge before I left Albany to assume charge of the War Department “to endeavor to win the infatuated incumbent of the executive chair back to his duty,” and that on taking my place in the Cabinet I “violated that pledge, abandoned my [his] party and principles, and became and con-

tinued false to both," I addressed General King a letter requesting him to state to whom and on what occasion such pledge was given.

In his answer he stated that "the pledge to which the preamble alludes was given by you, in terms as well as in spirit, in the course of a full and frank conversation held in this city [Albany] with members of the late Whig state administration, just previous to your departure to assume the post which had been tendered to you in the Cabinet of John Tyler."

In my reply I remarked that his answer was not specific, and among other things requested him to state what members of the late Whig state administration were present at the conversation referred to, and at whose house it took place.

In General King's answer to this request, just received, he says, "As to the conversation to which I have referred, I understand that it commenced at the house of Governor Seward and was resumed at the house of Mr. Thurlow Weed; that these two gentlemen were present, and if I am correctly informed, Mr. Willis Hall, Mr. J. A. Collier, and Mr. O. L. Holley also." General King then adds a new item, thus: "In the course of this conversation I understood you to have made the strongest avowals of your intention to use whatever influence you might secure at Washington, to promote the views and advance the interests of the Whig party." Although this last statement is entirely distinct from the original charge, I give it to avoid any imputation of unfairness.

As this is a matter involving more than political consistency, I claim the right to call for your statement on the subject, and I am persuaded you will recognize the justice of an answer. Will you then answer these questions:—

1st. Were you present at a conversation on the subject referred to by General King, at which the persons named by him were also present?

2d. Was any conversation on that subject had between you and me in the presence of either of the other persons named by General King, and if so, please to name that person?

3d. Was there any conversation whatever on the subject, ever commenced or had at Governor Seward's house?

4th. Was there any conversation whatever on the subject, resumed or had at the house of Mr. Thurlow Weed?

5th. Was, or was not, Mr. Thurlow Weed absent from the city of Albany on my return from Washington, and did he or did he not arrive at Albany the day preceding my final departure for Washington? And did Mr. Weed see me at all on the subject, or did he pass through Albany to Syracuse, without even an interview with me? or if he had

such an interview, was it not a slight and hurried one? In that interview, or in any other, did I make to him such a pledge as is above quoted from the preamble of General King's resolution?

As my only object in these inquiries is the vindication of myself from a false charge affecting me personally, I trust you will excuse my addressing you questions with so much precision, and will furnish your answer as soon as may be convenient.

Your obedient servant,

J. C. SPENCER.

[MR. WEED TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR.]

ALBANY, *February 19, 1844.*

SIR, — You cannot have forgotten the personal and political relations established between us when you left Albany for Washington. It was understood that, though our duties might in some respects conflict, yet, governed by the same general principles, each was left at liberty to pursue his course without disturbing the friendship and confidence that existed.

You found it necessary, or expedient, upon your arrival at Washington, to change your principles and friends. You thought proper, also, not only to terminate our intercourse, but to manifest your personal ill-will and unkindness. This was done to appease dignitaries whose service required the sacrifice. But while you have wantonly sundered the ties that then bound me to you, the remembrance of those days, and respect for mutual friends, has restrained me from making any public revelation of our differences.

If, however, as I apprehend from your letter of the 13th February, you contemplate an "Appeal to the Public," I must forego the honor of figuring in the appendix, with a response to your categorical interrogatories. There is no occasion for so much circumlocution between us. Our conversations in relation to the views and purposes with which you went into the Cabinet were free, unrestrained, and unambiguous. My recollection of those conversations, and of those views and purposes, does not exempt you from the charge of having, after taking your seat in the Cabinet, "abandoned your party and principles," and "becoming and continuing false to both."

It remains for you to determine whether those conversations, and the recollection of them, belong to the public.

Your obedient servant,

THURLOW WEED.

In April Mr. Weed wrote to John White, of Kentucky, Speaker in Congress from 1841 to 1843, saying, "The time has come when a President is to be nominated. The outlook for Mr. Clay is as propitious as his most sanguine friend could

wish. The party is practically united. Were it not that we have to select a Vice-President, there would be no need of a convention. Mr. Clay, after he has been presented to the people, will be written to for his opinion on all sorts of subjects by various people. Designing men will use simple-minded men to get something to misrepresent him. Mr. Clay has been forty years before the public. His views and principles are sufficiently well understood. Intelligent men know perfectly what they are. The only new question since he retired from the Senate is that [the Texas question] upon which he has already expressed convictions satisfactory to the people. I see that he is to be in Washington in a few days, and, if the suggestion meets your views, show him this letter."

A week after receiving Mr. Weed's letter Mr. White replied, "I have shown your letter to Mr. Clay. After reading it with great care he said, 'Mr. Weed is right. You may say to him that I shall write no letters.'"

The Whig national convention met at Baltimore on the 1st of May, 1844, and nominated Henry Clay for President. Two years before, at the Whig state convention in New York, Mr. Weed suggested the passage of a resolution calling for a national convention to name a Vice-President and frame a platform, and such a resolution was adopted. The idea of nominating anybody but Mr. Clay for President was not for a moment entertained. Theodore Frelinghuysen, of New Jersey, became the nominee for Vice-President, and the Baltimore convention adjourned. On the 27th of May the Democrats nominated James K. Polk and Silas Wright. Mr. Wright declined, and Mr. Dallas, of Pennsylvania, was substituted as a candidate for Vice-President.

[MR. CLAY TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *May 6, 1844.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — Your letter has been duly received by me since my arrival at this place, and hence the delay in my transmission of an answer. I do not now recollect the purport of the letter, from Mr. Dickinson, to which you refer; but you may be assured that it made no unfavorable impression on my mind toward anybody, least of all towards Governor Seward, whose determination to give cordial and efficient support to the Whig cause I have never doubted.

The nomination of Mr. Frelinghuysen was no doubt unexpected by you, as it certainly was by me. I think, nevertheless, it is a most judicious selection, and, if he does not add any strength — which, however, I think he will do — he will take away none from the ticket. The only regret about it is that the friends of so many able and good men should have been disappointed in regard to the selection of their favorites.

I do not think I ever witnessed such a state of utter disorder, confusion, and decomposition as that which the Democratic party now presents. Many believe that their convention will abandon Mr. Van Buren and take up some one else. That is not my opinion, unless he chooses voluntarily to withdraw. I think he is really the strongest man in their party.

I am sure you will be pleased to hear from me that I am firmly convinced that my opinion on the Texas question will do me no prejudice at the South. I remain, with great respect,

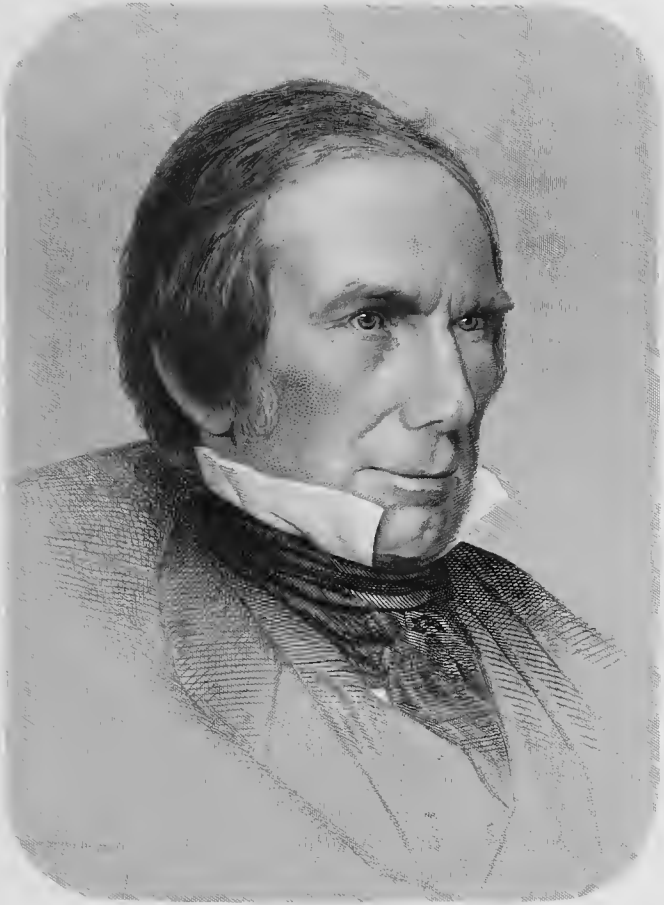
Your friend and obedient servant, H. CLAY.

There is no history so unerring as a bundle of old letters. No amount of biographical dissection could bring the reader so close to Henry Clay as he does here by his own hand. He was now about to stand for the highest office in the gift of the Republic for the third and last time. The election was to turn on the question of admitting Texas as a slave state. To that proposition the Democrats were publicly committed; it was evident that they would receive the entire pro-slavery vote. There was no reason to doubt Mr. Clay's success, if his canvass was wisely guided. It was clear that he had nothing to gain by courting the South, and everything to lose by alienating the free spirit of the North. How this great man was self-deceived! In regard to Mr. Frelinghuysen, he was seriously in error. That nomination by alienating a certain foreign element was a direct loss to the Whig ticket. He was equally at fault in predicting the nomination of Mr. Van Buren, and again in rating him the strongest man in the Democratic party. His "opinion on the Texas question," as expressed by Mr. Clay in his Alabama letter, may not have done him "prejudice at the South," but by needlessly inflaming opposition at the North, it destroyed for all time "Royal Harry's" brilliant presidential prospects. The canvass opened early, and the Whigs began work with zeal and confidence. On the adjournment of the New York legislature an address, signed by the Whig members, written by Mr.









*H. Clay*



Weed, was submitted to the people. In his paper he gave the Democrats "Annexation and Slavery," "British Free Trade," and a "Forty Million Dollar Debt to Pay," every time the office-boy called for copy.

"I am reading your editorials every day," wrote Washington Hunt, "sometimes deploring the cruelty of your trusted blade, sometimes aroused by the boldness of your sallies, continually delighted by your dexterity in fence, and always admiring the profuse intermingling of general sentiments and happy conceits. It seems like a perpetual feast, and indulgence only sharpens the appetite. . . . Over-loaded as my time is with engagements, I must endeavor to give you my ideas of the political situation. I need not speak of what has been done in Congress and what left undone. You will find many matters worthy of comment. Talmadge has been made Governor of Wisconsin. All things considered, I do not regret it, except that I feel mortified to see him take a commission under this miserable administration. But his position had become unpleasant,<sup>1</sup> as you know, and I am glad to see him put out of misery. It will also relieve his friends from many annoyances. . . . I perceive that our friend Collier<sup>2</sup> is inclined to hold Fillmore to a rigid construction of his letter;<sup>3</sup> but so far as I can judge at this distance you are right, and Fillmore is the man. I believe he is the strongest. We shall carry the State, but I assure you we have no strength to spare, especially since Charles King and other antediluvians of our party will not permit the Irish or the Dutch to vote the Whig ticket. Apropos, I am exceedingly indignant at this 'Native American' movement, and the folly of our people in giving their aid and countenance to disorganizers. . . . We shall expect to see you at Rochester at the convention."

"I wish to say to you," wrote George W. Patterson, "that you are right, as usual, on the question of Governor. After Mr. Frelinghuysen was named for Vice-President, it struck me that Fillmore above all others was the man. You may rest assured he will help Mr. Clay to a large number of good men's votes. Mr. Clay's slaves and his old duel would have hurt him with

<sup>1</sup> On account of his supporting Tyler.

<sup>2</sup> John A. Collier, of Binghampton, afterwards State Comptroller. He nominated Fillmore for Vice-President at the Whig Convention of 1848.

<sup>3</sup> Disclaiming any desire for the gubernatorial nomination.

some men, who will now vote the ticket. Fillmore is a favorite everywhere; and among the Methodists, where 'Old Father Fillmore' is almost worshiped, they will go him with a rush. Who but John A. King at the East will take the lieutenancy? If Collier was not above it, he would do. Some of our Whigs were going to take Verplanck, until they saw your answer to the 'Argus' a short time ago. . . . We propose to have a rouser about the 9th of July. I have written for Fillmore and Hawley, and as soon as the day is fixed, we will invite other speakers from abroad. . . . What course will J. C. Spencer take? I think he can't go for Polk and Texas. I have just heard from the Loco-Foco meeting at Mayville. After all their drumming and running with handbills, 'come and hear Major Davezac, the aid of General Jackson,' etc., they succeeded in numbering exactly 168 Locos, all told (including the county judges, as the court was in session). The valiant Major did not appear, but the Right Hon. Colonel Felix O'Daughaday, Judge of Common Pleas, etc., etc., mounted the stump, and, as you may suppose, astonished the natives. The only flag worth notice was got up by Postmaster Nichols, of Westfield. It was one of the true Texas stamp, with a solitary star, the glorious stars and stripes being abandoned. Such is Loco-Focoism in old Chautauqua."

1844. — Mr. Weed's advice was accepted by the state convention, and Millard Fillmore was nominated for Governor. "So I am 'in for it,' am I?" he wrote to Mr. Weed, on learning this result. "There is now no escape, though I had no desire for the office, and still less for the nomination. . . . There is a great deal of enthusiasm here [in Buffalo]. We have but two things to fear. First, the Abolition vote; second, that our friends will mistake these great meetings for the election, and omit to take the requisite steps to canvass every town by school districts, and furnish proper information to doubtful men, and make necessary arrangements to bring every Whig to the polls. Cassius M. Clay can do much to aid us on the first point, and will return from Boston to the ratification meeting at Rochester, and then devote the rest of his time till election in attending meetings as we shall think best. Some system is necessary, that the ground may not be traveled over twice. Our committee will send you a list of appointments to-day for Or-

leans, Erie, Wyoming, and Genesee, and we trust the state committee will perfect the list as soon as possible. Have it first published in some Abolition paper and then in our own papers. This will carry the notice in a suitable manner to those whom we are most anxious to have it reach. . . . On the second point our state committee must act promptly. No time is to be lost."

"Our prospects continue very good in this quarter," wrote Washington Hunt to Mr. Weed, as election approached, "although Mr. Clay has given his friends much unnecessary trouble. We had the Abolitionists in a good way, but Mr. Clay seems determined that they shall not be allowed to vote for him. I believe his letter will lose us more than two hundred votes in this county [Niagara]. Cassius M. Clay will be at Boston on the 19th, and intends returning to this State. His powerful usefulness is much weakened by the last letter of Mr. Clay's; yet he has a way of presenting the Texas question in clear and striking points of light, and he can do much good in some of the Abolition counties, such as Madison. I hope you will make it a point to see him, and give him such advice as you think useful touching his future movements. I dread that with all his efforts he may not counteract the influence of the letter, coming as it does at this critical moment, when half the Abolitionists were on a pivot."

"Yours of November 4th," wrote Governor Patterson, "predicting our total defeat, was duly received. It was in my bones all summer, as I told you in a former letter, and I could never get it out; but, like you, I made battle with a determination to succeed if possible. Some thought that my connection with the land office ought to prevent my taking part in politics, but I do not so understand my position. Of the Locos I have no favors to ask, and if my employers are not satisfied with my whigging, all they have to do is to tell me to quit my place, and I am off for home at once. But my mouth shall not be closed by friends or foes. I addressed the people this fall at about twenty-five different places in the county. On one occasion I left home at two P. M. on Monday, traveled eight miles with my own conveyance, spoke seven and a half hours at three different places, and got home at sunrise Wednesday morning. . . . I hear some talk about your leaving the 'Evening Journal,' and I protest against it most earnestly and solemnly. I care not what the 'Natives,'

anti-education, or Clay men of 1840 say about your connection with that paper. What did such men ever do towards sustaining the 'Journal' when in its infancy? The establishment received more curses than coppers from them, and are they now to dictate to its patrons who shall edit the paper? I trust not. They may dictate as much as they please for the 'Slippery Elm'<sup>1</sup> near you, and for the 'New York Commercial,' but we of western New York, — of the 'infected district,' — have some say about the 'Evening Journal,' which is our paper, — not theirs. Our young men have taken it as their guide in politics, as they have the Bible for their standard in religion, and all the Clay men of 1840 in creation shall not deprive them of it. You must consult our friends, and not be moulded by the whims of a set of fanatics."

The contest was fairly fought and won when Mr. Clay's famous letter made its appearance. That document found the Birney vote a straggling faction, of no special account to anybody, and straightway transformed it into an element of decisive influence. Reinforced by eleventh-hour Abolitionists, who claimed of all things to be opposed to the annexation of Texas, this element sacrificed enough votes upon its candidate to make James K. Polk President. New York would have saved the Whigs, but that was not to be. Thanks to the "third party," New York went against the state and national Whig candidates, Silas Wright becoming Governor.

"The country owes much of its misrule and misery," wrote Mr. Weed, "to the action of minorities, — well-meaning, patriotic, but misguided minorities. . . . The election of Mr. Polk means that Texas will be annexed to the United States. In all rational probability, this gain to the slave power insures permanent slave supremacy in the administration of the government. Such, at all events, was the known and avowed object of the annexation. That question, and that question alone, produced the nomination of Mr. Polk. It was that upon which the presidency hung, first in the nominating convention, and then at the ballot-boxes, where the people ratified the act of the convention. This is the precise truth, to deny which is both dishonest and unwise.

<sup>1</sup> The *Argus* office was located near the "old elm tree corner" in Albany.



“For whatever of calamity ensues, the people have themselves alone to blame. If New York and Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Maine shall become weary of their bondage, the fault is their own, for they gave their free limbs to the manacles with which they now go clanking through the world. . . . Whenever and wherever the rights and interests of the North and South have clashed, they have owed their triumph to our treachery. The political, numerical, intellectual, moral, and physical power and strength of the country resides north of ‘Mason and Dixon’s line,’ but our ‘dough-faces’ have frittered it all away. We have had the power to confine slavery to its constitutional limits, and it was our imperative duty to have exerted this power. But how lamentably have we failed in the discharge of this duty. The South is indebted for every acre of acquired slave territory to the recusancy of the North. The people have tamely and ingloriously allowed political leaders to surrender, campaign after campaign, the fastnesses and bulwarks of freedom for the ‘loaves and fishes’ of office. All that is important and valuable in policy, and all that is dear and precious in principle, has been yielded by ‘dough-faced’ representatives, to obtain places in cabinets, missions abroad, and ‘spoils’ at home. And the result of all this baseness and treachery is, that slavery not only boasts a President chosen expressly to enlarge its boundaries, but has acquired a decided preponderance in the Senate of the United States. . . .

“Abolition newspapers and Abolition conventions begin to clamor for remonstrances against the admission of Texas. Truth is, indeed, sometimes stranger than fiction! But for the influence and action of these same Abolition newspapers and conventions there would have been neither danger nor possibility of this extension of the territory and augmentation of the power of slavery. They first, by their political organization, secure the election of a President who was designated expressly and solely to annex Texas to the Union, and then remonstrate against a wrong which could not have been perpetrated without their consent and coöperation. And such has been the fatuity of Abolition, in its political efforts, for the last ten years, by electing members of Congress avowedly and notoriously opposed to emancipation, and then sending petitions for the abolition of slavery to representatives committed and

pledged against the object of the petitioners. The result of the late presidential election, however disastrous in other respects, will open the eyes of the people to the reckless designs and fatal tendencies of ultra Abolitionists. The fifteen thousand votes which were worse than squandered in New York, to say nothing of the thousands thrown away elsewhere, have not only made shipwreck of every other public interest, but threaten to extend the links and strengthen the chains of slavery. This, though at too great cost, will cure the evil. Birneyism will not again have power, by casting its weight into the scale of slavery, to make freedom kick the beam. In the mean time, though demagogues have run their race, the cause of emancipation will be onward. The Whig party, as philanthropic as patriotic, will steadily pursue its enlightened policy, until measures designed and calculated to secure the elevation and prosperity of those who are free, and the ransom and happiness of all who are held in bondage throughout the Union, have been carried into full and triumphant effect. . . .

“I wish there was a voice loud enough to reach all ears, and sufficiently influential to impress upon the people the great principle of obedience to the popular will, as expressed through the ballot-boxes, so that, instead of a theory, we may have practically a representative government. When a great public measure has been at issue between political parties, discussed in Congress, submitted to the people, and their decision had upon it, let that decision, right or wrong, be considered as binding upon Congress. In this way only can the people be made to act upon their responsibilities. In this way only can they be made to appreciate the value of the elective franchise. In this way only can they be made to think and act for themselves. In this way only can they be brought to realize that a sovereign power for good or for evil resides with themselves.”

## CHAPTER X.

1844-1846.

A WINTER IN THE TROPICS. — MR. WEED'S BOOK. — DR. FRANKLIN'S RULE. — WASHINGTON HUNT ON POLITICAL CORRUPTION. — RETURN TO ALBANY. — THE STATE CANVASS. — GOVERNOR YOUNG. — "MONEY WELL LAID OUT FOR OUR CONCERN." — TEXAS JOINS THE UNION. — WAR WITH ENGLAND THREATENED. — "NATIVE AMERICANISM." — LETTERS FROM BISHOP HUGHES, DANIEL WEBSTER, AND MR. GREELEY.

MR. WEED stood upon the deck of the ship *Cornelia* as she cast anchor off the west coast of the island of Santa Cruz on the 5th of December, 1844. This was his first glimpse of life in the tropics. On the following day, established in the most comfortable lodgings that could be obtained, he gave himself up to a half year of indolence and enjoyment. It was a sorry climax to the administration of Mr. Tyler, — keeping up the fight for Mr. Clay, when there ceased to be any prospect of his election. Mr. Weed maintained a bold exterior, but quietly warned his friends that all was lost unless New York city made great inroads on the Democratic majority. When it was plain that control of state and nation had passed into the hands of the "Loco-Focos," he was glad of an opportunity to escape for a time from public affairs. Physicians prescribed a southern trip for his daughter Harriet, and he took her to the West Indies.

It was now with abundant leisure, and deprived of all former methods of occupation, that he began to jot down reminiscences of his life, thinking, as his daughter told him, that at some future day they might interest his children. They were written with no thought of publication. In fact, when he started for home he forgot all about the manuscript, which was, however, secured by Miss Weed, as she was leaving for the ship. Then for twenty years it was not mentioned, until one day, in 1865, when, finding the papers, she took them to him and began to read them aloud. "What is all that?" he asked. She recalled to his mind the neglected narrative, and, hoping thus to

give him congenial employment, declared that it ought to be finished and published. "I don't know about that," said he, with a smile.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *December 30, 1865.*

MY DEAR WEED, — Our friends are so faithful that we ought to be tolerant of their very small weaknesses. They do not see always as we do the wisdom that lies in the exercise of reasonable self-confidence, especially where we are dealing with strangers.

As for writing a book, you ought to leave one; I ought not. How either could make one without making the other *seem* responsible, is a difficulty. My book, if I wrote one, would be charged to you, just as much as if you wrote it; yours, in like manner, to me. Perhaps the ostensible link may be severed by death or political accident, and it will be well for you to be prepared for it.

Your faithful friend,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

So many friends concurred in this view — that Mr. Weed should go on with his writing — that finally, in 1869, though in poor health, he took up the work, with his daughter Harriet as amanuensis. And thus, with the exception of the few introductory pages, his "Autobiography" was written entirely by dictation, after he had passed his seventy-first year.

Often Mr. Frederick W. Seward took Harriet's place. He had grown up from boyhood as much at ease and as welcome in Mr. Weed's house as in that of his father, dividing his early life between Auburn and Albany. In the preparation of a volume requiring constant reference to newspaper files, letters, and public documents, loss of vision was a very serious deprivation. Mr. Seward's genial presence and accurate knowledge of public affairs constituted a refreshing and sustaining influence. When he went to Washington, in 1877, as Assistant Secretary of State, the position which he filled during the administrations of Presidents Lincoln and Johnson, the narrative was laid aside until his return. As time went on, it came to be Mr. Weed's hope that, under the Providence by which he was so long and so mercifully guided, he might finish the book. That he did not was owing to several causes, chiefly to the increasing infirmities of old age, and the perpetual and perplexing appeals for employment and assistance to which he was subjected by numerous friends and acquaintances. He felt, moreover, after

a long life of almost ceaseless contention, an overwhelming wish not to speak unkindly of any man, but to end his days in peace; and it was difficult, while cherishing such feelings, to trench upon questions which still excite antagonism, or to express opinions concerning some men who are yet alive.

1844-1845. — "The transition from the old year to the new," he wrote at Santa Cruz, "is eminently a season for reflection, and particularly with those who are separated from family, friends, and country. Links in friendship's chain are brightened by absence. Distance not only lends enchantment to the view, but stirs and quickens the emotions of the heart. Memory charges itself with the grateful duty of calling up half-forgotten kindnesses and benefactions. Here, upon a mere speck of land, encircled by seas which separate me from the busy world, a review of the last thirty years overwhelms me with a deep sense of obligation. Few persons, so humble and undeserving, have such manifold reasons, first to God and then to fast-devoted friends, for heartfelt offerings of gratitude. It is common — too common, as I cannot but believe — to deride and depreciate friendship, as a name for man's illusion given, which certainly has not been my experience. On the contrary, it has been my good fortune to find friends whose fidelity, like hooks of steel, remains unbent and unbroken. It would be truly delightful to remember how much of the world's good I have enjoyed, if the recollection were not rebuked by the consciousness of how little of that good I have conferred upon others. If I had always acted upon Dr. Franklin's golden rule of 'letting the good offices go round,' of bestowing favors received upon neighbors, the burden of obligation would be lightened. But in opening such an account, I should find a fearful balance against me. So, like other debtors, whose present means are insufficient to liquidate the claims against them, I can only promise to pay hereafter. In the meantime, though my greeting will be long in reaching them, I tender to all friends the congratulations of the season, with warmest and heartiest wishes for their continued prosperity and enduring happiness. The new year anniversaries, which in joyous succession have been celebrated at Albany, come back to me consecrated by a thousand endearing recollections. I see friends and acquaintances, with elastic step and beaming eyes, exchanging congratulations through every

street of our ancient metropolis. I can see, too, the open door, the hountifully-laden board, and the cordial welcome that awaits each visitor in his cheerful rounds. I can imagine, also, deep snow and merry bells, or at least the icy streets and piercing winds of a northern winter; but those of you who have not hailed a new year in a tropical climate can form no idea of what is passing here. The fields are clothed in verdure; the trees are loaded with fruit. The rays of the sun, as intensely hot as those we encounter in July and August, are shining upon us. We sit with open doors and windows to catch every breath that stirs."

[WASHINGTON HUNT TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *February 15, 1845.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — If I could envy you anything in this world, it would be your happy condition at the present time, luxuriating in tropical fruits under the warmth of a genial sun, withdrawn from such scenes of political outrage and profligacy as afflict and disgrace our country.

The hope which you express that the dominant party here will proceed with energy and dispatch to carry out their boldest measures is in the way of being realized to the utmost of your desire. The journals of the day keep you informed, no doubt, of the doings of Congress. You will see that the Texas resolutions passed the House, and are now under discussion in the Senate. There is more than an even chance that some resolution will pass at this session. If, however, that calamity shall be averted, nothing can delay the consummation of the measure beyond another Congress.

Texas will be brought into the Union. We must prepare for it. There is no escape. With the South united in sentiment and the whole power of the government thrown into the scale to secure the northern Democracy, it is idle to think of resisting the current. It will sweep over every obstacle. . . . Washington is swarming with applicants for office under Polk. Such an army of office-seekers was never seen, and the cry is, still they come. Meanwhile Tyler is busy filling every possible place with his own favorites and retainers. This, of course, has thrown the legitimates<sup>1</sup> into an agony of disappointment.

Sincerely yours,

WASHINGTON HUNT.

<sup>1</sup> Meaning the Loco-Focos. After Tyler had filled the offices, of course it became harder for Polk to reward his particular friends.

When Mr. Weed returned home, in the spring of 1845, he found several of his usually discreet friends committed to the support of John Young for Governor. That gentleman had not only this strength, but also the coöperation of a certain Democratic element, which was determined to prevent, if possible, the reëlection of Silas Wright. At this time the Democracy of the State were divided into "Barnburners," who opposed the further extension of slavery, and "Old Hunkers," who deprecated all agitation on this subject. Governor Wright belonged to the former class. Not relishing the combination by which it was urged, Mr. Weed could not reconcile himself to the proposed Whig candidature. Difficulties arose, however, in making another selection. Many delegates, when the convention met, were in favor of Mr. Fillmore, whereupon Mr. Young's friends presented letters declaring that Fillmore was not a candidate. It soon became evident that Mr. Young had control; and, not wishing to vote for that gentleman, Mr. Weed substituted another delegate in his place, and quietly left the convention. His instincts as to what course politicians would probably take, under given circumstances, were by no means infallible, but they were wonderfully keen and accurate. In this instance he was not deceived.

Late in the summer he visited Boston. "The tariff is working wonders in Connecticut and Massachusetts," he wrote. "Every stream seems to turn a hundred wheels. It is refreshing to see so many hardy hands, cheerful faces, and such clusters of tidy cottages. One would suppose that every house in these two states had received a new coat of paint since the tariff of 1842." He then went with Chancellor Whittlesey through Vermont, "the only State in the Union," he wrote, "which can boast of never having given a wrong presidential vote."<sup>1</sup>

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, July 16, 1845.

MR. WEED, — I missed seeing you yesterday, being detained at home by well-cleaning. I write this line only to ask when you and your folks will probably come down and pass a Saturday at my burnt-up place. [My corn is looking like plug tobacco.] I ask, first, because

<sup>1</sup> Vermont was the only State which chose Wirt electors in 1832. In 1852 it was one of only four which chose Whig electors.

we count on the visit, and secondly, because we shall probably spend one Saturday this month at Rockaway, for the sake of sea-bathing, and want to be sure of not missing you.

Don't be bothered at all by Webb's ridiculous libel suit. I would just as soon go to trial on it as not, for he could n't recover more than \$200, and it is worth that to be sued by him. If you say anything to him, he will think I want to be let off, which I don't. If he should even recover \$1,000 of me, it would be money well laid out for our concern.

If you can, come down on Friday night. I shall be glad, but do not put yourself out of your way to do it. Robinson<sup>1</sup> and I have to attend a repeal meeting in Newark, Friday night. Saturday I think we shall go to Rockaway, some of us or all, whether you can come down or not. I went down to Coney Island on Saturday afternoon — a savage place, but cool, capital bathing.

I have assurances that our government is secretly paying the expense of the outfit of myriads of emigrants to Oregon. I am afraid they will starve each other to death in those barren solitudes.

I wish you would sometime handle as it deserves the "Express's" atrocious slander on Governor Seward, that he was false to Mr. Clay last year. From the "Express" this should not have come, and if acquiesced in, there are fools who will deem it a confession. Brooks is making money, and ought not to be so desperately malicious.

Please send me three lines at once, saying whether you can come down next Saturday or the next, or at any other time, and whether you would n't like to go down with us to Rockaway. If you never bathed in the sea by moonlight or at sunrise in July, it is a pleasure you ought not to miss much longer. Rockaway is magnificent—I mean the ocean, there is nothing else there; for one night I know not its equal.

Yours,

HORACE GREELEY.

P. S. I should like to go down with you and your folks any Saturday that you would. I want to teach my boy to swim. Mrs. Greeley and Miss Fuller will go.

Texas became a State on the 27th of December, 1845, and a successful effort was made immediately thereafter to embroil the United States in a war with Mexico. It was hoped to quiet anti-slavery agitation, and add popularity to Mr. Polk's administration by a foreign contest. Congress was Democratic in both branches, and there was little difficulty in securing appropriations. Indeed, during the session, not only was war with Mexico begun, but it was insisted that the United States should take possession of a large tract of British territory lying north

<sup>1</sup> "Richelieu" Robinson, of Brooklyn, afterwards member of Congress.



of Oregon. It was demanded that England should yield all the land south of  $54^{\circ} 40'$  in that region, or else "take the consequences."

Foreseeing the drift of events, Mr. Weed conferred with Joshua R. Giddings, of Ohio, and suggested a stroke such as could emanate only from the mind of a master. Mr. Giddings had been censured in the House of Representatives, in 1842, for offering anti-slavery resolutions, had resigned his seat to throw the case back upon his district, for judgment upon his record, and had been reelected. He was now a leading Whig at Washington.

[MR. WEED TO JOSHUA R. GIDDINGS.]

ASTOR HOUSE, NEW YORK, *December 24, 1845.*

DEAR SIR, — If the President in his message plays the game of war, why not out-trump him?

Wars are sometimes national blessings, though generally the reverse. But are there not worse things than war? The Mexican War, though causeless and ugly, yet contained jewels. If war with England would give us a tariff, Canada, and freedom, shall we refuse it? But it has another aspect, the duplicity of the administration.

Were you to take this ground in one of your strong, vigorous, fifteen-minute speeches, it would blow the war and the administration sky high.

Yours truly,

THURLOW WEED.

Upon this thoroughly characteristic letter, it is not too much to say, the fate of the Whig party hinged. Mr. Giddings was emphatically opposed to war. But he comprehended the "wisdom of the serpent," which lay in Mr. Weed's suggestion, and determined to make the most of it. Accordingly, on the 5th of January, 1846, he made one of his "strong fifteen-minute speeches," in which he favored the absorption of Oregon; showed how a war with England would in all probability secure the annexation of Canada, and argued that this new accession to the United States would be radically opposed to slavery, so that, in the end, emancipation must surely result. Then he drove in the spike and clinched it on the other side by predicting a servile insurrection as soon as hostilities with England began. His speech nonplussed the South and turned the tables on the Democrats. Great Britain proposed  $49^{\circ}$  as a boundary, the frightened Senate advised Mr. Polk to accept the compromise, and war was averted.

1845-1846. — There came into prominence about this time, in New York politics, the “Native American” party,<sup>1</sup> which found a reason for being in the oppressive political domination of foreigners, particularly the ignorant Irish and Germans in our great cities. Upon this movement Mr. Weed never looked with favor.<sup>2</sup> He was a true American in hatred of all proscription. As against this form of political outlawry, he advocated a limited right of suffrage, not to be accorded except to men or women who know how to read and write. The grips, oaths, and pass-words, agreed to by “Native Americans,” he condemned absolutely.

[MR. DAWSON TO MR. WEED.]

ROCHESTER, *July 10, 1846.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — I am in something of a quandary on this Nativism question.

What do the Massachusetts Whigs mean by a “thorough revision of the naturalization laws?” We are already sufficiently tinctured with this heresy. Webster & Co. are giving hope and confidence to the old Federalists here, who are ready to d— the Irish on the least provocation. Yours truly,

GEO. DAWSON.

[BISHOP HUGHES TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *August 29, 1846.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — I told you and another dear friend in 1844, the next day after the election of Mayor Harper by Whig votes, that by his success Henry Clay had been destroyed. Has it been so, or not? Similar results will again occur, unless you and yours are careful.

There is an immense voting population in this country, unspeakably honester than the leaders of either party. They do not understand the theories of principle which distinguish party, but they understand, in a gross sense, the principles of the Constitution, as well as Judge Taney. They regard parties through their understanding of this standard. Try to make the difference between Whigs and Democrats less unequal. Do not allow the scale to kick the beam at one end.

<sup>1</sup> This was not the “Know Nothing” party of 1852-1853, although its principles were similar.

<sup>2</sup> I thank you for your correct views upon this subject, and your independence in meeting this question, upon which the Loco-Focos are determined to drive us into a dilemma. — Washington Hunt to Mr. Weed, December, 1845.

Justice, right, liberality will be sufficient on your side, and if these be honestly persevered in, the "slang" on the other will be, depend upon it, unavailing.

It is a terrible thing to see a giant's chair occupied, not filled, by a pigmy. But, for Heaven's sake, do not reverse the order which has authorized dwarfs to speak as giants, and compel giants to fetter their tongues, instead of speaking out in the big, broad, honest dialect of their own generous nature. I speak by hints. But you will understand.

There is a friend dear to both who either has grown, or will grow up, to the required dimensions, if your party are worth ten groats. Be careful, save him; let him, as he will (for the stuff is in him), train and prepare himself. There is no chair which his heart and intellect are not worthy and capacious enough to fill. The time has come which will try what kind of metal you and he are made of. So far its sound is clear and not unmusical. The attempt on the part of the ingrates who owe to his popularity, in a great measure, that they are what they are, the attempt to crowd upon him, or, as Greeley would say, to "crowd him out," will make him exceedingly popular. His enemies have contrived to get their eyes in the back of their heads.

Yours ever,

† JOHN, B. N. Y.

The second Constitution of New York, the Constitution of 1821, provided that all subordinate state officers should be appointed by the Governor or the legislature. This arrangement was never very popular, and in 1845 there was a movement inaugurated in favor of giving the choice of these officials to the people. Mr. Weed was a warm advocate of the amendment, which was voted upon in the fall of 1846, and ratified. At the same election Mr. Young was chosen Governor.

[MR. WEBSTER TO MR. WEED.]

BOSTON, *November 16, 1846.*

MY DEAR SIR, — I am, and was, quite sorry not to stay in the city time enough to see you and to exchange congratulations on the great achievement which has been accomplished in New York, — an achievement, you must allow me to say, in producing which you have had as effective an agency as any other man.

The result of the election in New York is a most portentous sign to the administration. They cannot but understand it. In my opinion new prospects open upon the country. With prudence, moderation, and discretion the Whigs can hardly lose their present ascendancy.

But whether we possess these virtues, and shall exercise them, remains to be seen.

I think that while we exhibit, in the strongest light, the evil character and tendency of the measures of the administration, we ought to stop there, without such review or censure of the past as shall displease those who, leaving former political associations, have come over to help us in our opposition to Polk.

I hope to hear that your new Constitution is adopted. There is much in it that is wrong, in my judgment; but then there is much in it that is right, and the good, I think, is likely, in time, to root out the evil.

I hope to be in New York about the 27th, and that I may meet you there.

Yours truly,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

Governor Young soon exhibited unfortunate political tendencies. He rejected the advice of the ablest members of his party. Mr. Weed declined to present the name of any friend for appointment, and throughout the administration, although he endeavored to make it respectable, visited the executive chamber not more than half a dozen times. At the beginning of his second official year the Governor intimated to a few friends that he intended to insert in his annual message a paragraph criticising Mr. Clay's attitude in regard to the Mexican War. To suppress this reference Mr. Weed called upon the executive and accomplished his object. Intoxicated by the caprice which made him Governor, Mr. Young was aspiring to be nominated for Vice-President, and the proposed paragraph was part of his plan to secure that position.

"I find a good deal of concern about war," wrote Mr. Greeley from Washington. "Webster thinks this Mexican conflict has been commenced but as a prelude and entering wedge to war with England. The 54-40's are on their high horse. I believe the administration men will keep up the war on a moderate scale this summer to avoid the season on the Rio Grande, but that in the fall they intend to concentrate twenty-five thousand to fifty thousand men, and press them on to Mexico. They mean to have California and all Northern Mexico at any rate. The way the public money flows is a caution. If we flog Mexico easily and thoroughly, it will be easy to coax the country to try England next. . . ."

"Polk is a weaker and a meaner man than you think him.

He will use himself up if he plants himself on 54-40 and refuses all accommodation. . . .

“Dawson’s remark about nominating me for commissioner has knocked that project in the head, pretty likely. No matter. But why can’t you learn the rest of us to hold our tongues, when we can say nothing but mischief?”

## CHAPTER XI.

1846-1862.

THE BUSINESS OF SWINDLING EMIGRANTS. — HOW IT ONCE FLOURISHED IN NEW YORK. — REFORM EFFORTS. — ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF EMIGRATION. — NON-PARTISAN GOVERNMENT. — OTHER CITY COMMISSIONS. — A PIER LINE ESTABLISHED. — CHARITIES AND CORRECTION. — CENTRAL PARK. — METROPOLITAN POLICE. — ALVAH HUNT. — EVENTS AT WASHINGTON. — A TOUR THROUGH THE NORTHWEST.

THEY who visit the neat and well-regulated institution at which emigrants to the United States by way of the port of New York are now received into this country, see nothing to remind them of the fact that forty years ago, when a foreigner landed on these shores with the expectation of becoming an American citizen, he was immediately subjected to the combined attacks of boarding-house thieves, ticket-speculators, and other plunderers, who regarded each new comer, without distinction of age or sex, as legitimate prey. Ignorant of our language, geography, customs, and laws, emigrants formerly fell easy victims to organized rapacity. Whole families were frequently robbed of all that they possessed; children were stolen, and friendless young women, seeking relatives or employment in a strange land, were outraged.

For many years these abuses threw a heavy burden of taxation upon the city, which took charge of destitute foreigners through its board of Almshouse Commissioners, a body essentially political in character and wholly unfit for this service. Said Congressman Morton, of New York, now United States Minister to France, speaking in the House of Representatives, in April, 1880, "There were foisted upon our community large numbers of paupers, lunatics, and criminals, and there grew up in our port a class of men who preyed upon the poor and ignorant, crippling and oftentimes so completely stripping them as to make them charges upon the public bounty. These evils grew

to an alarming extent. . . . Finally the efforts of philanthropic and public-spirited citizens resulted in the establishment of an institution which, for the motives of those who inspired it and for the character of the men who managed it, stood among the most benign and efficient in the land. Through the exertions of Thurlow Weed, Archbishop Hughes, Moses H. Grinnell, Charles O'Connor, Robert B. Minturn, and other eminent citizens of New York, the passage of the bill to organize this board [of Emigration Commissioners] was secured."

Personal knowledge of a specific case served to call Mr. Weed's attention to this subject in the first instance. Brief examination satisfied him that grave wrongs were constantly practiced, and he began at once to see what could be accomplished in the way of reform. Hardly had he taken the first step, however, when he was set upon savagely by "scalpers" and their beneficiaries. Combining together, they hired lawyers to defend their rascalities. For exposing the "ring" and its operations in his paper, Mr. Weed was deluged with libel suits. On one occasion he was required to appear on the same day and at the same hour before seven different magistrates sitting in seven different and distant towns. These attacks not producing the desired impression, he was threatened with personal violence.

Finally, when he had kept up the fight, entirely at his own expense, for eight months, and had been unable to accomplish anything, he determined to bring the question before the legislature. He consulted with Robert B. Minturn, for many years a warm personal friend, who became deeply interested. It was discovered that the then owners of the site of "Castle Garden" were disposed to part with that property on reasonable terms. Mr. Weed drew up a bill moderately increasing the commutation or "head-money" tax, and providing for the appointment of a board to be called the Commissioners of Emigration.

The introduction of this measure brought "scalpers," Almshouse Commissioners, and all their friends to Albany. Fernando Wood, then Mayor of New York, joined in protesting against any innovation in connection with the emigrant system. He called a meeting of the New York common council, at which an official delegation was deputed to go to Albany and oppose this "interference" with the concerns of the metropolis. The

Mayor's committee consisted of two Whigs and three Democrats. One of the Whigs was Thomas McElrath, an enlightened citizen and one of Mr. Weed's friends. Upon ascertaining the objects contemplated by the bill, he gave it earnest support. On looking into the question, Abram Wakeman, the other Whig Alderman, experienced a similar conversion.

By resolution of the Assembly, a special committee was appointed to investigate alleged abuses, and their report, brought in shortly afterwards, abundantly sustained the necessity for legislative action.

Your committee must confess [they said] that they had no conception of, nor would they have believed, the extent to which these frauds and outrages have been practiced, until they came to investigate them. As soon as a ship loaded with emigrants reaches our shores it is boarded by a class of men called "runners," either in the employment of boarding-house keepers or forwarding establishments, soliciting custom for their employers. If they cannot succeed in any other way in getting possession and control over the objects of their prey, they proceed to take charge of their luggage, and take it to some boarding-house for safe-keeping, generally under the assurance that they will charge nothing for carriage-hire or storage. . . . The keepers of these houses induce these people to stay a few days, and when they come to leave usually charge them three or four times as much as they agreed or expected to pay, and exorbitant prices for storing their luggage; and in case of inability to pay, their luggage is detained as security. . . .

Your committee have been shocked to find that a large portion of the frauds committed upon these innocent and in many cases ignorant foreigners are committed by their own countrymen who have come here before them; for we find the German preying upon the German, the Irish upon the Irish, etc., etc.

1847. — Under the old law, steamship companies were compelled to pay a tax of one dollar *per capita* on emigrants landed in New York, and this money, in the hands of the board of Almshouse Commissioners, was an element of patronage. Thus the question assumed a party aspect. Happily, however, as its real character developed, many Democrats rose above party considerations. The Assembly passed the bill,<sup>1</sup> and it went to the

<sup>1</sup> John E. Develin, of New York, then a Tammany Assemblyman, voted in the affirmative.



Senate, in which House opponents of the measure were determined that it should be defeated.

While the bill was pending in the Senate, the New York common council called a public meeting, at which it was proposed to denounce the measure and all members of the legislature who gave it their support. Hearing of this movement, Mr. Weed went to New York with his friend, Andrew Carrigan, one of the Democrats who came to his relief.<sup>1</sup> Reaching the city, they were informed that Charles O'Connor was to preside, and that eminent gentlemen were to make speeches. Among the latter were mentioned the late District Attorney, John McKeon, Alderman William T. Brady, afterwards Mayor, and Recorder Morris. The brief interval was not lost. Archbishop Hughes, always quick to respond in a good cause, joined in the effort to protect the bill. Mr. Weed called upon Mr. O'Connor, Alderman Brady, Owen W. Brennan, Mr. McKeon, and other influential friends, while the Archbishop and Mr. Carrigan were equally active. The next evening the meeting was held. It had been industriously advertised by the boarding-house interest, and the hall was crowded. Five minutes had not elapsed when it was found that the meeting would act in a different fashion from what had been anticipated. The chairman, Mr. O'Connor, was for the bill; three out of the five speakers advocated it with great effect, and resolutions were passed calling upon the Senate to hasten its passage.<sup>2</sup>

Soon after this, the time arrived when, in the process of legislation, it was proper to fill the blank in the act with the names of commissioners. Mr. Weed met Mr. Carrigan for this purpose, at the residence of Ira Harris, then State Senator from the Albany district, and chairman of the committee to which

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Carrigan emigrated to this country from Ireland in 1822, and knew from personal experience something of the wrongs suffered by his countrymen on landing in America. His zealous coöperation with Mr. Weed in this matter cost him his political position.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. O'Connor gleefully recalled this meeting in an after-dinner conversation at his Nantucket home, in the summer of 1883. "There used to be at that time in New York [he added] a political sect called the 'Vote-yourself-a-farm' party. I remember that they endeavored to get control of our meeting, in order to have resolutions passed declaring that every man should vote himself a farm. But when their first speaker began to talk, I ruled him out of order."

the measure was referred. Up to this time Mr. Weed had not exchanged a word with anybody upon this subject. All that he desired was that men of high character, removed from partisan influences, and who would devote themselves to this cause without other reward than the luxury of being useful, should be selected. Sitting apart from each other, the three gentlemen mentioned wrote on slips of paper such names as occurred to them, and then compared results. Mr. Weed wrote on his slip: "Gulian C. Verplanck, Robert B. Minturn, David C. Colden, Andrew Carrigan, James Boorman, William F. Havemeyer, Jacob Harvey, William T. Brady, Francis B. Stryker, Leopold Bierwith, Gregory Dillon." These gentlemen constituted the first Board of Commissioners of Emigration of the State of New York. The Senate stood at a tie, on the 5th of May, 1847, when Lieutenant Governor Addison Gardiner, Mr. Weed's old friend of Manlius days, now President of the Senate, voted in the affirmative, and the bill became a law.

The first report of the commissioners showed that while much good had been accomplished, there were still abuses in connection with emigration which they were powerless to reach. To complete the reform, another appeal was made to legislation. A bill was framed designating Castle Garden an emigrant depot, at which all emigrant passengers must be landed, under the control of the commission, and a clause was added, increasing the power at the Garden of John A. Kennedy, chief of the New York police. These amendments provoked another combined effort at obstruction. Ticket agents, boarding-house keepers, "baggage smashers," and railway runners appeared again at Albany, in augmented force, and proved even more vituperative and troublesome than before. Many of them had grown wealthy from their ill-gotten gains, and they were beaten only after another sharp contest.

Checkmated at last, in New York, the speculators removed the field of their operations to Albany — where a transfer was made from the river to the canal — and to Europe, where for a time they enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity. Thousands of emigrants began to arrive at Castle Garden with worthless railroad tickets, for which they had paid two or three times what actual transfer would have cost. Fraudulent drafts were given in exchange for currency, and unprotected women were assigned

to houses of disreputable character. To combat these developments, the Board of Emigration was granted further powers. Mr. Weed's friend, David Nelligan, became their efficient agent at Albany. For the foreign service, Robert Murray was designated. With their own indorsement, and with strong letters from Governor Marcy, then Secretary of State in the Cabinet of President Pierce, Mr. Murray visited England, Ireland, France, Belgium, Prussia, Italy, and Holland, and in each of these countries, through his efforts, measures were taken which dealt a final blow to the business of swindling emigrants.

Thus originated a commission which has protected millions of our fellow creatures from imposition and robbery, and saved millions of dollars to the city of New York.

Among successors of the first board have been such men as A. C. Kingsland, George W. Blunt, Jacob A. Westervelt, Edwin D. Morgan, E. F. Purdy, Cyrus Curtiss, John P. Cuming, A. A. Low, William Jellinghaus, and Wilson G. Hunt. By them and their associates and successors the character and influence of this commission has been perpetuated. Six governors of the State yielded to Mr. Weed the selection of new appointees when vacancies occurred.

It is proper in this place to add that Mr. Weed was responsible for other New York commissions, whose work has been no less important.

From 1830 to 1854 the encroachments from New York and Brooklyn of dock, wharf, and pier owners proceeded so recklessly as seriously to threaten the navigation of the East River. To meet this abuse he suggested and the legislature passed a bill authorizing the Governor to appoint five commissioners, whose duty it became, in defense of the commerce of the State, to designate experienced surveyors to regulate the construction of docks, wharves, and piers, and to establish an exterior line beyond which no obstruction could be permitted. Of course for this service men of the strictest integrity were required. Strong influences were brought to bear in favor of the appointment of commissioners who would act in behalf of political or corporate interests. Mr. Weed presented the names of James Bowen, of New York, George W. Patterson, of Chautauqua, John Vanderbilt, of Kings, Preston King, of St. Lawrence, and John A. Talcott, of Erie. Although he was urged to make

other selections, these gentlemen were appointed by Governor Clark, and their duties were discharged with wisdom and impartiality. They reclaimed lands worth vastly more to the State than their expenses and salaries.

The original Central Park Commission was also Mr. Weed's personal selection, though here his responsibility was accidental. When the bill providing for the appointment of commissioners to locate and lay out the Park was under discussion in the Assembly, the section in which names were to be inserted was, as usual, left blank. No agreement had been reached, when it was suggested that Mr. Weed be asked to fill the blank, if he would consent to do so, and in that arrangement all parties interested acquiesced. Thus called upon, he named Robert J. Dillon, James E. Cooley, Charles H. Russell, J. F. Butterworth, Andrew H. Green, John A. Gray, James Hogg, Waldo Hutchings, Thomas C. Fields, Charles W. Elliott, and William K. Strong, the first Board of Commissioners of Central Park.

Then came the creation of the non-partisan Board of Metropolitan Police Commissioners. When efforts in this direction began, the Whigs were in power, and were unwilling to part with advantages long enjoyed by their opponents. Finally, however, in 1857, the act establishing the Metropolitan Police district and force was passed. On the 23d of April, in that year, the board of commissioners held their first meeting; present, Simeon Draper, James Bowen, James W. Nye, Jacob Chollwell, and James S. T. Stranahan. Fernando Wood, Mayor of New York, and Samuel S. Powell, Mayor of Brooklyn, were also members of the commission, *ex officio*, but they denied the constitutionality of the law, appealed to the courts, and made bloody resistance against the new organization. Suits brought in their behalf were carried to the Court of Appeals, which, in July, 1857, handed down a decision sustaining the validity of the law. Soon afterwards the Mayors of New York and Brooklyn took their seats in the board.<sup>1</sup> Under the amended act, James Bowen, James G. Bergen, and Thomas C. Acton were constituted commissioners in 1860. These gentlemen, with John A. Kennedy, Superintendent, carried into practice the most approved civil service principles. They divorced the de-

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the struggle between Mayor Wood's and the Metropolitan Police, see Stone's *History of New York City*, pp. 531-535.

partment from politics. Appointments and promotions were awarded by the test of fitness, and not from personal considerations or outside pressure. The result was that the police force of New York, which had been one of the worst in the country, took rank as the finest.

Next followed the non-partisan Board of Charities and Correction, for which both parties held Mr. Weed responsible. The bill creating this commission, passed in April, 1860, vested the power of appointment in the City Comptroller, who asked Mr. Weed to name the commissioners. He responded by suggesting Isaac Bell, Moses H. Grinnell, James B. Nicholson, and Simeon Draper, two Democrats and two Republicans, under whom for five years the cause of humanity, the interests of taxpayers, and the character of the municipal government were vigilantly guarded. When new selections were made, a Democratic Comptroller asked Mr. Weed to nominate two Republican members, and in response he suggested James Bowen and Owen W. Brennan, who were appointed.

1847.—In the fall of 1847 Alvah Hunt was elected State Treasurer. "I feel grateful to you for getting me nominated," he wrote in October, "but I may injure instead of benefiting the ticket. Our relations are so friendly, you being the 'Riche-lieu,' and I one of your 'serfs,' that Collier, Cook & Co. swear they will take this opportunity to punish the 'Weed and Seward clique.'" As his official term was closing Mr. Hunt wrote: "Let me take this occasion to thank you for all you have done for me and mine. I am under obligations to you that I can never repay, save with heartfelt gratitude. Parting with the society of yourself and the 'immortal few' will be all that will thud at my heart-strings on leaving Albany. You brought me into public life, and expanded my feeble mind to its utmost capacity. God knows why you did it; I don't. It has made one more dear to me than words can express very happy and grateful. She unites in kind regards to you and yours."

At the same election Mr. Fillmore was chosen State Comptroller, and his letters were equally cordial. Another of Mr. Weed's friends, whose letters lose none of their sparkling quality by reason of the lapse of years, was now busy at "Old Harvard."

[WILLIAM KENT TO MR. WEED.]

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., *February 3, 1847.*

DEAR MR. DICTATOR, — How do you do? How do you look? How do you talk, smoke, laugh, tell stories? Are you pleasant, as of yore, or have grim politics metamorphosed you into a Talleyrand or Metternich? I do not know how we agree in politics. I rather fear our courses are diverging. Certainly they are if you think with Horace Greeley, whom I abominate as the most pernicious journalist that ever pressed crazy reforms or urged to madness rampant Democracy.

I retain tender recollections of our companionship, our confabs over a sympathizing cigar, and jovial nights at the Eagle. Shall I ever forget them? How glad I should be to see you in our old halls, and to convince you — though Everett is President — that you will receive a hearty grasp of the hand, a warm-hearted welcome, and conversation not over precise nor too puritanical.

I want to compare experiences with you as to Europe, and have much to tell you which I certainly would not put into one of my lectures at Harvard University.

Yours ever,                    W. KENT.

From Washington Mr. Weed received frequent letters from his friend Congressman Hunt, now engrossed in the exciting debates of the session. “You see we have carried the Wilmot Proviso,”<sup>1</sup> he wrote in February. “We have carried it against great odds. The administration made mighty efforts, and almost succeeded. There were several from our State and others who wished to avoid the question, and indeed some had promised to vote against us, who, when it came to the point, dared not record themselves. We owe much to a few of our southern friends, who voted with us, or omitted to vote in committee of the whole, desiring to bring the question to a fair test by ayes and noes. Strong was the only Dough-face from our State. Three or four more of our delegation felt like him, but they were appalled by the dread of northern opinion. You may depend upon it, our state resolutions were of great service, and

<sup>1</sup> So called after David Wilmot, of Pennsylvania, who, when a bill appropriating \$2,000,000 for the purchase of territory from Mexico was under discussion in the House, moved to add a clause providing that slavery should never exist in the territory to be acquired. Mr. Wilmot’s suggestion was simply a renewal of the language of the ordinance of 1787, establishing the North-West Territory.

you did right in crowding them through. They compelled men to toe the mark."

1847.—During the presidency of Mr. Polk the question of appropriating money for internal improvements was agitated, much as it had been on a smaller scale in New York State during the governorship of De Witt Clinton. River and harbor improvement bills were vetoed by Mr. Polk on the ground that, in his opinion, they were unconstitutional. Mr. Weed attended the River and Harbor Convention which was held in Chicago on the 5th, 6th, and 7th of July, 1847, at which resolutions were adopted demanding appropriations for the removal of obstructions to the commerce of the Great Lakes. His letters describing this meeting are full of interesting allusions to this then undeveloped region.<sup>1</sup>

STEAMBOAT EMPIRE, *June 30, 1847.*

I am afloat, for the first time, on Lake Erie. . . . Captain Randall began working his way, by slow and tortuous movements, out of Buffalo Harbor, the insufficiency of which, for the vast commerce of these inland oceans, forcibly impressed us with the importance of the convention about to assemble at Chicago.

*July 1.*

During the forenoon, our friend, Seth C. Hawley, of Buffalo, called our attention to a circumstance which was particularly unpleasant to American eyes, and which proved, far more conclusively than argument or even figures can prove, the impolicy and wretchedness of our "Financial System of Forty-Two." The eye, at a single glance, took in a commercial fleet, consisting of fifteen sail, all from Cleveland and neighboring ports, and all heading directly for the Welland Canal. . . .

We entered the river at half past eight, and at half past ten were alongside of the wharf at Detroit, having traveled from Albany (nearly seven hundred miles) in fifty-one hours. We are, they tell us, the only persons who ever performed the journey between Albany and Detroit in so short a time.

*July 4.*

The great and good men who seventy years ago carved out a republic could have had but imperfect conceptions of its even yet unappreciated magnitude. They did not dream that in territory then unknown to them there would now be a population greater than that of

<sup>1</sup> They occupy 28 pages of fine type in the history of the convention, published by Robert Fergus, Chicago, 1882.

the old thirteen colonies. They could not, in their wildest imaginings, have supposed that on these then unexplored lakes there would now be a commerce exceeding in tonnage and value that of our Atlantic States. Yet these things are more than realized, and in reference to the population and resources of the West we have only seen "the beginning of the end."

The works of nature away out here, where "the sun sinks to rest," are indeed upon an extended scale. Here are a succession of mighty lakes, emptying themselves one into another, until, nearly three thousand miles from their head, their waters mingle with those of the Atlantic. And upon the shores of these lakes is an extent of country capable of supporting, and destined to receive, in the course of half a century, at least a quarter of a million of inhabitants.

CHICAGO, *July 5.*

After Mr. Allen closed, there was a spontaneous call for "Corwin," who was not, it was thought, present. But he was soon observed and pointed out in the crowd; and then a tremendous shout went up for "Corwin," "Corwin," who finally came forward amid deafening acclamations.

Immediately after reaching the stage; a profound stillness pervaded the assemblage. From five to six thousand faces, indicating intense interest, were turned upon the speaker, who riveted their attention.

Mr. Corwin closed a most impassioned and eloquent speech of half an hour by deprecating the introduction of any political tests here. Let nothing be said or done to recall the past, to mar the harmony of the present, or to jeopard the prospects of the future. Let the bugles of party sound a truce to politics while this convention is in session.

When Mr. Corwin closed, there was a general call for "Greeley," whom Mr. Wentworth introduced to the convention. Mr. Greeley remarked that he had hoped that his reputation as a bad speaker would have saved him from the embarrassment of addressing so vast an assemblage. He then spoke for half an hour with much effect, in favor of the objects of the meeting. He was listened to with great attention, and warmly cheered in concluding. Every word that he uttered was full of truth and wisdom.

*July 7.*

Chicago is destined to be a large and beautiful city. It is regularly laid out, with broad avenues, and, out of the business part of the city, it is thickly planted with trees, which will soon, in addition to adorning the city, furnish a grateful shade. It has four admirably conducted public schools, much larger than ours, and filled with children. The various religious denominations have large houses of



public worship. The river, extending well through the city, furnishes an ample and excellent harbor.

All are looking forward anxiously to the completion of the canal. That done, Chicago will eclipse even its own past magic-like growth. In ten years it will contain more inhabitants than Albany. . . .

We rode a few miles out, yesterday, to get a glimpse of the prairies. In doing so, we found the road all the way occupied with an almost unbroken line of wagons, drawn generally by two yokes of oxen, bringing wheat to the city. These teams are called "prairie schooners." That eccentric member of Congress from Alabama, Felix Grundy McConnell, among his last acts asked the House of Representatives to "Resolve, That this is a great country, and constantly increasing." One needs to visit Chicago to realize and confess that the proposition is one of undeniable truth.

STEAMER ST. LOUIS, NEAR MACKINAC, *July 10.*

Our boat rides at anchor in a broad bay, from which we look out upon a broader wilderness, apparently as unbroken and fresh as it was the day that Columbus discovered this continent. Solitude — vast and sublime solitude, — is the striking feature of these mighty waters and these boundless woods. Lake Michigan occupies more surface than the State of New York, and the productive unoccupied lands bordering it would sustain a population greater than that of the New England States. And yet there are hundreds of miles of coast upon this lake, whose waters float hundreds of vessels burdened with millions of dollars, where the government has not yet expended the first dollar for a harbor.

NIAGARA FALLS, *July 17.*

We arrived in Buffalo last evening, just in time to take the cars for Niagara Falls. The railroad from Buffalo to the Falls, since I was here last, has, much to the advantage of the public and the stockholders, changed hands. Instead of the rickety rail over which we were then drawn by horse-power, we were now taken through upon a substantial road in an hour and ten minutes.

## CHAPTER XII.

1847-1882.

FATHER MATHEW. — THE TOTAL ABSTINENCE QUESTION. — MISTAKES OF THE PROHIBITION PARTY. — THE USE OF LIGHT WINES. — GOSPEL METHODS OF INCULCATING SOBRIETY. — THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT IN MR. WEED'S CHARACTER. — HIS CHARITY. — RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES. — MISSION WORK. — DR. BOOTH'S REMINISCENCES. — PRACTICAL RESULTS OF CHRISTIANITY. — DUTY OF THE SECULAR PRESS. — THE LORD'S PRAYER.

WITH a keen sense of the wretchedness and degradation which is caused by strong drink, Mr. Weed was for half a century an attentive observer of such methods of relief or prevention as influential men and women have urged, and, in his own way, was always actively devoted to mitigating the evils of intemperance. A review of his position in regard to this question is suggested by the following letter: —

[MR. WEED TO FATHER MATHEW.]

ALBANY, *November 5, 1847.*

VERY DEAR SIR, — We are delighted with the assurance, in a Cork paper, that you are coming to America in the spring. The American people will welcome you joyously as their guest.

Permit me to second, earnestly, the application of Captain Knight, of the splendid packet-ship *New World*, for the honor of bringing over "the Apostle of Temperance." The *New World* is owned by Messrs. Grinnell, Minturn & Co., who tendered you a passage in their ship *Ashburton*, in 1843. Mr. Minturn was the moving spirit of the committee, in the city of New York, by which contributions were made for Ireland.

Captain Knight is a sailor, a gentleman, a teetotaler, and a Christian. He has sustained the cause of "Total Abstinence," by his precepts and example, for twenty years. His ship is one of the noblest specimens of naval architecture that ever graced the Atlantic.

Our mutual friend, Bishop Hughes, who was with me yesterday, on his return from Buffalo, unites in the wish that you would take passage in the *New World*.

When I remember the circumstance that you sought out a worthy temperance man in Aldersgate Street, London, and honored his humble abode with your presence, I am persuaded that Captain Knight's early and ardent devotion to the same cause will not be lost sight of in determining your choice of a ship.

I am instructed by Messrs. Grinnell, Minturn & Co., and by Captain Knight, to say that the best rooms in their ship are at the service of yourself and friends.

Very respectfully and truly,  
Your friend and servant, THURLOW WEED.

Mr. Weed's best hopes for the redemption of his fellow men from the curse of alcoholism were excited during his visit to Europe in 1843. As he approached Cork, by jaunting-car, he observed large numbers of orderly, well-dressed men and women who were returning from a funeral, so the driver explained, adding that a few years before he would have been compelled to stop, until dozens of poor creatures, in a state of helpless intoxication, were assisted to the sidewalk. Now, thanks to Father Mathew, they were sober and decent people.

Deeply impressed by this incident, Mr. Weed visited Father Mathew in Cork and London, and they became warmly attached to each other. "I attended his meetings," writes Mr. Weed, "and visited him at his lodgings, where he gratified me with the assurance that he would visit America. He came in 1849, receiving, as he deserved, a cordial welcome from all classes of citizens. He brought healing on his wings, and by his devoted efforts scattered blessings far and wide amidst the wives and children of reclaimed inebriates. Though long since called to his reward by the Master whom he served so faithfully, his name is still a household word among us, and his memory is cherished by tens of thousands who are indebted to him for prosperity and happiness. Nor are his teachings lost upon the present generation. Father Mathew temperance societies are yet continuing his work in most of our large cities."

[FATHER MATHEW TO MR. WEED.]

CORK, March 31, 1847.

MY DEAREST FRIEND, — The magnificent humanity evinced by our beloved brethren in the States for the suffering Irish has inspired every heart on this island with ardent gratitude. We shall ever regard America as our deliverer in the hour of bitter calamity.

The immense supply of Indian corn wafted into the Cove of Cork the last few days, and the free cargoes daily expected, have had an unexpected effect on the market. Maize has fallen from nineteen to ten pounds the ton. In the darkest hour we should not despair. The mercies of the Lord are above all his works.

I am resolved, God willing, to leave Ireland for the States next summer. It shall be my constant anxious prayer that the Lord may remove every obstacle, and allow me to indulge this darling desire of my heart. As soon as the expected breadstuff vessels shall arrive in Cork, I shall have the pleasure of writing to you again, expressing my thanks.

Presenting kindest remembrance to all my friends, I have the honor to be, dear Mr. Weed,

Yours ever truly, THEO. MATHEW.

PITTSBURG, *July 26, 1851.*

I was exceedingly gratified by your kind letter, as it convinced me that your heart was not so entirely occupied by your recent loss as to prevent you from thinking of your friends.<sup>1</sup> It will be my pride and delight to be your guest, but I request that you will, with your accustomed consideration, explain to the Right Reverend Bishop of Albany why you will not permit me to conform to the general usage that passing priests should sojourn at the episcopal residence. Should your learned and most zealous prelate kindly acquiesce in the arrangement, it will afford me much pleasure to accept of your honored invitation. I will afford myself the pleasure of addressing you again from Cleveland, etc., etc.

NEW YORK, *November 8, 1851.*

Though it would be impossible for me to convey in adequate terms the intensity of my gratitude for all that you have done for me, I cannot take my final departure from this great Republic without adopting the only mode left me of begging you to accept the warm acknowledgments of as grateful a heart as ever throbbed within human bosom. You have indeed proved yourself one of my best and kindest friends, and the recollection of the solicitude you displayed in sacrificing so much of your precious time, and in the exertions you made on my account, shall never be forgotten. . . . I shall indulge pleasing hopes of seeing you once more in the old country. To your kind, amiable lady and beloved and accomplished daughters be pleased to present my most respectful and devoted remembrance. Earnestly praying for your and their happiness, and bidding you farewell, believe me

Yours ever gratefully and affectionately, THEO. MATHEW.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Weed's only son, James, died in June, 1851.

In conferences with Chancellor Walworth, Mr. E. C. Delavan, Father Mathew, and other distinguished Prohibitionists, Mr. Weed did not acquiesce in, but rather sought to modify their methods and convictions. Some knowledge of human nature confirmed him in the belief that total abstinence is not the true remedy against intemperance.

“Much good might be accomplished,” he wrote in 1854, “if ultra Prohibitionists would permit the legislature to pass a law correcting the worst evils of intemperance. We have urged a law restraining the sale of adulterated liquor, on account of its poisonous character, and exacting such sums for licenses as would shut up cheap grogeries, and make distillers and liquor-dealers liable for the support of inebriates and their impoverished families. Popular sentiment would sustain such a law. Tens of thousands would rise up with grateful hearts to bless its supporters. Nine-tenths of all the liquors consumed in the United States are more or less drugged. There are numbers who live and thrive by this nefarious trade. More port is drunk in the United States in one year than passes through the Custom House in ten; more champagne is consumed in America than the whole Champagne district produces; Cognac brandy costs four times as much in France, where it is made, as it is sold for in our corner groceries; and the failure of the whole grape crop in Madeira produces no diminution in the quantity, nor an increase in the price of that wine.”

Mr. Weed liked most of the light wines, and his taste was exceedingly delicate. But he was by no means an invariable drinker, until over seventy years of age. He then took, regularly, at dinner and at bed-time, a dash of old Santa Cruz rum, abandoning all other stimulants. He drank of the Santa Cruz barely enough to color a glass of ice-water, nor would he suffer this quantity to be increased under any circumstances whatever, not even when physicians advised it. On this point he was very sensitive.

After fifty years wasted in futile efforts to inculcate the temperance principle by passing prohibitory statutes, he began to lose patience with the Neal Dow school of reformers. “What have you accomplished?” he asked of that gentleman. “Proscriptive laws have been so uniformly evaded or violated that they have become worse than a dead letter. It is a common

saying, well established by experience, that, if a man wants wine or beer, he can and will get it, if not openly, then 'on the quiet.' . . . In the old States, 'cast-iron' methods have been generally abandoned; though in Kansas, Iowa, Ohio, and other young communities, they have been espoused with more enthusiasm than discretion."

But it has often and very properly been urged that those who oppose these methods should offer something better.

"Presumptuous as my scheme may be regarded," Mr. Weed writes, "I am prepared not only to suggest but to demonstrate that by the concerted action of the people and the government we can become, as a nation, as distinguished for sobriety as we are now for intemperance. By the acquisition of new territory we can become as extensively a grape-growing country as France or Switzerland. Let California, Kansas, and other States with soils adapted to grape culture, turn their industries in that direction, and the practical remedy for intemperance will soon be reached. When the grape is produced in sufficient quantities to furnish cheap wine as a beverage for all classes, it will be within the scope and duty of Congress to perfect a reform that will emancipate our people from the horrors, and our Nation from the reproach, of intemperance. Congressional laws effectually prohibiting the adulteration of whiskey and other alcoholic drinks should be enacted. Under such laws experts should be appointed to test the purity of such liquors. Other laws should be passed imposing duties so onerous upon imported liquors as either to exclude or to render them so expensive that the rich only could purchase them. . . ."

"Intemperance, while it reaches all classes, is most fatal and most pervading with the poor, upon whom the curse rests most heavily. The shortest and surest remedy and relief for this most numerous class of victims is to place the cause beyond their reach. That cause exists in cheap liquors. The law should provide for the appointment of competent inspectors, whose duty it should be to ascertain by chemical tests that all liquors offered for sale are pure and unadulterated. Alcoholic liquors should be heavily taxed. That would immensely diminish the quantity sold, and so largely enhance the price as to render them inaccessible to the poor. It is only by mixtures and adulterations that intoxicating drinks are made cheap enough to

ruin and destroy hundreds of thousands. These mixtures and adulterations not only intoxicate but poison their victims. That those who habitually indulge in the use of cheap liquor inhale more or less of deadly poison has been clearly ascertained by chemical analyses. The sale of poisoned liquors should, for sanitary reasons, be prohibited. Let this reform be accomplished; let us obtain the passage of laws which will prohibit by stringent penalties the sale of adulterated liquors. Gin-shops and grogeries would then rapidly disappear. . . .

“If the time, labor, money, and talent that have been since 1820 devoted to well-meant but utterly fruitless efforts in favor of prohibition had been united in favor of the measures here briefly outlined, the curse of intemperance would have been removed from our borders. Light and palatable wines would have been substituted for inebriating and poisonous alcoholic liquors. . . . France and England are divided by a narrow channel; France produces wine as a beverage; England grows hops and brews beer. The French people are industrious, frugal, and sober; in England the laboring classes are improvident, intemperate, and degraded. Unhappily, our social and domestic habits and tastes came with our ancestors from England. Let us now rise above them, and adopt measures which will secure to future generations the blessings which confer prosperity and happiness upon the French people.”

All that has been actually accomplished for sobriety, in Mr. Weed's opinion, has been brought about by domestic, moral, and religious influences. Of these forces he ranked religion as the most potent. He was a firm believer in so-called “gospel methods” of converting inebriates. He contributed liberally to sustain “gospel temperance” meetings and missions in New York, at which he was a frequent visitor. Of these missions, after commending them to general favor, he writes: “The effect of the best discourses is greatly enhanced by the sacred melodies which precede and follow them. To hear such hymns as ‘Waiting and Watching,’ ‘Ninety and Nine,’ ‘Almost Persuaded,’ ‘Hold the Fort,’ ‘I need Thee every Hour,’ ‘Sowing the Seed,’ ‘Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By,’ ‘Just as I Am,’ ‘Oh, to be Nothing,’ ‘Once for All,’ ‘Only Trust in Him,’ ‘Rescue the Perishing,’ ‘Safe in the Arms of Jesus,’ ‘Rock of Ages,’ rendered as they are at these meetings, is a privilege enjoyed

only by the present generation. . . . Meanwhile, after the temperance missionary has accomplished his task, society is charged with the responsibility of completing the work. A reformed drunkard enters upon his new life in a sort of second childhood, helpless and dependent. He needs sympathy, assistance, and encouragement. When he is ready to substitute bread for whiskey, it should be cheerfully supplied until he is able to earn it. His greatest need is employment, and all who are fortunate enough to possess influence should promptly exert it in favor of those who are ready and willing to work."

This seems a proper time to say that the religious element in Mr. Weed's nature was largely developed. He made no professions in this direction; he subscribed to no formal articles of faith; but he always led a sober, conscientious, reverential life, and was a far better Christian in thought and deed than many who are punctilious in matters which he thought irrelevant. One day, when he was far advanced in life, a bustling young Baptist brother called upon him, to converse about sin and redemption. He alluded to the weather, the goodness of the Creator in granting various kinds of weather, and then, after a pause, began: "Mr. Weed, if you will excuse me, you are now an old man. You cannot have many years to live; and I have called to pray with you and talk with you about the interests of your soul, in view of the eternal future." Mr. Weed smiled upon the juvenile preacher, who might have been his grandson, and said, "I thank you sincerely for the good intent and kind wishes which no doubt brought you here. But you seem to be laboring under a misapprehension. Do you really imagine that a serious-minded man who has lived between these two worlds for eighty-four years, who has had the highest joy and the deepest sorrow, who has been stricken down in the shadow of death more than once and come out alive; who has been bereft of father and mother, brothers and sisters, wife and children, who has seen the dear friends of his youth drop off one by one till scarcely a companion remains above the sod, has never dwelt upon this question of the meaning of life and the mystery of death concerning which you have come to give me your opinions? I thank you, my dear friend; but you can do nothing for me." And the youth took his departure.

Certainly no one could be more charitable without being im-



provident. "Why do you pass your life in such misplaced generosity?" exclaims his friend William Kent, in one of his letters. "Do you imagine that Grub and Grinder are affected by such magnanimity?" In the days when he knew poverty he would sometimes walk down the street in Albany with a few dollars in his pocket, meet an old acquaintance in want, and that day the family would have no roast for dinner. "There, you do not need it so much as she," he said one day as he took a new red shawl from one of his daughters and placed it carefully across the shoulders of a beggar's shivering offspring. Such incidents were common.

"Horace Greeley used to tell," writes Charles A. Dana, "how of a Monday morning, to the first half-dozen poor widows who came soliciting alms, Thurlow Weed would empty his pockets to the last dollar of the scanty salary he had received the Saturday evening previous."

"When the virulence of party strife shall have passed away," wrote Henry J. Raymond, "the thousands whom he aided, the hungry whom he fed, the weak whom he strengthened, the men in every walk whom his hand, his influence, and his purse have always been ready to assist, will cherish the remembrance of his worth. Few nobler hearts ever lived."

"The man," writes William H. McElroy, "was greater than the politician, party leader, diplomatist, or journalist; and, reflecting upon his private life, I am tempted to apply to him Coleridge's words, declaring that 'his worth is much greater than his fame; it is impossible not to speak great things of him, and yet it will be very difficult to speak what he deserves.' His intercourse with his fellows was controlled by the golden rule; he loved his neighbor as himself in very deed and truth. The unselfishness which in public affairs was made manifest in unstinted, self-forgetting exertions for his well-beloved party, in private life took the shape of whole-hearted benefactions. To his friends he was faithful and attached unto death. To his most bitter opponents he was considerate and generous. The oppressed, the unhappy, from whatever cause, found in him a sympathizing confidant, ever prompt and liberal in relieving their necessities. The poor of New York regarded him as an Abou Ben Adhem, and no one of them, it is safe to say, ever went away empty-handed from his door. Many of the pension-

ers upon his bounty came to look upon his features in death, and, as they bent above his coffin, exclaimed, while the tears fell fast, that they had lost their best friend."

"To have a reputation for generosity," writes another, "necessarily subjects a man to many trials. Mr. Weed had more than his share. The never-ending throng that sought his influence to help them in government places was enough in all conscience for one man. Their name was legion and their pertinacity inexpressible; yet they were all courteously treated, and a fair proportion succeeded in their designs. But there was another crowd, who came for assistance in business or charity direct. They formed another legion, though their boldness was by no means equal to that of the office-seeking tribe. If Mr. Weed had given ever so little to each one, he would soon have dispensed the fortune of an Astor. To show something of the extent of these charity demands we may state a fact. One day a friend who was present in Mr. Weed's study, where applicants of all kinds were usually heard, privately noted the amounts asked for. On footing up the sums he asked Mr. Weed how much he thought he would have expended if he had given all that was asked. Mr. Weed had no idea, — possibly a hundred dollars. The figures were shown, and the amount was \$2,200. He had given almost as much as the sum named. But his charities were as far as possible kept from notice. He went where he heard of a poor woman in difficulty or distress, and she found her rent paid, or coal or flour coming without bills, or clothes for the children, and money in hand after the strange gentleman had taken his departure."

To this testimony it would be easy to add a hundred similar tributes.

"In my judgment, all who lead Christian lives, however different in their modes of worship, will be mercifully dealt with by a merciful Creator, through the mediation of our Saviour." That was his creed.

He rated benevolence as the brightest of Christian virtues. Upon selfishness and parsimony he looked with positive aversion. "In all the villages and cities in which I have resided," he once wrote, "there were individuals best known for their sharp practices in obtaining wealth, and for the deaf ears they ever turned to every application for charity. I hated these men

as cordially as I honored those who were habitually good to the sick and the unfortunate. I remember many individuals notorious as misers, but men, in other respects, of irreproachable character, with whom I could never affiliate. Indeed, avarice was the one offense I could not forgive." And yet, as he looked back through a vista of sixty years, during which he enjoyed a fair portion of life's privations and toils, and then of its compensations, he came to a better knowledge of the influences which control human action. He was passing threescore and ten when he said, one day, "I now know how hard it is for a wealthy man to keep the approaches to his heart open, and that the wealthy miser is entitled to pity rather than hatred."

It has been supposed that he became devout late in life, but, in reality, he became then less demonstrative in religious matters than he was before reaching his majority. His letters from 1815 to 1825 skeptics would call rhapsodical. They often contain little else than theological reflections. To Mrs. Weed he wrote freely of his earnest efforts to imitate Jesus. In one of these letters he describes a visit to a dying friend upon whom he was besought to invoke Divine mercy; which office he fulfilled, though full of misgivings, he says, as to his fitness for such a service.

In youth he attended church with inflexible regularity. He was impressed, while living in Onondaga, by the eloquence and piety of Lorenzo Dow, a friend of John Wesley's, whose long hair and beard were cultivated to give an apostolic effect to his ministry. Dow appeared without notice by the roadside at the foot of the West Hill, and began to expound the gospel with but two or three listeners, drawing, as he proceeded, men, women, and children from the adjoining village. Mr. Weed heard him subsequently at Herkimer and Rochester. Frequently, in closing his meetings in the open fields, this itinerant evangelist would give notice that exactly one year from date he would appear upon the same stump and deliver another sermon.

At Albany, in 1815 and 1816, Mr. Weed was attracted to the church of the Rev. Hooper Cummings, then a popular Presbyterian preacher, whose eloquence and fervor attracted large crowds. During the last twenty years of his residence in Albany he listened with satisfaction to the Rev. Dr. Campbell,

and afterwards, in New York, greatly enjoyed the preaching of the Rev. Drs. Booth, Hall, Deems, Paxton, and Taylor. He felt, also, a lively interest in the revival meetings conducted by Moody and Sankey.

“My attention was first called to Mr. Weed, in relation to any religious services,” kindly writes Dr. Booth, for this volume, “in connection with my constant attendance on the meetings of Moody and Sankey, at the Hippodrome. I took great interest in those meetings and was always there, and soon my attention was arrested by the equally constant presence of Mr. Weed, sitting down near the little wooden pulpit, and always manifesting the utmost interest and the closest attention. I presently began to notice him in attendance at my own church; and when the meetings were brought to a close I sought him out and made his acquaintance personally, which I had not done before. He immediately expressed a sense of personal obligation for my own interest in this good work, — that of Moody and Sankey, — and told me how much he himself had been impressed by its reality and power, and that he regarded it as a great blessing to the city of New York. After that time he began to attend the evening meetings in the University Place Church with great regularity, and was a very prominent centre of interest there.

“He had his favorite hymns out of the collection that was used at the Hippodrome [the ‘Gospel Hymns’], and always expressed very great pleasure whenever, either by accident or intention, any of those were used, — such hymns as ‘Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By;’ ‘Pass Me not, O Gentle Saviour;’ ‘T is the Promise of God full Salvation to Give;’ ‘Watching and Waiting for Me.’ He always would thank me, if he had the opportunity, when any of these hymns were sung.

“About this time — it might have been before this, but at this time it forced itself upon my consciousness — he began to be especially interested in the evangelical work that was carried on in the way of reform, particularly Jerry McAuley’s meetings in Water Street, at which he was a frequent attendant, and which he sustained with a great deal of generosity. His persistent disinclination to speak was somewhat curiously manifested in connection with these meetings, where he often desired to express what he felt. I was witness of some instances at that time, when he wanted to say something and could not speak.

His interest in the work was very great. He was McAuley's best supporter, when the Water Street Mission was really at a critical point. He followed that mission with deep interest in all of its changes; and when it was transferred to Cremorne Gardens, in Thirty-second Street, he still continued to attend whenever it was possible.

"He was also very deeply interested in the meetings in Yorkville, at which he was frequently present on Sunday afternoons, and in those held at Cooper Institute in the evening, conducted by Mr. Sawyer. I have no hesitation in saying that his presence at these meetings, aside from any pecuniary assistance, was equivalent to a very great moral support. The prominence of the man made him always remarked. At the time when it was a question whether they should be recognized as reputable or not, Mr. Weed did not hesitate to throw in the whole weight of his character and influence in forwarding that good work. Once he said to me, 'I want to thank you, as a personal matter, for the labor you have given those Hippodrome meetings. I think as a citizen I ought to feel grateful to those who stood by them.'"

"At the time when Mr. Moody made his visit to New Haven, where he came under a pretty strong glare of intellectual light, and was exposed to considerable criticism, or the possibility of it, Mr. Weed took pains to go there in his old age. I do not know whether he went for the sake of getting his own heart refreshed or of bearing testimony, but he went to New Haven and identified himself with the work, and on his return wrote to the 'Tribune,' expressing in the strongest terms his approval of the work of Moody and Sankey, its benefit to the community, and its reality as a Divine power.

"His later days, so far as they passed under my observation, were very fully and very tenderly identified with what I understand to be experimental religion. He was in the habit of using for the purpose of guiding and fixing his thought, a little manual of devotion, entitled 'Private Prayers,' by the Rev. Ashton Oxenden, of England. Copies of this little book he would frequently distribute among his friends. He took great pleasure in conversing on these matters with me, whom he called his pastor, with the obvious desire of getting help in living a good and true life. It was his sincere desire to receive the communion

and enter into some connection with the Church, but he was prevented by circumstances over which he had no absolute control. He had lost his power of coming to a prompt decision in such matters, which is often the case at eighty-four years of age. He did intend fully to receive the communion.

“ I remember that when I talked with him, a few days before he was seized with the illness which terminated his life, our conversation was directed toward the subject of religion, and the grounds of a good hope for the future, and at that time in the most explicit terms he stated to me that his reliance was on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in Him he trusted. His attitude was one of dependence, of humility in regard to himself, coupled with a sense of his own unworthiness, and of the blessedness and glory of the Christian's hope. That was our last interview. It was perhaps a week before he was taken ill. It left on my mind a very happy sense of the depth and power of this religious nature.”

“ New York furnishes many illustrations of the beneficence of religion,” wrote Mr. Weed in 1881, in an article designed to show the practical results of Christian effort. “ Forty years ago a locality too well known as the ‘ Five Points,’ with a population of several thousands, was the home of the vilest of the vile, and the resort of others equally debased. Men, women, and children, of all nationalities and colors, herded together, differing only in the degrees of crime and the depths of profligacy. Their days were passed either in idleness or depredations. Their nights were spent in dance-house debaucheries. All healthy or wholesome influences were excluded. Children grew up to become either street beggars or inmates of the almshouse, and their parents filled penitentiaries and prisons. These orgies continued year after year, defiant and aggressive, until that pandemonium was invaded by Christian men and women, whose patience would not tire, whose courage was indomitable, and whose devotion has been rewarded by a moral and religious reformation so complete that no part of our city is now more quiet and orderly than the once dreaded ‘ Five Points.’ Thousands of children, then growing up either vagabonds or culprits, are now attending schools, in which they are stimulated by precept and example to live industrious and virtuous lives. Instead, therefore, of going forth idle, ignorant, and vicious, to

prey upon society, the destitute and orphan children of the 'Five Points,' prepared for usefulness by moral and religious training, find happy homes in our rapidly-developing Western States and territories.

"Eight years ago, Water Street and its surroundings northward from Peck Slip had a notoriety almost as unenviable as that of the 'Five Points.' That region was rife with drunkenness, burglaries, pugilism, and their kindred vices. Jerry McAuley was conspicuous in all that was wicked and demoralizing. He had the reputation of being a terror to the precinct, a reputation which, by his own confession, was deserved. But this disturber of the public peace was converted, and then he resolved to devote the remainder of his life to the service of his Master, and, with a faithful, affectionate wife as a helper, he has atoned abundantly for all his offenses. For a long time the hisses and howlings of his former associates seriously disturbed his meetings; but courage, perseverance, and patience finally prevailed, and his work now progresses without interruption. The general character of the neighborhood has been improved; its social and moral atmosphere has been purified. Sailor boarding-houses have been reformed. Sailors now carry their Bibles with them to sea. Moody and Sankey hymns are sung in forecastles. Hundreds of half-naked and hungry wives and children, by the conversion of drunken husbands and fathers, now rejoice in comfortable and happy homes. The mission church is crowded every week-day and evening, and three times on Sunday, with intelligent Christian men and women, who, rescued from garrets and gutters, are now reputable citizens, enjoying the fruits of their industry, and relating with grateful hearts the miseries of their past, the joys of their present, and the hopes of their future. By all who 'went to scoff, but remained to pray,' Jerry McAuley and his exemplary wife are regarded with affection, and will be remembered with gratitude."

"The secular press of our day," writes Mr. Weed, in another article, "is doing its share of good work. As teachers—for such they are—editors exert a potent influence in preparing rising generations for usefulness. Youthful minds receive not only political but social and moral impressions from the secular journals which they are accustomed to read. Lessons teaching

the value of industry, economy, integrity, virtue and honor are learned from newspapers. I speak understandingly, for among the pleasures of old age none are more grateful than the numerous assurances I receive from intelligent and upright men residing in this and other States, that they not only owe much of their success in life, but their being made better and happier, to habitually reading Rochester and Albany papers of which I was editor." It is almost superfluous to add that, under the strict rules which he laid down, no article ever appeared in his paper at which offense could be taken by any reader, except for personal or political reasons.

It was his opinion that the Lord's Prayer should read "Our Father in Heaven," instead of "Our Father which art in Heaven;" and "Give us day by day our daily bread," instead of "Give us this day our daily bread." He adopted each of these readings himself, and once wrote a letter to a meeting of clergymen urging their general acceptance, but never sent the letter, concluding after it was written that it was not the part of a layman to present such suggestions.

"It is a relief to me to repeat the Lord's Prayer before going to bed," he once said, "nor could I sleep without it. I cannot believe, and cannot be brought to believe, that the purpose of our creation is fulfilled by our short existence here. To me, the existence of another world is a necessary supplement of this, to adjust its inequalities and imbue it with moral significance."



## CHAPTER XIII.

1848-1850.

RALLYING THE WHIGS FOR GENERAL TAYLOR. — LETTERS FROM WASHINGTON HUNT. — A USELESS PILGRIMAGE TO MARSHFIELD. — “MANAGING” A MASS MEETING. — RESULTS OF THE CANVASS. — HAMILTON FISH FOR GOVERNOR. — “MY SUFFERINGS IS INTOLERABLE.” — MR. SEWARD SENATOR. — THE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION. — A PRESIDENT AFTER MR. WEED’S OWN HEART. — “STAND FIRM, WE HAVE DIS-UNION MEN TO CONTEND WITH.”

“WE might as well make up our minds at once,” wrote Washington Hunt to Mr. Weed, on the 1st of January, 1848, “that Mr. Clay cannot be our candidate. Consider that point settled. I assure you that southern Whigs, with scarcely an exception, are for General Taylor. He will be a candidate, with or without a nomination. Granting these two facts, we are brought to a serious question, which may be multiplied into two questions, which we of the North must now prepare ourselves to answer. First, can we support him? Second, can we oppose him? I want you to bring your whole mind to this subject, and give it your careful meditation.

“We must not forget that the mass of our northern Whigs are deeply imbued with anti-slavery sentiments, and thousands of them are immovably fixed. What plagues me most of all is to think how I, after all I have said about slavery and its extension, am to look the Wilmot Proviso people in the face and ask them to vote for a southern slaveholder. There is one, but one, door of escape. I think General Taylor’s friends will be able to say that he is strongly in favor of peace, and will be content with a moderate acquisition of territory; that he will take less than any other man that is strong enough to be elected; and more than all that, will leave all legislative questions to the decision of Congress. There is no doubt he will accept a nomination from the Whig convention, if they offer it to him. That ought to make him a Whig in all true honor, yet

there is no doubt, if he is elected, it will be by the joint votes of Whigs and Loco-Focos. His aim would be to give his administration a non-partisan character. As between the parties it would probably be a draw game. Give me your thoughts in the free confidence of that friendship which must always subsist between us. You and I must act together ; New York must be united and embodied, so as to move her power as a unit in the national convention."

The Whig situation at the beginning of the year 1848 is here concisely depicted by Mr. Hunt. The party was growing tired of the idea of running Mr. Clay, who had been a candidate for over twenty years, and was fulfilling a prediction made by Mr. Weed in 1846, by rallying to the support of Zachary Taylor. There still remained a large number of Whigs, particularly at the North, who would listen to no other plan than again re-nominating Mr. Clay. Mr. Weed admitted Mr. Clay's fitness for the presidency, but, for reasons which do not require explanation, took ground strongly in favor of General Taylor.

In the meantime an amusing by-play was going on at the state capital, where Governor Young was maturing plans for the vice-presidency. Concluding that Mr. Weed's foresight was a safe guide, he sent a secret agent to Mexico with letters to General Taylor, and endeavored to get up a Taylor mass meeting at Albany. It was feared that these demonstrations would lead to counter activity by friends of Mr. Clay, and it was necessary, therefore, to keep Governor Young in the background.

"There is peace on earth again," wrote Mr. Hunt in February, a day or so after the Treaty with Mexico was signed. "All parties are rejoicing except Cass & Co., who have desired war as an appendage to the presidential canvass.<sup>1</sup> We have had a tragic scene in the House. Mr. Adams sank in his seat under a paralytic stroke. I was near him and was the first to see him as he was falling from his chair. It was one of those impressive scenes which make an abiding impression on the memory. Before this reaches you I fear the telegraph will announce that 'the old man eloquent' is no more."

<sup>1</sup> The Democrats urged the war record of General Cass as the strongest argument in his favor, and, had Mr. Clay been the Whig nominee, this argument, in all probability, would have proved irresistible against him.

A few days after the date of this letter, John Quincy Adams, who had been a member of the House since 1831, expired.

"I fear Taylor cannot be nominated," continues Mr. Hunt from Washington in March. "It is not thought possible here. You must judge whether you could make it go with the northern Whigs. What would you say about the Wilmot — extension of slavery, etc.? There is no doubt but that General Taylor would leave all such things to Congress, as Washington did, but you are for Clay in Albany, and I suppose a majority of the New York delegation will be likewise. . . . Many discreet men here think the nomination of Clay or Taylor would break the Whig party. I had a free talk yesterday with Clayton and Corwin. They express a strong opinion that it will be necessary to pass both and take a third man, and they are now ardent for Scott.<sup>1</sup> . . . I hope you see a way through this difficulty. You are like a deacon I knew. His wife said it always came natural to him to see into the doctrine of election."

"I agree with you perfectly about Mr. Clay," wrote Mr. Hunt in April. "There can be but one opinion about his letter. It is a clear case of *felo-de-se*. He has evidently treasured up all the clever things said to him by flatterers and parasites during his recent tour. I consider him out of the question. But can General Taylor say or do anything now that would satisfy the Whig feeling in our State? . . . There is a growing movement for Scott the last two weeks. The *Americus* letter is embarrassing, however, and may prove fatal. It has been suggested here that he ought to write a letter saying that whatever his opinions may have been in the past, since he has seen how the Irish and Dutch fought in Mexico, he would never consent to place them under any new disabilities. . . . I received yours of the 14th yesterday. The seal had been broken, evidently by a designing hand, and I half suspect it must have been done in the Albany Post Office, where your handwriting is well known. There is mischief somewhere. You ought to use wax."

"Presidential matters are coming to a focus rapidly," wrote Mr. Hunt in May. "I consider things simmered down to a question between Taylor and Scott. I have reason to believe that many of the naturalized people are ready to vote for Scott. He

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Clayton was subsequently made Secretary of State under Taylor. Mr. Corwin was Secretary of the Treasury, under Fillmore.

has also the sympathies of the Catholics, and many of their clergy are warmly attached to him. He educated his daughter in a Catholic school, and has respected their religion in Mexico. Aside from mere military reputation, look at the morale and discipline of his army. . . . Ohio and New England are coming in solid against Taylor. They even threaten consequences which we would all deprecate. Scott has relieved himself fully from the Americus letter by a new letter written yesterday at my instance."

We have seen that a feeling of pride, not in itself, perhaps, incomprehensible, cost Mr. Webster the presidency, when he rejected the advice and predictions of a friend touching the result in 1840. Had he been willing to allow New York to support him for Vice-President, he would have been nominated instead of Mr. Tyler; and, when General Harrison died, would have become Chief Magistrate, instead of Secretary of State in Mr. Tyler's Cabinet. It is a very curious circumstance that the events of 1839, 1840, and 1841 were now almost exactly duplicated, for Mr. Webster was visited by Mr. Weed, in 1848, and urged to accept the support of New York on a ticket headed by General Taylor. It was certain, when this visit was made, as Mr. Hunt's letters show, that Mr. Clay was out of the list of presidential possibilities. By this fact Mr. Webster's friends were greatly encouraged. They cherished the belief that by professing friendship for General Scott, the element which opposed allowing the Democrats to elect a President by claiming all the glory of the Mexican War might be divided, and that thus, one General neutralizing the other, the nomination would fall to the Massachusetts statesman.

"Well," said Mr. Webster, when Mr. Weed appeared at Marshfield, "how do things look now? I suppose the question still is, 'who will poll the most votes?'"

"Yes," said Mr. Weed, "and that man is General Taylor, who will be the next President."

"Why," said Mr. Webster, "Taylor is an illiterate frontier Colonel who hasn't voted for forty years!"

Mr. Weed then unfolded the object of his visit, insisting that General Taylor must be nominated by the Whigs, or he would be taken up and elected by the Democrats. Mr. Webster sent for George Ashmun, of Massachusetts, and Senator Wilson, of

New Hampshire, with whom political prospects were thoroughly canvassed. They listened to Mr. Weed's arguments and were disposed to yield to his suggestion. Finally his point was gained, and, highly pleased with his success, — for the proposed nomination for Vice-President appeared to be altogether more desirable than any other which could be made, — he was about to take his departure, when Fletcher Webster reached the Marshfield house. "The cause is making tremendous progress," he said. Informed of Mr. Weed's mission, he ridiculed it unsparingly. "Enough," said his father, "I shall remain in the field as a candidate for President. I am not a candidate for any other place."

The national convention met in June. General Taylor was nominated. The vice-presidency went begging, until finally a venturesome delegate nominated Mr. Fillmore, and he became the candidate. General Taylor was elected. He died soon afterwards. Mr. Fillmore became President, and Mr. Webster accepted the position of Secretary of State in Mr. Fillmore's Cabinet.

On the 22d of August, while the canvass was in progress, a Charleston paper published a letter addressed by a Democratic meeting held in that city to General Taylor, at which he was nominated for the presidency, together with a letter from General Taylor expressing gratification for this manifestation of regard. News of this proceeding was received by Whigs at the North with mingled indignation and incredulity. At Albany there was the utmost excitement. Leading members of the party joined in calling a public meeting, "for consultation, if not for action." A thousand Whigs assembled in the rotunda of the Capitol on Saturday night, and it was generally anticipated that they would repudiate the head of the ticket and demand another nomination. But, acting with Mr. Weed, a few of his friends contrived to secure a postponement until the following Monday.

The aspect of politics just after the close of the Mexican War gave plausibility to the hope which General Taylor entertained at this time, that he might, if elected, conduct his administration on "purely business principles," with no regard to partisan obligations. There was much in his character and pursuits to make him take that view. He had now, however, accepted

the Whig nomination, and, it was argued, had thus made himself a Whig, "in all true honor."

Never doubting but that contact with public affairs would soon convince General Taylor of the impracticability of some of his expectations, Mr. Weed exerted himself to the utmost to prevent precipitate action against the Whig candidate. On Monday night, pursuant to adjournment, a vast throng gathered at the Capitol. That class of men who never feel at home, politically, except when they appear as complainants, was largely represented. But so carefully had preliminaries been arranged that the committee on resolutions reported that they found nothing in the Taylor correspondence inconsistent with the course which he had uniformly pursued, and in full knowledge of which he had been nominated by the national convention. These resolutions were adopted, and the concourse adjourned, with cheers for "Old Zach Taylor, Our Next President."

But for the example thus set in Albany, to which the rest of the State, as well as some other States, then looked for political guidance, indignation and repudiation meetings, held generally throughout the North, would, to say the least, have rendered General Taylor's election improbable. In September, one month after this "flash in the pan," his "Rough and Ready" letter appeared, and there was no further difficulty.

Mr. Fillmore was in active coöperation with Mr. Weed through these stirring years. They walked together to the steamboat landing on the afternoon of the day on which General Taylor's Charleston letter reached Albany. Twenty years before, in an obscure New York town, Mr. Weed had "discovered" Mr. Fillmore, and brought him into public life, suggesting his nomination for the Assembly in 1829, and for Governor in 1844. Mr. Fillmore felt almost as much at home in Mr. Weed's house as Mr. Seward or Mr. Greeley.

As they walked together to the steamboat landing, this August afternoon, they discussed the probable effect of General Taylor's unexpected letter. Both agreed that a meeting should be held, at which resolutions calculated to subdue excitement should be adopted. Mr. Fillmore met his wife at the steamboat, and said he would go with her to the hotel, after which he would go to Mr. Weed's office, to confer with him further

concerning the resolutions, which Mr. Weed promised to write in the meantime. An hour afterwards, they sat together in the printing-house. The proposed mass meeting and its outcome were discussed freely.

This episode, of no apparent consequence in itself, is mentioned with some degree of particularity, because at a later date, when he deemed it to his advantage to declare war against old associates, it was charged by Mr. Fillmore that Mr. Weed instigated the meeting of 1848 for the purpose of injuring General Taylor. Extraordinary as this revulsion of feeling and defiance of facts was, Mr. Fillmore went even further, when he added, as he did, that he knew nothing about the resolutions adopted at the Albany meeting, until they were printed in the newspapers.

"For six years," wrote Mr. Weed, in 1855, "we have been subjected to persevering abuse from the Fillmore press in connection with a meeting honestly and wisely called, after consultation with the ex-President himself and him only; and during these six years of calumny and opprobrium, the seal of confidence was upon our lips. Now, emboldened by our forbearance, or oblivious of the vantage ground which he surrenders, Mr. Fillmore provokes a revelation of the whole truth. The deliberations of the meeting of 1848 were conducted and concluded precisely as Mr. Fillmore desired, but we assumed the whole responsibility for it; so that if results had not been thus fortunate, he would have been unharmed. That meeting renewed and invigorated the Whig party and gave Taylor and Fillmore the electoral vote of New York."

1848. — "General Taylor will be elected President within a few hours after this reaches you," wrote Washington Hunt to Mr. Weed on the 5th of November. "It is written in the book of manifest destiny. I put great faith in Pennsylvania and Ohio, though it will be close work, as you suppose. The Whig party will now be in power in State and Nation, and with that power comes great responsibility. We must use our victory with wisdom and moderation. Great prudence will be necessary to reconcile jarring interests and subdue personal factions. You will find me ready to do all in my power to preserve harmony and consolidate our strength. We must give and take, live and let live, and make all due concessions where

it is necessary to keep our organization united. . . . Some of us must display political virtue in a generous forgetfulness of self. . . . I am confident that our sentiments will fully accord in future as in the past. I can say to you, as I have uniformly said to others, that of all my associations, political and personal, none has afforded me more true pleasure than the frankness and kindness you have so uniformly extended to me. I persuade myself that there is a foundation of mutual confidence between us too deep to be moved by the officious kindness of friends or by machinations from any quarter. I can go further, and say that it would require more than one difference of opinion between us to change my personal sentiment.”

Mr. Weed's position at the head of the Whig party in New York was at stake in the canvass of 1848. He had taken advanced ground when he declared for General Taylor. By that step he incurred the displeasure of all ultra friends of Mr. Clay, as well as of all radicals who wanted slavery abolished without regard to the rights of the southern people. He held firmly to General Taylor through the pleadings and threats of the convention period, until the nomination was secured. When visionaries and iconoclasts protested, when Albany Whigs were on the brink of revolt, he so guided and controlled popular currents that General Taylor was triumphantly elected. Nor were these the only great results with which he was identified. In 1848 the Whigs secured a majority in the legislature which was to elect a United States Senator in 1849; Hamilton Fish, who had succeeded Addison Gardiner as Lieutenant-Governor at a special election in 1847, was promoted to the governorship, and George W. Patterson was elected Lieutenant-Governor. Thus, so far as they proved anything, the first fruits of Mr. Weed's leadership strikingly vindicated his sagacity.

And yet the crucial test remained. What policy would Zachary Taylor, of Louisiana, adopt? Would he turn apostate when the slave power shook its fist in his face?

1849. — In January, 1849, when a contest began at Albany for a successor in the United States Senate to John A. Dix, the most prominent Whig candidates were William H. Seward, John A. Collier, and Washington Hunt.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Collier had served one term in Congress, in 1832, and was State Comptroller in 1841. Mr. Hunt had served in Congress since 1843.



[WASHINGTON HUNT TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *January 1, 1849.*

DEAR WEED, — I wish you could see the letters I get. If I wanted to excite your sympathy, they would be sufficient. Some say Seward will be elected. More say neither Seward nor Collier will be chosen, but a majority are going for a third man by way of compromise, and my consent is invoked to save the party by being said "Number Three." Others insist that I ought to be Comptroller, whilst several have written that a rumor is spreading over the State that Weed and Hunt have formed a conspiracy to make Seward Senator and Hunt Comptroller, wherefore the Collier men swear neither Hunt nor Seward shall be the one or the other. These and like topics, with all sorts of variations, form the staple of the letters which are pouring in upon me by every mail. "My sufferings is intolerable."<sup>1</sup>

At this rate, my friends will be the death of me. What shall be done? How is a man to respond to such a medley of interrogatories, categorical, equivocal, and hypothetical? The truth is that I know no allegiance except to the Whig party, which I would preserve united by a course of wisdom, conciliation, and justice; but it seems that I am bound to be somebody's man. "Under which king, Bezonian? Speak, or die." I, who am here quietly representing the Niagara district, must needs swear by some man's jack-knife at Albany. I must sport the badge of the Fillmore Rangers, the Seward Plugs, the Collier Society, or the John Young Dragoons, and forswear T. W., or be suspected. Was ever a man so badgered, beset, and hampered? My only comfort is, that all my friends do not appear to me in person. In that case, I should be killed dead with kindness. As it is, I possess my soul in peace, and preserve the complacency of my temper. More than all, I sleep soundly at night, — an inalienable right which I never surrender to you, Thurlow Weed, nor to any faction at Albany. Pray for me, and believe me

Yours in affliction,

WASHINGTON HUNT.

On the 6th of February the Legislature chose Mr. Seward to the United States Senate, and Mr. Hunt State Comptroller. "First of all I shall ask you," Mr. Hunt wrote, on hearing this news, "by what charm you brought order and harmony out of the chaos which seemed to reign around you but a few days ago? If the telegram speaks the truth, they nominated me for Comptroller last night. I will try to discharge the duties of

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from one of Mr. Van Buren's letters, written in 1828, when he was in the State Senate. The phrase used to be a standing joke in politics.

that position. In this effort I shall need the aid and indulgence of my friends, and I shall not hesitate to appeal to you in all vicissitudes. I feel more gratitude to you than you would wish me to express."

The day before Mr. Seward was elected, Mr. Weed was visited by a brother editor, whose description of the interview may not be out of place : —

The Legislature of New York was to assemble the next day. Many of the members had arrived and his sanctum was crowded. The Whigs were in the majority, and a United States Senator was to be elected. More than usual interest was felt in political movements among the Whig members, and they gathered around Weed for counsel and advice. It resembled a President's levee. He remained standing in the centre of the room, conversing with those around him and shaking hands with new-comers. But there was nothing in the whole appearance and bearing of the man to indicate the slightest degree of mystery or excitement, so common with politicians. All was "calm as a summer's morning."

Of course, at that time we saw him but a moment, which was improved by him in extending a polite and cordial invitation to call again at some time when he was less engaged, and we could have an opportunity for a little chit-chat. We availed ourselves of the invitation, and found him, for once, alone in his sanctum. He was sitting at the table, behind a huge pile of exchanges, writing an editorial. He was taking it coolly, puffing away leisurely at a fine-flavored cigar, and making himself remarkably comfortable for a political editor upon whom so much responsibility then rested. He would have ceased writing had we permitted. But his article was soon finished, and he was ready for conversation, which, indeed, he had not entirely suspended, for he has learned, as most editors of daily papers must learn, how to write upon one subject and talk with callers upon other matters at the same time.

1849. — The political situation now became highly interesting. Dreams of reaching the White House in 1852 were beginning to dazzle Mr. Fillmore, who would have been satisfied had New York sent Mr. Hunt to the Senate, but who saw in Mr. Seward a probable rival. "Caution him ; caution him," wrote Philo C. Fuller to Mr. Weed, "and keep him out of danger. I fear he will be drawn into the eddy, and founder with the rest of the crew. You know him infinitely better than he knows himself."

General Taylor was sworn into office. Mr. Seward took his seat in the Senate. The President sent in the appointments of Hugh Maxwell, to be Collector of the Port of New York, and Zebedee Ring to be Surveyor. These gentlemen were Anti-Seward Whigs. The President also named Messrs. Hall and Haven to be District-Judge and District-Attorney, respectively. These gentlemen were the Vice-President's law partners. Mr. Foote, a Buffalo editor, and another Fillmore man, was sent on a foreign mission. Mr. Seward voted to confirm these nominations, though each appointee was a political adversary. Mr. Weed called upon his old friend, the President's brother, Colonel Taylor, and remonstrated. The President sent for Mr. Weed, acknowledged that he had been misled, and after that Mr. Seward's relations with the administration were most cordial.

It was about this time that Mr. Weed conversed with the President as to the wish which he had expressed before the election in respect to conducting his administration with no regard to ordinary party obligations. "He soon became convinced," Mr. Weed writes, "that the significance of a zealous and patriotic movement of the people which overthrew Democratic supremacy meant something more than the election of a Whig President and the appointment of a Whig Cabinet. In stopping there the victory was incomplete. 'I did not think it either wise, or just,' the President himself remarked, 'to kick away the ladder by which I ascended to the presidency; colonels, majors, captains, lieutenants, sergeants, and corporals are just as necessary to success in politics as they are to the discipline and efficiency of an army.' I remember with equal satisfaction and distinctness when, after a conversation on this subject at the White House, the President walked with me to the Treasury Department, where, as the Secretary rose to receive him, he said, 'I came over, Mr. Meredith, to inquire whether you think our friends are getting their share of the offices?'"

"The Secretary, after deliberately taking a paper of tobacco from his pocket and depositing fully one half of it in his mouth, replied that he 'had not thought of the matter in that light.' 'Nor,' added the President, 'had I, until recently. But, if the country is to be benefited by our services, it seems to me that you and I ought to remember those to whose zeal, activity, and influence we are indebted for our places. There are plenty of

Whigs just as capable and honest, and quite as deserving of office, as the Democrats who have held them through two or three presidential terms. Rotation in office, provided good men are appointed, is sound republican doctrine.' Secretary Meredith soon made wholesome reforms in his department.

"The Postmaster-General, Judge Collamer, to whom I was authorized to communicate the President's views, lost no time in appointing meritorious Whig Postmasters throughout the Union. New life was thereby infused into the Whig party. The Whig press and Whig people rallied with enthusiasm to the support of the administration; and, had Providence spared the life of that gallant soldier, patriotic citizen, and inflexibly honest President, his administration would have been more important in events, more beneficial to the country, and more glorious to himself, than any other since that of Washington."

But these were wheels within the wheels of politics. What the great mass of the people felt most anxious about was to know what ground the President would occupy in connection with slavery. One incident in his administration furnishes a conclusive answer.

When it became apparent, early in 1850, after a protracted struggle, that California, which applied to enter the Union as a free state on the 15th of February, could not be kept out, eight Democratic members of Congress met and loaded down the bill under which it was to become a free state with "riders," designed to extend the power of slavery in other directions. Messrs. Toombs, Stephens, and Clingman, members of Congress from Georgia, who then professed to be Whigs, visited the President, and endeavored to influence his judgment, urging him to favor the admission of California on the terms offered. In turning out of Pennsylvania Avenue, on the day when they visited the President with this object, Mr. Weed met these southern statesmen as they passed from the White House. He knew them as members of Congress, and had met them frequently in Washington and elsewhere. With Mr. Clingman his relations were intimate. But they now passed him with scarcely a nod of recognition. Puzzled and annoyed, he kept on towards the White House. Walking up the steps he met Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, who stopped long enough to say that the President would be found greatly agitated.

Mr. Weed entered General Taylor's apartment a moment later. The President was walking rapidly to and fro. "Did you," said he, with an oath, "did you meet those traitors?" Then, in an excited manner, and in strong language, he proceeded to relate what had passed between them and himself. They came, he said, to talk with him about his policy upon pending slavery questions; and when they were informed that he would approve any constitutional bill that Congress might pass, and execute the laws of the country, they threatened a dissolution of the Union; in reply to which he informed them that, if it became necessary, in executing the laws, he would take command of the army himself, and that, if they were taken in rebellion against the Union, he would hang them with less reluctance than he had hung deserters and spies in Mexico! When the President grew more calm he took his seat, and remarked that ultra members of Congress from southern states presumed upon his acquiescence in their views, because he was a southern man and a slaveholder; that before he had been placed in a position that made it his duty to examine both sides of the question, he had entertained and expressed views differing widely from his then sentiments. Relying on the assurances of distinguished southern statesmen that the North was "aggressive," and that the "compromises of the Constitution" were in danger, he had written a letter to his son-in-law, Jefferson Davis, saying that he was ready to stand with the South in maintaining all the guarantees of the Constitution; but that since it had become his duty to look carefully into the merits of the controversy, he had satisfied himself that the exactions and purposes of the South were intolerant and revolutionary. He added that he regarded Davis as the chief conspirator in the scheme which Toombs, Clingman, and Stephens had enunciated.

This account follows Mr. Weed's own description of these interviews, as given in a controversy with Mr. Stephens in 1876, in which that gentleman, while admitting all the other facts, denied that there were threats of disunion on the one side or of hanging on the other. Fortunately for Mr. Weed, his own distinct recollections were confirmed and corroborated by a letter from ex-Vice-President Hamlin, who saw Mr. Stephens and his friends pass out of the executive apartment, two or three

minutes before they passed Mr. Weed on his way to the White House.

“As I was approaching the door to the President’s room,” writes Mr. Hamlin, “Robert Toombs and Alexander H. Stephens, of Georgia, came out. They were excited in their manner to a degree that attracted my attention. We did not speak to each other. I went into the President’s room and found him alone. He was evidently much excited. I have frequently said that he appeared like an enraged lion in his cage, as the best description I could give. In fact, he must have walked across the room some three or four times before he even noticed me; after my entrance. He then spoke to me, but still continued pacing the room, crossing it several times more. He then addressed me with an inquiry: ‘Mr. Hamlin,’ said he, ‘what are you doing in the Senate with the omnibus bill?’ (so-called) then before the Senate. My reply was prompt: ‘Mr. President, I believe the bill wrong in principle, and I am doing what I can to defeat it.’ His rejoinder was as prompt, and very decided: ‘Stand firm; don’t yield; it means disunion, and I am pained to learn that we have disunion men to contend with; disunion is treason;’ and with an expletive which I will not repeat here, he said, with an emphasis which I shall never forget, that if they attempted to carry out their schemes while he was President, they should be dealt with by law as they deserved, and executed.”

Ex-Vice-President Wilson, writing in 1877, after quoting a disunion speech made in the House of Representatives by Mr. Toombs, and indorsed publicly, on the floor, by Mr. Stephens, before their interview with the President, thus refers to that interview, and to General Taylor’s position: <sup>1</sup>

At that time of timidity, wavering, and weakness in both Houses of Congress, President Taylor stood firm, collected, and resolutely determined to maintain the authority of the government. Aggrieved, on the one hand, at what he regarded as the ungenerous conduct of Mr. Clay, Mr. Webster, and other leading Whigs, he was deeply moved, on the other, by demands he deemed to be both unpatriotic and personally offensive. Mr. Hamlin, then a Democratic Senator from Maine, states that, making a business call upon the President; he met Toombs, Ste-

<sup>1</sup> Wilson’s *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America*. Vol. ii. pp. 259, 260.

phens, and Clingman just retiring from an interview. On entering the President's room he found him walking the floor, greatly excited and indignant. He told Mr. Hamlin that the men who had just retired had been making demands concerning the policy of his administration, accompanied with intimations that the South would not submit unless they were acceded to. He accompanied this statement with the declaration that, if there were any such treasonable demonstrations on the part of the southern leaders and people, he would put it down by the whole power of the government, even if he was obliged to put himself at the head of the army to do it. Thurlow Weed, who called at the Executive Mansion immediately afterward, found the President still in a state of excitement, and he, too, received the assurance of his purpose to maintain the Union and the government at all hazards. These statements received significance from a letter written by General Taylor to Jefferson Davis, dated Monterey, August 16, 1847. In this letter he says that his "position, feelings, and associations, independent of pecuniary considerations," were with the South, and that, while he would "respect the feelings of the non-slaveholding states," he would be "equally careful that no encroachments were made on the rights of the citizens of the slaveholding states." After expressing his convictions of the gravity of the slavery issue, and his willingness that it should be the subject of free and full discussion, he said: "But the moment they go beyond that point, when resistance becomes right and proper, let the South act promptly, boldly, and decisively, with arms in their hands, if necessary, as the Union, in that case, will be blown to atoms, or will be no longer worth preserving."

That the President, so unequivocally committed to southern interests, and holding views so decided, not to say defiant, should have taken, with such determination, his stand for the Union, as indicated by the statements of Mr. Hamlin and Mr. Weed, affords conclusive evidence that there were, in his view, no northern aggressions; that the cry of southern danger and alarm was simulated, or at least unfounded, and that the real foes to be resisted were at the South, and not in the North.

Not less fortunately for Mr. Weed, the denial of Mr. Stephens attracted the attention of General Pleasanton, a highly intelligent officer, who served with distinction in the Mexican War, and in the Union army during the Rebellion.

General Pleasanton's letter furnishes a fitting conclusion to the present chapter.

## [GENERAL PLEASANTON TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *September 22, 1876.*

DEAR SIR, — I have just read in the New York "Herald" a letter of the Hon. Alexander H. Stephens, in which he attempts to show that you were mistaken in the report of your interview with General Taylor. Permit me, in support of your statement, to present some facts coming within my own personal knowledge, which confirm your evidence that General Taylor did regard the southern leaders then in Congress as encouraging disunion, and that he looked upon such conduct as treasonable.

I served in the army in Mexico under General Taylor, and knew him well. [General Pleasanton here alludes to several occasions on which he was entrusted by General Taylor with responsible duties.] Shortly after my arrival in Washington, in April, 1850, I called to pay my respects to my old commander, then President. . . . Late in June, I received orders to join my command in New Mexico, and the same day called upon General Taylor. He then appeared to be in excellent health, was very glad to see me, and upon my mentioning my destination, said: "I am glad you are going to New Mexico. I want officers of judgment and experience there. These southern men in Congress are trying to bring on civil war. They are now organizing a military force in Texas for the purpose of taking possession of New Mexico and annexing it to Texas, and I have ordered the troops in New Mexico to be reinforced, and directed that no armed force from Texas be permitted to go into that territory. Tell Colonel Monroe (commanding in New Mexico) he has my entire confidence, and if he has not force enough out there to support him" (and then his features assumed the firmest and most determined expression), "I will be with you myself; but I will be there before those people shall go into that country or have a foot of that territory. The whole business is infamous, and must be put down."

This was my last interview with General Taylor. Mr. Fillmore succeeded him as President and hastened to countermand his orders. . . . Mr. Stephens says, that General Taylor could not have addressed himself to you as represented, as he (Taylor) had stated in a letter from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, August 5, 1848: "Not a drop of American blood was shed by my order while in Mexico, nor that of a Mexican except in the heat of battle." In this letter, General Taylor expressed himself as a soldier; he meant that he had never in an arbitrary manner ordered an American to be shot. But men were shot in Mexico by sentence of court-martial or military commissions;



for I was present myself at Camargo when eight of our soldiers were shot at the same time. General Taylor never intended to shoot Messrs. Toombs and Stephens, by his simple order; but in case they were caught, tried, and convicted of treason, he would order the sentence of death to be carried out, and they need not expect any mercy from him.

General Taylor was not alone, as President, in regarding some of the southern leaders of his time as traitors. General Jackson, as President, had similar troubles with the southern leaders of his time, and he threatened to hang Mr. Calhoun as a traitor, if South Carolina persisted in her course of nullification. Both of these Presidents were southern men, both declared that certain leaders in the South were working for disunion, and both expressed the opinion that, if they were not effectually squelched, they would eventually bring on civil war. Neither lived to see his prediction verified.

I remain, etc., your obedient servant, A. PLEASANTON.

## CHAPTER XIV.

1850-1851.

THE MAYORALTY DECLINED. — CALIFORNIA. — “OMNIA NON POSSUMUS OMNES.” — DEATH OF GENERAL TAYLOR. — EFFORTS TO “CRUSH” MR. WEED. — THE WHIG STATE CONVENTION OF 1850. — BOLT OF THE SILVER GRAYS. — WASHINGTON HUNT FOR GOVERNOR. — A TRIANGULAR CANVASS. — THE COALITION DEFEATED. — GOVERNOR FISH ELECTED SENATOR. — H. J. RAYMOND. — GOVERNOR MARCY AND THE PRESIDENCY.

“I RECALL a very pleasant anecdote of Mr. Weed,” says Alvah Bradish, the artist, “which I had from Governor Morgan, while he was sitting to me in New York for his portrait. We were speaking about Mr. Weed’s exceeding modesty, so remarkable in a man possessing such great influence. I learned from the Governor that some years before, while Mr. Weed was a resident of Albany, he had been asked to be a candidate for the office of Mayor of that city, at a time when there could be no doubt of his election. He declined this honor. The committee then called and urged his acceptance. No, no, he could not think of it. But it seemed to be an important crisis, perhaps, to his party, and a third earnest application was made to overcome his scruples. ‘No, no, gentlemen,’ he said; ‘I cannot consent; indeed, if you could only know what a very poor Mayor I should prove to be, I am sure you would not urge me.’ ‘And this,’ said the Governor, ‘from a man who had the power to make judges, governors and presidents!’”

[MR. WEED TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE CITY CONVENTION.]

ALBANY, *April 3, 1850.*

GENTLEMEN, — If the Whig convention that you represent knew half as well as I do how poorly I should discharge the duties of Mayor of our city, it would gladly take back the nomination which I am constrained to decline, and for which I am indebted to the impulses, rather than to the judgment, of my friends.

I am indebted to Albany and to Albanians for much of prosperity

and happiness; and if I felt that it was in my power to discharge the duties of the city's chief magistrate worthily, and thus lighten the sense of obligation, your nomination would be accepted cheerfully. But it is not so; and I must not bring reproach upon my party and friends by unwisely assuming responsibilities for which my pursuits and habits unfit me.

My declension involves the necessity of reassembling your convention. I regret this inconvenience; but we shall all, I doubt not, find our compensation in the unanimity which will characterize your deliberations, and in the enthusiasm with which our Whig friends throughout the city will rally to the support of your nominees.

Very respectfully and truly your friend, THURLOW WEED.

The California question now absorbed the attention of the whole country. In the hope of reaching a peaceable adjustment, Mr. Clay introduced in the Senate resolutions which subsequently became the basis of the combination of measures known as the "omnibus bill of 1850." Among equivalents, under these acts, for the admission of California as a free state, were payment of the Texas debt, repudiation of the Wilmot Proviso, and the enactment of a stringent, vindictive, and humiliating statute, under which United States Commissioners at the North were required to surrender fugitive slaves, without trial by jury, and all good citizens were commanded to aid in pursuing and arresting such fugitives, whenever an opportunity offered.

It was during the debate on the admission of California that Mr. Webster delivered his famous "7th of March" speech and Mr. Seward his speech on the "higher law."

[MR. WEBSTER TO R. M. BLATCHFORD.]

IN THE SENATE, 2d July.

DEAR SIR, — Truman Smith is making a very sensible speech, but I fear he will not be bold enough to vote rightfully.

The President is sick. Was very sick last evening, is better at this hour, but is still quite ill. I think he is in no great danger, however. It is an illness caused by heat and anxiety.

I perceive that my friend Weed laments that it did not happen to me to make such a great and glorious speech as Governor Seward's. I thank him sincerely for his condolence, but "*Omnia non possumus omnes.*" Yours on a very hot day, D. WEBSTER.

1850. — On the 9th of July, when Mr. Weed heard of the death of General Taylor, his feelings could not have been very different from those of Mr. Blaine in September, 1881, at the death-bed of Garfield. Not only was the national administration, which to a certain degree he had controlled, and which, with reason, he had believed to be big with promise, now wiped off the face of the earth at one fell stroke; but a new régime — a régime with which he could have no sympathy — was installed in its place. Heretofore Mr. Fillmore had always been an ardent friend of freedom. Almost immediately he veered round, and as ardently espoused the cause of slavery. Perhaps his change of heart was provoked by the pronounced position of Mr. Weed and Mr. Seward, who in 1850 were loudly denounced as too radical in opposition to slavery.

Thus a second time Mr. Weed found himself at war with a national administration which he had helped largely to create. “We are in a bad fix,” Mr. Fillmore had written to Mr. Weed, in 1842. “Captain Tyler has gone over soul and body to the Locos.” President Fillmore now took Mr. Tyler for his own model, embracing projects which had been rejected by General Taylor with righteous indignation. By signing the fugitive slave law he rent the Whig party in twain forever.

No secret was made of the purpose of the administration to “crush” Mr. Weed. All federal office-holders suspected of fidelity to “the Dictator” were requested to resign. Mr. Weed’s friend, Mr. Benedict, Postmaster at Albany, was summarily removed. The post-office department interfered with the subscription lists of Mr. Weed’s paper. A rival sheet, called the “Register,” was established at Albany, and commissioned to speak for the administration “by authority.” Hoping to keep up the division, Democratic papers took a hand in the quarrel, doing what they could to strengthen the administration, as they knew that Mr. Fillmore was no match for the men whom he challenged. William A. Duer, a member of Congress and a leading Fillmore politician, declared that Mr. Weed was “trying to build up abolitionism on the ruins of the Whig party.” By the “Register” he was dubbed “Generalissimo-in-chief of the Abolition forces.” And this folly Democratic papers reiterated, adding that the South would and should break up the Union, in case Mr. Weed succeeded in carrying out his “nefarious abolition policy.”

“The time will come,” wrote Mr. Weed, “when Mr. Fillmore will contrast the friendship which fawns around him now with that which he has repelled. . . . Neither Mr. Benedict nor those who act with him will wrangle about office. The President may do what he pleases with his appointments. If his measures are right, if he adheres to the principles of the Whig party, we shall prove better supporters of his administration than the fly-blown adventurers who bask in his favor. . . . As for the fugitive slave law, we cannot but reiterate our regret that a measure so repugnant received the sanction of Congress and the President. The execution of that law violently convulses the foundations of society. Fugitives who have lived among us for many years cannot be seized and driven off as if they belonged to the brute creation. The attempt to recover such fugitives will prove abortive. But the error of the administration is not so much in its determination to see the law executed, as it was in allowing a bill so dangerous to the public tranquillity to pass. . . . Slavery, in every aspect in which it can be viewed, is deleterious. It is a curse to the slave master, to the slave owner, to the state, to the community, and to the soil upon which it exists. It is equally a moral, political, and physical evil. It dignifies idleness and dishonors industry. It nullifies a solemn declaration that liberty is among the inalienable rights of all men. It leads to enervation in master and servant. The contrast between the slave and the free states, side by side upon our western rivers, is full of eloquent and instructive admonition. Ohio and Kentucky, Indiana and Virginia, are open volumes of nature, in which are written, in luminous lines, the vast superiority of free over slave labor.”

[ALVAH HUNT TO MR. WEED.]

GREENE, *July 18, 1850.*

MY DEAR FRIEND, — “And he mourned as one without hope.”

As the stage stopped at Oriskany Falls on the 10th, the appalling words fell upon my ears, “General Taylor is dead!” I could not, would not, believe it. On reaching Clinton, men were gathered in groups reading black-draped “extras.” From thence to Utica, though the stage was full, no word was spoken.

I thought of you, of Seward, and others of the tried and true; of what would probably come of this national bereavement. . . .

Have you courage for another trial? I had almost a mind to turn off at Utica and seek you, but duty pointed West, and I took that direction, believing also that you would shut yourself up for three days and refuse to be comforted.

Your articles touching the duty of the Whigs are among the best and wisest you ever penned. Your true friends will stand or fall on the position which you have taken. If this be treason, then let the reptiles who now crawl around that child of chance, the accidental President, "make the most of it."

Stage in sight. God bless you and yours.

ALVAH HUNT.

1850. — It was evident that the administration would put forth every effort to gain control of the New York Whig convention in the fall, in order to secure a vindication of the President's policy in his own state, and rebuke all Whigs who opposed that policy, particularly Mr. Weed and Mr. Seward. While the election of delegates was in progress there was unusual excitement.

On the 27th of September the convention was held at Syracuse. Francis Granger, who, when he went into General Harrison's Cabinet, was opposed by the South as an Abolitionist, appeared as an ally of the President. Mr. Maxwell, Collector of the Port of New York, with several of his subordinates, and the United States sub-Treasurer, were at Syracuse endeavoring to influence delegates. It was known that Mr. Granger took extreme ground in behalf of the administration, and he was therefore put in the chair, where it was thought he could do the least harm.

When a committee on resolutions was proposed, Mr. Granger made Mr. Duer chairman. Some time after the convention this gentleman admitted that he went to Syracuse from Washington with instructions from Mr. Fillmore to bolt in case Mr. Seward's course was approved in the platform. At the proper time he presented resolutions lamenting the death of General Taylor, extolling the administration; and leaving Mr. Seward severely alone. The moment this document was read, Mr. Cornwell, of Cayuga, moved a set of resolutions more pronounced against slavery and eulogizing Mr. Seward. The vote on the adoption of the substitute was, of course, a test of strength. It resulted in an emphatic majority against the administration.<sup>1</sup> Mr.

<sup>1</sup> The vote stood 76 to 40.

Granger abruptly threw down his gavel, and, with several other delegates, left the hall. In the mean time Mr. Weed was at his rooms in the hotel. When he heard how events were shaping he sent word to his friends to adjourn, an adjournment was at once carried, and a private consultation was arranged to be held at his quarters in the evening. It was not his way to ride roughshod over a minority which numbered among its leaders such men as Granger and Maxwell.

There assembled in the evening, at Mr. Weed's rooms, among others Christopher Morgan, Lewis Benedict, John L. Schoolcraft, William A. Wheeler, and James M. Cook. As Governor Fish was not a candidate for renomination, it was determined to nominate Washington Hunt, who was an intimate friend of Mr. Granger's, and whose candidacy, it was thought, would head off the chance of Granger's running as a Fillmore candidate. When the convention reassembled Mr. Hunt was nominated. He resigned as Comptroller, and Philo C. Fuller was appointed to that position by Governor Fish.

But, after looking over the ground, the administration party refused to acquiesce. In their name a call was issued for a new convention to assemble at Utica on the 17th of October, and this meeting was held on the day named. Mr. Granger presided, and speeches were made by Hiram Ketcham, John A. Collier, James O. Putnam, and others. It was decided to make no nominations. When the hour for adjournment arrived, Mr. Granger rose in his place and gave a name to the new movement by saying: "For this cause I shall fight so long as I live, nor do I ask any higher post than to be a private in the ranks of the Silver Grays."

Late in October there was held at Castle Garden a so-called "union" meeting, which was really a demonstration against Mr. Seward and Mr. Weed, delayed until just before election, so that there might be no reaction in the rural districts. A prominent New York journalist, then a bitter political and personal opponent of Mr. Weed, intimated in his paper that the names of merchants who refused to sign the call would be published, so that the South might understand from whom to withdraw patronage. The meeting was largely attended. Resolutions were adopted calling for vigorous enforcement of the fugitive slave law. A letter from Daniel Webster was read,

in which that statesman, true to the false course which he had begun to follow on the 7th of March, called upon all good citizens not to rekindle the flames of "useless and dangerous controversy."<sup>1</sup> Senator Daniel S. Dickinson sent a letter couched in a similar strain. Messrs. Charles O'Connor, Ogden Hoffman, Marshall O. Roberts, James W. Gerard, Moses Taylor, Schuyler Livingston, James Kernochan, Robert C. Wetmore, and John McKeon were named on the "Union Safety Committee." A coalition ticket was agreed upon, beginning, "Anti-Disunion, Anti-Abolition, Anti-Seward, Anti-Weed, — for Governor, Horatio Seymour, of Oneida."

Mr. Weed attacked the Castle Garden meeting, its objects, and all who had any part in it. The Fillmore press, anxious to defeat the Whig state ticket, eulogized the meeting as a "great popular protest against demagoguery." "After this demonstration," said one of these papers, "the President cannot but enforce the fugitive slave law at all hazards, even if it takes the whole United States army to do it." In reply, Mr. Weed returned defiance, declaring that New York was ready to face the issue.

Never did the Whigs go into a state canvass under such discouraging auspices. The Democrats were united, but, as election approached, "Silver Grays" boasted that the defeat of Mr. Hunt was preferable in their eyes to ratification of the Syracuse platform.<sup>2</sup> The New York Custom House, it was said, provided funds, by assessment, to aid the Democrats. John L. Schoolcraft, candidate for Congress in the Albany district, and William A. Sackett, candidate in the Seneca district, because those gentlemen were intimate friends of Mr. Weed and Mr. Seward, were openly opposed by the national administration. In his county, Oswego, Mr. Duer was so energetic that, although it gave General Taylor a majority in 1848, it now went eight hundred Democratic. For almost a fortnight the state remained in doubt. "Will the 'Evening Journal' have the dust brushed off that big eagle?" said the "Argus" just after the election. "We shall need it in a few days." To which Mr. Weed replied, "We have had the dust brushed off that eagle,

<sup>1</sup> This letter defeated the Whig ticket in Massachusetts.

<sup>2</sup> The Whig platform was essentially similar to that which carried the State in 1848.



but have not sent it to the 'Argus.' The gallant bird has no predilections for Loco-Focoism."<sup>1</sup> It was finally found that 214,614 votes had been polled for Mr. Hunt, against 214,352 for Mr. Seymour. Legislative district returns indicated that a Seward-Weed Whig would be chosen in 1851 to succeed Mr. Dickinson. Sanford E. Church, Democrat, was elected Lieutenant-Governor. Mr. Schoolcraft, who had had to contend against Erastus Corning, Albany's wealthiest citizen, was elected to Congress. So was William A. Sackett, of Seneca.

"These results," wrote Mr. Weed, "will encourage the friends of freedom to persevere by all constitutional means and through all rightful channels in their efforts to restrain the extension of slavery, and to wipe out that black spot, wherever it can be done without injury to the rights and interests of others."

[GEORGE ASHMUN TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, December 6, 1850.

MY DEAR SIR, — Mr. Schoolcraft showed me your article upon the message, and I cannot help telling you how much it gratified me. Of course you could not be expected to indorse the fugitive slave law; but considering your relations toward Mr. Fillmore, a more graceful thing could not have been done. So much for that.

Now, a single word. The fugitive law cannot and will not be repealed or amended. It has provisions which to all of us are objectionable. But they cannot be changed. As wise men, then, should we sustain or countenance a movement which is certain to fail? Is it not a mistake for politicians to take a step when defeat is inevitable? The movement itself would divide the Whig party of the North from that of the South; but more than that, the Whigs of the North would most certainly divide upon it. We should not, therefore, gain what sometimes follows a defeat, viz., the putting our enemies in a false position, of which we might afterwards take advantage; because we should ourselves be in no condition to take advantage of such a state of things by reason of our own division.

We are all in very good humor here, and have great hopes of a quiet and useful session — and *no agitation for ineffectual ends*. Good evening, and believe me,

Your friend,

GEORGE ASHMUN.

<sup>1</sup> For many years these establishments enjoyed in common the ownership of a large wood-cut representing an eagle, which served to illustrate the columns of the paper whose party was in a majority.

[GOVERNOR FISH TO MR. WEED.]

ALBANY, *December 31, 1850.*

MY DEAR WEED, — I send herewith a volume of “*Literary Curiosities.*” I pray you to accept it as a very slight testimonial of my appreciation of the uniform and uninterrupted kindness which I have experienced at your hands from the first moment of my entrance upon public duties. I came here without claims upon your kindness. I shall leave here full of the most grateful recollections of your favors and good will. I shall ever cherish the pleasure of recurring to the past.

May God’s choicest blessings be yours. Whatever space may separate us, I shall ever be,

Truly your friend,

HAMILTON FISH.

1851. — When the state legislature met, in January, the contest between Fillmore and Weed-Seward Whigs was renewed. In the Assembly the Whigs were in a majority, but the Senate, to which Fillmore men had elected James W. Beekman, of New York, was so close as to be doubtful.<sup>1</sup> The caucus to nominate a successor to Mr. Dickinson was not held until the 30th of January, and even after that, federal office-holders, who besieged Albany, were able to maintain a dead-lock for several weeks. Finally, however, Governor Fish, the anti-Fillmore candidate, was elected.

Mr. Weed was urged to accept the senatorship himself, but, as was his wont, declined to be a candidate.

Henry J. Raymond, was Speaker of the Assembly while the President was engaged in “crushing” Mr. Seward and Mr. Weed. Mr. Raymond began making political speeches in 1840, when too young to vote. Shortly afterwards, falling in with Mr. Greeley, he was given a position on the “*New Yorker,*” with a salary of \$400 a year. One day Mr. Greeley brought him into the “*Journal*” office and introduced him to Mr. Weed. In 1848, when his relations with General Taylor rendered him obnoxious to a certain class of Whigs, Mr. Weed voluntarily offered to withdraw from his own paper, in Mr. Raymond’s favor, if that would satisfy the discontented.<sup>2</sup> This suggestion was eminently characteristic of Mr. Weed. It

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Beekman finally voted with the Democrats.

<sup>2</sup> See *Maverick’s Life of Raymond*, pp. 88, 89.

was not acted upon, however, and Mr. Raymond, returning to New York, began to attack the editor of the "Journal" as a man whose "dangerous free soil tendencies" provoked discord and dissension. Wherefore, when Mr. Raymond went to the Assembly in 1850, Mr. Weed refused to recognize him.

Then, as now, Albany was addicted to a species of winter entertainments known as "legislative parties," to which gentlemen only are invited. Several such parties were given at Mr. Weed's residence, and Mr. Raymond was the only member of the legislature who received no invitation. It was not long, however, before prominent Whigs, who were friends of both gentlemen, busied themselves in efforts to bring about a reconciliation. Mr. Weed yielded so far as to invite Mr. Raymond to his house; and Mr. Raymond yielded so far as to accept the invitation. These formal courtesies soon led to the desired result, and thereafter, so long as life lasted, there was never again aught save the warmest friendship between these two great journalists. Mr. Raymond was chosen Speaker in 1851, was elected Lieutenant-Governor in 1854, and went to Congress in 1865.

[MR. WEED TO THE NEW YORK TYPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.]

ALBANY, *January 12, 1851.*

GENTLEMEN, — When your association honored me, two years ago, with an invitation to speak to the printers of the city of New York, I regretted, almost for the first time in my life, that this gift, "to speak in public on the stage," has been denied me. Indeed, my solicitude to be with you in celebrating the birthday of the immortal Franklin was so keen that, could I have relied, as did a gentleman similarly situated, on a friend to speak for me, I should have taken a seat at your table. But fearing that I might be less fortunate than Balaam, my valor took counsel of discretion. Though I cannot speak them, allow me to express in this form my grateful thanks for your present kind remembrance of me.

It is now forty years since I was apprenticed to the "Art preservative of all arts." I had aspired to this dignity four years earlier, but after officiating as "carrier" for a few weeks, in the office of Mackey Crosswell, of Catskill, my hopes were disappointed by the removal of my parents from that village to a then remote county. But in December, 1811, when Thomas Chittenden Fay established "The Lynx" in Onondaga Hollow, the cherished desire of my heart was gratified. According to the accounts of my master, I was then a very verdant

youth. And this, so far as my recollection serves in recalling the modes of instruction resorted to, must have been true; for he not unfrequently proposed to get ideas into my head with the "mallet," and on one occasion I evaded a well-aimed experiment in the same direction with the "sheepfoot," only by an "artful dodge." For this kind of discipline there were provocations. I remember one: An obituary notice of the death of the accomplished lady of a then youthful and promising but now venerable and eminent clergyman (the Rev. Derick C. Lansing) was handed in just before the paper was going to press. In setting it up, the word "consort" occurred. It was new, and did not strike me as conveying the appropriate idea; and instead of referring to the dictionary, I substituted the word "comfort," so that the deceased was thus made the "comfort" rather than the "consort" of the bereaved husband! The paper was worked off and sent about the village; and while I was felicitating myself upon an intellectual achievement, the blunder was discovered by Mr. Brown, a one-eyed shoemaker, and my ears yet tingle with the boxing my stupidity cost them.

In 1811 there were but thirty-four newspapers in this State. With their names, appearance, complexion, cuts, etc., I was as familiar as I now am with the faces around my own fireside. The paper on which they were printed resembled ordinary wrapping paper, in texture and hue, and the type, in most cases, was worn well down toward the "first nick." The "New York Columbian" was printed on a sheet as blue as indigo, while the "Hudson Bee" rejoiced in colors as yellow as "Mrs. Skewton's" bed curtains. . . .

Progress and mechanism have divested our art of much of its interest. I have never been able to look with complacency upon these innovations; and if our great exemplar, Franklin, could revisit earth, his spirit would grieve at the vandalism which has robbed "press work" of all its intellectuality. Benjamin Franklin, though a good "compositor," was a good "pressman" also, and worked as such from choice, while a journeyman.

But now only one branch of our trade is taught to apprentices. A printer is now no longer connected with the "press-room." The printer of the present day is a stranger to its healthful toil, its rich humors, its merry laughs, its habitual jests, and, I am constrained to remember, its too frequent revelries. The customs of the press-room, along with its labors, are all obsolete. Who, of the present generation of printers, knows anything of the mystic and magic power of signature "O"? And how can a boy make a good printer whose initiatory "steps" were not taken in treading a "pelt"? Who has forgotten, or *can* forget, the weariness of *that* treadmill? I remember

with gratitude the invention which gave us dressed deer-skins instead of "green pelts" for "balls"!

Railroads, steamboats, canal boats, etc., have had their share, too, in plucking flowers from our path. The journeyman printer, like the hatter and shoemaker, used to go on his "tramps." These were delightful peregrinations. I have traveled on foot, from Onondaga to Auburn, from Auburn to Utica, from Utica to Herkimer, thence to Cooperstown, thence to Albany, thence again to Utica and to other places, working a few months, or weeks, as chanced, in each town.

Time has wrought great changes, and nowhere else with such a legible hand as in your city. I obtained a "situation" there in June, 1816. It seems as though but a night had intervened, and that all I now see, in waking, of grandeur and magnificence, of a wilderness of dwellings and forests of masts, is the work of enchantment.

My first employers there were Messrs. Van Winkle & Wiley, whose office was in Greenwich Street, a few doors below Cortland. I was at press on "Cobbet's Register," that great English radical and reformer then having an office at No. 10 Wall Street. Anxious to see "William Cobbet," of whom I had read and heard so much, I obtained permission to take a "proof-sheet" to him.

Through the aid of the late Samuel H. Davis, one of the best printers I ever knew, and my cherished friend through life, I soon got a better situation at Daniel Fanshaw's, in Cliff Street. Mr. Fanshaw had the printing of the Bible and Tract Societies. This gave constant though hard work, for he required "eleven quire tokens" of us. I worked subsequently at the office of Samuel Wood & Sons, George Long, Jonathan Seymour, William A. Mercein, and, for a short time, upon the "Courier," published by the late Barent Gardiner.

Upon the years of my life which glided away as a journeyman printer in New York, I look back with exceeding gratification. It was a period of high, healthy, buoyant spirits, and fresh enjoyment. I was never for a day out of work; and with a hardy frame and willing hand, was enabled from my wages to gratify every rational wish.

Few journeymen made a larger figure in the "bill book" of a Saturday night than myself; but I was indebted for much of this to the driving, indomitable industry of my "press partners." Often when, of a pleasant afternoon, I suggested a walk on the Battery, instead of allowing me to "cap the balls," my partners would insist on "breaking the back of the thirteenth token," which being done would suggest an argument for "finishing" the thirteenth token the next day. But all this told in our favor on Saturday, when, instead of a "dead

horse," we had a live one in the stable, and when I was sure to treat myself with a pit ticket in the Park Theatre, — then in its palmyest days, for its boards were graced by the talents and genius of Hilson, Hop Robinson, Mrs. Darley, and Miss Johnson. Then every face habitually in the boxes was familiar to my eye. But here again, Time, with his merciless scythe, has "cut down all, both great and small." On a more recent occasion, when all play-going people were attracted to that theatre, the only persons always present thirty-five years ago were Philip Hone, M. M. Noah, and Jacob Hays.

Let me give you a practical idea of what printing was in New York in 1816. Messrs. Kirk & Mercein, booksellers, received an early copy of Moore's "Lalla Rookh," and determined to astonish the public with a hastened edition. The copy was sent to Mr. Mercein, in Gold Street, where I was at press. All the force attainable was in request. Compositors, pressmen, folders, binders, etc., worked day and night, and the American edition was for sale in a fortnight!

Again. In 1817 I worked on the "Courier." Those who remember the proprietor and editor, Mr. Gardiner, need not be told that his education as a financier had been sadly neglected. He could not afford to keep a news-boat, as Long & Turner, of the "Gazette," and Mr. Butler, of the "Mercantile Advertiser," did. And yet he must have the "marine list," which was obtained in this wise: Every half hour after dark, until eleven o'clock, a boy was dispatched from the "Courier" to the "Gazette" office, who "cribbed," and brought back — in his memory — all arrivals, consignees, etc. This incident will enable you to contrast the commerce of New York in 1817 with its "ship news" in 1851.

When I first worked in New York the late Mr. Roger Prout was the only ink manufacturer in the State. Soon afterward, two very worthy journeymen printers, Messrs. Mather & Donnington, established themselves in the business. They were, of course, poor, and had to contend against an old manufacturer with capital, by whom they were regarded as intruders. The employers, generally, took part with Mr. Prout, while the sympathies of the journeymen were with his rivals. We believed that our friends were oppressed, and it was soon found impossible to do "good work" with Prout's ink. In spite of our best efforts, "picks," "monks," and "friars" marred the beauty of each impression. This soon compelled employers to patronize Mather & Donnington, whose ink worked to a charm! In looking back upon this warfare, I am not sure that Prout's ink received fair play; but, fortunately, business increased so rapidly that both found abundant employment. Mr. Prout died rich; and Mr. Mather, who as a printer, a man, and a Christian is an honor to all

his professions, is now the best and most extensive ink manufacturer in America. . .

It was my good fortune, as a journeyman, to find in employers almost invariable kindness. I remember them all with sincere regard, and several with affection and gratitude. Mr. Seymour was an honor to his race. Mr. Mercein was a most amiable man. The now venerable Thomas Walker, of Utica, for some thirty years publisher of the "Columbian Gazette," and nearly or quite as long an upright magistrate, has not outlived his enemies, for he never had one. Colonel W. L. Stone, always proud of his profession, was an estimable and guileless man.

In Everard Peck, of Rochester, for whom I worked after a wife and children were upon my hands (that wife, God bless her, always doing more than her share for the support of all), and to whose office I seemed to have been providentially attracted, I found that friend who "sticketh closer than a brother." . . .

I rejoice that the memory of Franklin is cherished by printers. No page of history is adorned by a brighter name. His precepts and examples — both eminently wise and good — have exerted a salutary and living influence over the civilized world. But to printers, especially, have his teachings been profitable. Stimulated by his virtues, and emulous of his fame, printers have risen to high and enviable stations.

There is no man, I venture to say, who has the slightest intellectual relation to our craft, who has not been rendered wiser, better, and happier, by reading the life of Benjamin Franklin. And many a printer's "devil," who, but for his familiarity with the history of Franklin, would have groveled through life, has risen to eminence. Every state in the Union has furnished gratifying illustrations of this fact. . . .

But it is time to arrest this garrulous pen. I sat down merely to write my thanks for the honor which your invitation confers. Instead, however, of regarding the maxim which teaches that brevity, on social occasions, is "the soul of wit," old memories have kept me wasting ink and paper these two hours. But the horse led to water will drink or not as he pleases, and you have this advantage over me: letters, like petitions, can be referred, or laid on the table — "without reading."

Very truly yours, THURLOW WEED.

P. S. — If sentiments "register" with your proceedings, I beg to submit the following:—

The Journeyman Printers of the City of New York, — May "full cases" and "fat takes" brighten their toil, while "proofs" of friendship, and "tokens" of affection sweeten their repose.

[WILLIAM KENT TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *January 22, 1851.*

MY DEAR WEED, — We hear a good deal here of movements to defeat Fish as Senator. That would be a base desertion of one who has proved himself so true and worthy in every station. Of one thing I am sure, — intrigues are going on to obstruct the choice; but how likely they are to be of any effect, you know better than I do. My heart and soul are for Fish.

I have just finished reading your autobiographical letter to the printers, and while the glow of pleasure still animates me, cannot refrain from writing you a line to thank you. Interesting as it is (and it is worthy of Franklin, and much more warm-hearted than careful "Poor Richard's" memoirs), it might have been made more piquant, if it had set forth incidents some of which I wot of. My occupation this winter has been and is to make notes to a law-book; but if I ever become annotator of your letter, and place before its readers adventures which I learned from you over the wheel of a steamboat of a summer's evening, the book will vie with Gil Blas of Santillane, if, indeed, it will not with the adventures of Roderick Random.

One dark page will appear in your biography. It will appear that, in 1822, you became acquainted with a young lawyer, who from that time to the present never faltered in his attachment; who stuck to you through good and ill report, and yet whom you never visited. Or, if conscience made you come to his house of a Sunday evening, when he sat gaping over the fire, from whose door you turned away with some slight excuse which will not pass muster in the day of judgment; but yet this history will say that the lawyer still continued faithful as Everard Peck, or any other devoted devil of a printer among your host of friends.

Yours ever truly,

W. KENT.

[HAMILTON FISH TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *November 15, 1851.*

MY DEAR WEED, — I hardly have the heart to write. A noble, glorious party has been defeated — destroyed — by its own leaders. What is to become of us? Where shall we go? Webster has succeeded better under Fillmore than he did under Tyler, in breaking up the Whig organization and forming a third party. How are the mighty fallen!

I pity Fillmore. Timid, vacillating, credulous, unjustly suspicious, when approached by his prejudices, he has allowed (rather than accomplished) the sacrifice of that confiding party which has had no



honors too high to confer upon him. It cannot be long before he will realize the tremendous mistake he has made.

When are you coming to New York? Let me know, and make your arrangements for a sociable dinner with me, where, with two or three friends, we can talk over the past, the present, and the future. You know you are sure of a cordial welcome. If Alvah Hunt comes with you, bring him to my house also.

Truly yours, HAMILTON FISH.

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, December 20, 1851.

FRIEND WEED, — If Fillmore and Webster will only use each other up, we may possibly recover. But our chance is slim. Our friends came together dispirited, as well they may be. We ought to have cast thirty votes to-day for Thad. Stevens, as a protest against the compromise resolve, yet we got but sixteen. Even Henry Bennett and the Michigan men, who owe their election to the hatred of the fugitive slave law, went wrong. Schoonmaker voted under advice, as his seat may be contested. Pennsylvania cheated Stevens meanly, — but that was like her.

There is a powerful interest working hard against Douglas. It pushes William O. Butler for President, and would like to run W. L. Marcy for Vice if he would consent, but may take Frank Pierce. I am not sure that Marcy will not himself be the candidate. Our Barnburners would prefer him if they could nominate him, and tried to have the delegates chosen by state convention for that purpose; but Hunkers outgeneraled them and called by districts, which will give Douglas a chance. Buchanan will have to fight hard for his own State; if he gets it, he may yet be nominated. Cass is nowhere.

I see the old set of borers for everything here.

Yours, H. GREELEY.

Mr. Greeley concurred cordially in denouncing the administration, but, as his letter shows, believed, or tried to believe, that the Whigs might “possibly recover,” and thus, as the plan was, elect General Scott. Regarding this result as out of the question, but unwilling to embarrass his friends, Mr. Weed concluded to go to Europe for six or eight months. Believing that a Democrat would certainly be chosen President, he was disposed to allow Mr. Fillmore or Mr. Webster to secure the Whig nomination, and take the consequences. Thus, so far as his influence in national politics was exercised at this time it

was not so much in connection with his own as with the Democratic party.

“Governor Marcy,” he writes, “though nominally an old Hunker, was sound on the slavery question. With the Democrats of his own State united in his favor, it was fair to expect that he might succeed in obtaining the Democratic presidential nomination. Having friendly intercourse with prominent Barnburners, among whom were Lieutenant-Governor Addison Gardiner and Simeon B. Jewett, of Monroe, and Deau Richmond, of Batavia, I brought them and Governor Marcy together. The misunderstanding between the Governor and Mr. John McKeon, of New York, was, by mutual explanation, reconciled.

“One obstacle only remained, Mr. Daniel S. Dickinson, of Binghamton, was a candidate, relying confidently upon the support of Virginia and other Southern States. With the approval of Governor Marcy, I undertook to arrange that matter by an agreement that the delegates from New York should vote solid for Mr. Dickinson if he should prove to be stronger in the national convention outside our State than Governor Marcy; while, on the other hand, if Governor Marcy should prove stronger than Mr. Dickinson in other states, then New York was to vote solid for him.

“After a conference with several prominent Democrats, Francis B. Cutting and Elijah F. Purdy were suggested as the right persons to confer with Mr. Dickinson on that subject. They cheerfully acquiesced, and the day before I departed for Europe Mr. Cutting informed me that he would visit Mr. Dickinson, accompanied by Mr. Purdy, at an early day. But that day was procrastinated until it was too late. Indeed, the proposition was not made to Mr. Dickinson until his leading friends had committed themselves by a second choice. Mr. Corning and Mr. Jewett subsequently informed me that what Mr. Cutting and Mr. Purdy neglected was proposed when the national convention met, but that the proposition came too late. Mr. Dickinson in 1862, when I talked the matter over with him, said that if Mr. Cutting and Mr. Purdy had visited him as contemplated, he would have ‘accepted the situation’ cheerfully, and that whatever might have been his opinion then, he now knew that it would have resulted in Governor Marcy’s nomination and election.”







W. L. Marcy



[WASHINGTON IRVING TO CHARLES R. LESLIE.]

NEW YORK, *November 20, 1851.*

MY DEAR LESLIE, — This will be handed to you by my worthy and intelligent friend, Thurlow Weed, Esq., who makes a short visit to London, in the course of a brief European tour. He, of course, is desirous of seeing the lions, — particularly the literary lions, — of London. Can you give him an introduction to Dickens, of whom he is one of the most enthusiastic admirers I have met with? Render him any other civility that is conveniently within your power.

With kindest remembrances to Mrs. Leslie and all your family,  
Ever, my dear Leslie, yours, WASHINGTON IRVING.

[THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO LORD CARLISLE.]

WASHINGTON, *January 6, 1851.*

MY DEAR LORD CARLISLE, — I pray to introduce to your notice and regard my friend, Mr. Thurlow Weed, of the State of New York. Mr. Weed is a gentleman of character and much intelligence. He has been heretofore connected with the political press of this country, and by that instrumentality has exercised a very considerable influence. He is modest and retiring in his manners, but you will find him capable of giving you a just account of the state of things with us in whatever regards public affairs and political transactions. I cordially recommend him to your kindness. With entire respect, my dear lord,

I remain your obedient servant,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

## CHAPTER XV.

1851-1852.

MR. WEED'S SECOND EUROPEAN TOUR. — CHANGES NOTED IN GREAT BRITAIN. — LONDON'S PECULIARITIES. — KOSSUTH. — PROTECTION AND FREE TRADE. — FRANCE AND THE COUP D'ÉTAT. — PARIS SIGHING FOR A RESTORATION. — PROVENCE. — MARSEILLES. — GENOA. — FLORENCE. — NAPLES. — ROME AT EASTER-TIDE. — THE APENNINES. — VIENNA. — FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAIN. — RETURN TO ENGLAND.

“THE aspect of England has greatly changed since I saw her eight years ago,” wrote Mr. Weed from London on the 9th of December, 1851. “It is a change vastly for the better. England is now prosperous. Her commerce thrives. Her manufacturing interests are in a healthy state. Her agriculture, though landlords do not get as large profits as formerly, diffuses wide-spread prosperity throughout the Kingdom. The English nation is now better fed and better clothed than it has been at any time for fifty years. There is destitution and suffering, as must needs be, but it is greatly diminished in extent and squalor. Instead of having, as many suppose, enjoyed all there was for her of ‘rise and progress,’ England is going on with giant strides to increased power, wealth, greatness, and munificence.

“Much of her prosperity is, of course, the fruit of a long peace. But not all. England has been, for fifteen or more years, wisely governed. The ‘Iron Duke,’ the late Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, Lord Aberdeen, and others of her leaders are enlightened and patriotic statesmen. The Queen, ‘take her for all in all,’ has qualities which render her a blessing to the nation. With a knowledge which enables her to discriminate between good and bad measures, and a faculty of surrounding herself with experienced and upright counselors, she steadily exerts her power to uphold the right. It is the opinion of the wisest men here that no king, however able, could have reigned so usefully as has Queen Victoria. . . .

“When here before, I was struck by the circumstance that



London had, in the sense we understand the term, no suburbs ; that there were no miserable shanties or windowless huts, and no starving women or ragged children upon the outskirts of the city. The grounds are highly cultivated, and everything looks most palmy, up to the gas-lights. The reason did not then occur to me, though it is apparent enough. Land is too valuable to be wasted. Every available rod or foot is needed for cultivation. London cannot afford to let the idle and vicious, or even the unfortunate, vegetate where vegetables can be grown. The poor and the destitute, along with the profligate and pestilential, are driven into the heart of the city, to tenant cellars and garrets in lanes and courts.

“ And in one respect there is a marked difference between the agricultural districts of England and America. Heretofore our farmers have had few or no high-blooded animals. They have not been able to purchase ‘Durhams,’ ‘Herefords,’ ‘South-downs,’ etc., etc. With us grain has been cheap ; we could best afford to fatten common herds. Here nothing pays but blooded stock — the purest paying the best. The English cannot afford to pay anything for bones, legs, snouts, and ears. They go for flesh, and they get it, too, with the smallest possible proportion of bone or garbage. There is precious little ‘coarse meat’ in John Bull’s beef and mutton. . . .

“Kossuth is now, I suppose, in America. He created a stir here, and is regarded as a man of decided ability. But he has no thought of retirement or repose. He is cast for a part in the world’s drama, and means to ‘play out the play.’ With a temperament which requires action, I do not believe he will content himself long in America, especially if events in the Old World invite his return. . . .

“The Queen, with her Court, is at the Isle of Wight, and London is out of town. Our Minister, Mr. Lawrence, is at his post. He resides in Piccadilly, fronting St. James’ Park, with the Duke of Wellington for his near neighbor on one side, and the great heiress, Miss Burdett-Coutts, on the other. He has sustained himself most creditably.

“The Hon. Robert J. Walker, who is rightfully regarded as the father of the tariff of 1846, is receiving marked attentions here — attentions to which he is well entitled, for England is now profiting largely by the policy of the Polk administration.

The British manufacturers are reaping, and will continue to reap, a rich harvest from the tariff of '46. They paid handsomely, if what I hear be true, for that tariff; but it is repaying them, in its operation, fifty-fold. After adhering for centuries to a rigidly restrictive policy, England has attained a position which enables her, with superabundant capital and cheap labor, to become the world's workshop. There is a fable, I believe, of a fox who, having lost his own tail, persuaded his friends that tails were quite useless. England has got to the end of Protection, and is now endeavoring to persuade America, a nation that possesses, like England, all the elements required for manufacturing independence, that as she can manufacture for us, we should abandon the Protective policy. She does not tell us, however, that when, deluded by the popular theory of Free Trade, we shall have withdrawn the pressure of American competition, John Bull, generous as he is, will consult his own rather than our interests, in his prices.

“I do not urge a high tariff. We collect quite enough revenue now. But let us have a discriminating duty, with one eye to revenue and another to protection, keeping the latter eye a little widest open. I hope to see the closest commercial relations cherished and perpetuated between America and England. We want much that she makes, and she needs some things, many, indeed, which we produce. But when the balance of trade is so much against us as to require the shipment of nearly a million of dollars a week, making some fifty millions a year, I venture to hazard the opinion that we cannot stand it long. . . . I met ex-Secretary Walker at the house of an English friend the evening before we went to Manchester. He is even more zealous for Free Trade than when in the Treasury Department, insisting that our true interests lie in that direction. ‘It was urged,’ he said, ‘that the tariff of 1846 would break down the iron interests, and yet Pittsburg, the only exclusively iron working city in the Union, was never so prosperous.’ But he very frankly admitted that this was owing principally to the fact that the raw material was obtained at rates so low that it was destructive to that interest, which is large and important. . . .

“I was quite fortunate in the canvas-back ducks that I brought over for some friends. Four brace went to the American Minister, three to Mr. George Peabody, three to Joseph

Parkes, Esq., and three to Mr. Steele, of Manchester. Mr. Lawrence divided with the Duke of Wellington, Mr. Peabody sent some to Mr. Sturgis, of the house of Baring Brothers & Co., and Mr. Parkes divided with other friends. Mr. Lawrence tells me that he never ate them in finer order, even in Washington. The Duke was delighted with this specimen of Yankee game. I partook of them myself at the hospitable table of Mr. Peabody (the 'American merchant prince'), and of Mr. Parkes, and certainly never ate finer ones at the Astor House, or at Barnum's. Ducks, therefore, shot in the Chesapeake Bay on the 21st day of November, were on the 7th of December gracing the best tables in London, having traveled 3,600 miles. So much for steam and ice."

PARIS, *December 21, 1851.*

"The people of France are now deciding the question, by ballot, whether Louis Napoleon shall be their ruler for ten years. Or rather, they are ratifying the act by which he declared himself supreme. I have been yesterday and to-day to the polls in several districts. Inspectors and clerks preside, as with us; and each elector takes with him the evidence that he is a voter. A man stands at the entrance of each poll distributing ballots, and for this he is paid by the government. Each poll is protected by two sentinels. The question is decided by "yes" and "no." Tickets with "yes" only are printed, so that those who vote "no" write their ballots. There is no other candidate, and there will, it is supposed, be but few negative votes. Instead, therefore, of an independent expression of public sentiment, it is but an act of acquiescence. . . .

"Such of the French people as you hear talk on the subject are in favor of the change. This grows out of a desire for some form of government strong enough to give repose and security; and so long as the army is with Napoleon they feel sure of both, while without this influence, it is said, all would go wrong. There is, how rightfully I will not undertake to say, a great dread of Socialism here. It is not believed that society can be reformed upon that plan. It is difficult to conquer the prejudices, reform the habits, and subdue the passions of ages. However attractive as a theory, most people doubt whether such a reconstruction of society is practicable. The system would stand a better chance, or, at least, a fairer experiment could be

made, by commencing with a community whose habits of civilization are unformed.

“ There is, also, among the aristocracy of France, a systematic effort making to cure the working classes, especially of Paris, of their *penchant* for Republicanism. Paris, since the downfall of Louis Philippe, has lost its accustomed gayeties. The fêtes, balls, etc., etc., that formerly rendered the city so attractive, have been discontinued. The nobility and aristocracy live cheap, purchasing as little as possible of shopkeepers, and giving few entertainments. The city is consequently less interesting to strangers, and business is dull. Paris, to be prosperous, must be brilliant. Her palaces must be occupied, and her saloons open. The wealthy and fashionable must be drawn here by royalty, whose atmosphere cannot be breathed except by those in costly attire. A very large proportion of the inhabitants of Paris derive their support from occupations which minister to the luxuries rather than the necessities of life. In almost everything the ornamental predominates over the useful. And in everything ornamental — in all that charms the eye, gratifies the ear, or delights the palate, the French are unrivaled. The shopkeepers, milliners, confectioners, and perfumers, sigh for a restoration. . . .

“ That Napoleon has the sympathies, and will have, if he desires it, the support of the Legitimists of Europe, is quite certain. If by doing for them what they could not do for themselves, their friendship could be won, he is well entitled to it. It is easier to mould and govern France now than it ever was before. There are fewer master-spirits to deal with, fewer rivals to encounter, and a less excitable population. The spirit of the age is pacific. Even those who love freedom rationally are disposed to count the cost. They are even willing to forego the enjoyment of its blessings, if the boon is to be purchased with blood and treasure. But this, probably, grows out of the circumstance that here in France, after having overthrown despotisms and representative monarchies for the sake and in the name of freedom, they fail to get a genuine article. So far, the French political crucible has given the people bogus instead of the pure metal, and it is not to be wondered at that they begin to distrust, if not to weary of false pretenses.

“ The success of Napoleon’s demonstration will, in defiance of

the maxim, roll back the wheels of revolution. It will put out the fires and crush the spirit of freedom all over Europe. There is no hope for Switzerland or Sardinia, and less than none for Hungary. The people of Prussia and Belgium, who obtained installments of liberty from their monarchs will be required to yield them back. . . .

PARIS, *December 29, 1851.*

“The best informed persons here are ignorant of Napoleon’s intentions. The movement which overthrew the recent government was a perfect surprise. Ministers and generals who found themselves in prison on the morning of the 3d instant went to sleep wholly unconscious and unsuspecting. All was admirably arranged. The Minister of the Interior, the officer destined to the command of the army, and the chief of police, were alone in Bonaparte’s councils. The entire police force was on duty, with extra pay, all night. Resistance was apprehended only from the National Guard. To avoid this possibility, the drum-majors of each brigade were directed to repair with all their drummers and drums to a large court in the Place Vendôme at eleven o’clock at night. Here they were placed under a sufficient guard, and supplied bountifully with refreshments for the night. This and similar precautionary steps were taken so adroitly as to escape observation. . . .

“France, as you know, has a common centre to which everything tends and all are attracted. With us, many to whom the restraints of law are inconvenient, go to Texas, or Canada, or California; but in France, all persons of enterprise and genius come to Paris. This, of course, makes a mixture of good and bad, in which, however, there is a strong infusion of the latter ingredient. Of persons condemned through a series of years to the galleys, some five hundred, who had either been pardoned or had served out their terms, returned to Paris. They were restricted to certain quarters, though not very rigidly watched. These discharged convicts, or some of them, were engaged in barricading the city on the 3d instant, with a view to pillage and spoils. Orders were therefore given to the chief of police to arrest all who had thus broken their ban. Several hundred have been taken and sent to Cayenne, where a colony of convicts is to be established.”

AVIGNON, *January 14, 1852.*

“Provence, through which we passed to-day, is apparently very poor. Everything looked old and dilapidated. We saw but few cattle, and no sheep. There was everywhere an absence of domestic comfort. The people lacked the cheerfulness which belongs to the French character. The buildings are all of stone, with apartments for families and horses under the same roof. For full a hundred miles we encountered a race of unwashed women. We did not see for hours, either in villages or at farm-houses, a woman or child with clean face or hands.

“But as we approached Avignon, both the face of Nature and the faces of ‘Heaven’s best gift’ manifested a gratifying improvement; so much so, that it is not at all difficult to imagine that Laura’s charms and virtues were worthy of Petrarch’s muse and devotion. On inquiring, however, for Laura’s tomb, we were informed that but a single stone of it remains.”

MARSEILLES, *January 15, 1852.*

“Marseilles is peculiar for its confusion of costumes and languages. In its harbor all sorts of craft are seen, and on its wharves you meet people of all nationalities. I saw in half an hour’s stroll, in their respective costumes, Turks, Moors, Greeks, and Arabs. Among the latter were a hundred of the most miserable looking objects I had ever met. They were going from a dirty-looking vessel to a steamer destined for Algiers, but why to Algiers I could not learn. They were filthy and half naked, looking haggard and ill. The Moors are well-dressed, fine-looking fellows.

“There is, except in its fine harbor, but little of interest for the stranger here. We rode to the Prado, a beautiful promenade, from which we had our first view of the Mediterranean, now calm and unmoved, with a mild sun shining upon its bright waters. Here, too, we immediately recognized the ‘Château d’If,’ to which Dumas imparts such thrilling interest in his ‘Monte Christo.’”

GENOA, *January 24, 1852.*

“Sardinia is now the only constitutional asylum for fugitives. Thousands of Italian, Hungarian, and French refugees are here trembling. Unfortunately, Sardinia has to encounter not only civil despotism, but has incurred the displeasure of the Church

of Rome, by denying its civil supremacy. That Church, I am pained to see, is now the ally of despotism. How far it is to be blamed for this, I will not undertake to say. The present head of the Church signalized his accession to power by acts worthy of the highest commendation. His government, at once enlightened and parental, looked alike to the civil and religious welfare of his people. It seemed, for a season, like the dawning of a brighter day for Italy. But the Romans, like the French, were either unfitted for, or are unworthy of, good government. Not satisfied with privileges which they had not enjoyed for ages, and ungrateful for favors which a philanthropic ruler had, at great hazard to himself, granted, they took advantage of the installments of freedom given them to overthrow their benefactor and drive him into exile. Betrayed by those to whom he desired to be a father, is it strange that the Pope should act with those by whom he was restored to authority? I believe that the principles and sympathies of Pius IX. were for freedom, and with the people. But the good things he did, as an earnest of good things to come, served only to make the people his enemies. So now he 'puts his trust in princes.' "

FLORENCE, *February 4, 1852.*

"If Florence could exchange climates with the island of Madeira, there would be at least one Paradise on earth,—that is, if Paradise be that place of beautiful perfections with which it is invested by hope and faith. The bountiful soil of Tuscany supplies all wants of man. Genius has adorned the galleries of Florence with attractions which continue to charm through never so long a life; for, like the plays of Shakespeare, I am sure these pictures may be studied forever. And as for palaces, there are more than enough for all who wish to occupy them, and that, too, at rents marvelously low. Why, you may live in a palace, with ample grounds (including garden and vineyard), for less rent than is paid for any two-and-a-half story building in our immediate Hudson Street neighborhood. And the prices of all needful articles correspond, provisions, fuel, wine, service, etc., being more than reasonably cheap. A person with a small income at home, well invested, may come here to enjoy the 'fat of the land,' and become rich, without working, if he lives long enough.

"Take an example. The villa and palace of the Salviati

family is situated a mile and a half from the city, and joins that of their great rival family, the De' Medici. Besides its ample gardens, orangery, etc., there are several hundred acres of vineyards, olive orchards, meadow and pasture lands. In out-houses, there are all that befit a palace. In the gardens there are statuary and fountains. The saloons, dining-hall, library, and boudoir of the palace are hung with paintings by old Italian masters. From the palace you have fine views of Fiesole, the ancient city of the Etruscans, Val d'Arno (in viewing which both Milton and Washington Irving fertilized their classic spirits with beautiful imagery), and of the city of Florence, which spreads out like a mosaic carpet at your feet. This fine old palace, with its appropriately rich furniture and its broad grounds, is occupied by Colonel Winthrop, of New Orleans, who pays for all these luxuries the sum of \$1,200 per annum.

“Again, Mr. Tweedy and wife, and Miss Knower, of Albany, occupy pleasant furnished apartments on the Arno, with a large open corridor, from which you have a fine view of the river, the Corsini and surrounding villas, for which they pay \$160 a year. Dinners are served from an excellent hotel, for themselves and two servants for \$1 per day. Their breakfasts cost less than half a dollar. Wood costs \$6 a cord; wine, of Tuscany (pure and delicious), from ten to twenty cents a bottle.”

NAPLES, *February 16, 1852.*

“This city contains more than four hundred thousand inhabitants. Its harbor and bay are claimed to be the most beautiful in the world, though the palm is disputed by the admirers of Constantinople and Valparaiso, while others, as they well may, place that of New York in competition. In scenery and associations we cannot claim for New York the magnificent features which Naples presents. We have no Vesuvius, with its ever-smoking, and sometimes fiery eruptions. Nor have we, as in view of Naples, islands that have shot up mountains high out of the sea. Nor can we point, as Neapolitans do, to the spot where St. Paul landed on his way to Rome; where Tiberius died, and Virgil was entombed. But in place of these memorials of antiquity we can boast of high moral achievements. New York, with a bay almost as broad and during the



summer months as bright and beautiful as this, looks out upon mighty ships and splendid steamers wafting the products, the luxuries, and the treasures of the world to and from nearly twenty-five millions of enlightened, prosperous, happy freemen. How gladly would any or all the hoary and decayed nations of Europe exchange their memories and their miseries, their palaces and their prisons, for the freshness and fertility, the privileges and the bounties enjoyed in America!"

ROME, *April 11, 1852.*

"Rome rejoices to-day in a risen Saviour. The Church, having passed her season of fasts, and laid aside her sables, assumes her gayest vestments. All is life and animation. Numerous religious processions and ceremonies took place at break of day. We repaired to St. Peter's at eight o'clock, where a great multitude had already assembled. Soon after nine o'clock, the Pope's procession, preceded by the Pope's guard, entered the church. It was far more imposing than those which preceded it. There was a larger number of ambassadors, noblemen, military officers, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and other dignitaries, and they were all most richly decorated. The services which followed, occupying more than two hours, were deeply impressive. These over, everybody rushed to the great square in front of St. Peter's to receive, from its balcony the Pope's benediction. For half an hour St. Peter's discharged, through its four side-doors, a dense mass of human beings, numbering, I judge, from thirty to forty thousand. These, added to more than as many more, previously in front of the church, along with five or six thousand troops, swelled the aggregate to nearly a hundred thousand. There all stood under a bright sun and cloudless atmosphere, with eyes directed to the balcony until his holiness appeared. Then all was hushed to breathless silence, all knelt; and the scene, at this moment, was more solemn and sublime than can be described. The blessing over, various bands commenced playing, and the various regiments moved off. All was now life and spirit. Carriages rattled off; but this was no easy task. Ours, though dragoons were busy in preventing confusion and opening avenues, was over an hour in getting out of the square. The streets, on our way to our hotel were lined, like Broadway on the 4th of July, with

people decked in their gayest attire. . . . Thus closes the morning of Easter Sunday. We go in the evening to see St. Peter's illuminated."

*Nine o'clock, P. M.*

"We have seen St. Peter's illuminated. It was a sight that richly compensates for a long journey to Rome. The effect is truly magnificent — much more so than can be imagined from all the descriptions or views we had seen. In comparison, all that I had ever witnessed in the way of illuminations was tame and common-place.

"We drove to the church at seven o'clock. The lighting of nine thousand lamps took ten minutes. These illuminated St. Peter's from its base to the brass at the top of the dome, together with the corridors on either side of the square, showing the church to great advantage. But brilliant as this was, that which succeeded was far more so. At eight o'clock precisely, and as the great bell tolled the hour, instantaneously the "golden illumination" occurred. Thousands of additional and even more radiant lights appeared as by magic, and now the scene was one of gorgeous beauty. The mighty cathedral was in a blaze of glorious light. Several bands were all the while discoursing soft, mellow music around the square, in which were from fifty to seventy-five thousand spectators. Having feasted our eyes on this beautiful scene, we drove to the Pincian Hill for the purpose of obtaining another and more distant view. This, too, was grand. Having devoted two hours to the illumination we returned, deeply impressed with recollections of a spectacle of unsurpassed magnificence."

IN THE APENNINE MOUNTAINS, *April 20, 1852.*

"Rome follows me, day and night, with her precious memories. Oh, what bright visions of her faded glories come teeming back! One could live, I am sure, a long life of happiness upon the mental treasures garnered up in a month at Rome. In her ruins, in her villas, and in her galleries, emotions are excited that will make the heart bound as long as its pulsations last. You bring away from Rome impressions that will endure through life. In the recollections of the Eternal City there is a fund of enjoyment worth far more than the money it costs. To say nothing of many other great pictures, I would not, for many

golden dollars, have foregone the exquisite pleasure of seeing, again and again, Guido's 'Cenci,' a picture of such surpassing excellence that the whole world is paying it the homage of admiration. That picture, with the 'Fornarina' of Raphael, in the palace of the Barberini, if money could purchase them, would command almost any sum demanded."

LAYBACH, April 30, 1852.

"European travel has its novelties, especially to an American. Its exactions try the temper of all, though we stand them better than the English, many of whom scold and chafe from the moment they cross the Channel. If you travel by post, every post-boy claims his *buona-mano*. If by vetturini, your driver claims his at the end of the journey. At hotels, though 'service' constitutes an item in your bill, the waiters, chambermaids, and porters, all stand ready to wish you a *bon voyage*, in such polite and gentle terms that the appeal is irresistible. And then the 'secretary' has such consummate skill in working upon a bill, that while you know beforehand what your apartments, breakfast, and dinner are to cost, the total frequently startles you. These extortions lead to practices, in the way of indemnity, which are at least ludicrous. If, for example, four want dinner, you order fish for two, butter for two, sugar for two, and dessert for two, because of these things you are sure to get enough for four. In a fashionable hotel, if you are to stay but one night, four wax candles are lighted in your parlor, and one, sometimes two, in each of your bed-rooms. These are charged at the rate of twenty cents each. You must, therefore, either submit to the imposition or pocket the candles. The practical result is, that your Countess and your Baroness, as well as ladies without titles, who at home would scorn to trouble themselves about candle ends, quietly slip them into their trunks or carpet bags. They also fob various articles, for which they pay roundly, but in a manner so stealthily that it has a petty-larceny appearance.

"While my hand is in, let me make a clean breast of it. At our hotel in Vienna the charge for tea was forty cents. As we were paying six dollars a day for apartments, and as the tea consisted simply of a cup of tea and a roll, we ordered for two only, though our party consisted of four. And this is so com-

mon that those who do not practice it are exceptions to the rule. Some travelers, it is said, hide enough of their breakfast to make a dinner. We content ourselves with pilfering a lunch from our breakfast-table. The justification for all this is, that you pay separately for each and every thing, and most exorbitantly for small 'rations.'"

VIENNA, *Sunday Evening, May 9, 1852.*

"Returning late from the Prater, we went for our dinners to the coffee-room of our hotel (the Archduke Charles, and the best in Vienna), where a dozen or fifteen tables were spread, and groups of from three to ten seated, some just taking their soup, others going through their meat courses, and others again at their dessert. Most of the persons at table were officers, with some of whom were ladies. But the peculiarity which struck me was that gentlemen who finished their dinners first invariably lighted cigars, and, without rising, smoked away in the faces of those sitting by them, whether ladies or gentlemen, who went on with their dinners quite undisturbed. To me, the worst feature of this vile habit was that the cigars were infernally bad."

PRAGUE, *May 11, 1852.*

"We could learn one lesson from Austria with great advantage to our people. This is the art of making good bread, which is universal here, and is really a great national blessing. We were struck first at Trieste by the fine quality of the bread at our hotel. At all the eating-houses between Trieste and Vienna we remarked the excellence of the bread. Here we enjoy the same luxury. Nor is it a luxury for the rich alone. The same light, sweet bread is in all the bake-shops, at prices which enable all classes to purchase. England has contrived, humanely, to give 'cheap bread' to her people, but Austria affords it still cheaper and of an excellent quality.

"I do not know that the secret of making good bread can be communicated. Perhaps it is owing to some peculiarity in the flour or in the water; but I do know that the art of making for American people such bread as is eaten throughout Austria would be an acquisition of incalculable value. A Vienna baker who should go to the city of New York and vend such bread as we get here would be able to ride in his coach and reside on

Fifth Avenue in two years, providing Yankee bakers did not find out his secret."

FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAIN, *May 16.*

"Frankfort is one of the free cities whose representatives constitute the German Diet. It is situated on the River Main, which forms a junction with the Rhine, twelve miles below. It contains seventy thousand inhabitants, who, if every outward sign and all the usual indications be not deceptive, are a prosperous and happy people; or if not a happy, they must be an ungrateful people, for of all the beautiful cities I have seen this is the most beautiful. There are many rich people, — many more with a competency, — still more who are growing rich, — and yet more who live well upon their earnings. The hackmen and porters are well off. Waiters at the hotels are intelligent and gentlemanly. If there be any poor here, they keep or are kept out of sight. . . . I do not know that the prosperity of Frankfort has anything to do with its form of government, but the fact that it has been for centuries a free, representative city, is significant. Where, as is the case here, the people are intelligent and virtuous, they ought to be invested with the responsibilities of government; and there are such places, scattered, like green spots in a desert, throughout oppressed and benighted Europe.

"Though not agreeing with Pope to the extent of his sentiment that that government which is best administered is best, yet there is a great deal of truth and good sense in the remark. The best possible form of government can be abused, and the worst can be rendered tolerable. Belgium, for example, under a monarchy, is among the most prosperous and happy nations upon the earth."

LONDON, *June 15, 1852.*

"Here I enjoyed again the real luxury of listening to a 'proud representative' of the legitimate drama; not in the person of Charles Kean, but in that of his gifted wife, so well known to us as Ellen Tree. All my former impressions of this accomplished woman's talent were confirmed. She is truly great; and if things in this respect had not changed, if it were possible to do so, she would restore the drama to its former dignity and glory. But this is impossible. The drama has had its day. Its glories have faded out.

“ In Charles Kean you catch glimpses, and glimpses only, of his illustrious father. With the elder Kean the representative of Shakespeare’s heroes died. Nor will there, while the world is busy with railroads, electric telegraphs, Californian and Australian gold mines, cheap literature, etc., be any lineal heir succeeding.”

## CHAPTER XVI.

1852-1854.

THE WHIG NATIONAL CONVENTION AT BALTIMORE. — GOVERNOR HUNT'S MISTAKE. — BUOYANCY OF THE WHIG CANDIDATE. — COLLAPSE OF THE PIERCE ADMINISTRATION. — THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA CONTEST. — REPEAL OF THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE. — SHIFTING POLITICAL FORCES. — THE KNOW NOTHING PARTY. — NEW YORK WHIGS IN COUNCIL. — MR. GREELEY DISAPPOINTED. — ELECTION OF MYRON H. CLARK.

WHILST Mr. Weed was in Europe, Mr. Greeley's confidence in the possibility of Whig success continued unabated. The particular preliminary result which he most desired was accomplished, for at the national convention of the Whigs, which met at Baltimore on the 16th of June, 1852, Mr. Fillmore and Mr. Webster "used each other up" in the most effectual manner. The President was supported by only nine out of the seventy-five Whig newspapers in New York; but he had gained some strength at the South, which was now utilized in such a way as to counterbalance the forces arrayed for his Secretary of State. Foiled in 1840 and in 1848, Mr. Choate and other prominent friends of Mr. Webster felt that they would not again be disappointed. There was a long debate about minor questions, before the balloting began. Fifty-two ineffectual attempts were made to name a candidate. Then came the decisive vote: For Mr. Webster, 21; for Mr. Fillmore, 112; for General Scott, 159. That ballot was a formal announcement to the world that Daniel Webster would never be President. His disappointment was more than the great man could bear. He retired to Marshfield and advised his friends to vote for Franklin Pierce, who had been nominated by the Democrats.

Mr. Weed was dining at George Peabody's, in London, on the day when General Scott was nominated. He would have been better pleased had Mr. Fillmore been permitted to face an indignant party; but his friends had kept him advised of the drift of events, and this result was not unexpected. During his

absence Mr. Greeley's letters were particularly cordial and entertaining.

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, April 18, 1852.

FRIEND WEED, — I have just opened a most welcome letter from you at Rome, 25th ult., and must leave everything else to write a word in reply. True, no steamship will leave for three days, but if I put this aside now I fear I shall find no time to resume it before steamship day.

I was at your house last Sunday, and sat with them at dinner, — Mrs. Weed, Emily and husband, Fred Seward, and the little girl. They had just heard of your arrival in Rome, but were concerned about Harriet's health, and still more for fear of the effect upon you of the death of Maria's daughter, which (they apprehend) will hurry your return. They seemed all in fair health.

But about politics. Our legislature was weak beyond precedent, and had no guidance beyond a little that Raymond tried to exercise, and he was out of his depth. I did n't try. "Bray" Dickinson attempted, but, though all right, was so mixed up with canal contracts that he could do nothing. The consequence is that we are out at sea in the wildest confusion, and have no compass or port in sight. We shall carry the State for Scott, but lose the legislature, and probably everything at home. We would if our adversaries were not even worse cut up than we are. The bold attempt of the state officers to repudiate and break down the canal enlargement, their impudent disavowal of their last fall's pledge to uphold and prosecute the canal enlargement, saying they *never signed it*, though they *knew* that it was circulated all through the canal region and confided in, has irrecoverably damaged them. I don't see how they could live but for *our* troubles.

Chief among these is the Maine law. That need not have been a trouble. If some sort of an act had been passed and sent to the people, all would have been easy. If there is any fear of its immediate operation, it might have been made to take effect far ahead — say the 1st of May, 1853 — and meantime submitted to the people at the fall or a special election. Now it goes square into the fall contest and ruins our chance for the legislature.

It seems to me that we must run Patterson for Governor. He is an old temperance man, but not known to be anywhere on the Maine law. We can get through with him if anybody. I could have run myself, and should have rather liked to but for this question. Now it is out of the question. But Raymond, who would like it is equally unavail-



able. He is identified with the twaddling operations of this winter, and would be killed by one side as I would by the other. Perhaps he may do for Lieutenant, though we ought to carry that too, as the Senate continues tied, and is ugly about confirmations.

You are not well posted as to the presidency. Scott will be nominated "all to nothing." The only danger is that he will be forced to shoulder the fugitive slave law, and be crushed by it. No convention can be packed so as to nominate anybody else, but one may be that will pass a Brooks-ish resolve. That is our only danger.

Nor will Cass be nominated on the other side, as you infer. Cass *has* had a look, but it has vanished. All the traders are against him. The South will be nearly solid against him; Pennsylvania quite ditto, Ohio divided, Illinois and Vermont for Douglas, Indiana in the market, and a majority from New York ditto. How, then, do you nominate Cass? He has just strength enough to kill all his opponents, and that he will probably do. It is "anybody's row" as yet, though I think Dickinson has as good a look as anybody. He is making a great show of zeal for Cass, but I can see the under-tow. The calculation is that nobody can get two thirds, and that at the end of a fight the Cass men will be offered their choice apart from Cass, and will take Dickinson. At all events, it will be a man that we can beat if Scott is not overloaded.

Ohio has just elected delegates by districts — *every one* for Scott. Pennsylvania by general ticket — all ditto. Indiana ditto. Illinois nearly or quite ditto. California anti-Fillmore — will be for Scott. Mudd says the State can be carried for Scott or Webster. Mangum is openly for Scott; Stanly and Jones of Tennessee privately ditto. Bell never was for anybody else. This State will choose 30 Scott men out of 35, and the other five only waiting an offer or a pretext to come over. Beside, a convention *never* nominates a candidate to get beaten, or never one its betting men dare not bet on. I told Jim Lawrence at Syracuse last Tuesday that they might choose a full convention of Fillmore men, and I would bet on its nominating Scott. And it would.

Our flax investment (with Reed, Leavitt & Co.) in Onondaga promises well.

Thank you for your care and kindness about the sculpture at Florence. No doubt your judgment (or Harriet's) is right.

Please call at the Wofman's for my sake. Also see for me Faust's Bible in the British Museum, which I forgot.

Yours, HORACE GREELEY.

P. S. — You will be glad to hear that the "Tribune" is doing well — never better. I am personally out of debt.

1852. — Although distinctively pro-southern candidates were set aside by the Whig national convention, the platform adopted was weak and evasive. Evidently the party was not inclined to live up to General Taylor's advanced convictions concerning the extension of slavery. Many of the wisest in the land, among whom Governor Hunt, of New York, was not the least, became unsettled in their political beliefs during this period. "He has begun to take in sail for a place in some one's Cabinet," wrote George Dawson in his quaint way to Mr. Weed. "The closing paragraphs of his message are a beggarly petition to the South." But despite that, or perhaps to teach the Governor a lesson, Mr. Hunt was renominated in the fall. "With this I send you some sherry, which survives my official life," he wrote, as his term was closing, to Mr. Weed. "I beg you to accept it as a slight token of my undying friendship and gratitude." The Governor was right, if he felt that his "official life" was indeed to end forever in December of 1852. After getting off on the wrong track in his message, he was unable to switch back where he belonged when the Republican party was organized.

"My apprehensions in regard to the hopelessness of Whig success in 1852," writes Mr. Weed, "were fully realized. The intimate political friends who in November agreed with me in believing that it was unwise to oppose the renomination of Mr. Fillmore warmed up during the winter in favor of General Scott, whose nomination by the Baltimore convention was regarded by them as a great triumph. I returned from Europe in June, and entered actively into the canvass, with the knowledge that we were to be badly beaten.

"An incident occurring a fortnight before the election seems worth recording, inasmuch as it proves what has frequently been asserted, that candidates themselves are often the worst possible judges of their chances of success. General Scott, on his return from a western tour, ostensibly to find a suitable site for a military hospital, but really to see and be seen of the people, tarried over Sunday as the guest of Governor Hunt at Albany. The Governor stopped at my house on his way from church, and asked me to dinner. I begged off on the ground that I could not speak cheerily about a contest which I considered utterly hopeless. But, inasmuch as General Scott had expressed a wish to see me, there was no escape. My appre-

hension of embarrassment was quite unfounded. General Scott needed no information or opinions. He looked forward buoyantly to an easy and triumphant victory. He was in fine health and spirits, and if I could have overcome my surprise and regret at witnessing the deep delusion of a distinguished military chieftain, the dinner would have passed off pleasantly. These delusions were soon dispelled by an inglorious defeat. In all my subsequent intercourse with General Scott, that political campaign was never mentioned."

1853.—Mr. Pierce was swept into the presidency by what is called a "great uprising of the people." Men who knew nothing of his qualifications or his history rallied to his support with the utmost enthusiasm, and gave him the largest popular vote which up to that time had ever been cast in the United States for any candidate. He began his administration under the most promising conditions. The Whigs were dismembered and betrayed. He was the chosen leader of an overwhelming majority. Admiring Democrats classed him with Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. When he took the oath, on the 4th of March, 1853, he counted more than a quarter of a million of supporters in New York. Within one year this then unparalleled constituency was reduced to a hundred and ninety thousand. In 1854, the Democratic state convention split in two, and Greene C. Bronson was nominated as an anti-Pierce candidate for Governor, and the regular Democratic ticket was defeated. In 1855, the Democratic vote dropped to one hundred and forty-nine thousand, and toward the close of the year there was barely a prominent administration Democrat in the State. Finally, Preston King, James W. Nye, Abijah Mann, William Cullen Bryant, Bradford R. Wood, Philip Dorsheimer, and other Democrats of the old school formally repudiated Pierce and united with free soil Whigs in organizing the Republican party.

The national administration was so conducted as to unite all elements of opposition. The President first conciliated anti-slavery Whigs by a speech against the fugitive slave law, and then sought to recover with conservative Democrats by promising to discourage every species of agitation. With each of these forces he soon broke peace by yielding abjectly to Slavery. He gave to the South all the offices and territory which her leaders sought.

He built forts for the South and rejected appropriations for the improvement of northern harbors. "In his every act," Mr. Weed wrote, "he has been the facile, docile, supple tool of Slavery. . . . He will have his reward. The Slave States will refuse him a renomination. They will fling him aside as a worn out, useless thing, and take a new northern dough-face to delude the North again, serve the South, and then be flung aside in turn."

[MR. GREELEY TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *August 8, 1853.*

FRIEND WEED, — I did hope that the last Whig had been or soon would be out of office, so that I could be allowed to earn my living unharmed by secret stabs or back-handed blows. I was too sanguine. One appears to be left in placé at Albany, and he has just dealt with me in a way which I shall remember.

Some months since I wrote to St. John in respect to the bank advertising. He misrepresented it as a petition for the advertising, as an offer to do it for nothing, and so on, no part of which is true. . . . Finally, I saw him in Albany, and supposed that it would be done, but No. The returns were made by the banks yesterday, were all in the "Times" office in good season; but were studiously withheld from us until, at least half an hour before midnight, we were furnished with a part, and now the "Times" comes out bragging, as you see, with a perfect return, and we are beaten.

Ought I not to remember St. John for this?

Yours,

H. GREELEY.

The proposition was made in Congress in 1854 that the people of Kansas and Nebraska should decide for themselves whether or no slavery should exist in those states, when admitted, although both were forever barred to slavery by the compact of 1820. This virtual reopening of the whole question of slavery extension called out excited and indignant protests. When brought to vote, many Democrats joined Free Soilers and anti-slavery Whigs in opposition, and the so-called "Kansas-Nebraska" bill was temporarily blocked. "The project has been abandoned for the present," wrote Mr. Weed, in April, "but there is no probability that it will sleep long. The spirit of slavery extension is restless and persevering. It may be at this session, or it may be at the next. It may be in this shape, or it may be in some other that we shall have the next manifes-

tation, but such manifestation we are sure to have in some shape. . . . How much of this triumph is due to the North, and how much to the resistance of a few faithful and honorable southern representatives may be discussed hereafter. To defeat the bill, friends of freedom North and South united. In all future agitations it will be necessary to calculate not only how much support slavery extension can gain from the North, but also how much it is going to lose at the South."

In May the Democratic majority in Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska bill, with a provision abrogating the Missouri Compromise *in toto*, and leaving new territories to decide by a ballot of their own citizens whether or no they would permit slavery within their own borders. Then at once ensued the long struggle for the possession of these territories.

1854. — "The crime is committed," wrote Mr. Weed on the 23d of May. "The work of Monroe, Madison, and Jefferson is undone. The wall they erected to guard the domain of liberty is flung down by the hands of an American Congress, and slavery crawls like a slimy reptile over the ruins.

"They tell us that the North will not submit. We hope it will not. But we have seen this same North crouch lower and lower each year under the whip of the slave-driver, until it is hard to tell what it will not submit to now. Who, seven years ago, would not have derided a prophecy that Congress would enact the kidnapping of free citizens, without judge or jury? Who would have believed that it could enact that white men have a right to hold black in slavery wherever it is their sovereign will and pleasure? Yet now that prophecy is more than realized.

"It was fitting that the Kansas-Nebraska bill should be passed as it was. It was in accordance with its spirit that it should be conceived in treachery, sprung upon the House by fraud, and forced through by a parliamentary lie. It was appropriate that one member should be bribed, another bullied, and another bought, until the ranks of slavery were full. Had law, or order, or honesty, had aught to do with its passage, there would have been a strange incongruity between the means and the end.

"We cannot read the future. We cannot predict what will be the consequences of this last and most fatal blow to liberty.

But we can see what the duty of freemen is, and we mean that it shall be through no fault of ours if it is left undone.

“If the North is what it claims to be, and what we have, of late, had gratifying assurance that it will be, this day ends the era of compromise. With the band of representatives who have nobly resisted the consummation of this iniquity, for its standard-bearers, it will declare that there shall be no more new slave states; that there shall be no more slave territories; that there shall be no more northern Congressmen ‘with southern principles.’ It will seek the immediate colonization of Nebraska by settlers who can yet save it from the impending curse. It will take a solemn pledge of the men whom it sends to Washington that their first and last votes there shall be cast for Repeal and Freedom. It will send no more fugitives back without a legal trial. It will sweep slavery out of every nook and corner where the general government has jurisdiction, imprison it within its fifteen states, and surround it there with triple bands of steel. It will “establish justice, promote tranquillity, and secure the blessings of liberty to itself and to its posterity.” This the United States will do, if they have retained the spirit of their founders. If not, then God help the Republic; for its days are numbered. Such a gigantic confederacy of crime as it must otherwise become never existed elsewhere, cannot exist here, and ought not to exist anywhere.

“Those who have passed this bill, flushed with success, already announce new schemes. They will send mercenary governments to the territories to establish slavery there, even if the will of settlers shall oppose it. They count upon Kansas as a slave state in the next Congress, and Nebraska as a slave state before the next presidential election. They are planning an unprovoked and unjust war for the sole purpose of forming slave states in Cuba. They will send emissaries to Texas and New Mexico with instructions to form slave states in that region. They will demand as the natural consequence of the recognition of slave property in all the territories, the recognition of it in all the states. They believe that popular discontent evoked by this bill will die out before November, and they know that, if it shall, not only office and power, but the whole future policy of the country must be thrown into the hands of slaveholders.

"This is the struggle before us. It is fraught with momentous results. From the tone and temper of the people we have everything to hope. From the unbridled folly of partisan leaders we have everything to fear. Believing as we do, that the purposes of Eternal Justice are not to be cast down by men's hands, we are confident that in the end the right will triumph. But whether that triumph shall be slow or speedy, whether it shall come in our day, or be postponed, is for freemen, north and south, to determine. . . . Popular sentiment finds expression at meetings and conventions and in the newspapers. The exigency requires action. Boston has suggested a practical plan. Let Kansas and Nebraska be immediately settled by freemen. Let meetings be called and efforts concentrated with this object in view. If steps are taken promptly, the tide of emigration may be turned. Settlers who have passed through this city within a month would give a population larger than that of Texas or Florida, when they were admitted as states. New England sends forth into the West, every year, a body of yeomen whose patriotism, if they plant themselves in these territories, would be sufficient guarantee for their freedom."

1854.—The effort to populate Kansas and Nebraska with emigrants who would vote against slavery caused a general break-up of parties. Those who engaged in the work on behalf of freedom did not at first adopt a national name. They were mostly Whigs who had contended against abrogating the Missouri Compromise. But many Democrats abandoned the administration and their party, to cooperate with this force, with which there was also soon blended the "Liberty party" of 1840 and the "Free Soil party" of 1848. Those Whigs who supported the Nebraska bill were repudiated by their brethren who opposed it, and for some time kept up a separate party, claiming to represent the old organization, but they finally fused with the Democrats.

While politics were in this transition state, there was a revival on a national scale of the "Native American" movement, which in 1844 had elected James Harper Mayor of New York. The controlling spirit of this organization was opposition to the influence upon public affairs of foreign-born voters and politicians. An elaborate code of signals and passwords was adopted and all operations of the "Americans" were wrapped in pro-

found secrecy. If a member of the order was asked about its practices or purposes, he answered that he knew nothing about them, and "Americans," for that reason, soon came to be called "Know Nothings." In 1855 they were joined by the "Silver Grays," whom Mr. Fillmore was unable to guide into any other harbor. Politics were further complicated by what was called a "Temperance" movement, by which Prohibition was made an issue, and by the division of the Democrats into Pierce and anti-Pierce factions.

Mr. Weed was consistently opposed to the "American" party, in all its phases. He was against it because its work was done in secret, if for no other reason. But he did not shut his eyes to the fact that there was much in the conduct of our adopted citizens to provoke indiscriminate ill will. "Foreigners come among us," he wrote, "with imperfect knowledge and exaggerated ideas of the advantages to be enjoyed in the United States. Many of them look for streets lined with gold. If manufacturers, mechanics, or laborers, they go to work and make themselves useful, but some of the better informed, when needy and restless, turn politicians and make party merchandise of their countrymen. Through the influence of this class, Irishmen and Germans, instead of becoming Americans in their feelings and sympathies, and acting as they acquire knowledge from their own convictions, are kept banded together by society discipline, to act in bodies for the benefit of leaders. In this way, for example, the editor of an Irish newspaper in the city of New York has kept himself and his son in office for twenty years. Between the Catholic and Protestant world there has been, and there is to be, we suppose, perpetual warfare. The excited and ultra on either side will go on probably to the end of time mistaking fanaticism for religion. Sympathizing with neither to any extent, and believing that neither will become dangerous while reason is left free to combat both, we take slight interest in their controversy. There was nothing consistent with Christianity or civilization in the destruction of the convent at Boston, or the burning of churches at Philadelphia. Out of the ashes of those institutions ten convents and a hundred churches have sprung up in America. On the other hand, to the folly and blindness of certain Catholic journals, Know Nothingism is largely indebted. These papers assiduously fan the embers



of bigotry. They furnish fruitful themes for pulpits. . . . There are no political evils among us, nor are there political reforms required which cannot be best cured by free and open discussion. Tiled doors, passwords, and secret obligations to effect political objects, are in their nature and tendency pernicious. They may be resorted to for the purpose of overthrowing despotisms which restrain freedom of speech and action; but time and reflection will ultimately demonstrate that in this country secret political associations invoke worse evils than those which they aim to remedy. Jealousy against foreign dictation originated in the masses, but it immediately attracted the attention of politicians. It was by them that the Know Nothing order was instituted. It is they who now demand independent conventions and nominations."

1854. — The Whig state convention met in the fall under new and peculiar conditions, some of which are pointed out in Mr. Greeley's last letter. It was thought best by Mr. Weed's friends to nominate George W. Patterson for Governor. In the early summer, when this plan was suggested to that gentleman, he showed no anxiety to be a candidate. "I wish to say to you in all sincerity," he wrote, "that I have no aspirations for this office. My friends have done all for me that I could ask or expect (and much more than I had any right to expect), for which I feel grateful; but I have no right to aspire to a place once filled by Clinton, Tompkins, and Seward, to say nothing of many other distinguished men who have adorned that position. I know of some smaller patterns who have occupied the 'chair of state' who were not true to the friends who put them there, and, in my judgment, disgraced the office; but I forbear to name them. . . . There is a general impression that Greeley is desirous of the place, but his position on the temperance question would drive away thousands of Whig votes, and he ought to know enough not to require a pledge of any Whig candidate. . . . I liked your hit at Fillmore a few days ago; but, after all, the policy of letting him alone is best."

"Mr. Greeley called on me at the Astor House," writes Mr. Weed, "and asked if I did not think that the time and circumstances were favorable to his nomination for Governor? I replied that I did think the time and circumstances favorable to his election, if nominated, but that my friends had lost the con-

trol of the state convention. This answer perplexed him, but a few words of explanation made it quite clear. Admitting that he had brought the people up to the point of accepting a temperance candidate for Governor, I remarked that another aspirant had 'stolen his thunder.' In other words, while he had shaken the temperance bush, Myron H. Clark would catch the bird. In addition to the fact that Mr. Clark had become the temperance candidate, I informed Mr. Greeley that Know Nothing or 'Choctaw' lodges had been secretly organized throughout the State, by means of which many delegates for Mr. Clark had been secured. Mr. Greeley saw that, to use an expression then well understood, the 'slate' had been broken, and cheerfully relinquished the idea of being nominated. But a few days afterward Mr. Greeley came to Albany, and said in an abrupt, but not unfriendly way, 'Is there any objection to my running for Lieutenant-Governor?' I replied as promptly, 'Certainly not, if on reflection you are willing to take the nomination.' 'Why should I not be willing to take it? You say that I have many enemies. I know that; and if they should all fall upon me and defeat my election, the office is not important, and the party would not be injured. I should rather like to try conclusions with them.' I then reminded him of a cry raised in the Philadelphia national convention when Abbott Lawrence, of Boston, was named for Vice-President, to run with General Taylor for President, and when a dozen men sprang to their feet and shouted that it would not do to have 'cotton at both ends of the ticket.' Mr. Greeley laughed, and said, 'I suppose you mean that it would n't do to have Maine law at both ends of our state ticket?' After a little more conversation, Mr. Greeley became entirely satisfied that a nomination for Lieutenant-Governor was not desirable, and left me in good spirits."

There were few men of prominence at the convention. Many Know Nothings among the delegates urged the nomination of Daniel Ullman or J. W. Savage. The prohibition vote was divided between E. C. Delavan and Mr. Greeley. There was some skirmishing, and then, as Mr. Weed expected, Myron H. Clark, who had been a firm Whig, and who was also a Prohibitionist, was nominated. No great chagrin was felt by Mr. Greeley, in so far as this selection was concerned; but, when the convention named Mr. Raymond for Lieutenant-Governor,

he was pained and exasperated. "I went to the convention," Mr. Weed writes, "prepared to acquiesce in the nomination of Mr. Clark for Governor, and caring only that the other nominees should be so selected as to strengthen the ticket. No candidate for Lieutenant-Governor had been designated. Many delegates were anxious to ballast the ticket by the nomination of a candidate for Lieutenant-Governor who was not committed in favor of prohibitory or Maine law legislation, and yet who would not be obnoxious to temperance men. Several names were canvassed, but none seemed to unite all interests until that of Mr. Raymond was suggested. That nomination wounded Mr. Greeley deeply. He had cheerfully withdrawn his own name, but he could not submit patiently to the nomination of his personal, professional, and political rival. Mr. Greeley not only held me responsible for that nomination, but supposed that in my conversation with him the intention to urge it had been concealed. In that supposition, however, he erred, for I had not thought of Mr. Raymond in that connection until his name was suggested to me at Syracuse."

A complicated campaign followed. The National Democrats, or "Hard" anti-Pierce men, supported Greene C. Bronson, of New York, for Governor. The Pierce Administration Democrats, or "Softs," supported Horatio Seymour. The Whigs were joined by the Prohibitionists in support of Mr. Clark. Designing Democrats were the basis of a movement which put Mr. Ullman, also, in the field. "The main question simply is," wrote Mr. Weed, "whether the curse of servitude shall be extended? Freedom in all new states and territories we advocate not as a temporary issue, not as a mere expedient for Kansas and Nebraska, but as an enduring principle of government at all times and in all cases whatsoever. We advocate it in behalf of the Constitution, which makes it incumbent upon the majority of Congress to regulate the institution of territories, which should be so regulated as to secure the blessings of liberty."

1854.—The last time that Mr. Weed ever set type was on the 8th of November in this year. His paper was held back from the press on the afternoon of that day in order that it might, if possible, contain the result of the election in New York. It is a tradition of the office that word was received at the last moment, and that Mr. Weed rushed up stairs, seized a

“stick,” and himself threw into “brevier” these expressive sentences: “Let the eagle scream! Myron H. Clark is elected!”<sup>1</sup>

[THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *December 20th.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I have cheerfully complied with your request for letters of introduction to our Ministers at London and Paris for Mr. Richardson, though, in giving them, I have disregarded a rule of the Department. A regard for personal friends occasionally makes exceptions to such rules.

Our old friend, E. Croswell, is here, and I have an appointment with him to-night. What would Bennett say if he knew that I was in correspondence with you and holding friendly chit-chats with Croswell?

When I left New York it was sound, and I hope you will make it so again by the time I get ready to return to it.<sup>2</sup>

Yours truly, W. L. MARCY.

<sup>1</sup> The vote in detail stood: Clark, 156,804; Seymour, 156,495; Ullman, 122,282; Bronson, 33,850. In other words a change of 155 votes from Clark to Seymour would have given the State to the Democrats.

<sup>2</sup> When Governor Marcy “left New York” it had just given its electoral vote to the Democrats. Of course he hoped for another Democratic victory, through Republican blunders, in 1856.



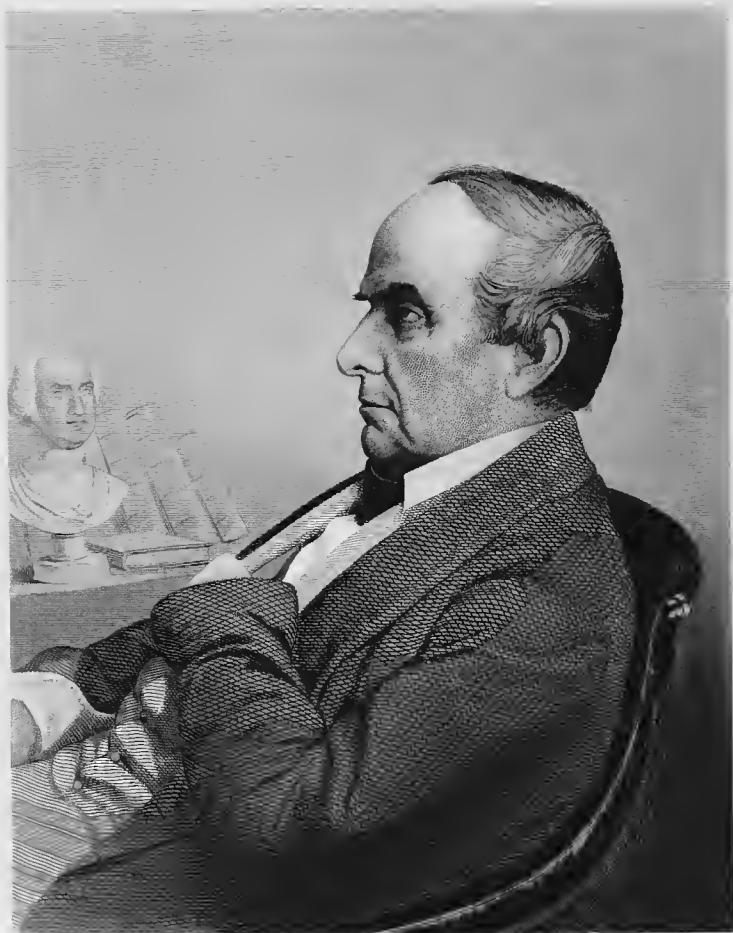


PLATE LXXVII

*John Millar*

Engraved by J. G. Kneller, from a portrait by Sir J. Watson, 1768.







## CHAPTER XVII.

1845-1855.

A TRANSITION PERIOD.—DEATH OF MR. WEBSTER AND MR. CLAY.—READJUSTMENT OF PERSONAL RELATIONS.—PARTING WITH FRANCIS GRANGER.—KNOW NOTHING OPPOSITION TO MR. SEWARD.—AN INCIDENT IN THE SENATORIAL CANVASS.—FUSION OF WHIGS WITH FREE SOIL DEMOCRATS.—MR. WEED'S WISH TO RETIRE FROM JOURNALISM.—"NO. 11" AT THE ASTOR.

THE Whig party was rapidly becoming a unit against the further extension of slavery when Mr. Webster's 7th of March speech put new life into the miserable heresy that human bondage was really a great blessing, which ought to be extended and perpetuated. For a time that renowned oration, followed as it was by the death of General Taylor, paralyzed the cause of freedom. There ensued at once what was like a sudden truce. Then everywhere new lines of division appeared, new political combinations began forming. Neither Mr. Webster nor Mr. Clay lived to witness the outcome of their crowning compromise. Each died in 1852: Mr. Clay in June, Mr. Webster in October.

It was while this state of transition lasted, slavery remaining the only vital issue, that Mr. Weed was forced into conflicting relations with several of his warmest, oldest, and most intimate friends. Not that he quarreled with them capriciously. Not that in each case the separation was not a genuine affliction. But that such partings were compelled by the new demands of progress and civilization. The defection of Francis Granger seemed particularly unwarrantable and hard to bear. It was not supposed that there was any alienation between him and Mr. Weed until the break in 1850, when the Silver Grays were organized; but, so to speak, Mr. Granger was converted by Mr. Webster's speech before it was delivered, as a letter which has been held until now, so that its significance might be fully understood, testifies:—

[MR. WEED TO FRANCIS GRANGER.]

ALBANY, *June 19, 1845.*

DEAR GRANGER, — We have traveled together so long that I cannot consent to part company without an expression of regret that I should have lost the confidence of an old and cherished friend.

I not only appreciate your feelings in relation to the perverse course of political Abolitionists, but have never failed to hold them responsible for the evil which they have accomplished, as well against the country as the cause of emancipation. I know how the Whigs of Madison County have been oppressed by the falsely-styled "Liberty" party, and I respect the indignant sentiments entertained there by Whig friends. Nor shall I omit any opportunity to vindicate those friends or avenge their wrongs. Demagogues of the "Liberty" faction have beguiled ten or twelve thousand honest men and true Whigs from allegiance to the country. The base uses made of their influence over these voters last fall has opened the eyes of many, and will open the eyes of many more.

You and I and the Whigs with whom we act are better friends to the slave and truer advocates of emancipation than the "Liberty" party organs and editors. Shall we, then, allow these leaders to hold the power which they wield year after year, with such fatal effect, against the country?

Slavery is grasping for an enlarged boundary, that it may possess the government, and crowd a new issue upon the North. Ere long we shall be called upon to discharge duties which may not be disregarded, and in relation to which you and I shall think and act together.<sup>1</sup> Shall we leave this field to the "Liberty" party, or shall we preoccupy the ground, defending the faith and upholding the principles of freedom? It is my earnest hope to disarm agitators, to expose and thwart their schemes, to devote myself faithfully to the cause of emancipation, not rashly and heedlessly, but rational emancipation. I follow in the footsteps of John Quincy Adams, William Slade, and Cassius M. Clay.

Tell me, my friend, whom do "Liberty" party organs hate or revere more than these true Whig friends of freedom?

I should do injustice to my feelings to deny that it pains me to lose a friend by whom I have been so long and so generously sustained, first as an anti-Mason and then as a Whig; but I am sure we do not part in unkindness. I am consoled with the reflection that, though now misapprehended, if my life shall be spared, time and truth will ultimately restore me to your confidence.

<sup>1</sup> These references were verified in every particular.

That you will always stand fast in the cause of our country, I know full well. That I may err in judgment, as I have often erred, is not improbable; but when I cease to be influenced by motives as patriotic as those I know guide your actions, when I abate in zeal or waver in fidelity to the Whig cause, every sympathy of my nature, all the impulses of my heart, must have undergone a radical change.

Truly and gratefully yours, THURLOW WEED.

Mr. Seward had now been in public life for nearly twenty-five years, during which he had never sought power by ignoble means or used it for unworthy purposes. Almost immediately after his election to the Senate in 1849, he came to be widely looked upon as the most trustworthy Whig leader in Congress. Courageous, high-minded, eloquent, and patriotic, he adorned the exalted station to which he had been chosen by a great people. Mr. Weed by no means stood alone when he lamented that during the "omnibus bill" debate of 1850, "it did not happen" to the illustrious Massachusetts orator "to make such a great and glorious speech" as the representative of New York. Mr. Seward's term was to expire in February, 1855, and in January, when the legislature met, and Know Nothings opposed his reëlection, all resources at Mr. Weed's command were employed, with wonted vigor, in his friend's behalf. The caucus of the Whigs was held on the 1st of February, 1855, and Mr. Seward received nearly a unanimous vote. On the 6th of February, 1855, he was reëlected.

"I snatch a few moments," he wrote from Washington, "to express not so much my deep and deepening gratitude to you, as my amazement at the magnitude and complexity of the dangers through which you have conducted our shattered bark, and the wonderful sagacity and skill with which you have saved us all from so imminent a wreck. It was well that I did not know any sooner that the principle of secret combinations, which we only scotched in 1830, had been recovering vitality and vigor, and extending itself ever since, until it had secured, practically, an oath-bound majority of the legislature, and concentrated all its energies upon the unholy purpose of defeating all our hopes for the benefit of our state, our country, and mankind. I am overwhelmed with obligations, and shall need all your wisdom to save myself from proving unworthy of its great benefit."

[MR. GREELEY TO GEORGE E. BAKER.]

NEW YORK, *February 8, 1855.*

FRIEND B., — Weed is a giant. I went up to Albany to see if I could be of any use, but I could not. I could do more good here.

Weed can be swindled by men who are fair to his face, but I think he will be more cautious hereafter. It is hard for him to realize that men can "smile and smile and be a villain," — and he loves those who seem never to oppose his will, — but he is, after all, the greatest man we have left; Seward *not* excepted. . . .

Lieutenant-Governor Raymond is quietly and industriously laying pipe for the next step. I hope he has been convinced that he cannot be both the Seward and the Hindoo candidate. If he has not, Sam<sup>1</sup> will enlighten him on that point.

Ah, well; the struggle is over, and I am no longer anybody's partisan. I don't care a button whether Seward stops where he is or goes higher.

Yours,  
HORACE GREELEY.

The late Hugh Hastings used to tell an amusing story in connection with this senatorial canvass: —

During the Know Nothing excitement of 1855 [Mr. Hastings writes] Seward was a candidate for reëlection to the United States Senate on our side of the house. The Know Nothings were opposing him with great spirit and were in the majority. It therefore became necessary to capture a few of our opponents, which was no easy task. At that time I was Secretary of the Senate, — the last one elected under Whig rule, by the way. Mr. Weed was a noted and liberal entertainer. He was accustomed to give great dinner parties at his residence, to which were invited not only the various state officers, but such distinguished visitors as chanced to be in the city. The premises were not large enough to accommodate the entire legislature at once, and so he used to invite the members in alphabetical platoons.

Well, upon one of these occasions he had asked three or four Know Nothings, who we thought had come over to our side in the Seward matter, to be present. He received them with that splendid cordiality of his which seldom lost its effect, and then turned them over to me, to be shown through the house. I dragged them here and there, showing them pictures, statuettes, bricabrac, and everything I thought would be of interest. At last we suddenly came upon the portrait of Bishop Hughes, and one of the party asked me who that was. Here,

<sup>1</sup> As here used, this word is equivalent to "the Hindoos" or "the Know Nothings."

by the way, it should be said, that after their return from Europe the Bishop sat for his picture, at Mr. Weed's request, and this was the result of that sitting, showing the distinguished prelate in all his pontifical vestments. I will admit that the situation staggered me. I knew that, if they discovered whom the portrait represented, our chances were gone, and for the life of me I could think of no way out of the dilemma. But finally, as matters were becoming very embarrassing, a thought flashed upon me. It was a happy one. "Why," I said, feigning surprise, "don't you know who that is? That portrait represents George Washington in his Continental robes. It was presented to Mr. Weed's father by George Washington himself." That carried the day for us, and Seward was triumphant.

1855. — New York was now divided politically into regular Democrats, Whigs, free soil Democrats, Know Nothings, and Abolitionists. In order to weld Whigs and anti-slavery men of other parties together, it was agreed to hold two conventions at Syracuse on the same day. A conference was held between Mr. Weed and his immediate friends on the one hand, and free soil leaders on the other, at which details were discussed and arranged. Double delegations went to Syracuse, and two conventions were held. Preston King, representing the free soil element, was nominated for Secretary of State, and James M. Cook, Whig, was nominated for Comptroller. In the election which followed, the Know Nothing ticket, headed by J. T. Headley and Lorenzo Burrows, carried the State by 12,000 plurality.

To Mr. Fillmore this result was particularly gratifying. Although brought into public life because he was outspoken in opposition to the interference of a secret society with political affairs, he had now become a Know Nothing, and, true to the law of apostasy, surpassed in zeal the very founders of his newly-chosen sect.

[PRESIDENT FILLMORE TO COLLECTOR MAXWELL.]

BUFFALO, *March 10, 1855.*

MY DEAR SIR, — I owe you many thanks for your kind, frank, and I may add flattering letter of the 21st ult. I regret exceedingly that you did not visit me as you had intended. Should I remain at home, I hope to see you the ensuing summer. But I have reflected much on what you say of my taking a journey to Europe, and have delayed answering until I could consult some friends who were absent from the city.

I notice what you say of the desire of my enemies to draw my name into the seething cauldron of politics. That you are right in this I cannot doubt, and that they would have less inducement to do it, if I were absent, seems very probable. Yet I have a spice of obstinacy that makes me unwilling to act from any apprehension of that kind. I think I may safely defy their machinations. I will not say with Brutus that, —

“I am armed so strong in honesty  
That they pass by me as the idle wind ;”

but I will say that, though they have pursued me with unremitting rancor and envious malice for years, yet they have seldom disturbed the equanimity of my temper, however they may have impaired my reputation.

You seem to think that something said by Mr. Dickinson requires a response from me. This may be so, but I really know not what it is, as I have not read a speech of his during the season. My attention was called to some letters from Messrs. Weed, Clowes, and others, that were said to conflict with a statement made by me to Mr. Brooks in answer to an inquiry of his about the famous Taylor meeting at Albany in 1848, and some thought that I had better write out the history of the whole transaction ; but that looked like entering the lists with these men on a question of veracity. The bare suggestion was revolting, and I refused, although I have the most ample materials in writing, made at the time, to verify the truth of my letter ; but Mr. Weed's own statement in his own paper at the time of the occurrence is ample to sustain me, regardless of what he or those under his influence may now pretend to recollect of a transaction that took place more than six years since. I am determined not to disgrace myself by putting my reputation for truth and veracity in conflict with such men. Let Mr. Weed and his compurgators be heard, and then let the world judge between us.

Nor will I be driven from my country by their mendacity. If I visit Europe, it will be for reasons wholly independent of this, or anything of a personal character connected with future political events. While I cannot feel otherwise than flattered to have my name occasionally mentioned in connection with the highest office in the gift of the people, yet an election could confer no new honors on me ; and the vexatious cares and heavy responsibilities of that office might tarnish those which I now wear. Being fully impressed with this, I have no aspirations. Every ambitious wish of my heart has been more than gratified, and I am content. But do not misunderstand me. I do not underestimate the honors connected with that exalted station. They are beyond price or comparison ; but I have enjoyed them, and

while my heart is filled with gratitude, my judgment tells me that if I would consult my own happiness or even my future reputation, I should not venture again upon that sea of troubles. I have escaped wreck once, though tempest tost for many a weary day and anxious night. Prudence says, tempt not the treacherous element again, where the reputations of so many great and good men have been lost. Pardon me, my dear sir, but would not my illustrious successor give the same advice ?

But still I am rather inclined to make the tour of Europe, if I can accomplish it. I am chiefly impelled to this by an apprehension that my health may be impaired by changing so suddenly from a very active, to a totally inactive life. I am well now. I spend my time mostly in reading, and very pleasantly, — yet neither the body nor the mind has that exercise to which it has been accustomed, and a long settled habit has become a second nature, — and I fear that so torpid a state may cause paralysis of body or stagnation of intellect. I believe with Adam Clark that it is better to wear out than rust out, and, as my political life has unfortunately deprived me of my profession, perhaps I can do nothing better than diversify my pursuits by traveling. Within the past year I have journeyed over the greater part of the United States. I enjoyed these journeys very much, but that source of instruction and amusement is nearly exhausted. I must, therefore, if I pursue it further, cross the Atlantic, and compare the Old World with the New.

There are some things of which I wish to know more before I resolve to undertake so long a journey. And as my means are limited, the *first* and most important is, the probable expense for a year that should carry me southeast to Constantinople, and northeast to St. Petersburg. *Next*, would my position be such, in my intercourse with the titled dignitaries of Europe, as to subject my country to any indignity through me in our social intercourse ; and if this be so, could it be avoided by refusing all invitations to festive entertainments ; or would it be possible, or if possible, would it be advisable, to travel incog. ? You will understand that while I have no personal pride for any social distinction in Europe, I would not knowingly place myself in a position where my country would be degraded or insulted through me. And *lastly*, what servants should I want, and where would it be best to provide them ; and when should I leave New York ?

Your recent tour will enable you to give me valuable advice on all these subjects ; and in the mean time please to keep the matter a profound secret. Truly your friend, MILLARD FILLMORE.

Mr. Weed's health still remained good, but in 1855 he had reached what is usually regarded as the "evening of life." Younger men were ready to assume the burden of office work, which he still performed, but from which he naturally wished to be relieved.

More than a year ago [he wrote, in August], when changes were made in the proprietorship of this paper, its senior editor intimated his desire and intention to withdraw. In reference to time and manner, it was and is his purpose to have regard to the interests of his party, and to consult the views and claims of those to whom he is linked by common sentiments and sympathies, and by lifelong obligations.

Public rather than personal considerations suggested the propriety of retirement. We love and honor a profession with which, as printer or editor, our hands, head, and heart have been busy for forty-four years. If moderately qualified for any duties, it was for those which we have endeavored to discharge. Nor is the "wish" of retirement "father to the thought." It is alone prompted by the consciousness that men, like that noble animal whose spirit and muscle we task, grow old and wear out; or, like garments, go out of fashion. With our day and generation our season of usefulness passes. We are a fast people, and this a fast age — so fast that "old fogies" cannot hope and should not attempt to keep up with either.

We regard the "Evening Journal" with an affection kindred to that which a parent feels for his child. It is of our own procreation. During the first two years of its existence we were the sole editor, reporter, and news collector for a sheet which has been our constant charge and care for more than a quarter of a century. . . .

Our services have been more than requited, our wishes more than gratified, by the confidence, munificence, fidelity, and kindness of partisans and friends. In all these relations we have been peculiarly happy. Few men have had their pathway through life brightened by so many beautiful manifestations. The remembrance of all this constancy and truth, all the generosity and warmth of "troops of friends," brings with it an oppressive sense of gratitude. We cannot expect, nor do we ask, strangers to comprehend the feeling of obligation that weighs us down. These audible pulsations of a burthened heart address themselves only to those with whom we commune through these columns. Those whose lives have been sweetened and solaced by enduring friendships; whom its flowers and fragrance have blessed; whose households are consecrated by its souvenirs, will pardon the weakness which, in view of separation, whether immediate or remote, finds relief in the indulgence of long welled-up emotions.



But, if we contemplate divesting ourselves of all pecuniary interest in this paper, it is not our intention to shirk any political duty, avoid any labor, desert any friend, or abate any effort required to advance the cause and maintain the principles which it represents. On the contrary, with the advantage of having neither aspirations, interests, nor wishes, other than such as concern the general welfare, we shall linger, from habit and inclination, around the old political shrine, working freely and cheerfully for those to whom we are so largely a debtor, until we discover the secret which *Gil Blas* imparted to the Archbishop of Grenada.

There was reserved for Mr. Weed's exclusive use during these years of active leadership a room in the Astor House, New York, which he always occupied when called to that city. It was on the Vesey Street side, up one flight, and under the old administration was known as "No. 11." I can remember well when he took me there, as a boy, in John Brown times, and how I was thrilled by the majestic presence of Lieutenant-General Scott, six feet four in his stockings, and every inch a soldier.

"He retained Room 11 until 1868," writes one who knew him well, "when failing health compelled him to give up participation in the affairs of the nation. Could that room but speak, what a story it might tell! It was an audience chamber and council closet, where all sorts of persons went month after month, year after year. In it caucuses were held, campaigns arranged, senators, members of the cabinet, governors, ministers, and even presidents were made and unmade. For nearly a quarter of a century more political power and influence probably emanated from that little apartment than from any other source in the entire Republic.

"Mr. Weed was ever accessible, not only to politicians of every grade and complexion, but to mere strangers, land hunters, place seekers, and solicitors of charity. An extraordinarily good-hearted man he was, always willing to interest himself in the cause of any one, however humble, and to give time and money to whomsoever asked for both, or either. During the long period that he occupied Room 11, there was a ceaseless stream of humanity flowing in and out of the door, and it is believed that no one ever left him with a heavier heart than he carried into his presence.

“But sometimes he would deny himself to all, perhaps to take a nap, and great men might importune in vain. On one occasion, when several eminent gentlemen were thus waiting, they were surprised, and at first much vexed, by seeing a negro promptly admitted. The negro soon reappeared, and hastily left the house, when it was learned that he was a runaway slave, and had been aided in his flight for liberty by the man who was too busy to attend to cabinet officers, but had time to say words of encouragement and present means of support to a flying fugitive.”

## CHAPTER XVIII.

1854-1856.

THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA CONTEST. — ORGANIZATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY. — THE PITTSBURG CONVENTION. — ITS PURPOSE. — PROGRESS OF THE MOVEMENT IN VARIOUS STATES. — MR. WEED A REPUBLICAN. — HIS CONSISTENT RECORD AGAINST SLAVERY. — AN "OLD LINER'S" DOUBTS AND FEARS. — THE PRESIDENTIAL QUESTION. — MR. SEWARD. — MR. FILLMORE. — JOHN A. KING. — RESULTS ANALYZED.

THE Missouri Compromise was now repealed, and it was left with the people of Kansas and Nebraska to determine whether they would range themselves on the side of slavery or of freedom. Kansas held the first election under the new law on the 29th of November, 1854, to fill a vacancy in Congress. It was a short, brisk skirmish, in which the free soilers were easily defeated by pro-slavery settlers, reinforced by desperadoes from Missouri. "Border Ruffians" rallied at the polls with rifles and pistols, and those who voted the anti-slavery ticket did so at the peril of their lives.

The great battle was yet to come. An election was called at which the first state legislature was to be chosen. To meet the requirement of Congress, that none but actual settlers should be allowed to vote, "Emigrant Aid Societies" had been formed at the North, and had engaged actively in the work of populating the proposed state with free soil voters, whilst the South had engaged as actively in an endeavor to secure a constitutional majority for slavery. The election was held on the 30th of March, 1855. Thousands of armed Missourians invaded the territory in the interests of slavery and took possession of the polls. They assaulted citizens who tried to vote the free soil ticket. They destroyed the crops and set fire to the homes of free state settlers. The entire proceeding was no more than a riot. No such outrage upon popular sovereignty had ever before been perpetrated in this country.

Four months passed. In July a gathering which claimed to

be the legislature-elect assembled at Pawnee, and, with sardonic consistency, decreed that the Constitution of Missouri should be the Constitution of Kansas. It was provided, further, that any person who should "write or print any book, paper, argument, opinion, advice, or innuendo calculated to produce a disorderly disaffection" among the slaves of the territory should be imprisoned at hard labor for a term of not less than five years; while for such a crime as aiding a slave to procure his freedom the punishment was fixed at death. Other provisions, equally arbitrary and barbarous, were enacted, and election laws were so arranged that Missourians might continue to sway the territory in case slavery settlers again required outside assistance.

So glaring were the frauds connected with the establishment of the Pawnee legislature that Governor Reeder refused to recognize it. He ordered new elections in six districts. Such elections were accordingly held, and, as Missouri ruffians descended upon only one district, five free soil representatives were chosen. Subsequently, however, when their credentials were presented by these free soil representatives, they were all ruled out, in favor of pro-slavery men, who suddenly appeared as contestants. In this emergency free soil settlers assembled in conventions at Topeka on the 5th of September, 1855, and a free state Constitution was framed and adopted, by virtue of which state officers were elected in the following January.

Thus Kansas began the year 1856 with dual state governments, each claiming to represent her people and neither inclined to yield its position.

President Pierce now entered actively into the contest. He sent a message to Congress on the 24th of January, asserting that the Pawnee legislature was properly constituted, and that its authority must not be denied. A few days afterwards he supplemented this message with another, declaring that the meeting of the Topeka legislature was an act of insurrection, denouncing all attempts to resist the laws enacted at Pawnee, and warning all persons engaged in such attempts that they would be dealt with as rebels, not only by local militia, but, if necessary, by the regular army of the United States. Mr. Pierce then removed Governor Reeder, and appointed a new Governor, with strict orders to enforce the intolerable laws passed by the pro-slavery legislature.

1856. — It was at this juncture that the national Republican party sprang into life. Freedom and progress demanded its formation. It was the response of a great people to the question, Shall there ever be an end to the exactions of the slave power? It was an organized protest against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the wrongs inflicted upon free soil settlers in “bleeding Kansas.” Not only had the solemn agreement of 1820 been ruthlessly abrogated, at a time when the North, silenced, if not convinced, by the eloquence of Mr. Webster and Mr. Clay, was disposed to regard the slavery question as settled, but an irregular legislature, foisted upon one of the sisterhood of states by intimidation and violence, was now sustained by the national administration, and the army of the United States was invoked to perpetuate this shameful usurpation. The Whig party had already demonstrated its unfitness to deal with slavery. New rallying-cries, new principles, new courage, and new morality, were needed to grapple with the hydra-headed monster at the South.

Maine, Wisconsin, and Michigan have claimed the honor of originating the Republican organization, and statesmen have disputed for the distinction of having suggested its name. On the last day of February, 1854, there was held in the town of Ripon, Wisconsin, a meeting of Whigs and Democrats, who distinctly resolved that in case Congress should pass the Kansas-Nebraska bill they would throw old affiliations to the winds, and join in a movement having for its single aim opposition to the extension of slavery. Similar meetings were held about the same time in other towns and cities, at which, although the resolutions adopted were not precisely the same, participants were actuated by an identical purpose and spirit. Boston had an “anti-Nebraska” meeting February 23d; New Market, New Hampshire, February 27th; and New York, May 13th, — ten days before the bill was passed.

The first Republican state convention was held in Michigan on the 6th of July, 1854, and Kinsley S. Bingham, who was nominated for Governor, was elected. Ohio held a Republican state convention during the same summer, at which a ticket was nominated which carried that State in the fall. “Whig” was a cherished word in New York. It was not formally repudiated in the mixed canvass of 1854, when Mr. Clark defeated the

other three candidates, nor was it wise to force an independent beginning until 1855, when joint meetings, which practically amounted to one convention, were held at Syracuse. In several states the new party took root slowly. It was to perfect and strengthen it in all its parts, that a national council was called to meet at Pittsburg on the 22d of February, 1856. At this meeting nothing was said about candidates. The crisis in Kansas was discussed, a platform of principles was promulgated,<sup>1</sup> and a formal call was issued for representatives of the party to assemble in national convention at Philadelphia on the 17th of June to make nominations for the Presidency. Thus even by the dates of its first meetings the new party was consecrated to patriotic endeavor.

That Mr. Weed should be a Republican was inevitable. He had protested from the first against the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, — no one more strenuously. On the same day when that measure received the approval of Congress he called for action to rescue these territories from the enemies of freedom. Nor were these the earliest or the only assertions of position which led him consistently and resistlessly up to the consummation of 1856. Before he was of age he was opposed to slavery. Not a few of his editorial articles, written when James Monroe was President, are full of the spirit of Lincoln and Whittier. When Texas was to be annexed, he opposed that project with all his power. When the Wilmot Proviso was at stake, the state resolutions which he “crowded through” — such were Governor Hunt’s words — “compelled men to toe the mark.” While the fugitive slave law was pending, he assailed that measure with unsparing bitterness, and when it was passed, with redoubled bitterness demanded its repeal.

“It seems to be foreordained,” wrote Governor Hunt, in a letter which graphically portrays the feelings of an “Old-Line Whig,” in January, 1856, “that our party is to be swallowed up in fusion. I regret that it is so, but that is of no avail. In every proper way I want to do right and prevent wrong on the slavery question. But you know I never could make it the sole object of my thoughts to the exclusion of more practical

<sup>1</sup> The Pittsburg address, of which Mr. Raymond was the author, disclaimed any intention of interfering with slavery in states where it already existed.

concerns. I should be good for nothing in a party which proposes nothing but to struggle and talk about one and only one everlasting topic. Since the new party movement was set on foot I have been continually harassed by inquiries from various quarters as to whether I am for it or against it. . . . I have written a letter to Webb, approving his course and declaring my purpose to remain a Whig even after that party has been dispersed. I know you will consider me a 'fogy,' but I hope you will not feel vexed with me. I understand perfectly that my views of duty will separate me from all political movements of the day, but you know that private life has neither pains nor penalties for me. Between my trees and books and family I can find agreeable occupation, and this satisfies my mind. I have made myself Robert's schoolmaster, — the largest office I desire ever to hold. This sectional contest must come to an end at some time, in some way. When it is over and other objects engage the public mind, something may remain to be done where you and I will be found side by side. . . . No party on earth can change or weaken my feelings of personal friendship and gratitude towards you. Memory will oft recall the past, and dwell upon our pleasing intercourse — so kind and harmonious from first to last — through all the varied scenes in which we have coöperated for the service of friends and for the good of the country. In truth, my object in this letter is to assure you that your generous friendship, counsel, encouragement, and support are treasures in my heart, and will remain there till it rests from its pulsations. Thank God, 'the past is secure!' . . . I have often wished that one idea were less potent over your mind, — or more powerful in mine. We don't differ much about the idea, but rather the practical duties it imposes upon us. I know the sincerity of your convictions. You must never doubt the integrity of mine."

"Kansas," wrote Mr. Weed, in April, "stands at the door of the Union, knocking for admission. But the latch-string is drawn in, because she presents herself with a free Constitution. When Arkansas and Florida came with constitutions holding men, women, and children in subjection, no obstacles were encountered. In *their* admission the Free States acquiesced. Then Texas, wrested from Mexico by filibusters, was forced into the confederacy. . . . Shall the door of the Union be closed now

against a state because that state desires to enjoy the freedom to which she is entitled by a solemn compact? Let us hear from the people at primary meetings, in our conventions, and by petition. Is it not time to make the experiment whether concessions to freedom are not as effective in saving the Union as concessions to slavery?" . . .

"I find," wrote Seth C. Hawley to Mr. Weed, from Cincinnati, on the 1st of May, "that Seward has grown immensely popular in this section. He is allowed to be the great man of Congress and the great power at Washington, second only to the power of slavery. In this he has no competitor. And it is worthy of observation that this idea is openly expressed by extreme Hunkers, Democratic, and Whig. . . . Is it not possible that we are mistaken in supposing that he is not our best candidate? . . . Governor Raymond tells the Native Americans that you say that Republicans cannot nominate the same man they take; and it makes them very uncomfortable to hear it. He should not quote you to that effect, whatever the fact may be."

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *May 4, 1856.*

DEAR WEED, — I do not intend to question or doubt in any way the wisdom of any one in regard to the nomination, but what seems to me unnecessarily hard is that I am made by my friends to stand in the way of a candidate they want to nominate. Nor can I yet understand why I must be set up as a candidate to be beaten in the convention, instead of being allowed to practice the moderation and generosity of giving a clear field.

Perhaps I shall find out that this is a necessary course on the part of political friends; but I do not expect to be satisfied that it is generous or kind towards me. You alone, however, will know of this sensibility on my part. For the future I am not over-anxious; but it is very decidedly my impression that the time has come for me to give up public life altogether, and retire with dignity at the close of this session of Congress, when my policy will have been inaugurated, and Republicans will feel it a relief to be discharged of fancied claims of mine for reward.

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

These letters suggest a question which has often been asked: Why was not Mr. Seward the Republican candidate for President in 1856?



Mr. Weed did not believe that the Republicans could succeed in their first national canvass. The party was in its infancy. It was not "in running order." Its strength was uncertain. The Democrats were compact and hopeful. Their nomination of James Buchanan gave them every southern electoral vote, and was believed to ensure their success in Pennsylvania. They were certain to increase their popular vote, as cast for Mr. Pierce in 1852, while it was doubtful if Republicans could increase the vote cast by the Whigs for General Scott. The Know Nothings were a troublesome factor, partly because of their platform, which prevented a fusion of all forces opposed to slavery, and partly because of their mysterious, oath-bound operations, which Mr. Weed detested cordially, and by which he was to a certain extent perplexed. In session at Philadelphia, in February, four months before the other parties took the field, the Know Nothings nominated Millard Fillmore as their candidate for President.

It has been said that "his failure to nominate Mr. Seward in 1856 was a great disappointment to Mr. Weed." Nothing could be farther from the truth. Had Mr. Weed consented to the plan, Mr. Seward would have been nominated. It was with difficulty that he prevailed upon his friends to bide their time until the next national canvass. He reasoned that the Know Nothings, were Mr. Seward nominated, would ensure the election of Mr. Buchanan. Even as against any other Republican, Mr. Buchanan was almost sure to be elected, and, if elected, Mr. Weed thought, absolutely certain to make so many mistakes that nothing could prevent Republican ascendancy in 1860. It was only four years to wait, and under the circumstances nothing was to be gained by precipitancy.

When he reached this conclusion, having no preference for any special candidate, he watched for indications of popular sentiment, as between Speaker Banks, Colonel Fremont, or Judge McLean. "In May," he writes, "the way opened too bright and clear to mislead any political pathfinder. I then became assured that Fremont was the best man to put in nomination."

Virginia, Kentucky, Delaware, and Maryland joined the Free States in sending delegates to the national convention, in June. Kansas, Nebraska, and Minnesota, then territories, and the District of Columbia, also responded to the Pittsburg call. Henry

S. Lane, of Indiana, presided, and nearly a thousand delegates were present. John Charles Fremont, a native of Georgia, received the vote of New York and was nominated on the first ballot. Mr. Seward wrote a letter withdrawing his own name, which was not presented. Among candidates for Vice-President were William L. Dayton, Abraham Lincoln, Charles Sumner, General Banks, and David Wilmot. Mr. Dayton was nominated.

The New York "Democratic-Republican" convention met at Syracuse on the 24th of July. The call was signed by Elbridge G. Lapham, Ward Hunt, James S. Wadsworth, Edward Wade, Lucius Robinson and A. S. Devin. This assemblage refused to acknowledge the Buchanan convention as an exponent of true Democratic doctrine, on account of its pro-slavery attitude, and an address, written by David Dudley Field, of New York, was adopted, setting forth what was understood to be the creed of Jackson, Jefferson, and Silas Wright. This convention endorsed the nomination of Fremont and Dayton. Among delegates were Charles J. Folger, of Geneva; George W. Luther, of Albany; D. D. S. Brown and Roswell Hart, of Rochester; and John M. Francis, of Troy.

An "Old-Line Whig" convention met at Albany on the 14th of August. The delegates were mainly from New York city. They came up by the night boat, which, according to Mr. Weed's article the next day, "got lost somewhere down the river in a fog, so that the Old-Liners felt perfectly at home, as they have been in a political fog now for three years." Among these gentlemen were Francis Granger, Daniel B. St. John, James Kidd, and James R. Lawrence. The design of their meeting was to correct the impression that the Whig party was defunct.

The Republican state convention met at Syracuse on the 17th of September. The call was signed by Edwin D. Morgan, Simeon Draper, John L. Schoolcraft, Samuel P. Allen, and others. Among delegates were Theodore F. Humphrey and Hale Kingsley, of Albany; N. M. Allen, of Cattaraugus; John T. Hogeboom, of Hudson; W. G. Waite, of Johnstown; Moses Taggart, of Batavia; Burt Van Horn, of Niagara; Owen W. Brennan, Andrew Bleakley, Isaac Dayton, of New York; Bloomfield Usher, of St. Lawrence; and Charles Hughes, of Sandy Hill. On the first ballot, John A. King received ninety-one

votes; James S. Wadsworth seventy-two; Simeon Draper twenty-three; Myron H. Clark and Ira Harris, each twenty-two. Among the scattering were votes for George W. Patterson and E. W. Leavenworth. On the next ballot Draper, Leavenworth, and Patterson withdrew, and King received one hundred and fifty-eight votes, Wadsworth seventy-three, and Clark ten. Mr. King's nomination was then made unanimous. An effort was made to nominate Mr. Wadsworth for Lieutenant-Governor, but it was stated, by authority, that he would not accept that position, for which Henry L. Selden was then nominated.

Thus at the first Republican gubernatorial convention in New York, although the candidate whose nomination was urged by Mr. Weed was successful, a good-sized minority which disputed his leadership was developed. Their difference with Mr. Weed, however, was entirely a matter of principle. Votes cast for Governor Clark represented a radical sentiment on the liquor question; votes cast for General Wadsworth, a radical sentiment concerning slavery. On account of the attitude which these candidates held, respectively, in regard to prohibition and abolition, either would have been overwhelmingly defeated, had he received the nomination.

John A. King was elected. He represented the sound judgment and morality of the people. They knew his record, and it was approved, as it deserved to be. His public life began in 1819, when he went to the Assembly, to which he was reelected six times. Subsequently he served in Congress, where he was a consistent exponent of Whig principles. When the Republican party was formed, he was among the first to join in that movement, and presided over its first state convention, at Syracuse. A man of culture, who inherited aristocratic position, as youth and man he was ever an unostentatious, true-hearted gentleman. He and Mr. Weed had been friends for thirty years.

After abandoning his own party because it had become "tainted with free soil," Mr. Fillmore now proclaimed that the South ought to dissolve the Union in case of Fremont's election. This threat incensed Mr. Weed beyond measure. It was a little more than he was able to condemn in the formal language of polished controversy. Forgetting Governor Patterson's advice, "to leave him alone," he attacked Mr. Fillmore without mercy. "Deserter," "Backslider," and "Decoy duck

for slavery," were among the mildest epithets which he hurled day after day at the Know Nothing candidate. "Mr. Buchanan," he wrote, "expects to receive the united vote of the Slave States. Why then does Mr. Fillmore remain in the field, except to divide the vote of the North?"

In November Mr. Buchanan carried the fourteen Slave States, and Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois, and California. He received 1,838,169 votes. Colonel Fremont carried the remaining eleven Northern States, and had a popular vote of 1,341,264, — 50,000 less than were polled for General Scott in 1852. Mr. Fillmore secured the electoral vote of Maryland, and a popular vote of 874,534, — the largest ever polled for a "third party" candidate.

## CHAPTER XIX.

1857-1859.

MR. WEED'S READINESS TO ABDICATE. — PROGRESS OF THE KANSAS CONTEST. — DECISION IN THE DRED SCOTT CASE. — THE REPUBLICAN STATE CONVENTION OF 1858. — NOMINATION OF E. D. MORGAN. — GOVERNOR HUNT'S DECISION. — MR. SEWARD'S TRIP TO EUROPE. — LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT NATIONAL CAMPAIGN. — ELECTION RESULTS. — JOHN BROWN.

"OBEDIENCE to the law of nature," to use his own phrase, suggested to Mr. Weed in 1855 the propriety of withdrawal from active editorship, but his friends would not think of consenting to such a step, and he was now working as regularly and industriously as ever in his old seat. He often expressed cheerful readiness, however, to resign paper and pen to any successor whom his party or his friends might indicate.

His solicitude lest he might seem to be holding on to power beyond the time when he could render useful service was gratuitous. At the age of sixty he had not lost that elasticity, mental and physical, which is required for intelligent dealing with public affairs. Indeed, he had never before been so well qualified to lead a great party. But there was a certain grandeur in the way he had of disdaining considerations such as would have been rated all-important by men who from time to time have set themselves up as censors. He filed no claim for a pension. He not only never sought, but steadfastly refused the places of public distinction and emolument which are commonly striven after and prized as the realization of high political ambition. He chose to have his friends governors, senators, presidents. For the paper which was of his "own procreation," he did not care ten groats, so long as it did not pass into faithless hands. The benefit of his matchless political ability was always reaped by others. He was equally willing that others should take the property upon which he had lavished unstinted labor for thirty years.

1857. — Throughout the later portion of the administration of Franklin Pierce a desultory sort of civil war continued to ravage Kansas. The Topeka legislature attempted to reassemble, but the members were dispersed by United States troops. The towns of Lawrence and Ossawatimie were sacked. Mr. Buchanan's term began on the 3d of March, 1857. Soon afterwards free soil settlers were induced to recognize the Pawnee authorities, so far as to participate in an election which they had ordered, and the majority in the accredited legislature was thus reversed. But a convention to which members had been elected in the interests of slavery, before this result, assembled at Lecompton, on the 4th of September, and submitted a new Constitution to the people, who were granted the privilege of adopting it "with" or "without" slavery. This option affording no opportunity for rejecting the Constitution altogether, free soilers generally abstained from voting, and the Constitution "with" slavery received a majority. The legislature then ordered a new election, which permitted voters to pass upon the entire question, and the Lecompton Constitution was rejected. It was held by Democrats, however, that this verdict was irregular, as the legislature had no power to order such an election.

In the mean time the Kansas question was angrily debated at Washington, where, in the heat of the excitement, Charles Sumner, of Massachusetts, was assaulted on the floor of the Senate by Congressman Brooks, of South Carolina, a relative of Senator Butler, whom Mr. Sumner had criticised. The House censured Mr. Brooks, who resigned and returned home, whereupon his constituents presented him with a gold-headed cane and returned him to Congress.

"The enemies of freedom never yet saw such a battery as the 'Journal' mounted yesterday," wrote his friend Charles A. Stetson to Mr. Weed. "Let them keep their distance."

"I remained in Kansas until I was satisfied that it was as sure for freedom as Massachusetts," wrote George W. Patterson to Mr. Weed. . . . "Buchanan did a very clever thing for us in removing Wier as District-Attorney and appointing Davis. Wier received news of his removal at St. Louis, on his return from Washington, and went immediately home and helped the two Republicans of the board to appoint two free state men, and one pro-slaver as judges of election in every election dis-

tract in the territory, except three new ones, where, not knowing their men, they had to 'pick them up' by guess work, but in those districts they will be closely watched. All the appointments were made before Davis's commission was received."

Two days after Mr. Buchanan was sworn into office Chief Justice Taney, of the Supreme Court, handed down a decision in the Dred Scott case, holding, according to a popular interpretation, that "negroes have no rights which white men are bound to respect." Scott had been a slave in Missouri. In 1834 he went with his master to Illinois, and then to Minnesota, where he lived five or six years. He then went back with his master to Missouri, where he was soon afterwards whipped. Claiming that he had secured freedom by residence in a state and territory both of which forbade slavery, he brought suit for assault and battery, and the case went to the court of last resort. Judge Taney's verdict was a great victory for the slave power. It not only practically reduced blacks at the South to a level with inanimate property, but incidentally decided that, as slavery was guaranteed by the Constitution, no slaveholder could be prevented from settling in any part of the country, with his slaves or without them, as he might elect.

In the summer of 1858 the Republicans of New York were to designate a candidate to succeed Mr. King as governor. Mr. Weed's earliest choice was Simeon Draper. Arrangements were on foot, looking to his nomination, when, a few weeks before the convention, Mr. Draper became so seriously embarrassed in business enterprises as to occasion a sudden and unexpected failure. All his time, therefore, was engrossed in the adjustment of his own affairs. The name of James M. Cook, of Saratoga, who had served creditably to himself and usefully to the State as Senator, Bank Superintendent, and Comptroller, was then hastily canvassed. Mr. Weed's friends generally received it with favor, and for a brief interval, it was confidently expected that he would be the candidate. But circumstances, in no way reflecting upon General Cook's personal qualities, demanded a sudden change of front, and it became Mr. Weed's painful duty to inform his expectant friend that he could not be nominated.

Contrary to his usual custom, Mr. Weed went as a delegate to the state convention, and named Edwin D. Morgan, of New

York, as his choice for Governor. The convention contained all the opposition votes which Know Nothings, Radicals, and remnants of the Prohibition party were able to muster, and they were all united upon one aspirant; but Mr. Morgan was nominated, and elected. He had been an uncompromising opponent of the Fillmore administration, and had a clear record, by votes in the state legislature, against the fugitive slave law and outrages in Kansas. Mr. Weed formed a high estimate of his executive ability during the canvass of 1856, when Mr. Morgan was chairman of the national Republican committee.

[GOVERNOR MORGAN TO MR. WEED.]

ALBANY, *January 16, 1850.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — I am glad to know the policy to be pursued by the administration.<sup>1</sup> As for prohibiting slavery in territory now free, I agree with you that Whigs must assert that principle clearly and firmly. Being in a minority in the House, and with but two majority in the Senate, it is in the latter alone that we can assist this principle. Whatever may have been the private wishes of those in the southern part of the State, where at all times we have had less of the free soil feeling, we shall now without exception give our aid to our party.

. . . I shall be pleased to have your suggestions as often as you can possibly find leisure to write.

Truly yours, E. D. MORGAN.

It was not until after the nomination of Mr. Morgan that the relations between Mr. Weed and Washington Hunt, which had been growing for some time less and less friendly, owing to the ex-Governor's refusal to join the Republican movement, finally became inimical. Soon after the state canvass began, it was announced that Governor Hunt intended to support Lorenzo Burrows, the Know Nothing candidate. To Mr. Weed this decision seemed absolutely indefensible, in view of Governor Hunt's record and past affiliations; and it was all the harder to bear when the Democrats had, in Judge Parker, of Albany, an exceptionally strong candidate. But every effort to induce the ex-Governor to unite with the Republicans proved unavailing.

<sup>1</sup> This letter was written to Mr. Weed at Washington. President Taylor was still alive.



[GOVERNOR HUNT TO MR. WEED.]

LOCKPORT, *November 15, 1858.*

MY DEAR WEED,—I read your letter with mingled regret and astonishment. It took me by surprise. I see in it another instance of the malign influence of partisan excitement working upon a mind naturally just and generous.

After weighing your complaints with perfect candor, I deny emphatically and without "circumlocution" that there is any sufficient ground for them. They are not justified either by my conduct or my intentions. I persuade myself that a calm survey of the whole ground will bring you to the same conclusion. Let us begin at the beginning.

We were Whigs together. The Republican party was formed in 1855. I declined to join it for reasons which were frankly expressed in advance. Personal feeling and cherished attachments impelled me to follow the majority of my Whig associates into the new organization. If any desire for personal advancement could have influenced me, certainly my interests were in that direction. But I was restrained by honest convictions of duty. I could not bring my mind to approve the basis of the new party, and I decided the question against myself upon principles which governed my judgment. You considered my opinions wrong, but conceded my right to entertain them. It was no lack of gratitude towards old associates that kept me from joining in the Republican movement. . . . The Whig party was dissolved against my judgment, and I was not responsible for it.

I am told that I placed myself "in a false position." I knew very well that I was taking the weaker side,—but that sacrifice was made deliberately, in the belief that there are worse things than being in the minority. If you did not deem it ground for personal offense in 1855, why be offended because I could not join, or appear to join, the Republicans of 1858? Why impute it to lack of gratitude, or appreciation of your former services? Why do yourself and me the injustice to say that I "spurned your advice"? It was no disrespect for Mr. Weed, no forgetfulness of former relations, no distrust of his sincerity or friendship which determined me to stand where I have stood and where I stand. Far from it. . . .

You object to the tenor of my Albany letter. What there was in that letter to cause "pain" or "mortification" to you or to any other mortal man is to me incomprehensible. It contained no unkind word or allusion. It breathed a spirit of conciliation, which was commended by many Republicans. You assume that Mr. Morgan was my friend and supporter, and that Mr. Burrows was not. Of course you think so; but it is an erroneous impression. I always regarded them both

as friends and supporters. . . . Shall it be said that I could not vote for one of these gentlemen without ingratitude to the other, or that I cannot speak well of one without injustice to the other? I aimed to speak kindly of Mr. Morgan, and to show that nothing separated us but a mere difference of political opinion and action. . . . I call this honor and fair dealing, not "circumlocution," — a word which I disdain and repel.

But you say my letter was drawn from me by two of your personal enemies. Here again you labor under a misapprehension. I wrote through no agency of those enemies, or of anybody in Albany. After the nominations at Syracuse it seemed to me, in looking over the proceedings, that the American convention had made a fair effort for union, and had not been met. When friends inquired of me, I replied that I should vote for Mr. Burrows. A friend of his (not a resident of Albany) applied to me to address a meeting in your city. I declined, but finally promised to write a letter declaring my intention to vote for Burrows. Therefore, in writing that letter I simply kept my word. I informed you of this fact, and certainly you did not ask or desire me to violate my promise. . . .

But why write a letter for publication if I feel but little concern in political affairs? My indifference is not of that degree which leads one to renounce the rights and duties of a private citizen. I expect to vote and express my opinion sometimes, if any man asks for it in a civil way. My real meaning was that political concerns occupy but a small share of my thoughts. . . . You thought I could induce the American candidates to withdraw. I deemed it impracticable. I had no power to accomplish it, even if I could have multiplied myself a hundred times. I did n't belong to their party. . . . I did n't expect to write so long a letter. I have written it because I was unwilling that you should remain under impressions which are unjust to me and unworthy of you. I have not forgotten the past. I have never assailed you, or encouraged anybody in so doing. In fine, I have done nothing to merit reproaches or to sunder the ties of personal friendship. You assure me that there is no unkindness in your heart. You know, or ought to know, that there is none in mine; and that when my opinions have compelled me to dissent from yours, it has been in sorrow, and never in anger. If, however, you adhere to all the sentiments expressed in your last letter, I shall be angry, as in duty bound.

Yours sincerely,

WASHINGTON HUNT.

In the early part of the year 1859, Democratic papers at the South began to hint vaguely that "the candidate of the Black Republicans" was going to Europe "in search of material aid

to advance his presidential prospects." This stupid slander sprang from the fact that Mr. Seward, worn out by a decade of contention against the majority at Washington, entertained the hope of taking a few months' rest abroad. With the exception of the first few months of his service, at no time since his election to the Senate had he been on friendly terms with the national administration; there had not been even a temporary truce between him and a President since the death of Taylor. President Fillmore dragooned all the appointees of his administration into his effort to destroy Mr. Seward. But Mr. Fillmore was himself destroyed by his own folly and ingratitude. After him came President Pierce, and then President Buchanan, both of whom were bitterly opposed to the Senator from New York. But the more insolent and vindictive his enemies became, the clearer rang out Seward's glowing pleas for freedom. All eyes now turned toward him as the logical Republican candidate in the approaching presidential contest.

[MR. GREELEY TO GEORGE E. BAKER.]

NEW YORK, *April 28, 1859.*

FRIEND BAKER, — I lack faith that the anti-slavery men of this country have either the numbers or the sagacity required to make a President. I do not believe there are a hundred thousand earnest anti-slavery men in this State, or a million in the Union. If they ever do choose a President, it will be in spite of themselves, with Gerrit Smith and all such doing their utmost to throw the country into the hands of the slavery propagandists, as they did in 1844, and as Gerrit did last fall.

Slavery has not another body of servitors half so useful and efficient as the most rabid Abolitionists.

I never said I would vote for Crittenden, but I am willing to go even lower than that — to support Sam Houston (do you know a more unprincipled old wretch?) — if I may thereby elect a President in opposition to the slavery-extending party.

I hope Seward or Chase will be nominated on the platform of 1856, and then I will go to work for him with a will, but with perfect certainty that we are to be horribly beaten. I only want to be in such a shape that, when the thing is over, I can say "I told you so." I don't believe the time ever has been (or soon will be) when, on a square issue, the Republicans could or can poll one hundred electoral votes. But let her drive.

Yours, H. GREELEY.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *April 29, 1859.*

DEAR WEED, — The southern and western politicians have habits and usages different from ours. They come upon me with a directness which confounds me. I have two or three subjects submitted by them which I propose to you now, because in the hurry of preparing my business for departure for Europe I must save time. You can keep this letter at hand and refer to it at leisure.

Many southern gentlemen express to me a wish that the national convention may be held somewhere on the border. Without expressing any opinion about it as an abstract question, I think our friends ought to know that it was understood at Washington that Humphrey Marshall intends to go over to the Democrats. If Louisville should be suggested as the place, the committee would of course consider Mr. Marshall's position in connection with the subject. It might have a bearing against such a selection.

The Baltimore " — " is in trouble. Mayor Swayne, Judge Lee, Mr. Cole, and others there want to have the paper reorganized and brought into the position of an organ in that State and for the country south of the Potomac, of the Republican party. They had Simon Cameron over there a week or two ago to confer. They think they will need some funds from the North, but I am satisfied that if they only had the benefit of your advice and Cameron's, they would be able to subscribe all the funds they want, and would promptly do so. Cameron and I promised them that we would ask you to meet him there. Cameron knows them all, and he will go at any time.

Speaking of Cameron, I promised him when he left Washington to spend a day or so with him on my way home. He took me to his house, told me all was right. He was for me, and Pennsylvania would be. It might happen that they would cast the first ballot for him, but he was not in, etc. He brought the whole legislature of both parties to see me, feasted them gloriously, and they were in the main so generous as to embarrass me.

I have Stetson's letter to you. Corwin is uneasy and fidgety; but persons who live in Ohio have excuses. They are inheritors of a noble reversion, and they would like to extinguish the present estate without being able or willing to pay its cost. He wrote me a month ago, inclosing a pitiful piece of twaddle from a correspondent of the "Express," saying that he was against me as everybody else was. He contradicted the allegation, and said that the Cincinnati "Gazette" would contain an authorized denial. . . .

You will find John S. Pendleton, of Virginia, bold enough and well

disposed for anything. The man in the District of Columbia is Henry Addison, now Mayor of Georgetown. He is wise, honest, indomitable and unreserved. You may send him safely anywhere.

Yours faithfully,                      WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

I stayed in London [wrote Mr. Seward from Leeds, Yorkshire, in July,] so long as it seemed necessary to learn the interests and the men concerned in the government. I found that the element of reform, progress, democracy, — call it by what name you will, — is developed only in the manufacturing districts. I have come out here for the purpose of studying that force. Birmingham, Glasgow, and Leeds are the only towns I have yet seen, but they are enough to astonish and confound me. I had no conception of the greatness which America has thrust upon England for the purpose of saving the institution of slavery for a few years more.

1859. — “The victories achieved last Tuesday,” wrote Mr. Weed, in October, “thrill the hearts of the people like the sound of a trumpet. Six million freemen have spoken. Their utterance is that of unequivocal condemnation of the principles and policy of the administration,<sup>1</sup> and of the party which sustains it.

“Nor is this a spasmodic uprising. Year after year the same voice has been heard — growing in strength, and volume, and significance, with every reiteration. Victory has followed victory, from Maine to Iowa, until now hardly a state, whose soil is not blackened by the footprints of slavery, is so poor as to do reverence to a party whose policy is at war with the fundamental principles of the Republic. . . .

“The importance of these triumphs cannot be over-estimated. They do not simply indicate hostility to the bad principles of the Democratic party; but that that hostility is so inflexible, so ‘irrepressible,’ that it will find utterance on every available occasion. They show that Republicanism has its seat in the heart of the people; and it is that fact which renders the Republican party the most formidable which has ever had an existence in this country. . . .

“Republicans of New York: What our brethren in other states have done, we must do. It would be a disgrace to falter when Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Iowa stand firm. New York must hold her place on the right of the glorious army of freedom.”

<sup>1</sup> That of James Buchanan.

John Brown left Kansas in July, 1859, and settled in Maryland, with the desperate intention of exciting an uprising among negroes in the Slave States.

On the 17th of October he raided Harper's Ferry and seized the United States Arsenal, which was well supplied with arms and ammunition. Of course, he was taken prisoner. Shortly afterwards a Virginia tribunal sentenced him to death.

"Virginia justice," wrote Mr. Weed, "has a quick tongue and a sharp sword. Committal, indictment, and trial, follow one another with dramatic celerity. A wounded man is carried into court within a week after his offense. He asks a day's delay, that he may have counsel not appointed by the tribunal before which he is arraigned. His request is denied.

"In the court of the Doges of Venice, there was but the 'Bridge of Sighs' between the victims and the scaffold. In the French reign of terror the man imprisoned to-day found his door chalked for the guillotine to-morrow. On board the Somers there was but a 'short shrift' between an imagined mutiny and the yard-arm. Old Ossawatimie Brown raises his voice to exclaim, in the spirit which animated Robert Emmet: 'You are mine enemy, and make my challenge; you shall not be my judge.' Since the day when Paul spoke to Agrippa we have heard nothing more truly sublime than his response to the tribunal before which he stood to receive sentence of death. . . .

"We regret that Governor Wise persists in his determination. Neither the dignity nor the safety of the State of Virginia demands this sanguinary termination of the affair at Harper's Ferry. But John Brown and his associates will undoubtedly be hanged, and thus, instead of being remembered as imprisoned criminals, they will be shrined as martyrs; and their acts, instead of being characterized as insurrectionary, will be tortured into deeds of chivalric heroism. The execution of this man will do more to intensify anti-slavery agitation than the arrest and imprisonment of ten thousand other men, insane and criminal enough to attempt to run off negroes from the South. Already the muttered thunder of pent-up sympathy is heard."

## CHAPTER XX.

1860.

THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION AT CHARLESTON. — PLAN OF THE SECESSION LEADERS. — MR. WEED AND THE SEWARD CANVASS. — LETTER FROM MR. BOWLES. — THE CHICAGO CONVENTION OF 1860. — WITHDRAWAL OF MR. CAMERON. — NOMINATION OF MR. LINCOLN. — THE DECISIVE BALLOT IN DETAIL. — POSITION OF PROMINENT DELEGATES. — HANNIBAL HAMLIN FOR VICE-PRESIDENT.

THE leading candidate for the presidential nomination at the hands of the Democratic party in 1860 was Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois. In Congress he had been one of the ablest defenders of the fugitive slave law, and had voted steadily against the Wilmot Proviso. But he had not been absolutely subservient to the South, and thus lost the support of that section. Other candidates were named, when the convention was about to meet, among whom Vice-President Breckenridge, Jefferson Davis, Mr. Guthrie, of Kentucky, Senator Lane, of Oregon, Alexander H. Stephens, and General Houston, of Texas, were the most prominent.

The convention was held at Charleston, South Carolina, on the 23d of April. Sprinkled generously among the delegates were many rabid pro-slavery men, who, alarmed by the tempest which was fast gathering on the northern horizon, saw, or pretended to see, no security for slavery except in the establishment of a new national government, to be composed entirely of slave-holding states. With these men the presidential contest was only an episode in the grand tragedy of disunion. Still, it was an episode of tremendous consequence, upon which the fate of the whole conspiracy turned. To have Mr. Davis, or Mr. Breckenridge, or Mr. Stephens nominated over Mr. Douglas, and elected, was by no means what these extremists desired. They did not want to make any Democrat President; but, by insuring the election of a "Black Republican," to furnish the Slave States a pretext for rebellion.

In order to carry out this design, it was necessary, first, to defeat Senator Douglas at Charleston, and next to render his election, in case of his nomination by any other convention, impossible. Whom the Republicans might nominate mattered little. It was necessary only that the Republican candidate should succeed. Then, it was reasoned, the Slave States could be plunged into secession, on the plea that thus only were their rights secure. And so the Charleston convention was deliberately split, one section subsequently nominating Mr. Douglas, of Illinois, and the other Mr. Breckenridge, of Kentucky.

1860. — By no one were these proceedings watched more closely or more intelligently than by Mr. Weed. And when it became altogether probable, as it now did, that the nominee of the Republicans was to win, solicitude was intensified. The Republican convention was to assemble at Chicago on the 16th of May. Mr. Weed's interest in it was more profound than he had ever felt in any other political gathering. The far-off canvass of 1824, in which, according to Mr. Greeley, "he rendered services but for which John Quincy Adams would not have been President," seemed like child's play in comparison. The Harrison triumph was nipped in the bud; the promise of General Taylor's time, "like Dead Sea fruit, had turned to ashes on the lips." Now came the crowning opportunity of a life-time; not to make a man President because he was a personal friend, but to raise to that splendid station one who was greater than Adams or Harrison or Taylor, and at a time when the very existence of the nation was trembling in the balance.

[SAMUEL BOWLES TO MR. WEED.]

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., *March 5.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — The reaction in favor of Seward is very marked in this State. Our delegation would have been satisfactory to you any way. Now it will be so strong for Seward as to be against anybody else. All the New England delegates, save Connecticut's, will be equally satisfactory. I hear of ultra old Whigs in Boston who say they are ready to take up Mr. Seward upon his recent speech. Banks writes me that he is greatly impressed with it, and that it must and should enhance Seward's prospects.

I want to thank you, my dear sir, for the very interesting afternoon you gave me at your house. I have long desired to know you, for



myself, as well as through others; and I treasure that opportunity, its confidences, and its impressions, as among the most agreeable incidents of my life.

There are few men I care to know well. Not all in political life will bear close observation. But my faith in human nature and in you was warmed and cheered by that interview. It is of small consequence to you to know this, but it is a pleasure to me to say it, and so I have. I feel now that I have an independent opinion of Thurlow Weed, and I treasure it.

Pray excuse this indulgence in personality and believe me,  
Yours very truly, SAMUEL BOWLES.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *March 15, 1860.*

DEAR WEED, — Mr. Cameron claims all the delegates in Philadelphia but one. He says he wants to see you, and will meet you here or at Philadelphia at any time you may suggest. He said he would write you so, but it seemed well enough for me to tell you. — says that he must go to Chicago, and that I must see that he is sent. I am sure that you will either send him or see that my skirts are free from blame. If he is sent, I should be delighted, but you will do what is wise. . . .

You know all about Mr. Carl Schurz, and the important and responsible part he is acting in the Republican cause. Please give him your confidence.

All New England advices justify what Mr. Bowles wrote you.

I wonder continually how you get through with such labors and bear up under such responsibilities.

Yours faithfully, WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

With a unanimity of purpose never paralleled before or since, the Republicans of New York State presented as their choice for President the name of William H. Seward. His ability, eloquence, and patriotism were everywhere recognized and admired. From him thousands of Republicans had come to love the party and its principles. It was he who had boldly proclaimed in the Senate, when Mr. Webster and Mr. Clay were rocking the old Whig party to sleep in the arms of treaties and compromises, the "great and glorious" doctrine of a "higher law."<sup>1</sup> "It was he," I once wrote, "who had pronounced at

<sup>1</sup> It is true, indeed, that the national domain is ours. It is true that it was acquired by the valor and with the wealth of the whole nation. But we hold, nevertheless, no arbitrary power over anything, whether acquired law-

Rochester, in 1858, an 'irrepressible conflict' against slavery. On the stump, before the courts, in the legislature of New York, as Governor of the State, his career was a succession of brilliant triumphs, without a blunder, defeat, or stain. There were never two men in politics who worked together or understood each other better than Mr. Seward and Mr. Weed. Neither controlled the other in any objectionable sense. One did not always lead, and the other follow. They were friends, in the best, the rarest, and the highest sense. They were like two brothers with whom nearly all interests are common. Their names had become almost like synonymous terms, but each was so different from the other, and each was so much of a man himself, that it used to be said that some day they must clash and separate. That day never came. Mr. Weed's hand directed all the movements of the canvass, and his advice was followed with unquestioning confidence. For weeks his whole heart and brain were absorbed in the thought of putting Mr. Seward at the head of the Chicago ticket. So well were arrangements made for that result that defeat seemed out of the question. Mr. Seward looked forward to his nomination almost as one does upon an accomplished fact, and so did Mr. Weed."

The Republican national convention held its sessions in a wigwam specially constructed for its occupation. Governor Morgan, of New York, called the meeting to order; David Wilmot, of Pennsylvania, was temporary chairman; and George Ashmun, of Massachusetts, was permanent chairman. Among the delegates were John A. Andrew, William M. Evarts, George William Curtis, Henry L. Selden, John L. Schoolcraft, John A. King, Theodore M. Pomeroy, William Curtis Noyes, Vivus W. Smith, David Davis, Thaddeus Stevens, William B. Allison, Edward H. Rollins, George S. Bontwell, Francis P. Blair, Horace Greeley, Montgomery Blair, A. W. Campbell, James W.

fully or seized by usurpation. The Constitution regulates our stewardship; the Constitution devotes the domain to union, to justice, to defense, to welfare, and to liberty. But there is a higher law than the Constitution, which regulates our authority over this domain, and devotes it to the same noble purposes. These territories are a part of the common heritage of mankind, bestowed upon them by the Creator. We are his stewards, and must so discharge our trust as to secure in the highest attainable degree their happiness. — Speech of William H. Seward, in the United States Senate, March 11, 1850.

Nye, Thomas Corwin, Andrew H. Reeder, Joshua R. Giddings, Caleb B. Smith, Thomas W. Ferry, Carl Schurz, John A. Kason, B. Gratz Brown, and Eli Thayer. The first two days were spent in a contest over organization. The first ballot was taken on the third day.

Perfect silence fell over the vast assemblage as the clerk announced the result of the first ballot, as follows:—

For William H. Seward, of New York . . . . .	173½
For Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois . . . . .	102
For Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania . . . . .	50½
For Edward Bates, of Missouri . . . . .	48
For Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio . . . . .	49
For William L. Dayton, of New Jersey . . . . .	14
For John McLean, of Ohio . . . . .	12
For Jacob Collamer, of Vermont . . . . .	10
For Benjamin F. Wade, of Ohio . . . . .	3
For John M. Read, of Pennsylvania . . . . .	1
For Charles Sumner, of Massachusetts . . . . .	1
For John C. Fremont, of California . . . . .	1

Whole number of votes cast, 465; necessary to a choice, 233.

Mr. Seward had the entire vote of New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, California, Minnesota, Kansas, and the District of Columbia. He had also ten votes from Maine, one from New Hampshire, twenty-one from Massachusetts, one and one half from Pennsylvania, three from Maryland, eight from Virginia, five from Kentucky, four from Texas, and two each from Iowa and Nebraska.

Mr. Lincoln had the solid vote of Indiana and Illinois. He had also six votes from Maine, seven from New Hampshire, four from Massachusetts, two from Connecticut, four from Pennsylvania, fourteen from Virginia, six from Kentucky, eight from Ohio, two from Iowa, and one from Nebraska.

Mr. Cameron's votes were all from Pennsylvania, except three.

The Chase vote was nearly all that of Ohio, with eight from Kentucky, and four or five scattering.

The Bates vote was that of Missouri, reënforced by Delaware, Maryland, Connecticut, and Oregon.

The president announced that no candidate having received a majority of the whole number of votes cast, the convention would proceed to a second ballot.

After the second ballot had been taken, but before the result was announced, Governor Reeder, of Pennsylvania, took the floor and said that while the voting was going on, General Cameron had withdrawn his name; he now formally withdrew the name of Simon Cameron as a candidate for nomination. Forty-eight votes from the State of Pennsylvania were then thrown for Mr. Lincoln, and the clerk announced the result, as follows:—

For William H. Seward, of New York . . . . .	184½
For Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois . . . . .	181
For Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio . . . . .	42½
For Edward Bates, of Missouri . . . . .	35
For William L. Dayton, of New Jersey . . . . .	10
For John McLean, of Ohio . . . . .	8
For Cassius M. Clay, of Kentucky . . . . .	2
For Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania . . . . .	2

Whole number of votes cast, 465; necessary to a choice, 233.

Mr. Seward gained four from New Jersey, two each from Texas and Kentucky; and one each from Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Nebraska, a total gain of eleven.

Mr. Lincoln's gains were forty-four from Pennsylvania, ten from Vermont, — the Collamer vote, — six each from Delaware and Ohio, three each from Rhode Island, Kentucky, and Iowa, and two each from New Hampshire and Connecticut, a total gain of seventy-nine.

The president announced that no candidate having received a majority of the whole number of votes cast the convention would proceed to take another ballot.

Mr. Seward stood within forty-eight and a half votes of the nomination; but the sudden rise in Mr. Lincoln's vote, caused by the transfer to him of the votes from Pennsylvania, which on the first ballot had been cast for General Cameron, suddenly brought into the field a formidable opposition candidate.

Other influences were at work in the same direction, but the change in the vote of Pennsylvania, startling the vast auditorium like a clap of thunder, turned the scale.

On the next ballot the vote in detail stood as in the following table, when Mr. Carter, of Ohio, announced a change of four votes in that delegation to the leading candidate, thus nominating Mr. Lincoln:—

## THE DECISIVE BALLOT.

STATES.	Seward.	Lincoln.	Chase.	Bates.	McLean.	Dayton.	C. M. Clay.
Maine.....	10	6	..	..	..	..	..
New Hampshire.....	1	9	..	..	..	..	..
Vermont.....	..	10	..	..	..	..	..
Massachusetts.....	18	8	..	..	..	..	..
Rhode Island.....	1	5	1	..	1	..	..
Connecticut.....	1	4	2	4	..	..	1
New York.....	70	..	..	..	..	..	..
New Jersey.....	5	8	..	..	..	1	..
Pennsylvania.....	..	52	..	..	2	..	..
Maryland.....	2	9	..	..	..	..	..
Delaware.....	..	6	..	..	..	..	..
Virginia.....	8	14	..	..	..	..	..
Kentucky.....	6	13	4	..	..	..	..
Ohio.....	..	29	15	..	2	..	..
Indiana.....	..	26	..	..	..	..	..
Missouri.....	..	..	..	18	..	..	..
Michigan.....	12	..	..	..	..	..	..
Illinois.....	..	22	..	..	..	..	..
Texas.....	6	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wisconsin.....	10	..	..	..	..	..	..
Iowa.....	2	5½	½	..	..	..	..
California.....	8	..	..	..	..	..	..
Minnesota.....	8	..	..	..	..	..	..
Oregon.....	1	4	..	..	..	..	..
<b>TERRITORIES.</b>							
Kansas.....	6	..	..	..	..	..	..
Nebraska.....	3	1	2	..	..	..	..
District of Columbia.....	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
	180	231½	24½	22	5	1	1

Scenes of wild excitement accompanied the taking of the decisive ballot. Thousands unable to gain admittance to the wigwam were communicated with by watchmen stationed on the roof, and when the president declared that Mr. Lincoln had been nominated, the announcement was greeted with thundering applause. Women waved their handkerchiefs, men shouted themselves hoarse, and children added to the uproar. One hundred guns were fired from the top of an adjoining building, and each report was responded to within by vociferous cheers. A large portrait of Mr. Lincoln, prepared for the purpose, was brought out

upon the platform, and simultaneously the Pennsylvania delegation strung up an immense banner with this inscription: "The Keystone State is good for 20,000 Majority for Abe Lincoln, the People's Candidate."

As soon as his voice could be heard, Mr. Evarts, of New York, took the stand and said:—

The State of New York, by a full delegation, with complete unanimity of purpose at home, came to this convention and presented for its choice one of its citizens, who had served the State from boyhood up, who had labored for and loved it. We came from a great state, with, as we thought, a great statesman [prolonged cheers], and our love of the great Republic, from which we are all delegates, the great American Union, and our love of the great Republican party of the Union, and our love of our statesman and candidate, made us think that we did our duty to the country, and the whole country, in expressing our love and preference for him. [Loud cheers.] For, gentlemen, it was from Governor Seward that most of us learned to love Republican principles and the Republican party. [Renewed cheers.] His fidelity to the country, the Constitution, and the laws; his fidelity to the party and the principle that the majority govern; his interest in the advancement of our party to its victory, that our country may rise to its true glory, induces me to assume to speak his sentiments, as I do, indeed, the opinions of our whole delegation, when I move you, as I now do, that the nomination of Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, as the Republican candidate for the suffrages of the whole country for the office of chief magistrate of the American Union, be made unanimous. [Enthusiastic cheers.]

Several gentlemen then endeavored to get the floor, which was accorded to Governor Andrew, of Massachusetts, who said:—

I am deputed by the united voice of the Massachusetts delegation to second the motion just proposed by the distinguished citizen of New York, who represents the delegation of that noble State. I second that motion, therefore, in the name of Massachusetts, that the nomination of Abraham Lincoln be made unanimous. [Loud cheers.] . . . The affection of our hearts and the judgment of our intellects bound our political fortunes to William H. Seward, of New York [cheers]; to him, who is the brightest and most shining light of this political generation [applause and cheers]; to him, who, by the unanimous selection of the foes of our cause, has for years been the determined standard-bearer of liberty,—William H. Seward. [Loud

cheers.] Whether in the legislature of his native State of New York, whether as Governor of that young and growing imperial commonwealth, whether as Senator of the United States, or as a tribune of the people, ever faithful, ever true. [Cheers.] In the thickest and the hottest of every battle there waved the white plume of the gallant leader of New York. [Cheers.] And, gentlemen, by no hand of Massachusetts was it for him to be stricken down. . . . It was not for us to strike down William H. Seward, of New York. But, Mr. President and gentlemen, as we love the cause, and as we respect our own convictions, and as we mean to be faithful to the only organization on earth which is in the van of the cause of freedom, so do we, with entire fidelity of heart, with entire concurrence of judgment, with the firmest and most fixed purpose of our will, adopt the opinion of the majority of the convention of delegates, to which the American people have assigned the duty of selection; and as Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, is the choice of the national Republican convention, Abraham Lincoln is at this moment the first choice of the Republicans of Massachusetts. [Enthusiastic cheers.]

Carl Schurz, of Wisconsin, said: —

I am commissioned by the delegates of Wisconsin to second the motion made by the distinguished gentleman from New York. Our delegates were directed to cast their votes unanimously for William H. Seward, and it is unnecessary to say that the instructions we received added but solemn obligations of our constituents to the spontaneous impulses of our hearts. [Great applause.] . . . I am now speaking in the spirit of Mr. Seward, when I say that his ambition will be satisfied with the success of the cause which was the dream of his youth, and to which he has devoted all the days of his manhood, — even if the name of William H. Seward should remain in history an instance of the highest merit uncrowned with the highest honor.

Speeches were made by Austin Blair, of Michigan, Mr. Browning, of Illinois, Caleb Smith, of Indiana, and other delegates. The convention then adjourned for dinner, and, on re-assembling in the afternoon, nominated Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, for Vice-President. New York was invited to name a candidate for this place, but declined.

Mr. Weed was already hastily preparing to leave Chicago for the prairies of Iowa.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1860.

“GREELEY AT THE TREMONT : WEED AT THE RICHMOND HOUSE.”—GOVERNOR SEWARD TO MR. WEED.—THE VISIT TO IOWA.—“NOW I AM EVEN WITH GOVERNOR SEWARD.”—RAYMOND’S REVIEW OF THE CONVENTION.—DISSOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL “FIRM” OF “SEWARD, WEED & GREELEY.”—MR. GREELEY’S LETTER TO GOVERNOR SEWARD.—MR. WEED’S REPLY.

MR. JULIUS WOOD, of Columbus, Ohio, an old and true friend of Mr. Weed, visited him at the Astor House, early in 1860, and declared that he was afraid that candidates would be accumulated at Chicago in such a way as to prevent the nomination of Mr. Seward. “I think there is no danger of that,” said Mr. Weed. “But,” continued Mr. Wood, “the Blairs, Mr. Bryant, Mr. Greeley, and others are certainly hard at work.” “Yes,” said Mr. Weed, “but something more than their opposition will be required to accomplish the defeat of a man upon whom the people have set their hearts.”

At this time there was friendly intercourse between Mr. Greeley and Mr. Weed, nor did anybody suppose that Mr. Greeley was not on good terms with Governor Seward. He had, indeed, in 1854, written to Mr. Seward a remarkable letter, “dissolving the firm of Seward, Weed & Greeley,” but Mr. Weed had never seen such a letter, nor did Mr. Greeley appear to remember its existence. Mr. Weed and Mr. Greeley met frequently in New York, not with all of the old cordiality, perhaps, but still they had by no means quarreled. Mr. Greeley wrote often to Mr. Weed, in the old way, and he and his family were visitors at Mr. Weed’s house. Indeed—though that seems impossible—Mr. Greeley stopped at Mr. Weed’s house, in Albany, on his way West, before the Chicago convention, and made a friendly visit of a day or so, leaving the impression that he was going to support Mr. Seward when he reached Chicago.



In March Mr. Wood met Mr. Seward in Washington, and reiterated his fears in connection with the accumulation of candidates. "Mr. Lincoln was brought to New York to divide your strength," he said. But Mr. Seward was not disconcerted by these warnings.

Less than a fortnight afterwards Mr. Wood was at the Astor House, where he again met Mr. Weed and Mr. Seward. Sunday afternoon Mr. Greeley visited the hotel and passing through one of the corridors met Mr. Wood, with whom he began conversation.

"We shan't nominate Seward," said Mr. Greeley, "we'll take some more conservative man, like Pitt Fessenden or Bates." Immediately afterwards Mr. Wood went to Mr. Seward's room. "Greeley has just been here with Weed," said Mr. Seward. "Weed brought him up here. You were wrong in what you said to me at Washington about Greeley; he is all right." "No, I was not wrong," insisted Mr. Wood. "Greeley is cheating you. He will go to Chicago and work against you." At this Mr. Seward smiled. "My dear Wood," said he, "your zeal sometimes gets a little the better of your judgment."

Mr. Greeley reached Chicago before Mr. Weed. His disaffection was at once communicated to Lincoln, Bates, and Chase men, who magnified its importance. Flyers reading, "Greeley at the Tremont: Weed at the Richmond House," flooded the city. Rumors were started that there was a break in the New York delegation. But streets and hotels were crowded with enthusiastic friends of Seward, and even his opponents did not appear to believe that he could be defeated. "The conviction is," telegraphed Mr. Greeley himself on the 17th of May, "that the opposition to Governor Seward cannot be concentrated on any other candidate, and that he will be nominated." This despatch appeared in the New York "Tribune" the day the final result was reached.

On his way back to New York Mr. Raymond visited Governor Seward, at Auburn, where he was found busily and happily engaged in directing improvements upon his residence. It would be absurd to say that Mr. Seward did not feel his defeat. He was human, like other men, and felt it deeply; but his disappointment was not of a morbid character.

[GOVERNOR SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

AUBURN, *May 18, 1860.*

MY DEAR WEED, — You have my unbounded gratitude for this last as for a whole life of efforts in my behalf.

I wish that I were sure that your sense of disappointment is as light as my own. It ought to be equally so, if we have been equally thoughtful and zealous for friends, party, and country. I know not what has been left undone that could have been done, or done that ought to be regretted.

You see that I am not expecting you to stop here on your way home, although Mrs. Seward and I have hoped that Harriet might stay with us a day or two. Ever faithfully yours, WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

AUBURN, *May 24, 1860.*

MY DEAR WEED, — I hardly expect to find you at Albany on my way to Washington next week, and therefore I write what is most needful to be said.

Your letter from Davenport is kind and generous; I need not say satisfactory. I was prepared for what happened, for I had breasted the demoralization at Washington, and apprehended its success more than I was willing to confess, lest it might seem unworthy of me.

Of the manner in which it was effected, I need only say that I know enough when I know who my friends were, and how generously, faithfully, and devotedly they acted.

Of the future I speak with decision, because I had anticipated these developments, and considered the consequences thoughtfully. Private life, as soon as I can reach it without grieving or embarrassing my friends, will be welcome to me. It will come the 4th of next March in my case, and I am not unprepared.

To have friends, troops of friends, in position, or expecting to be, crowded and pressed by a new combination, seems not more dangerous to the Republican party than hateful to you and me. What is to be done with and for them?

In that line of action I always was useless, and now shall be more so than ever. You are at the head of these friends. Shall you remain here or go to Europe? My best sympathies for yourself advise the latter. My concern for them and our great cause would make me hesitate, even if I did not think that egotism and ambition on the part of the chief leader of the late movement, now unavoidably for a time the leader of the Republican party, will, in six months, bring everything to a dead stand, and that you may then be able to save all. But it is too early to speculate yet with any confidence. I will meet you in New York or Albany, at any time you may designate.

Faithfully and gratefully, yours always, WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Mr. Weed was for a time completely unnerved by the result at Chicago. He even shed tears over the defeat of his old friend, — as who would not over the defeat of a friend who, under all the circumstances, could write such letters as those just given? With a few companions — his daughter Harriet, Mrs. Welles and daughter, Mr. Julius Wood, and others — he started for Iowa, to visit a tract of land which had stood in his name for several years, but upon which his eyes had never rested. Returning east, after a few days, he accepted a cordial invitation to visit Mr. Lincoln, and a short stop was made at Springfield for that purpose.

In conversation with Mr. Raymond at Auburn, Governor Seward called attention to the fact that he had been making large drafts upon a constitution not over hardy, and that he began to long for seclusion and retirement. In response to an invitation to address a ratification meeting in New York, he sent a letter warmly indorsing the Chicago nominations, and expressing his earnest belief and ardent hope that Lincoln and Hamlin would be elected.

On the 22d of May Mr. Raymond wrote a letter to his New York paper describing Mr. Seward's country-seat, and the affectionate regard in which he was held by the people of Western New York. Mr. Raymond declared that there was no possibility that Seward would accept a place under the new administration, in case the Republican ticket should be successful.

On the day that Mr. Raymond's letter was written Mr. Greeley made a speech in New York, which he began as follows: "The past is dead. Let the dead past bury it, and let its mourners, if they will, go about the streets."

This speech was commented upon by Mr. Weed, who had resumed his post at Albany. "The mourners,' to whom Mr. Greeley alludes," he wrote, "constitute the rank and file, as well as the intelligence and patriotism of nearly every Republican state in the Union. In the strongest and most trustworthy of such states they are in the majority. Is it, then, in good temper to rebuke thus an army of Republican soldiers who have heretofore done, and who will hereafter do their whole duty, when they manifest no unmanly emotion in regard for the future of the chieftain who has led them through so many conflicts to so many triumphs?"

“Governor Seward had a strong and peculiar claim to the highest reward which Republicans could bestow. His whole term of service in the United States Senate has been signalized by toils and sacrifices, amid rancor and persecution, political and social, such as no other statesman in this country has ever experienced. His fidelity to freedom in the darkest hours, his boldness in exposing and denouncing misgovernment on all occasions, his prompt resistance to aggression and usurpation, his enlightened advocacy of all right measures, with his searching exposition of misrule and outrage, have taxed to the utmost all the faculties of his great mind. Regardless of the power of an insolent administration, and in the face of threatening senators, he has stood up in his place, and dared to do whatever each crisis has demanded. . . . Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster were sustained by the party which disputed the supremacy of their adversaries, and were generally upheld by a vote of the majority of the Senate, but Governor Seward during his twelve years at Washington has worn a crown of thorns. . . .

“We did not know, until recently so informed by one of the ‘Tribune’ editors, that Mr. Greeley had given Governor Seward formal notice of his hostility. It may be that his opposition to Governor Seward was fair and right. We do not say that it was unjust. We do say that, in our judgment, it should have been avowed. Where the feeling of animosity was so strong in Mr. Greeley as to lead him to exclaim, when Mr. Lincoln was nominated, ‘Now I am even with Governor Seward,’ and, after cool reflection, to utter such sentiments as he does in the present speech, it seems to us that his opposition should have been declared. . . . But for this neither Mr. Lincoln nor his immediate friends are in any way responsible. His name was legitimately presented. His nomination was honorably secured. It was the only name upon which all the elements of opposition to Governor Seward could have been united. And it is a fortunate circumstance that it is the name of a true man, and that no personal disappointments, however severe, release Republicans from their obligation to the cause and to the country. We can support Lincoln and Hamlin as cheerfully, and we shall support them as zealously, as we should have supported the candidate whom New York would have delighted to honor.”

Mr. Greeley left Chicago as promptly as Mr. Weed. His

admissions immediately after the convention adjourned show that he felt that his opposition was the main cause of Governor Seward's defeat. Such was also the impression of Andrew B. Dickinson, of New York, when he met Mr. Greeley in the rotunda of the Tremont House on his way to the cars. "Bray" Dickinson was not a man to mince words, and when he then and there confronted Mr. Greeley, charging him with the basest ingratitude, the air was fairly blue with vituperation. "I never saw a man get such an awful dressing," says an eye-witness of the affair. "Greeley could n't get a word in edgewise." He returned to New York immediately, and soon wrote an article in which he took the ground that it was through no fault of his that Governor Seward was defeated. He "had resolved," he said "to avoid this convention, for obvious reasons." But he had been "induced" to go, in order to act for an Oregon absentee, and had favored the nomination of Mr. Bates, whom he still regarded as a "stronger candidate than Mr. Lincoln." The defeat of Mr. Seward he ascribed to politicians in Pennsylvania and Indiana, who thought that those states would be lost if Seward was a presidential candidate.

In reply to Mr. Greeley, Mr. Raymond wrote a long article, referring to the inside history of the convention. His review of Mr. Greeley's connection with the Seward canvass was a scathing piece of satire. It is so interwoven with the course of this narrative that without it this volume would be incomplete.

I observe that to-day's "Tribune" [wrote Mr. Raymond] contains a long personal explanation from Mr. Greeley of the part which he took in the action of the Chicago convention. It is never easy for a public man to be the historian of his own exploits. If he be a vain man, he will exaggerate his personal influence; if he be an over-modest one, he will underrate it. It is scarcely necessary to say that Mr. Greeley has fallen into the latter mistake.

With the generosity which belongs to his nature, and which a feeling not unlike remorse may have stimulated into unwonted activity, he awards to others the credit which belongs transcendently to himself. The main work of the Chicago convention was the defeat of Governor Seward, — that was the only specific and distinct object towards which its conscious efforts were directed. The nomination which it finally made was purely an accident, decided far more by the shouts and applause of the vast concourse which dominated the con-

vention, than by any direct labors of any of the delegates. The great point aimed at was Mr. Seward's defeat; and in that endeavor Mr. Greeley labored harder, and did tenfold more, than the whole family of Blairs, together with all the gubernatorial candidates, to whom he modestly hands over the honors of the effective campaign.

Mr. Greeley had special qualifications, as well as a special love, for this task, to which none of the others could lay any claim. For twenty years he had been sustaining the political principles and vindicating the political conduct of Mr. Seward through the columns of the most influential political newspaper in the country. He had infused into the popular mind, especially throughout the Western States, the most profound and thorough devotion to the anti-slavery sentiments which had given character to Mr. Seward's public career. He had vindicated his opinions upon naturalization, and upon the organization of the Know Nothing party, from the assaults made upon them; he had urged his reelection to the Senate in the face of all the sentiments which had made him obnoxious to a portion of his constituents; he had gone far beyond him in expressions of hostility to slavery, in palliation of armed attempts for its overthrow, and in assaults upon that clause of the Constitution which requires the surrender of fugitive slaves; and he was known to have been for more than twenty years his personal friend and political supporter.

These things gave him a hold upon the Republican sentiment of the country, and a weight of authority in everything relating to Governor Seward, to which neither "old Blair of the 'Globe,'" as Mr. Greeley styles him, nor both his sons, could for a moment lay claim. His voice was potential precisely where Governor Seward was strongest, — because it was supposed to be that of a friend, strong in his personal attachment and devotion, and driven into opposition on this occasion solely by the despairing conviction that the welfare of the country and the triumph of the Republican cause demanded the sacrifice. For more than six months, through the columns of the "Tribune," Mr. Greeley had been preparing the way for this consummation. Doubts of Mr. Seward's popular strength, — insinuated, rather than openly uttered, — exaggerations of local prejudice and animosity against him; hints that parties and men hostile to him and to the Republican organization must be conciliated and their support secured; and a new-born zeal for nationalizing the party by consulting the slave-holding states in regard to the nomination, had filled the public mind with a distrust which had already done much to demoralize the Republican party, and prepare the minds of its delegates in convention for the personal representations and appeals by which these agencies were followed up. Mr. Greeley was in Chicago several days before the meeting of the

convention, and he devoted every hour of the interval to the most steady and relentless prosecution of the main business which took him thither, — the defeat of Governor Seward. He labored personally with delegates as they arrived, commending himself always to their confidence by professions of regard and the most zealous friendship for Governor Seward, but presenting defeat, even in New York, as the inevitable result of his nomination.

Mr. Greeley was largely indebted to the forbearance of those upon whom he was waging this warfare for the means of making it effectual. While it was known to some of them that nearly six years ago — in November, 1854 — he had privately, but distinctly, repudiated all further political friendship for and alliance with Governor Seward, and menaced him with his hostility whenever it could be made most effective, for the avowed reason that Governor Seward had never aided or advised his elevation to office, that he had never recognized his claim to such official promotion, but had tolerated the elevation of men known to be obnoxious to him and who had rendered far less service to the party than he had done; no use was made of this knowledge in quarters where it would have disarmed the deadly effect of his pretended friendship for the man upon whom he was thus deliberately wreaking the long hoarded revenge of a disappointed office-seeker. He was still allowed to represent to the delegations from Vermont, New Hampshire, Ohio, Indiana, and other states known to be in favor of Governor Seward's nomination, that, while he desired it upon the strongest grounds of personal and political friendship, he believed it would be fatal to the success of the cause.

Being thus stimulated by a hatred he had secretly cherished for years, protected by the forbearance of those whom he assailed and strong in the confidence of those upon whom he sought to operate, it is not strange that Mr. Greeley's efforts should have been crowned with success. But it is perfectly safe to say that no other man — certainly no one occupying a position less favorable for such an assault — could possibly have accomplished that result.

We deem it only just to Mr. Greeley thus early to award him the full credit for the main result of the Chicago convention, because his own modesty will prevent his claiming it, — at all events until the new Republican administration shall be in position to distribute its rewards. It is not right that merit so conspicuous should remain so long in the shade. Even the most transcendent services are in danger of being forgotten in the tumult and confusion of a contested election; and we cheerfully tender for Mr. Greeley's use, this record of his deserts, when he may claim at the hands of his new associates that payment for lack of which he has deserted and betrayed his old ones.

I have said above that the final selection of Lincoln as the candidate was a matter of accident. I mean by this that down to the time of taking the first ballot there had been no agreement among the opponents of Seward as to the candidate upon whom they should unite. The first distinct impression in Lincoln's favor was made by the tremendous applause which arose from the ten thousand persons congregated in the wigwam, upon the presentation of his name as a candidate, — and by the echo it received from the still larger gathering in the street outside. The arrangements for the convention were in the hands of Mr. Lincoln's friends, and they had been made with special reference to securing the largest possible concourse of his immediate neighbors and political supporters. It was easy to see that the thundering shouts which greeted every vote given for him impressed what Mr. Greeley calls the "ragged columns forming the opposing host," with the conviction that he was the only man with whom Mr. Seward could be defeated. Vermont, whose delegates would have been peremptorily instructed to vote for Seward if there had been the slightest apprehension on the part of their constituents that they could do otherwise, was the first to catch the contagious impulse; and throughout the second ballot the efforts of other states to resist the current which deluged the convention from without were but partially successful. On the third ballot the outsiders had it all their own way. Upon the first call Lincoln lacked only two and a half votes of a nomination. Ohio was the first to clutch at the honor of deciding the choice, — and thenceforward the only apprehension on the part of delegates seemed to be that they would not be registered on the winning side. The final concentration upon Lincoln was then mainly, in my judgment, a matter of impulse.

After this had been effected, the attitude of the New York delegation was not calculated to inspire confidence in the issue. They changed no votes, joined in no applause, but sat grieved, dejected and almost sullen in their resignation to what had become inevitable. They were pressed to name a candidate for Vice-President, and if they or he would have consented, Preston King would have been nominated by acclamation. But their first act was to declare that New York would not accept the vice-presidency under any circumstances; and their next was to designate Hamlin, of Maine, as their choice, so far as they had any. They came away disposed to do their duty as Republicans in the canvass, but by no means without misgiving as to the issue. They feel relieved, however, of all responsibility. Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, and Indiana have taken upon themselves the main burden of the canvass, and New York will feel that she has done her part, if she succeeds in casting her electoral vote for the nominees of the convention.



Mr. Raymond's letter produced a prodigious impression. Little attention was paid to the implication with which it closed, for neither the attitude of Mr. Seward nor of Mr. Weed sanctioned the threat that New York would be lukewarm in the canvass. What excited astonishment and incredulity was Mr. Raymond's unqualified charge that Mr. Greeley had cut loose from Mr. Seward in 1854; and for the reason that he had not been given office. The general public were disposed to resent this imputation. There was a loud call for evidence, if evidence could be produced, to sustain Mr. Raymond's assertion. "Yes," echoed Mr. Greeley, evidently without due reflection, "let us have the evidence for circulation in each edition of the 'Tribune.'"

Thus came to be published, on the 14th of June, 1860, Mr. Greeley's famous letter dissolving the "firm of Seward, Weed & Greeley," which here follows:—

[MR. GREELEY TO GOVERNOR SEWARD.]

NEW YORK, *Saturday Evening, November 11, 1854.*

GOVERNOR SEWARD.

The election is over, and its results sufficiently ascertained. It seems to me a fitting time to announce to you the dissolution of the political firm of SEWARD, WEED & GREELEY, by the withdrawal of the junior partner, — said withdrawal to take effect on the morning after the first Tuesday in February next. And, as it may seem a great presumption in me to assume that any such firm exists, especially since the public was advised, rather more than a year ago, by an editorial rescript in the "Evening Journal," formally reading me out of the Whig party, that I was esteemed no longer either useful or ornamental in the concern, you will, I am sure, indulge me in some reminiscences which seem to befit the occasion.

I was a poor young printer and editor of a literary journal, — a very active and bitter Whig in a small way, but not seeking to be known out of my own ward committee, — when, after the great political revulsion of 1837, I was one day called to the City Hotel, where two strangers introduced themselves as Thurlow Weed and Lewis Benedict, of Albany. They told me that a cheap campaign paper of a peculiar stamp at Albany had been resolved on, and that I had been selected to edit it. The announcement might well be deemed flattering by one who had never even sought the notice of the great, and who was not known as a partisan writer, and I eagerly embraced their proposals. They asked me to fix my salary for the year; I

named \$1,000, which they agreed to ; and I did the work required to the best of my ability. It was work that made no figure and created no sensation ; but I loved it and did it well. When it was done you were Governor, dispensing offices worth \$3,000 to \$20,000 per year to your friends and compatriots, and I returned to my garret and my crust, and my desperate battle with pecuniary obligations heaped upon me by bad partners in business and the disastrous events of 1837. I believe it did not then occur to me that some of these abundant places might have been offered to me without injustice ; I now think it should have occurred to you. If it did occur to me, I was not the man to ask you for it ; I think that should not have been necessary. I only remember that no friend at Albany inquired as to my pecuniary circumstances ; that your friend (but not mine), Robert C. Wetmore, was one of the chief dispensers of your patronage here : and that such devoted compatriots as A. H. Wells and John Hooks were lifted by you out of pauperism into independence, as I am glad I was not ; and yet an inquiry from you as to my needs and means at that time would have been timely, and held ever in grateful remembrance.

In the Harrison campaign of 1840 I was again designated to edit a campaign paper. I published it as well, and ought to have made something by it, in spite of its extremely low price ; my extreme poverty was the main reason why I did not. It compelled me to hire press-work, mailing, etc., done by the job, and high charges for extra work nearly ate me up. At the close I was still without property and in debt, but this paper had rather improved my position.

Now came the great scramble of the swell mob of coon minstrels and cider suckers at Washington — I not being counted in. Several regiments of them went on from this city ; but no one of the whole crowd — though I say it who should not — had done so much toward General Harrison's nomination and election as yours respectfully. I asked nothing, expected nothing ; *but you*, Governor Seward, *ought to have asked that I be Postmaster of New York*. Your asking would have been in vain ; but it would have been an act of grace neither wasted nor undeserved.

I soon after started the "Tribune," because I was urged to do so by certain of your friends, and because such a paper was needed here. I was promised certain pecuniary aid in so doing ; it might have been given me without cost or risk to any one. All I ever had was a loan by piecemeal of \$1,000, from James Coggeshall. God bless his honored memory ! I did not ask for this, and I think it is the one sole case in which I ever received a pecuniary favor from a political associate. I am very thankful that he did not die till it was fully repaid.

And let me here honor one grateful recollection. When the Whig

party under your rule had offices to give, my name was never thought of; but when in '42-'43, we were hopelessly out of power, I was honored with the nomination for state printer. When we came again to have a state printer to elect, as well as nominate, the place went to Weed, as it ought. Yet it was worth something to know that there was once a time when it was not deemed too great a sacrifice to recognize me as belonging to your household. If a new office had not since been erected on purpose to give its valuable patronage to H. J. Raymond and enable St. John to show forth his "Times" as the organ of the Whig state administration, I should have been still more grateful.

In 1848 your star again rose, and my warmest hopes were realized in your election to the Senate. I was no longer needy, and had no more claim than desire to be recognized by General Taylor. I think I had some claim to forbearance from you. What I received thereupon was a most humiliating lecture in the shape of a decision in the libel case of Redfield and Pringle, and an obligation to publish it in my own and the other journal of our supposed firm. I thought and still think this lecture needlessly cruel and mortifying. The plaintiffs, after using my columns to the extent of their needs or desires, stopped writing and called on me for the name of their assailant. I proffered it to them — a thoroughly responsible name. They refused to accept it unless it should prove to be one of the four or five first men in Batavia! — when they had known from the first who it was, and that it was neither of them. They would not accept that which they had demanded; they sued me instead for money, and money you were at liberty to give to them to their heart's content. I do not think you *were* at liberty to humiliate me in the eyes of my own and your<sup>1</sup> public as you did. I think you exalted your own judicial sternness and fearlessness unduly at my expense. I think you had a better occasion for the display of these qualities when Webb threw himself entirely upon you for a pardon which he had done all a man could do to demerit. (His paper is paying you for it now.)

I have publicly set forth my view of your and our duty with respect to fusion, Nebraska, and party designations. I will not repeat any of that. I have referred also to Weed's reading me out of the Whig party — my crime being, in this as in some other things, that of doing to-day what more politic persons will not be ready to do till to-morrow.

<sup>1</sup> If I am not mistaken, this judgment is the only speech, letter, or document addressed to the public in which you ever recognized my existence. I hope I may not go down to posterity as embalmed therein. — H. G.

Let me speak of the late canvass. I was once sent to Congress for ninety days merely to enable Jim Brooks to secure a seat therein for four years. *I think I never hinted to any human being that I would have liked to be put forward for any place.* But James W. White (you hardly know how good and true a man he is) started my name for Congress, and Brooks's packed delegation thought I could help him through; so I was put on behind him. But this last spring, after the Nebraska question had created a new state of things at the North, one or two personal friends, of no political consideration, suggested my name as a candidate for Governor, and I did not discourage them. Soon, the persons who were afterward mainly instrumental in nominating Clark came about me, and asked if I could secure the Know Nothing vote. I told them I neither could nor would touch it; on the contrary, I loathed and repelled it. Thereupon they turned upon Clark.

I said nothing, did nothing. A hundred people asked me who should be run for Governor. I sometimes indicated Patterson; I never hinted at my own name. But by and by Weed came down, and called me to him, to tell me why he could not support me for Governor. (I had never asked nor counted on his support.)

I am sure Weed did not mean to humiliate me; but he did it. The upshot of his discourse (very cautiously stated) was this: If I were a candidate for Governor, I should beat not myself only, but you. Perhaps that was true. But as I had in no manner solicited his or your support, I thought this might have been said to my friends rather than to me. I suspect it is true that I could not have been elected Governor as a Whig. But had he and you been favorable, there would have been a party in the State ere this which could and would have elected me to *any* post, without injuring itself or endangering your reëlection.

It was in vain that I urged that I had in no manner asked a nomination. At length I was nettled by his language — well intended, but *very* cutting as addressed by him to me — to say, in substance, “Well, then, make Patterson Governor, and try my name for Lieutenant. To lose this place is a matter of no importance; and we can see whether I am really so odious.”

I should have hated to serve as Lieutenant-Governor, but I should have gloried in running for the post. I want to have my enemies all upon me at once; I am tired of fighting them piecemeal. And though I should have been beaten in the canvass, I know that my running would have helped the ticket, and helped my paper.

It was thought best to let the matter take another course. No other name could have been put on the ticket so bitterly humbling to me as

that which was selected. The nomination was given to Raymond; the fight left to me. And, Governor Seward, *I have made it*, though it be conceited in me to say so. What little fight there has been, I have stirred up. Even Weed has not been (I speak of his paper) hearty in this contest, while the journal of the Whig Lieutenant-Governor has taken care of its own interests and let the canvass take care of itself, as it early declared it would do. That journal has (because of its milk-and-water course) some twenty thousand subscribers in this city and its suburbs, and of these twenty thousand, I venture to say more voted for Ullmann and Scroggs than for Clark and Raymond; the "Tribune" (also because of its character) has but eight thousand subscribers within the same radius, and I venture to say that of its habitual readers, nine tenths voted for Clark and Raymond, — very few for Ullmann and Scroggs. I had to bear the brunt of the contest, and take a terrible responsibility in order to prevent the Whigs uniting upon James W. Barker in order to defeat Fernando Wood. Had Barker been elected here, neither you nor I could walk these streets without being hooted, and Know Nothingism would have swept like a prairie fire. I stopped Barker's election at the cost of incurring the deadliest enmity of the defeated gang; and I have been rebuked for it by the Lieutenant-Governor's paper. At the critical moment, he came out against John Wheeler in favor of Charles H. Marshall (who would have been your deadliest enemy in the House), and even your Colonel-General's paper, which was even with me in insisting that Wheeler should be returned, wheeled about at the last moment, and went in for Marshall, — the "Tribune" alone clinging to Wheeler to the last. I rejoice that they who turned so suddenly were not able to turn all their readers.

Governor Seward, I know that some of your most cherished friends think me a great obstacle to your advancement; that John Schoolcraft, for one, insists that you and Weed should not be identified with me. I trust, after a time, you will not be. I trust I shall never be found in opposition to you; I have no farther wish than to glide out of the newspaper world as quietly and as speedily as possible, join my family in Europe, and if possible stay there quite a time — long enough to cool my fevered brain and renovate my overtasked energies. All I ask is that we shall be counted even on the morning after the first Tuesday in February, as aforesaid, and that I may thereafter take such course as seems best without reference to the past.

You have done me acts of valued kindness in the line of your profession; let me close with the assurance that these will ever be gratefully remembered by

Yours,

HORACE GREELEY.

“The third member of the firm,” says an editorial writer,<sup>1</sup> “remained to be heard from. Thurlow Weed was beaten at Chicago, but it cannot be said that he was outgeneraled. There was no other person on the ground who assumed to rank as a General. There were captains in plenty, but there was no one accustomed to command a party, and no one who had a tithe of his ability to deal with masses of men and steer them to go his way. . . . Mr. Greeley’s letter did not remain unnoticed by Mr. Weed. . . . His reply was so dignified, so truthful, so severe, and withal so patriotic, — it stands in such contrast with the furious self-seeking of Mr. Greeley, that it cannot be read now without giving the impression that the man who could write it, while still bearing the burden of a Waterloo defeat, possessed elements of real greatness.”

There are some things in this letter requiring explanation [Mr. Weed wrote] — all things in it, indeed, are susceptible of explanations consistent with Governor Seward’s full appreciation of Mr. Greeley’s friendship and services. The letter was evidently written under a morbid state of feeling, and it is less a matter of surprise that such a letter was thus written, than that its writer should not only cherish the ill-will that prompted it for six years, but allow it to influence his action upon a question which concerns his party and his country.

Mr. Greeley’s first complaint is that this journal, in an “editorial rescript formally read him [me] out of the Whig party.” Now here is the “editorial rescript formally reading” Mr. Greeley out of the Whig party.

[From the “Evening Journal” of September 6, 1853.]

The “Tribune” defines its position in reference to the approaching election. Regarding the “Maine law” as a question of paramount importance, it will support members of the legislature friendly to its passage, irrespective of party. For state officers it will support such men as it deems competent and trustworthy, irrespective also of party, and without regard to the “Maine law.” In a word, it avows itself, for the present, if not forever, an independent journal (it was pretty much so always), discarding party usages, mandates, and platforms.

We regret to lose, in the “Tribune,” an old, able, and efficient colaborer in the Whig vineyard. But when carried away by its convictions of duty to other, and, in its judgment, higher and more beneficent objects, we have as little right as inclination to complain. The “Tribune” takes with it, wherever it goes, an indomitable and powerful pen, a devoted, a noble, and an unselfish zeal. Its senior editor evidently supposes himself permanently

<sup>1</sup> In the *New York Evening Post*, November 27, 1882.

divorced from the Whig party, but we shall be disappointed if, after a year or two's sturdy pulling at the oar of reform, he does not return to his long-cherished belief that great and beneficent aims must continue, as they commenced, to be wrought out through Whig instrumentalities.

But we only intended to say that the "Tribune" openly and frankly avows its intention and policy; and that in things about which we cannot agree, we can and will disagree as friends.

Pray read this article again, if its purpose and import be not clearly understood! At the time it appeared, the "Tribune" was under high-pressure "Maine law" speed. That question, in Mr. Greeley's view, was paramount to all others. It was the "Tribune's" "higher law." Mr. Greeley had given warning in his paper that he should support "Maine law" candidates for the legislature, and for state offices, regardless of their political or party principles and character. And this, too, when Senators to be elected had to choose a Senator in Congress. But instead of "reading" Mr. Greeley "out of the Whig party," it will be seen that after Mr. Greeley had read himself out of the party by discarding "party usages, mandates, and platforms," the "Evening Journal," in the language and spirit of friendship, predicted just what happened, namely, that, in due time, Mr. Greeley would "return to his long-cherished belief, that great and beneficent aims must continue, as they commenced, to be wrought out through Whig instrumentalities."

We submit, even to Mr. Greeley himself, whether there is one word or thought in the article to which he referred justifying his accusation that he had been "read out of the Whig party" by the "Evening Journal."

In December, 1837, when we sought the acquaintance and coöperation of Mr. Greeley, we were, like him, a "poor printer," working as hard as he worked. We had then been sole editor, reporter, news collector, "remarkable accident," "horrid murder," "items" man, etc., etc., for seven years, at a salary of \$750, \$1,000, \$1,250, and \$1,500. We had also been working hard, for poor pay, as an editor and politician, for the twelve years preceding 1830. We stood, therefore, on the same footing with Mr. Greeley when the partnership was formed. We knew that Mr. Greeley was much abler, more indomitably industrious, and, as we believed, a better man in all respects. We foresaw for him a brilliant future; and, if we had not started with utterly erroneous views of his objects, we do not believe that our relations would have jarred. We believed him indifferent alike to the temptations of money and office, desiring only to become both "useful" and "ornamental," as the editor of a patriotic, enlightened, leading, and influential public journal. For years, therefore, we placed

Horace Greeley far above the "swell-mob" of office-seekers, for whom, in his letter, he expresses so much contempt. Had Governor Seward known, in 1838, that Mr. Greeley coveted an inspectorship, he certainly would have received it. Indeed, if our memory be not at fault, Mr. Greeley was offered the clerkship of the Assembly in 1838. It was certainly pressed upon us, and though at that time, like Mr. Greeley, desperately poor, it was declined.

We cannot think that Mr. Greeley's political friends, after the "Tribune" was under way, knew that he needed the "pecuniary aid" which had been promised. When, about that period, we suggested to him (after consulting some of the board) that the printing of the common council might be obtained, he refused to have anything to do with it.

In relation to the state printing, Mr. Greeley knows that there never was a day when, if he had chosen to come to Albany, he might not have taken whatever interest he pleased in the "Journal" and its state printing. But he wisely regarded his position in New York, and the future of the "Tribune," as far more desirable.

For the "creation of the new office for the 'Times'" Mr. Greeley knows perfectly well that Governor Seward was in no manner responsible.

That Mr. Greeley should make the adjustment of the libel suit of Messrs. Redfield and Pringle against the "Tribune" a ground of accusation against Governor Seward is matter of astonishment. Governor Seward undertook the settlement of that suit as the friend of Mr. Greeley, at a time when a systematic effort was being made to destroy both the "Tribune" and "Journal" by prosecutions for libel. We were literally plastered over with writs, declarations, etc. There were at least two judges of the supreme court in the State, on whom plaintiffs were at liberty to count for verdicts. Governor Seward tendered his professional services to Mr. Greeley, and in the case referred to, as in others, foiled the adversary. For such service this seems a strange requital. Less fortunate than the "Tribune," it cost the "Journal" over \$8,000 to reach a point in legal proceedings that enabled a defendant in a libel suit to give the truth in evidence.

It was by no fault or neglect or wish of Governor Seward that Mr. Greeley served but "ninety days in Congress." Nor will we say what others have said, that his Congressional *début* was a failure. There were other reasons, and this seems a fitting occasion to state them. Mr. Greeley's "isms" were in his way at conventions. The sharp points and rough edges of the "Tribune" rendered him unacceptable to those who nominate candidates. This was more so formerly than at present, for most of the rampant reforms to which the



"Tribune" was devoted have subsided. We had no sympathy with, and little respect for, a constituency that preferred "Jim" Brooks to Horace Greeley.

Nearly forty years of experience leaves us in some doubt whether, with political friends, an open, frank, and truthful, or a cautious, calculating, non-committal course is not the right, but the easiest and most politic. The former, which we have chosen, has made us much trouble and many enemies. Few candidates are able to bear the truth, or to believe that the friend who utters it is truly one.

In 1854 the "Tribune," through years of earnest effort, had educated the people up to the point of demanding a "Maine law" candidate for Governor. But its followers would not accept their chief reformer! It was evident that the state convention was to be largely influenced by "Maine law" and "Choctaw" Know-Nothing delegates. It was equally evident that Mr. Greeley could neither be nominated nor elected. Hence the conference to which he refers. We found, as on two other occasions during thirty years, our state convention impracticable. We submitted the names of Lieutenant-Governor Patterson and Judge Harris (both temperance men in faith and practice) as candidates for Governor, coupled with that of Mr. Greeley for Lieutenant-Governor. But the "Maine law" men would have none of these, preferring Myron H. Clark (who used up the raw material of temperance), qualified by H. J. Raymond for Lieutenant-Governor.

What Mr. Greeley says of the relative zeal and efficiency of the "Tribune" and "Times," and of our own feelings in that contest, is true. We did our duty, but with less of enthusiasm than when we were supporting either Granger, Seward, Bradish, Hunt, Fish, King, or Morgan for Governor.

One word in relation to the supposed "political firm." Mr. Greeley brought into it his full quota of capital. But were there no beneficial results, no accruing advantages, to himself? Did he not attain, in the sixteen years, a high position, world-wide reputation, and an ample fortune? Admit, as we do, that he is not as wealthy as we wish he was, it is not because the "Tribune" has not made his fortune, but because he did not keep it, — because it went, as other people's money goes, to friends, to pay indorsements, and in bad investments.

We had both been liberally, nay, generously, sustained by our party. Mr. Greeley differs with us in regarding patrons of newspapers as conferring favors. In giving them the worth of their money, he holds that the account is balanced. We, on the other hand, have ever held the relation of newspaper editor and subscriber as one of fraternity. Viewed in this aspect, the editors of the "Tribune" and

"Evening Journal" have manifold reasons for cherishing grateful recollections of the liberal and abiding confidence and patronage of their party and friends.

In conclusion, we cannot withhold an expression of sincere regret that this letter has been called out. After remaining six years in "blissful ignorance" of its contents, we should have preferred to have ever remained so. It jars harshly upon cherished memories. It destroys ideals of disinterestedness and generosity which relieved political life from so much that is selfish, sordid, and rapacious.

"The first intimation of Mr. Greeley's desire to go before the people for a representative office," wrote Mr. Weed, in 1871, "was received in 1846, when he went to Albany and in a hesitating manner inquired if I thought he could be nominated in some of our strong Whig counties as a delegate to the state constitutional convention, adding that he thought he could be useful in such a body. I replied that most of the counties had already made their nominations, and expressed my regret that he had not made the suggestion to me at an earlier day. He said that he would have done so if he had not expected a nomination from Chautauqua, where some of his relatives resided. In looking about for an opening, Washington County seemed to be the most likely to act upon the suggestion; but on closer examination we found that its Whig convention would meet the next day. An effort to place Mr. Greeley in nomination from Delaware County was unsuccessful, the nominees having been agreed on before our messengers reached Delhi. Simultaneously we sent an influential friend to New Scotland, in Albany County, to induce the delegates from that town, in which a candidate was to be located, to accept Mr. Greeley. But they had already agreed on Dr. Rainsford, and with that failure the project was abandoned. If Mr. Greeley had made his wishes known two or three weeks earlier, they would have been gratified, although there had been, I believe, but two precedents in the history of our State. . . .

"On two or three subsequent occasions Mr. Greeley indicated a willingness to accept nominations, but did not seem anxious. If the same strong passion for office which subsequently became apparent existed then, I had no knowledge or suspicion of it. I thought that his ambition and pride looked to the establishment of a widely-circulating and influential journal, through the columns of which he could render great and good service to the

country and to the people. I knew how able, how industrious, how virtuous, and how unselfish he was. I knew that his sympathies were with the oppressed and downtrodden. I believed that his devotion to the rights, the interests, the elevation, and the prosperity of the laboring, the agricultural, and the manufacturing classes would win for him a name as bright and fame as enduring as that of Franklin. But I did not then know or dream that a passion so subdued and under control would in after years become absorbing and inextinguishable.

“The high estimate I formed of Mr. Greeley’s character at the outset of our acquaintance was strengthened by all I saw and knew of him for the ensuing twelve years. I invested him with more good qualities than generally belong to the best of our public men. His great ability and greater industry seemed destined to work out enlightened and beneficent purposes. He seemed also to work unselfishly, finding his reward in the consciousness of doing good. His happiness seemed to consist in laboring diligently for his country and his race. He had no vices great or small, no recreations, and few amusements. I do not remember in all our intercourse to have heard him speak of his boy-life, of ball-playing, of kites, of marbles, of tops, etc.; and I incline to the belief that he was a stranger to all or nearly all of these juvenile joys. Indeed, it is by no means certain that his case was not the exception to a rule which is supposed to be universal, that he was not a grown-up man who had never played ‘High, Low, Jack and the Game.’

“But viewed in the light which subsequent years and events shed upon his character and conduct, my earlier impressions must have been erroneous, or the Horace Greeley of 1840 was not the Horace Greeley of a later day. It is certain that in many respects his views underwent marked changes. For example: Up to and for several years after 1840 Mr. Greeley had no patience with and could not endure the importunity of office-seekers. His greatest annoyance after a successful election was that ‘office-beggars’ (as he stigmatized them) bored him for letters to governors and presidents. The idea of men’s seeking office as a reward for political service disgusted him. In later years, however, he not only became tolerant of office-seekers, but some of the most impudent and worthless of the tribe entrenched themselves strongly in his confidence and favor.

It is a fact equally mortifying and instructive, that Mr. Greeley during the last ten years of his life was the dupe and victim of political adventurers, men so universally discredited that their shams would pass current with nobody else. And yet, while sufficiently distrustful of others, Mr. Greeley's confidence in sharpers involved him in frequent political entanglements and subjected him to serious pecuniary losses. . . .

"In looking back through a vista of nearly forty years, I find myself seriously perplexed in endeavoring to understand Mr. Greeley's true character. While all I saw and knew of him in early life inspired feelings of confidence and admiration, there was very much in later years to occasion surprise and regret. I can account for this change, if I am right in assuming that his character did so change, only by attributing it to a cause which has worked men's downfall in all ages of the world. Ambition, while under the subjection of reason, is laudable; but when it breaks bounds and o'erleaps itself, the consequences are disastrous."

"The greatest politician this country ever knew," writes George E. Baker, "maintained the second place in the great 'political firm.' Mr. Weed assumed control of all mere party affairs. With these Mr. Seward had nothing to do. He frequently differed with Mr. Weed, but when no principle was involved, submitted to Weed's judgment. . . . While the 'firm' existed, the senior and junior members acquiesced in the nominations made by Mr. Weed. Indeed, it is difficult to determine which of the two partners more highly appreciated the genius in this particular line of the 'Dictator.' . . . Mr. Greeley's letters show how high an estimate he placed upon Mr. Weed's abilities as a politician and statesman. . . . President Lincoln, equally with Mr. Seward, looked to Mr. Weed for counsel, when, as often during the war, he met with difficulties hard to surmount. It was Mr. Lincoln's habit at such times to telegraph Mr. Weed to come to Washington from Albany or New York, perhaps at an hour's notice. He often spent the day with the President, coming and returning by night, regardless of his age and infirmities. His services in these exigencies were often invaluable. . . .

"At length Mr. Greeley began to feel that he was not an equal member in 'the firm of Seward, Weed & Greeley.' He

chafed under the domineering influence of Mr. Weed, who, never seeking office himself, did not, until too late, discover Mr. Greeley's consuming desire for political preferment. Mr. Weed knew that as a politician Mr. Greeley would prove a failure, while as an editor his fame would be transcendent and his influence immeasurable. Nevertheless, in 1854, Mr. Greeley withdrew from the 'firm.' His famous letter to Governor Seward was regarded as but a temporary ebullition of petulance, such as a child might exhibit on being denied some hurtful indulgence. It did not raise a doubt, then, of his fidelity. The event, however, was disastrous to Mr. Greeley, and to some extent disastrous to the cause he loved. Whatever effect it may have had on the fortunes of Mr. Seward, it never provoked from him an unkind word or act. No trace of resentment ever manifested itself in all his after life, — not even after his defeat at Chicago, mainly by Mr. Greeley's efforts."

"It was a great triad," writes Colonel Frederick Morley,<sup>1</sup> referring to the now dismembered "political firm of Seward, Weed & Greeley." "Through all the future of this Republic the vibration of their lives and influence will never cease. In the marvelous era which produced them they did their full share of work, and through a wider freedom and a larger humanity contributed each in his degree to a better age of mankind. The needs and agitations of their times led their common instincts into the same fields of labor, and their abilities, curiously diversified, gave practical results to the methods their wisdom inspired. While others were content to spend their opposition in raging and futile declamation, it was these men, and others of their kind, who taught and organized effective resistance to slavery, and to the cramped conditions which surrounded many of their own race. It is not easy to find in the annals of any nation a stronger or similar combination of forces represented in three individuals, and that it failed to endure the tests of time and circumstance is only another instance in the mournful multitude of proofs of the instability of human alliances. Seward, with his courtly graces, his keen and well-schooled intellect, his cheerful philosophy, his persistent philanthropy, and his broad faith in his kind, was the first, through strange vicissitudes, to find his rest. Greeley followed next,

<sup>1</sup> Formerly editor of the *Detroit Post and Tribune*.

crowning fifty years of almost unequaled toil, in which he 'bulted better than he knew,' with personal disappointments, but an eternal victory, his mistakes atoned by the greatness of his life's purpose, and all his infirmities forgotten in the infinite pathos of his death. And Weed, the senior of both in years, and happier than either in the quiet of his gentle sunset, has rejoined them at last. Whichever the manifold judgment of time may pronounce the greatest, it is certain he was not the least."

## CHAPTER XXII.

1860.

“THE RAIL SPLITTER CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY.”—HIS CANVASS BEGUN IN 1859.—THE ILLINOIS STATE CONVENTION AT DECATUR.—LEONARD SWETT’S RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CHICAGO CONVENTION.—“THE CHANCE LAY IN PENNSYLVANIA.”—MR. WEED AT SPRINGFIELD.—EFFORTS IN NEW YORK.—LETTERS FROM MR. LINCOLN, JUDGE DAVID DAVIS, AND MR. SWETT.

AMONG the earliest supporters of Mr. Lincoln were David Davis, afterwards Judge of the United States Supreme Court and President of the United States Senate, and Leonard Swett, of Chicago, a very able lawyer and politician. They began work early in 1859. An Illinois state convention was to assemble at Decatur on the 10th of May, in that year, and it was arranged that Mr. Lincoln should appear at this meeting, though not as a delegate. Dr. J. G. Holland<sup>1</sup> describes Mr. Lincoln’s dramatic entrance into the hall, while, simultaneously, there were brought upon the stage two old fence-rails inscribed, “The Rail Splitter Candidate for the Presidency, Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois.” No opportunity for “creating popular sentiment” was neglected. At Decatur Judge Davis was chosen a delegate-at-large, and soon afterwards Mr. Lincoln began his “starving tour” through Kansas, Ohio, New York, and New England. “Most of all were the politicians affected,” writes Dr. Holland, “and it is not to be doubted that the impression of that evening [in New York] left them convinced that if Mr. Seward, the man of their choice, should be set aside, as the Republican candidate for the presidency, Mr. Lincoln, the favorite of the West would be abundantly worthy of their support.”

“Of course,” says Mr. Leonard Swett, “the first question was whether or not Mr. Weed, who was confessedly in the leadership of the Seward movement, could carry off the nomination by main strength and on the first ballot. If it should prove

<sup>1</sup> In his *Life of Lincoln*, p. 198.

that he could not, then we had hopes, for we believed Mr. Lincoln could concentrate forces, as against Chase, Cameron, or Bates. The efforts of his friends, therefore, were directed to getting for Mr. Lincoln the strength of these men, after their personal hopes should be abandoned. Everybody who knows politicians knows that what they worship is the god of success. The friends of Mr. Lincoln knew this, and saw their chance in securing, upon the failure of Mr. Seward affirmatively to carry the convention, a great demonstration of strength as between Mr. Lincoln and the other candidates.

“The chance lay in Pennsylvania, which had, as I remember, fifty-four votes. The Seward men were laboring with delegates from that State, and so were friends of Mr. Lincoln, and both were hopeful; but in the small hours of Friday morning, in a room of the Tremont House, two of Mr. Lincoln’s friends and two of Mr. Cameron’s being present, our arguments prevailed, and the Cameron men agreed to come to us on the second ballot. They did so right nobly and gave us forty-eight votes. This, with other accessions, was a blow in the centre which disorganized the forces of our great opponent and revealed the coming man. Thousands in the wigwam catching the inspiration, he was immediately nominated. . . .

“After the joy of the occasion had subsided, and the convention adjourned, a Mr. Humphreys,<sup>1</sup> who was a member of the New York delegation, and who had formerly lived in Bloomington, Ill., came to me and said Mr. Weed was feeling badly at the result, and some of us ought to call upon him. I asked him to go and introduce us; but, because, as I remember, he did not know him personally, he declined, and Judge Davis and I went alone. This was the first time either of us had met him, and I shall always remember the interview.

“Mr. Weed did not talk angrily as to the result, nor did he complain of any one. I remember the substance of his words, as with much feeling, and confessing to the great disappointment of his life, he said, ‘I hoped to make my friend, Mr. Seward, President, and I thought I could serve my country in so doing.’ He was a larger man intellectually than I anticipated, and of finer fibre. There was in him an element of gentleness

<sup>1</sup> There was no gentleman of this name on the New York delegation. Mr. Swett’s friend must have been in Chicago unofficially.



and a large humanity which won me, and I was pleased no less than surprised. We urged upon him the propriety of making Mr. Lincoln's acquaintance before he returned. He was going for some purpose to Iowa, and we finally arranged that he should telegraph us at Bloomington what day he could be in Springfield upon his return, as we had offered, if he would do so, to meet him there and introduce him. We did meet him, according to his despatch, and were present at the interview, which was of a general character, upon the prospects of the campaign and the condition of the country. . . .

“About a month after the election the propriety of consulting Mr. Weed upon the formation of the Cabinet and the general condition of the country, which had begun to assume a threatening aspect, was under discussion. In conclusion, Mr. Lincoln asked me to write a letter to Mr. Weed, saying that he would like to see him, and asking him to come to Springfield for that purpose. I did so, and in a few days he came to Bloomington, and Judge Davis and myself went to Springfield with him. Mr. Seward had already been selected, although, perhaps, no one knew it, and at the opening of the interview, Mr. Lincoln announced that fact. As to the rest of the Cabinet, it was an open question, although some names had been fixed upon, unless substantial objection should arise, and others were being favorably considered. Judge Davis and myself were present, by courtesy; but the substance of the interview was between Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Weed, and the object was to obtain his opinion upon all material questions connected with the opening of the administration. These interviews were protracted through several days, and every possible subject was discussed.

“General Cameron was desirous of being Secretary of the Treasury, and the question of his relations to the Cabinet was considered. This was the only subject upon which Mr. Weed, as it seemed to me, did not speak with entire freedom. He spoke kindly of General Cameron; said that Pennsylvania was entitled to a place in the Cabinet, and conceded that that state would be for Cameron. He thought, however, it would be wiser to give Cameron some other place than the Treasury.

“Mr. Lincoln then suggested Edward Bates and Caleb B. Smith. The selection of Mr. Bates was heartily approved, and

that of Caleb B. Smith assented to. To Mr. Welles and Mr. Blair Mr. Weed made strong opposition. In reference to Mr. Welles, Mr. Lincoln said he had conferred with Mr. Hamlin. I think he had met him in Chicago after the election, and he being a New England man, and New England having large shipping interests, Mr. Lincoln had tendered to him the selection of the Secretary of the Navy. Mr. Hamlin had selected Mr. Welles, and therefore the only question was as to whether he was unfit personally. The result of this was that Mr. Lincoln said he would take several names suggested under advisement, but, as the result shows, he adhered to the original purpose. In reference to Mr. Blair, Mr. Weed insisted if Mr. Lincoln took him into the Cabinet he would regret it. He insisted that the Blair blood was troublesome, and traced evidence of this back to the time of General Jackson. Mr. Lincoln replied that he must have some one from the Border States, and Montgomery Blair seemed to possess more of this element than any other available person, because he lived in Maryland, and Frank, his brother, in Missouri.

“Mr. Weed’s parry was first made with Henry Winter Davis. I thought in this he hoped for more support from Judge Davis than he actually received (he being his cousin), but finally he changed to Mr. Gilmer, of North Carolina, and conditionally succeeded. Mr. Lincoln knew Mr. Gilmer favorably, and the result was that he said if Mr. Weed would go to see Gilmer, who was then in Washington, and there was no doubt of his fidelity, he would appoint him. The secession of North Carolina spoiled this, and Mr. Blair was selected. . . .

“One thing in these interviews impressed me. From the beginning to the end, Mr. Weed did not intimate that he wanted anything, either for himself or for any friend, and made no personal requests of any character whatsoever. It was simply an earnest discussion in regard to the condition of the country and what was for its interests. Both men were remarkable in stature and appearance. Mr. Lincoln was six feet three and a half in height, and Mr. Weed more than six feet. Both had rough, strongly marked features, and both had risen by their own exertions from humble relations to the control of a nation whose destinies they were then shaping. If I but shut my eyes I can recall as if but yesterday those strongly-marked

figures and features photographed on my mind, as they sat in the parlor of Mr. Lincoln's home, opposite each other, anxiously considering the future, and endeavoring to avert the great danger which then began to threaten. . . .

"Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Weed, to use our rough phrase, naturally 'took to each other' from the very day they met, and their relations grew gradually more agreeable and friendly until the day of the former's death. Often, when knotty questions arose, Mr. Lincoln would send for him for consultation, or, stating a case, ask him to arrange or suggest a way in which what he wanted to be done could be done most easily. More than a score of times, I believe, such messages have been sent through me; and while Mr. Weed was a man always wanting political positions for the army of friends who depended on him, and sometimes complained that he did not get his share, he never availed himself of a pinch or necessity to get what otherwise he found difficulty in obtaining. He did what was wanted to be done, or devised what was to be devised, with cheerfulness, never intermingling with such services any complaints or requests, and never demanding political rewards for them afterwards."

"After the convention," once said Mr. Weed, "I was going down the Mississippi River in a steamboat, and was sitting beneath the awning, when a gentleman spoke to me, saying that he was a member of the delegation from Virginia. 'I suppose you expected that we would vote for Seward, and were very much disappointed because so many of us went for Lincoln?' he said to me. 'Yes,' I replied, 'of course I was disappointed; but that is all over now.' 'I should like to explain why we changed,' added the delegate. 'We were informed that Mr. Seward had a very strong anti-Masonic record. If that is not true, we did wrong in changing, for we had no other excuse.' I told him that his information was correct."

No man appreciated Mr. Lincoln more highly when living than Mr. Weed, nor did any one feel more keenly the bereavement which deprived the country of his services. Mr. Greeley and Mr. Bryant were also great admirers of Mr. Lincoln, the latter as early as 1859, and both during and immediately after the canvass of 1860. But in the dark crises of the war, when the great President stood most in need of support, Mr. Greeley

and Mr. Bryant not only had no word of sympathy, but were most unreasonable and exasperating critics ; and, in 1864, when a second term for Mr. Lincoln was proposed, no one surpassed Mr. Bryant in opposition to that suggestion, unless, possibly, Mr. Greeley, who, a month after Mr. Lincoln's renomination, led a movement for the nomination of another Republican candidate.

Often in his life such inconsistencies on the part of contemporaries served to bring out in bold relief Mr. Weed's individuality. He never deserted a principle or a friend.

"I went to the Chicago convention," he writes,<sup>1</sup> "warmly in favor of and confidently expecting the nomination of Governor Seward. That disappointment of long-cherished hopes was a bitter one. I accepted, very reluctantly, an invitation to visit Mr. Lincoln at his residence in Springfield, where, in an interesting conversation, even while smarting under a sense of injustice to Mr. Seward, confidence in Mr. Lincoln's good sense, capacity, and fidelity was inspired. A campaign programme was agreed upon, and returning to Albany, I went to work as zealously and cheerfully as I should have done with Mr. Seward our presidential nominee. Mr. Lincoln's inauguration and the Rebellion occurred simultaneously.

"Events soon proved that the Chicago convention had been wisely, if not providentially guided. The country in its emergency had, what it so greatly needed, the services of two, instead of one, of its greatest and best men. With Lincoln as President and Seward as Secretary of State, the right men were in the right places. In looking back upon that momentous struggle, I am quite sure that the country could not have spared either. And of this Rebellion was so well assured that their taking off by assassination was deliberately arranged by rebel conspirators in Canada. . . . With ample opportunities for studying the character of Abraham Lincoln, I have no hesitation in declaring that his sense of public and private duty and honor was as high and his patriotism as devoted as that of George Washington."

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to the Lincoln Club, of New York, February 12, 1879.

[ABRAHAM LINCOLN TO MR. WEED.]

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., *August 17, 1860.*

MY DEAR SIR, — Yours of the 13th was received this morning. Douglas is managing the Bell element with great adroitness.<sup>1</sup> He had his men in Kentucky to vote for the Bell candidate, producing a result which has badly alarmed and damaged Breckenridge, and at the same time has induced the Bell men to suppose that Bell will certainly be President, if they can keep a few of the Northern States away from us by throwing them to Douglas. But you, better than I, understand all this.

I think there will be the most extraordinary effort ever made to carry New York for Douglas. You and all others who write me from your State think the effort cannot succeed, and I hope you are right. Still, it will require close watching and great efforts on the other side.

Herewith I send you a copy of a letter written at New York, which sufficiently explains itself, and which may or may not give you a valuable hint. You have seen that Bell tickets have been put on the track both here and in Indiana. In both cases the object has been, I think, the same as the Hunt movement in New York — to throw states to Douglas. In our State, we know the thing is engineered by Douglas men, and we do not believe they can make a great deal out of it.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

All eyes were now turning with Mr. Lincoln's upon the State of New York, where the burden of the campaign fell upon Mr. Weed, Governor Morgan, and Governor Seward. At the state convention of 1860, much to the satisfaction of Mr. Weed, Governor Morgan was renominated. He still retained his place as the New York representative on the national committee, and devoted himself with the utmost zeal to the success of the national ticket, Mr. Seward joining cordially in these efforts.

"It seems clear to me," wrote Mr. Seward from Auburn, on the 26th of June, "that it would not be wise to rush in at the beginning of the canvass, and so seem most falsely to fear that I shall be forgotten. Later it may seem that I am wanted for the public interest. Of all this I want to talk to you quietly. Alas, that it must now be only you and I! Schoolcraft has gone."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The "Constitutional Union" party, composed of former "Know Nothings," nominated John Bell, of Tennessee, and Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, for President and Vice-President, on the 19th of May, 1860.

<sup>2</sup> He died of disappointment at Governor Seward's defeat.

I will stand by you so long as you have thought or heart to stand by any one of our good friends. Shall I come down to Albany say on Monday of next week for a night? — or name any day earlier or later.”

The Democratic national committee met on the 9th of August. Vacancies which existed in that body were filled, and business was taken up. A hopeful feeling pervaded the session, and assurances were furnished that a large fund could be raised. One of the reports which came to Mr. Weed, in a letter still extant, was that the writer had seen at Mr. Belmont's office, Mr. John Hardy, secretary of the executive committee, and that it had been intimated, quietly, that the Democrats were to make a tremendous effort to carry New York. Suggestions of fusion with the “Breckenridge folks” were repudiated, as Douglas was felt to be stronger without than with this element.<sup>1</sup>

[LEONARD SWETT TO MR. WEED.]

BLOOMINGTON, *July 4, 1860.*

DEAR SIR, — The faith with which the Democracy of our State follows the foundering fortunes of Douglas passes human comprehension. They went to the Baltimore convention in large numbers, and, so far as we could judge, confident of success. The news of the nomination of Douglas was telegraphed to Chicago at the same time the other nomination was, but the latter was withheld from the interior from Saturday until Monday. The effect was that the Douglas men made very good demonstrations, basing their hopes on the supposed failure of the seceders to unite upon any line of action. Early on Monday came news of the seceders' nomination, which appalled the Democracy. . . . In this State the Breckenridge party will not increase the Buchanan vote of 1858. They have no leaders and no vitality.

There seems to be unusual activity among the Republican masses, although there is not so much order and method as I might wish. Our meetings are the result of independent action by men in the various counties not ordinarily called politicians. While the want of methodical action sometimes brings one meeting in conflict with another, or subjects speakers to unnecessary travel, it shows the real feelings of the people. All our meetings are largely attended, and enthusiastic. Each one is a surprise to every one, and while our opponents are inac-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Breckenridge was nominated for President at Baltimore on the 28th of June, by extremists who seceded from the Democratic national convention at Charleston.

tive, we are acquiring, day by day, accessions to our ranks from the Fillmore and Douglas parties.<sup>1</sup> . . .

What is your opinion of Pennsylvania? Judge Davis and I would go there if we could do good, and if there are reasonable doubts of the result there. Joseph Casey, of Harrisburg, Mr. Cameron's friend, has written us that we ought to come some time before the election. So has a Mr. Lewis, of West Chester. I have heard also from Mr. Sanderson, of Philadelphia, urging us to come and expressing great doubts of Pennsylvania, and no hopes of New Jersey. This is the Sanderson of whom we spoke at Springfield, and all these letters were written before the Baltimore convention. We wish to work at home if the State is safe, but to go, if it is doubtful, and we can do any good.

I should be exceedingly glad to hear from you at any time during the summer. We have not the experience you have, and your views, expressed to me at any time, would have controlling influence. In the mean time, I shall take the liberty to write you quite often, informing you candidly of our prospects, and asking your advice, whenever we are in doubt.

Yours, very truly,

LEONARD SWETT.

[DAVID DAVIS TO MR. WEED.]

BLOOMINGTON, ILL., August 24, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have just got home, having stopped in Indiana for a short time, and hasten to write you.

In my judgment, that State is in a good deal of danger. . . . Colonel R. W. Thompson had done and did do all he could to prevent the formation of a Bell ticket. The old Fillmore men along the Wabash thought as he did, but the southern counties, bordering on Kentucky and influenced by her politicians, were in the majority, and so the electoral ticket was formed. A large portion of the Bell men will vote for Hendricks. They appreciate the importance of the October election, and think that if Lane carries the State, it is a foregone conclusion that Lincoln will get the election. Morehead, of Kentucky, was in Indianapolis, and avowed in his speech that the object of running Bell was to prevent Lincoln's carrying the State. When asked in private what Bell would do if the election was carried into the House, he stated that Republicans would vote for Bell rather than for Breckenridge. Is not that the height of audacity?

*Per contra*: the leaders of the Breckenridge movement desire to crush out Douglass, even if by so doing Lincoln is elected President.

<sup>1</sup> Half of the "Fillmore vote," so-called, was generally conceded to the Democrats.

The mass of the Breckenridge party will vote for Hendricks for Governor; some will vote for Lane; others will not vote at all. We will not, in the October election, make as much out of the Breckenridge men as we will lose by the Bell men.

They believe that with \$10,000 the State can be carried, and that without "foreign aid" they are in trouble. Their organization is not complete for lack of money. Their expenses are heavy. It is difficult to raise enough money to keep campaign speakers in the field. They want a number of speakers, and they have to be paid. The state is poor and the central committee has not raised what they expected. The election may run itself, as it is doing in a great many States, but, depend upon it, without pecuniary aid, there can be neither certainty nor efficiency. Fifteen hundred dollars is the sum total received.<sup>1</sup>

Please read Governor Morgan this portion of my letter, as he was anxious to know the *status* of Indiana. Allow me to congratulate him and yourself on the unanimity and success of your state convention.

Mr. Swett is home from the southern part of his State and is in high feather. Will write you in a day or so.

I trust that you will not forget to look in on Rhode Island speedily.

Most truly yours,

DAVID DAVIS.

P. S. — The Indiana politicians don't want Governor — in that State. The Dutch, from whom we are gaining, don't like him.

[MR. WEED TO MR. LINCOLN.]

ALBANY, *November 3, 1860.*

DEAR SIR, — In a few locations things do not look as well as they did ten days ago. Since writing you last Sunday, the fusion leaders have largely increased their fund, and they are now using money lavishly. This stimulates and to some extent inspires confidence, and all the confederates are at work. Some of our friends are nervous. But I have no fear of the result in this State.

In the city of New York they cannot get more than 25,000 majority without cheating us, of which there is danger.<sup>2</sup> In other cities and in villages their money will help them to several thousand votes, for unfortunately our state committee disbursed their funds too early, and, feeling quite safe, we have been sending money to New Jersey and Delaware that is now needed here. I feel confident, however, that the masses are with us and that there is a certain majority (I have not found leisure to estimate it) ready to give us the State; nor do I believe this purpose can be thwarted.

<sup>1</sup> The state election was only six weeks off when this letter was written.

<sup>2</sup> The majority for Douglas in the city was 29,000.



I send you a letter from one of our best Republicans in Oneida County. Unless the enemy buys us out of Oneida, your majority there will be from 4,500 to 5,000. I fear that money against us will reduce it to 4,000.<sup>1</sup>

Yours truly, THURLOW WEED.

The general result in 1860 was a sweeping Republican victory. Lincoln electors carried all the Free States except New Jersey, where three Douglas electors were chosen, with four for Lincoln. The popular vote for Douglas was 1,375,978, but he received only 12 electoral votes. Breckenridge, with a popular vote of only 845,953, had 72 electoral votes. Bell received a popular vote of 590,631, and 39 electoral votes. Lincoln's popular vote was 1,866,610. His electoral vote was 180. Breckenridge was supported by nearly all the Southern States. Virginia went for Bell.

[LEONARD SWETT TO MR. WEED.]

BLOOMINGTON, *November 26, 1860.*

DEAR SIR, — The great contest is ended. . . . To carry our State for Lincoln was comparatively easy, but to secure Trumbull's election was troublesome, as the result shows. We have but one majority in the Senate, and that vote is secured by only seven majority at the polls.

We all feel that New York and the friends of Seward have acted nobly. They have not only done their whole duty to the party, but they have been most generous and magnanimous.

We should be exceedingly glad to know your wishes and your views, and to serve you in any way in our power. I say this freely for myself because I feel it, and for Judge Davis, because, although now absent, I know his feelings. Of course nobody is authorized to speak for Mr. Lincoln. . . . I shall be at Springfield Tuesday.

Yours truly, LEONARD SWETT.

[MESSRS. SWETT AND DAVIS TO MR. WEED.]

BLOOMINGTON, *December 10, 1860.*

MY DEAR SIR, — Mr. Lincoln would be very glad to see you. He asks me to tell you so. Your coming to Springfield may make newspaper talk, but he says he don't care for that, if you don't. The substance of his statement is that if you see no impropriety in coming, he would like to have you do so.

Perhaps, in this connection, I ought to say that I have been often

<sup>1</sup> Oneida gave Lincoln 3,500 majority. Fremont had 5,000 in 1856.

with Mr. Lincoln during the summer, and I understand reasonably well his feelings. I do not think it at all necessary for you to come, so far as recognition of Mr. Seward's friends by him may be affected by that interview. This I mention, as it may be inconvenient for you to make the journey.

Still, it was Mr. Lincoln's wish that you should come, and it strikes me that it would be much better. Second-hand conversations are unsatisfactory, as you know, and besides, Mr. Lincoln wants your advice about his Cabinet, and the general policy of his administration, and I would greatly like to have him have it.

Please let me hear from you as soon as practicable.

Yours truly,

LEONARD SWETT.

P. S.

BLOOMINGTON, *December 10, 1860.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I would advise you, inasmuch as Mr. Lincoln requests it, to go to Springfield at once. You will have to go to Chicago, and this place is on the route to Springfield. Telegraph us when you will reach here. We would cheerfully meet you at some half-way place, but think, from Mr. Swett's interview with Mr. Lincoln, that you had better come to Illinois.

Your friend,

DAVID DAVIS.

It was Mr. Lincoln's wish that you should come immediately.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

1860.

THE FREE STATES NOT UNITED AGAINST DISUNION. — SECESSION ADVOCATES AT THE NORTH. — A NEW EPOCH IN MR. WEED'S LIFE. — HIS WILLINGNESS TO ABIDE BY A PEACEABLE ADJUSTMENT. — WILLIAM H. SEWARD SECRETARY OF STATE. — AFFAIRS AT WASHINGTON. — MR. LINCOLN TO MR. WEED. — POSITION OF THE PRESIDENT-ELECT.

THE supreme question which should have occupied the anxious thoughts of all patriotic men during the three or four months which immediately preceded the beginning of the civil war was : Can the Union be preserved by peaceful means ? Secondly another question was involved : If war must come, what policy is best calculated to uphold the authority of the government ?

But these questions were not asked by northern Abolitionists, who, late in 1860, began to exercise remarkable influence upon public affairs. It had been conclusively demonstrated by the success of the Republicans in the presidential contest that slavery could not be further extended. Several of the cotton states were making extensive preparation for secession. South Carolina had already given notice that she was ready to enter into the formation of a southern confederacy. Treason, bold, arrogant, full-grown, gigantic treason, stared the country in the face. The government was in imminent peril. And yet, Abolitionists, seizing this critical moment to renew their demands, were able to mislead, demoralize, and inflame a large portion of the people, as well in southern as in northern communities. That their influence was wholly in the wrong direction Mr. Weed never for a moment doubted. It did not seem to him a propitious time to descant upon an issue which, recklessly pressed at the North, rendered the Southern people an easy prey to demagogues and traitors.

When the Constitution of the United States was framed, it was felt that slavery was a misfortune of the first magnitude,

but nevertheless an evil not to be remedied by heedless aggression. Twelve out of the original thirteen states were slaveholding. Only one was free. Slavery had existed in the colonies since 1618. Evidently, no agreement could have been reached upon a constitution by which this curse was prohibited. The founders of the government, therefore, left the question to be disposed of by the several states, cherishing the hope that one would follow another in the passage of emancipation measures. "We should march up to the verge of the Constitution," said Benjamin Franklin, "to destroy the traffic in human flesh."

Seven of the original states accomplished emancipation without violence or bloodshed. In three of the remaining six states there was for twenty-five years before the Rebellion a strong undercurrent of emancipation feeling. Nurtured and guided by enlightened leadership, Mr. Weed believed this free soil force would ultimately drive slavery out of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Had that result been reached, enfranchisement must have followed in the small section remaining without the hideous carnage of civil war.

Assured that slavery's control in national politics was terminated forever by the growth of free soil feeling all over the country, the preponderance of that feeling in the Northern States, and the election of Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Weed saw no good result to be gained by further agitation on the subject, at a time when the South was busily preparing for a trial of strength on a new issue: the preservation of the government. The certain supremacy of freedom gained, why join with Abolitionists in assailing the Constitution of the United States, when the South was seeking to override that instrument, in order that slavery might be perpetuated? In Mr. Weed's opinion, it was worse than folly to deride the Constitution as "a league with sin and a covenant with hell."

When the elements which entered into this most trying portion of our national history are called to mind, it is difficult to understand the reasoning by which abolition action was guided. The leaders of this faction were in truth as illogical and impracticable as in 1844. Then, professing to be opposed to the annexation of Texas, they elected James K. Polk, who was unalterably committed to annexing Texas, and under whom Texas was forthwith admitted as a slave state. Now, profes-

sing anxiety to accomplish the extinction of slavery, they argued that the South should be permitted, if that was its wish, to secede and form a separate government, by which slavery would have been, as it was intended that it should be, perpetuated. Governor Moore, of South Carolina, a rampant Secessionist, hailed the Abolitionists, in 1860, as "our best friends." This distinction they earned; for northern and southern bigotry and bluster stood in such relations of reciprocity that by each the question of preserving the government was ignored and despised. Each set of extremists played into the hands of the other. Though they differed widely in some ways, they agreed perfectly in contempt for the Union and the Constitution.

"Greeley is in favor of the South's seceding," wrote George W. Patterson to Mr. Weed. "He told me so in New York, and gave as a reason that it is the only part of the world where he can't travel in safety." How like Mr. Greeley! In his "Liberator" William Lloyd Garrison closed his review of thirty years of editorial service with an article glorying at the prospect of disunion. Senator Toombs took Georgia into the Confederacy by reading to the state legislature a defense of secession, written and published by Horace Greeley. In a speech at Boston, Wendell Phillips said: "Let the South march off, with flags and trumpets, and we will speed the parting guest. Let her not stand upon the order of her going, but go at once. Give her forts, arsenals, and sub-treasuries. Give her jewels of silver and gold, and rejoice that she has departed. All hail disunion!"

"I am weary of strife," wrote Mr. Weed, "and could not be driven into controversy upon a question less vital than the safety of the government and Union. I have no personal ill-will, as is charged, towards leading Abolitionists. I do not know, never saw, and am indifferent to Wendell Phillips. With Senators Wade and Chandler I lived many years upon terms of friendship, regarding them as useful public men, until they adopted views which, in my judgment, were inevitably destructive. I was alienated from Gerrit Smith until he emancipated himself, and then my heart warmed back to him as in the days of his youth, when his great intellect, genial nature, and ample fortune were devoted to all good works. I have confidence that Senator Hale, of New Hampshire, will discover the

truth and be found walking therein. . . . I denounce the course of Messrs. Sumner, Greeley, and Phillips, as years ago I denounced the incendiary proceedings of Mr. Delavan and other Prohibition fanatics, who were ruining the cause which they espoused. Mr. Delavan's crusade against wine at the communion was prosecuted until drunkenness swept like a pestilence throughout the country. Now 'abolition,' substituted for 'temperance,' is urged in the same spirit, tending to the same result, with this difference, that this folly imperils the government and the Union. . . . The Whig party was always opposed to slavery. But there was a broad and well-understood distinction between Whig opponents of slavery and the fanatical Abolitionists. With opponents of slavery, led by John Quincy Adams, I lived and labored in harmony and with zeal. We were eternally opposed by Birney, Goodell, Garrison, and other Abolitionists, who, in elections, so cast their 'third-party' vote as to elect pro-slavery governors, congressmen, and presidents. Finally, by defeating Mr. Clay, they brought Texas into the Union as a slave state. That class of Abolitionists threw themselves across the track of all healthful political organizations. They were the worst enemies of the Whig party then — they are the 'best friends' of rebellion now. . . . In abhorrence of slavery I am behind no man. But our danger has been, and is, that abolition, by dividing the North and uniting the South, may enable rebellion and slavery to avert the penalty both so richly merit."

The month immediately following the election of Mr. Lincoln was almost like the dawning of a new epoch in Mr. Weed's life. He cast aside the weapons which none could wield so well, and raised his eyes and thoughts above the horizon of party. Mr. Buchanan, the retiring President, was a Democrat, and it was the fashion for Republicans to cast obstacles in his path. Foreseeing the approach of an appalling calamity, Mr. Weed ceased to be a partisan. He asked no man whether he was Democrat or Republican. He stood almost alone among the leaders of that day in expressing willingness to abide by a peaceable adjustment of national difficulties. He urged concession, not surrender, not "backing down," but that reason and moderation should not be utterly abandoned; that a great people should not be plunged into the most inhuman war of modern times to suit the caprices of Jefferson Davis and Wendell Phillips.

“They who are conscious of least wrong,” he wrote, “can best afford to manifest a spirit of conciliation. In the present controversy the North is nearest right, though not wholly blameless. There are motes, at least, in ours, if there are beams in our neighbors’ eyes. Too many of us forget that when this Union was formed, slavery was the rule, freedom the exception. While we — climate, soil, and interest favoring and seconding our sentiments and sympathies — have been working out of, other states, with adverse complications and elements, have worked more deeply into slavery. Thousands upon thousands of our citizens, swayed by feelings to which we are neither insensible nor indifferent, with no slavery to oppose at home, have deemed it their duty to demand the abolition of slavery elsewhere, forgetting, in their zeal, that it exists in the Southern States under the Constitution, and with the consent of our fathers, who bound themselves and their descendants to obey that Constitution. Societies have been formed, presses established, tracts distributed, and emissaries sent into the Slave States, teaching that slavery is sinful and that slaves ought to be emancipated. These lessons, in harmony with all the humanities of civilization, were easily learned. But, in learning them, we did not find written on the same page, nor in the same chapter, that in our efforts to abolish slavery, we should provide no indemnity to the owners. When we refer, as we often do, triumphantly to the example of England, we are prone to forget that emancipation and compensation were provisions of the same Act of Parliament.”

Early in December Mr. Lincoln sent to Mr. Seward a cordial letter expressing personal confidence, and requesting the New York Senator to accept the position of Secretary of State. After consulting with those upon whose affection and judgment he relied, Mr. Seward accepted this trust. His letters refer to the aspect of affairs at Washington.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *December 2, 1860.*

MY DEAR WEED, — South Carolina is committed. Georgia will debate. Time will operate favorably, but she probably follows. Florida will precipitate, Mississippi and Alabama likely follow. But by that time passion begins to give place to perplexity, as to whether it is best to conciliate or fight. Congress can resolve, but three fourths of

the state legislatures must call on Congress, and Congress can't initiate conventions. No amendments that can be prepared, and would be satisfactory, can get two thirds by the House, although just such amendments might pass three fourths of the states.

Nothing can be agreed on in advance, but silence must not be sullen, as last year, but respectful and fraternal. If southern members will be for once cautious and forbearing; if we can keep peace and quiet for a time, the temper will be favorable on both sides to consultation. . . .

WASHINGTON, *December 3, 1860.*

Here's a muss. Republican members stopped at the "Tribune" office on their way, and when they all lamented your articles, Dana told them they were not yours, but mine. I "wanted to make a great compromise like Clay and Webster!" Washington was in a buzz all day yesterday, all reporters, especially, keeping clear from me. They telegraphed that I am to bring in the compromise and make a speech certainly this week. The "Courier" piled up the measure of agony to-day, by sending to each member a copy of its paper, indorsing your suggestion.

Charles Sumner's lecture in New York had brought a "Barnburner" or Buffalo party around him. They gave nine cheers for the passage in which he describes Lafayette as rejecting all and every compromise, and the knowing ones told him those cheers laid out Thurlow Weed, and then he came and told me, of course.

On the very first day of the session, when I had been preaching quiet, moderation, cheerfulness, and graciousness to all, we were summoned to a Republican caucus of Senators in the antechamber of the Senate, in view of everybody. I asked for the object of the meeting. Hale said he had wanted it called because he proposed to make a speech. I had little difficulty about getting a decision against that. Then a debate arose about the enacting of a force bill. I, with more difficulty, got them to drop that subject, at this immature time. Then came the avowal of the real object of the caucus, namely to find out whether I authorized the "Evening Journal," "Times," and "Courier" articles, and to combine the whole influence of the Senate to bring these papers to better judgment. I kept my temper. I told them they would know what I think and what I propose when I do myself; and as for influencing those three editors, or any one of them, they would find them as independent as the Senate itself, and more potential.

The Republican party to-day is as uncompromising as the Secessionists in South Carolina. A month hence each may come to think that moderation is wiser.

Yours ever,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.



[PRESTON KING TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *December 7, 1860.*

DEAR WEED, — It cannot be done. You must abandon your position. It will prove distasteful to the majority of those whom you have hitherto led. You and Seward should be among the foremost to brandish the lance and shout for war.

Truly yours,                      PRESTON KING.

[MR. WEED TO PRESTON KING.]

ALBANY, *December 10, 1860.*

MY DEAR SIR, — I have not said, nor thought, nor dreamed anything inconsistent with Republican duty. But, in view of what I think is coming, — though you do not seem to realize its approach, — I want to secure the most advantageous position. I want to occupy practical and efficient, instead of absurd and useless ground. Some of the Slave States can be saved. Let us set ourselves right in the judgment of the world.

We owe our existence as a party to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. The aggressions of Slave States and the coöperation of Pierce's administration in those aggressions gave us several Democratic states, and almost enabled us to elect Fremont.

But for the ever-blind spirit of slavery, Buchanan would have taken away our ammunition and spiked our guns. The continued blindness of Democracy and the continued madness of slavery enabled us to elect Lincoln. That success ends our mission, so far as Kansas and the encroachments of slavery into free territory are concerned. We have no territory that invites slavery for any other than political objects, and with the power of territorial organization in the hands of Lincoln, there is no political temptation in all the territory belonging to us. The fight is over. Practically, the issues of the late campaign are obsolete.

The normal proclivities of the American people are Democratic, and we, the party in power, need to have our wits about us, and a stronger issue than that which has just given us success, and one which will absorb all others. If Republican members of Congress stand still, we shall have a divided North and a united South. If they move promptly, there will be a divided South and a united North. My dear old friend, the sooner you put on your thinking-cap and impress your colleagues with a sense of our dangers, the more you will rejoice all the remainder of your life.

Truly yours,                      THURLOW WEED.

[AUGUST BELMONT TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *December 19, 1860.*

MY DEAR SIR, — Allow me, though a comparative stranger, to express to you the heartfelt satisfaction with which I have read your very able and patriotic article of last Monday.

The statesmanlike view which you take of our present difficulties and the wise and conciliatory course which you, with so much truth, counsel as the only remedy which can save this great Republic from untold calamities, must command not only the warm support of your friends, but also the unqualified respect and admiration of your opponents.

As one of the latter, it gives me much pleasure to convey to you my sincere assurances of these feelings.

I have fought to the last against the great party of which you have proved so formidable a leader; but I shall never regret our defeat if your wise counsels prevail and, with God's blessing, peace and concord are restored, under Mr. Lincoln's administration, to our distracted country.

Truly yours, AUGUST BELMONT.

The theory undoubtedly prevailed among radical politicians that prominence of the abolition issue and failure to reach a peaceable adjustment would drive Mr. Seward out of the State Department and Mr. Weed out of politics. To reject all arbitration was to condemn the policy with which Mr. Seward and Mr. Weed were identified. Ambitious Radicals did not fail to make the most of what they conceived to be a great political opportunity. They claimed that the President-elect was an Abolitionist, and that as soon as his administration began, conservative Republicans would be "laid out" and an "affirmative" policy inaugurated.

Thus the North was taught to look upon Mr. Lincoln with suspicion, and the South to regard him as a robber.

[THE PRESIDENT-ELECT TO MR. WEED.]

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., *December 17, 1860.*

MY DEAR SIR, — Yours of the 11th was received two days ago.

Should the convocation of governors of which you speak seem desirable to know my views on the present aspect of things, tell them you judge from my speeches that I will be inflexible on the territorial question; that I probably think either the Missouri line extended, or Douglas's and Eli Thayer's popular sovereignty would lose us every-

thing we gain by the election; that filibustering for all south of us and making slave states of it would follow, in spite of us, in either case; also that I probably think all opposition, real and apparent, to the fugitive slave clause of the Constitution ought to be withdrawn.

I believe you can pretend to find but little, if anything, in my speeches, about secession. But my opinion is that no state can in any way lawfully get out of the Union without the consent of the others; and that it is the duty of the President and other government functionaries to run the machine as it is.

Truly yours,

A. LINCOLN.

The President-elect was a close observer of the currents of popular feeling. No one knew better than he, before the Rebellion, that the northern mind was divided on the slavery question,—divided even on the question of the extension of slavery. There was a large majority against extension; a still larger majority against abolition. On the way to Washington, Mr. Lincoln was making a speech at Cincinnati, on the 12th of February, 1861, when asked by a number of Kentuckians who were present what Republicans intended to do with the South when the administration passed into their control.

“I will tell you,” he answered. “We mean to treat you, as near as we possibly can, as Washington, Jefferson, and Madison treated you. We mean to leave you alone, and in no way interfere with your institutions; to abide by every compromise of the Constitution; and, in a word, coming back to the original proposition, to treat you, as far as degenerate men (if we have degenerated) may, according to the examples of those noble fathers,—Washington, Jefferson, and Madison. We mean to remember that you are as good as we are; that there is no difference between us other than the difference of circumstances. We mean to recognize and bear in mind always, that you have as good hearts in your bosoms as other people, or as we claim to have, and to treat you accordingly.”

## CHAPTER XXIV.

1860-1861.

THE CRITTENDEN PROPOSITION. — RETURN OF "NATIONAL PRODIGALS" TO ENGLAND. — "A SECRET OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE." — EFFORTS TO SAVE THE BORDER STATES. — A. T. STEWART TO MR. WEED. — GENERAL DIX SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY. — MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED. — "THE CONSEQUENCES AND RESPONSIBILITY MUST FALL UPON THE AGGRESSORS."

IT is almost enough to say further of the movement to avert the civil war, that it failed. The specific adjustment favored by Mr. Weed, which seemed most likely to succeed, was introduced in the Senate by Mr. Crittenden, of Kentucky. This measure was substantially a reestablishment of the compact of 1820, upon which the nation had rested in peace and prosperity until the repeal of 1854. It was proposed that the line of  $36^{\circ} 30'$  be extended across the continent, and accepted as an irrevocable boundary. In the acceptance of this suggestion the South would have had to yield a great deal more than the North. But, when Mr. Weed went to Washington and urged it upon Republican members of Congress, he was met by the argument that concurrence would ruin the Republican party. He explained that the presidential election was over; that slavery was already driven to the wall; that secession was nothing more nor less than a confession by the slave power that it was defeated. But these arguments made no impression upon a Congress which neither took steps to preserve peace nor to strengthen the government for the other contingency.

For weeks it was impossible to get even a hearing for the Crittenden project. It was finally taken up, against the solid Republican vote, on the 16th of January, 1861, when the six Secession senators voted with the Republicans to smother it with an amendment. Some time afterwards, when its passage would have been of no service, it was defeated, by a vote of 19 to 20. That a large portion of the southern people, who were anxiously

watching the decision of Congress upon this question, were now led into the belief that the North cared nothing for conciliation, but was indifferent to southern interests and southern rights, is not open to denial. The effect was particularly unfortunate in the "Border States," where the efforts of Secessionists to inculcate their doctrines had up to this time met with emphatic disapproval.

South Carolina, with six slaves to every voter, took the lead in the movement to organize a southern confederacy. Her legislature remained in session until it was known that Mr. Lincoln was elected, when a state convention was called and the legislature adjourned. At the convention, on the 20th of December, 1860, an ordinance of secession was passed, and messengers were immediately despatched to other states to convey this information, and seek coöperation. Mr. Buchanan and radical orators in Congress continued to charge each other with numerous offenses, while leaders in the secession revolt lost no time and made no blunders. Allusion has been made to their effective use of the ammunition furnished by northern agitation. Their adroitness was even more remarkable in another direction.

[JUDAH P. BENJAMIN TO THE BRITISH CONSUL IN NEW YORK.<sup>1</sup>]

NEW YORK, *August 11, 1860.*

DEAR SIR, — I exceedingly regret your absence from New York at this time, as the important object of my visit is to have a personal and confidential interview with you.

My apology for this breach of conventional usage, in presuming to address you without the formality of an introduction, may be pardoned in consequence of the very extraordinary nature of the business which induced me to approach you without the friendly intervention of a third party. Indeed, it would not only have been unwise but actually dangerous for me to have even borne a letter of introduction.

Having assumed the whole responsibility of this very critical step, I cannot use too much caution and circumspection to insure my personal safety and the successful accomplishment of the mission I have in view. Therefore I prefer trusting my own judgment in approaching a genteel stranger on such business, to that of bringing into my service the scrawls of governors or members of Congress with whom, perhaps, you are as little acquainted as myself.

The official confidence which your government seems to repose in

<sup>1</sup> This letter is published on what is believed to be trustworthy authority.

you, by intrusting to your charge its great commercial affairs in the most important city on this continent, I think is sufficient to warrant me in trusting to your discretion, patriotism, and loyalty a secret of the greatest importance and interest to Her Britannic Majesty's kingdom.

The present disastrous condition of political affairs in the United States (which has no parallel in the past history of the country) seems to have split the great Democratic party into many contending factions, all of which are so hungry after the public spoils that its disintegrated parts render them an easy prey to the opposing Black Republicans.

The doctrines maintained by the Republican party are so unsuitable to the great interests of the whole South that an election of their candidate (which is almost certain) amounts to a total destruction of all plantation interests, which the South, as sure as there is a God in Heaven, will not submit to. Sooner than yield to the arbitrary dictates of traitorous allies and false friends, who have proven recreant to the solemn obligations of our old Constitution, we will either Secede from the Union and form a separate government, or, upon certain conditions, *at once return to our allegiance to Great Britain, our Mother Country.*

Many, very many, of the most wealthy and influential planters throughout the South have already discussed this alternative, in the event of the election of Mr. Lincoln, and the popularity of the proposition seems to pass from one to another almost with an elastic rapidity. It is true they have made no public demonstration of their intentions, for such a course would be attended with direful consequences at this time, *but the Pear will be fully ripe before November.*

Gossiping newsmongers and babbling pothouse politicians are not allowed to know what is going on in their very midst.

Select dinner parties come off every day throughout the whole South, and not one of them ends without a strong accession to our forces. I have even heard some of them address each other by titles already.

My object in approaching you is to cultivate your friendship, and procure your coöperation in aid of accomplishing this grand object of returning to the dominion of our fathers' Kingdom. Through your kindness and loyalty to your Queen, I am desirous of properly approaching Her Majesty's minister at Washington City, with a view to the accomplishment of this great end. If you will condescend to grant me the necessary assistance for this purpose, you will soon receive the meritorious reward of your most gracious Queen, and the hearty cheer from every true Briton's heart for having aided in the return of the National Prodigals.

Reposing that confidence in you which your position in life warrants me in doing, you must at present excuse me from not signing my name, for fear of an accident. This much you may know, I am a Southron, and am a member of Congress, whose untiring perseverance will never cease until the object I have thus boldly undertaken is fully accomplished. Be so kind as to answer this as early as possible. Allow me a personal interview, and, if you cannot come to New York, address your answer to "Benjamin," in care of some one at your office.

When this amazing letter was written, Mr. Benjamin had just been reëlected to the Senate of the United States from Louisiana. Lord Palmerston thought he foresaw the rapid downfall of the United States government and Lord Ramsden rejoiced in the House of Commons that the "bubble of Democracy in America" had burst. Mr. Benjamin's letter was forwarded to Lord Lyons, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Great Britain in the United States.

"South Carolina demands the withdrawal of Anderson and abandonment of the forts," wrote Mr. Seward to Mr. Weed, on the 29th of December, 1860. "The President<sup>1</sup> inclines to yield, but there will be an explosion if he does. A plot is forming to seize the capital and usurp the government. It has abettors near the President. I am writing you not from rumors but knowledge. I have written to ——,<sup>2</sup> first that he ought to anticipate and come here by surprise, second, that I ought to know his agents with whom I am to act, and they ought to be here to make preparations. You will be welcome enough here in a few days."

"No terms have been offered to traitors," wrote Mr. Weed, on the 9th of January, 1861.<sup>3</sup> "It is so that the country may be the better prepared to deal sternly with traitors that we have urged and do urge that the position of Union men in Southern States should be considered. Apprehending that we should be called upon to test the strength of the government, we saw,

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Buchanan.

<sup>2</sup>Through the war period Mr. Seward's letters are full of omissions like this. In the present case the reference is, of course, to Mr. Lincoln. Sometimes Mr. Seward wrote so illegibly that his handwriting might almost be mistaken for a cipher.

<sup>3</sup>Mississippi seceded on the day this article was written. She was the first state to follow South Carolina.

what is even more apparent now, that the effort would tax all its faculties and strain all its energies. Hence desire before the trial came to make up a record that would challenge the approval of the world. This was due not less to ourselves than to the Union men of southern states, who with equal patriotism and more of sacrifice, amidst the pitiless peltings of the disunion storm, sought, like the dove sent out from the ark, a dry spot on which to set their feet."

In February, at the instance of the Virginia legislature, there was held at Washington a peace convention, composed of delegates elected by the legislatures of the various states. Mr. Weed was elected a delegate, but he declined in favor of Francis Granger, with whom he was now again in harmony. He was strongly committed in favor of this meeting, but before it assembled virtually abandoned hope of any peaceable settlement, and entered upon what may be called his second great effort in connection with the war,—an effort to narrow the boundaries of rebellion.

"There were in the Border States," he writes, "tens of thousands of anxious, devoted Union men, who asked only that they should be thrown a plank which promised a chance of safety. Maryland was withheld from secession by the firmness and fidelity of her state administration. Kentucky's Anderson at Fort Sumter, Holt in the Cabinet, and Cassius M. Clay on the stump, were doing as much as men could to maintain the federal authority. In Governor Houston, Texas had a strong arm to hold her from the madness of the hour. Tennessee's majority for John Bell was sufficient to show that her sympathies were on the right side." In January, 1861, there were scores of county meetings in Arkansas, Missouri, and other doubtful states at which resolutions were adopted declaring Mr. Lincoln's election no excuse for secession, condemning the course of South Carolina, and promising unwavering allegiance to the Union.

But Republican Congressmen were not disposed to concede "the fruits of the presidential victory." The press of his party opposed Mr. Weed's policy as equivalent to "political suicide." While he was at Washington, representatives of the Border States met in caucus and agreed upon the Crittenden proposition. This Republican members parried successfully week



after week, in the mean time assuming no affirmative position. Border state members submitted a basis upon which they could hold together in defense of the government. The suggestion was laid on the table, in caucus, by an overwhelming vote, "although," Mr. Weed declared, "several of its features were entirely acceptable, and returning them in the form of a counter-proposition might easily have constituted the basis of an ultimate agreement." "But," said Republicans to Mr. Weed, "we have wronged nobody. Lincoln has been elected in a constitutional manner. There is no sufficient excuse for secession. If the South thinks there is, we propose to let her try it and take the consequences."

[GOVERNOR NOBLE TO MR. WEED.]

MADISON, WIS., *February 12, 1861.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — We are doing a good work in bringing our Republican friends up to the true standard. We *must* save the Border States. . . . Resolutions appointing commissioners were passed in Senate by my casting vote, the Democrats voting with six Republicans — against fourteen Republicans. But they are lost in the House, much to my regret. Personally I am "catching fits" from the abolition "wing;" but I shall come out all right in the end.

Yours truly,

BUTLER G. NOBLE.

[FRANCIS GRANGER TO MR. WEED.]

CANANDAIGUA, *Wednesday Evening.*

MY DEAR SIR, — I will tell you in candor how the idea [of accepting appointment as delegate to the peace convention], which had never entered my head, struck me. Of course, it would be accepted as a most flattering honor, but you cannot imagine with what repugnance I even think of the possibility of ever again appearing before the public. You, whose life is spent in the exciting whirl of politics, cannot, for a moment, understand it. How unlike my life twenty years ago, — and yet, in my view, how much more satisfactory!

What a proser I am getting to be, to send this to one engaged in getting out a commission on which the Union may depend, and in making a Senator, — to say nothing of things at Washington and Albany generally. I am a proser, but, thank God, not a croaker of the Jim Talmadge school, spending my last days in thinking that I have not been appreciated, for the State cannot show a happier man. But too much of all this. I can bear anything but a thought of the breaking up of this proud nation. Notwithstanding all that is said, I don't

feel quite easy about what may happen before or on the 4th of March. Your rampant friends underestimate both the will and power of the Southern States for a fight.

Thanking you for your good intentions, and happier without than with their realization. Ever truly yours, FR. GR.

[A. T. STEWART TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *February 20, 1861.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — The most important concern to the people of the United States at the present time is the reëstablishment of fraternal relations between the North and the South, the destruction of which affects most injuriously our standing among nations, and makes us feeble for protection or attack at home and abroad.

A high tariff at this time, when importation of goods under the most favorable circumstances is attended with loss, would be injudicious, especially as the government requires large revenue for extraordinary purposes. To raise rates would not only lower receipts from customs; its effect would be to prevent pacification, if not to produce retaliatory measures in the South. . . . It would tend to render their exclusion from the Union complete, and induce free trade legislation in the hope of enlisting foreign powers in their favor. And if a high tariff is injudicious in this view, it is more so in the contingency of final separation. The destiny of the North in that event will be that of a manufacturing people, with a view to the supply of foreign nations, and consequently of competition in other manufacturing countries. We must reach this point, not through prohibition and restriction, which is a confession of inferiority, but by inviting all that we can of the raw material, reducing rates to the standard of other countries, improving our skill in machinery and labor, and by those means not only making it impossible for the foreign producers to compete on equal terms here, but also in every other convenient market at which we will be obliged to sell, and in which our tariff will give no protection.

This policy of reliance on our skill, industry, and energy, under circumstances of the highest competition, will make the North, if the tremendous evil of séparation is inevitable, a powerful empire unsurpassed by any other in the world. And so I say that meditated legislation, obliging us to withdraw within our own shell on the eve of such great events, is impolitic in the extreme, and can only come from that want of flexibility in men which induces them to hold on to their opinions, however changed the circumstances of the country. . . .

The refusal at Washington to concede costs us millions daily. It is opening up our nation to every conceivable mischief and danger. It advances the happiness of no single human being, bond or free, unless

it be of those on the other side the water who rejoice over the disgrace, degradation, and ruin in which our country, lately so prosperous and happy, is involved.

Relying upon your energy and wisdom, so conspicuously shown in present difficulties, I am,

Yours respectfully,

ALEX: T. STEWART.

On the 11th of January, 1861, John A. Dix was appointed Secretary of the Treasury. He found the affairs of that department in a disgraceful condition, and at once began, with characteristic energy and ability, to restore the financial credit of the nation. General Dix was a Democrat, and according to radical ideas it was treachery to the Republican party to cooperate with him in these efforts. Disdaining partisan arguments, Mr. Seward and Mr. Weed cordially indorsed the Secretary's plans, which without their aid might have proved futile.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *January 30, 1861.*

DEAR WEED, — Does the State of New York, or rather its legislature, mean to abandon the Union? If so, I pray you to let me know promptly, and I will get up a private subscription to guarantee the bonds, procure signatures here, and send an agent to New York city. What is the matter with the legislature?

WASHINGTON, *January 31, 1861.*

. . . Our friend Wakeman goes to Albany at my urgent request to get the legislature to assent to Dix's proposition to guarantee U. S. six per cent. bonds to the amount of the United States Deposit Fund. It is the turning point. We shall maintain the capital safe into the administration of 4th March, if New York don't desert the Union now. If she does, I don't know but the blow will be irretrievable.

Yours,

WM. H. SEWARD.

Immediately after Mr. Lincoln's unexpected appearance at Washington, on the 23d of February, it began to be generally conceded that obstacles to any scheme of arbitration were insurmountable. The peace convention was still in session, but there was no prospect that any plan which it might recommend, no matter how unfavorable to the South, would meet the approval of Congress. A basis for retaining the Border States, which extreme southern men violently opposed in the convention, was

submitted, but the Radicals of the House of Representatives would not even consent to have the document read. They were ready to dissolve the Union, destroy the government, and bankrupt the people, to keep Mr. Seward out of the Cabinet.

“Mr. Lincoln goes to Washington,” wrote Mr. Weed, “with a dark cloud hanging like a pall over the country. All that remains to us, if conciliation is not to be obtained, is to prepare for a test of the strength of our government. We must vindicate its power by the firmness of its laws, or we no longer preserve the respect of other nations, or of our own people. We shall need the concentrated influence, physical and moral, of all the friends of the Union. Shades of difference between those who love their country should be forgotten, until the vantage ground is reached. We can afford, as Mr. Jefferson once said, to be ‘all Federalists — all Republicans.’

“If the Union can be preserved only by fighting for it, then war with all its miseries must be accepted. Freedom is worth all it ever costs. This aspect of the situation we have contemplated with horror. We have hoped that it might be ignored; that, through God’s goodness and mercy, the Union might escape the calamities of civil war. But, if the delusion which has seized upon Carolina spreads; if the disease raging there shall infect southern people generally; if, for some inscrutable purpose, the great problem of emancipation is to be solved by the sword; if cities smoke and bodies bleach, the consequences and responsibility must fall upon the aggressors. If war shall be commenced and waged against freedom, there can be no question as to how it will terminate.”

## CHAPTER XXV.

1860-1861.

INCONGRUOUS REPUBLICAN ELEMENTS. — THE SENATORIAL CANVASS OF 1861. — WM. M. EVARTS. — MR. GREELEY. — DEFEAT OF THE RADICALS. — "JUSTICE TO ALL." — MR. LINCOLN'S FIRST INAUGURAL. — ITS TONE AND PURPOSE. — CABINET SELECTIONS. — APPOINTMENT POLICY. — FORT SUMTER SURRENDERS. — DUTY OF THE GOVERNMENT. — "OUR COUNTRY, RIGHT OR WRONG."

UP to the time when the Chicago convention was held, Mr. Weed's authority in the Whig and Republican parties was exercised almost without dissent. He was known to be as impartial as he was judicious, and a general disposition existed to leave the settlement of important political questions in his hands. But when the Republican party was formed it was necessary to fuse into its membership elements which were to a certain degree incongruous. Lucius Robinson, Hiram Barney, and David Dudley Field were not likely to act in perfect accord with Mr. Weed, however easy it may have been for them, on various occasions, to affiliate with Mr. Bryant and Mr. Greeley. The dangers of the new alliance were recognized by the men who had ruled the Whigs, but instead of instituting a proscriptive policy, intended to keep the minority in subjection, Mr. Weed was inclined to show them rather more recognition than was really justified by their stock in trade. George Opdyke and David Dudley Field were among those representing the anti-Weed element who intimated a desire to be chosen delegates to the national Republican convention of 1860. As public sentiment ran strongly in favor of Mr. Seward, their aspirations in this respect were not gratified. When the convention met, however, both appeared at Chicago in a private capacity, and with Mr. Bryant, Mr. Barney, and Mr. Greeley, constituted a New York basis of opposition to the New York candidate. The result of the convention was, of course, a great source of encouragement to these politicians.

In course of time, Mr. Barney was appointed Collector of the Port of New York, through the influence of Secretary Chase, and Mr. Opdyke, by the employment of Custom House patronage, was nominated for Mayor of New York, to which position he was elected. The significance of these movements, it need hardly be said, was perfectly apparent to Mr. Weed; but, so far as they were directed against his political authority, he regarded them with indifference. He was indeed "weary of strife," as he wrote, nor could he have been "driven into controversy" upon a question less vital than "the safety of the government and Union." When radical politicians imperiled both, as he believed, they discovered that "the Dictator's" power had not been entirely obliterated.

At the beginning of the year 1861, when the New York legislature met, there was interjected into the progress of events a canvass for a successor to Mr. Seward in the Senate. The Republicans had made heavy gains in the State Senate in the elections of 1859, and it had been anticipated that they would hold a majority when the time arrived to fill this vacancy. With even greater confidence it had been expected that Mr. Seward would be nominated for President in 1860, and for that reason he had been regarded as out of the list of candidates. Just after his defeat at Chicago there was a disposition to return Mr. Seward to the Senate, but it was soon believed that he would become a member of the Cabinet, and his name was then dropped.

At this juncture Mr. Weed was urged by his friends, for at least the third time, to become himself a candidate for this position. Had he consented, he could have been elected without doubt. Indeed, it was conceded by the politicians of that day that he could not be defeated, if he chose to enter the lists. "It is a curious fact," wrote one who was active in the canvass, and who knew its temper perfectly, "that Mr. Weed might have been chosen Senator even when known to vary in judgment on questions vital in importance from the party making the appointment. This could have been true of no other man, and long after the fires even of this vivid day shall have died out, it will be remembered as one of the most honorable incidents in his remarkable life."

William M. Evarts was the candidate whom Mr. Weed hoped

might succeed Mr. Seward. Mr. Evarts gained reputation and strength by his conduct of the celebrated Lemmon case, which came up for argument before the Court of Appeals late in January, 1860.<sup>1</sup> He was a man whose election would add new dignity to a position second only to the presidency. But the radical element, which had a strong and aggressive representation in the legislature, determined to send Mr. Greeley to Washington. Troubles were rapidly accumulating, and it was thought that he might ride in on the edge of the storm. Charles A. Dana, then of the "Tribune," was sent to Albany to advance the cause of his chief, and Mr. Greeley went in person soon afterwards. The radical canvass was conducted under unusually favorable circumstances, and, as the caucus approached, both sides saw that the vote would be close. It was given out that several Assemblymen had sided with Mr. Greeley on representations that the President-elect favored the radical candidate.

[JUDGE DAVIS TO MR. WEED.]

BLOOMINGTON, ILL., *February 2, 1861.*

DEAR SIR, — I was surprised to hear it intimated that Mr. Lincoln was interfering for Mr. Greeley, and had authorized the use of patronage in that direction. Depend upon it this is a canard of the grossest sort. The possibility of Greeley's election surprises me. . . .

If the Republican party makes any missteps, it is gone under. It looks to me now as if this result was manifest destiny.

Truly yours,

DAVID DAVIS.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *January 27, 1861.*

DEAR WEED, — W—— writes me, of course impatiently, that Evarts is in danger, and that I ought to interpose for him directly, and secure Mr. Lincoln's interference. My judgment informs me that if unusual proceedings ought to be taken, you are the one to call on me for them.

<sup>1</sup> The plaintiff, a citizen of Virginia, in 1852 shipped eight slaves on board a vessel bound for Texas. The ship went to New York; the negroes were taken off on a writ of habeas corpus and brought before Justice Paine, who decided that they could not be held in slavery under New York laws. They were thus liberated, but a subscription taken up in the city indemnified Lemmon in full, and the State of Virginia, retaining Mr. O'Conor, brought suit to test the validity of enfranchisement. "Mr. Evarts," wrote Mr. Weed while the case was on trial, "has placed beyond doubt his right to be ranked among the foremost lawyers of our country."

As to Mr. Lincoln's interference, of course I understand how absurd that would be. Do not let me fall unjustly under censure of unfaithfulness to a friend on the one side, or of misjudged interference on the other.

Yours faithfully,

WM. H. SEWARD.

[THE PRESIDENT-ELECT TO MR. WEED.]

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., February 4, 1861.

DEAR SIR,—I have both your letter to myself and that to Judge Davis, in relation to a certain gentleman in your state claiming to dispense patronage in my name, and also to be authorized to use my name to advance the chances of Mr. Greeley for an election to the United States Senate.

It is very strange that such things should be said by any one. The gentleman you mention did speak to me of Mr. Greeley in connection with the senatorial election, and I replied in terms of kindness toward Mr. Greeley, which I really feel, but always with an expressed protest that my name must not be used in the senatorial election in favor of or against any one. Any other representation of me is a misrepresentation.

As to the matter of dispensing patronage, it perhaps will surprise you to learn that I have information that you claim to have my authority to arrange that matter in New York. I do not believe you have so claimed; but still so some men say. On that subject you know all I have said to you is "justice to all," and I have said nothing more particular to any one. I say this to reassure you that I have not changed my position.

In the hope, however, that you will not use my name in the matter,  
I am,

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

One hundred and fifteen Republicans attended the caucus, which was held during the first week in February. Their vote was almost exactly divided between Mr. Evarts and Mr. Greeley. A few scattering ballots were cast for Ira Harris, then a Justice of the Supreme Court. While the voting was in progress Mr. Weed, Governor Morgan, and Mr. Evarts were seated in the Executive Chamber. Eight ballots were taken without material change. On the ninth Mr. Greeley gained five votes, which Mr. Evarts lost, and it was therefore probable that on the next ballot Mr. Greeley would be elected, unless prevented by a *coup d'état*. Mr. Weed conferred with the Governor and with Mr. Evarts, and it was hastily decided that it was better to bestow the nomination on Judge Harris, than suffer the success of



Mr. Greeley. Messengers were instantly despatched for leading Republicans, and the next ballot resulted: for Harris, sixty; for Greeley, forty-nine; for Evarts, two; scattering, six. Thus Judge Harris was elected.

“The motives which prompted opposition to Mr. Greeley,” writes Mr. Weed, “were patriotic and loyal. Republican members of the legislature cherished friendly feelings for a favorite editor; but they disapproved of his secession sentiments, and were unwilling to trust him with a seat in the United States Senate.” Many, however, who aided in the election of Judge Harris, afterwards regretted that Mr. Greeley was not afforded this opportunity to prove his fitness or unfitness for the high positions to which he aspired.

1861. — The first developments of Mr. Lincoln’s policy were awaited with breathless anxiety. “The inaugural,” wrote Mr. Weed from Washington, “was worthy of a Republican President and of the American people.” Much more might have been said, had the writer been given to self-glorification. In this memorable paper, the President arrayed himself distinctly against the Radicals and the Abolitionists. “I have no purpose,” he said, “directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists.” Addressing the South, these were his memorable words, “We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection.” Speaking of this first inaugural, Mr. Lincoln refers to it himself, in his second inaugural, as having been “devoted altogether to saving the Union without war.” That was precisely what Mr. Weed sought to accomplish.

In constructing his Cabinet the President wished to be strictly impartial. William H. Seward, of New York, was made Secretary of State; Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio, Secretary of the Treasury; Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania, Secretary of War; Gideon Welles, of Connecticut, Secretary of the Navy; Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana, Secretary of the Interior; Montgomery Blair, of Maryland, Postmaster-General; and Edward Bates, of Missouri, Attorney-General. Mr. Seward was leader of the conservative Republicans. He had formerly been a Whig. Governor Chase was leader of the Radicals. He had belonged to the “Liberty” party from 1841 until 1848, when he voted for

Van Buren. In 1849 he was elected United States Senator by Democrats and Free Soilers, and in 1855 was elected Governor of Ohio as a Republican. There were two other Whig-Republicans in Mr. Smith and Mr. Bates ; two other converted Democrats in Mr. Blair and Mr. Welles. Mr. Cameron had been elected to the United States Senate in 1845, by Democrats, Whigs, and "Native Americans."

In regard to minor appointments the President's policy was much the same as that which General Garfield, under somewhat similar conditions, followed at the beginning of his administration. Among early nominations were Anson Burlingame, to China ; Henry S. Sanford, to Belgium ; William H. Vesey, to Havre ; Andrew B. Dickinson, to Nicaragua ; and Governor Randall and R. M. Blatchford, to Italy. These gentlemen were all Mr. Weed's intimate friends, personally and politically. On the other hand, there was sent as Minister to The Hague a gentleman known only as a skillful malinger of Mr. Seward.

Shortly after the inauguration, South Carolina, still taking the lead in the secession movement, announced that Major Anderson, commanding Fort Sumter, in Charleston harbor, must turn over that fortification to Governor Pickens ; and when this demand was refused, and it was known that the President had despatched troops to Anderson's assistance, she fired upon the United States flag flying over the garrison. For thirty hours the bombardment lasted. Then, on the 14th of April, 1861, the fort surrendered.

"The crisis is one of intense solicitude," wrote Mr. Weed, on the 10th of April. "It is not improbable that the era of blood will this day be inaugurated. Indeed, the conflict may even now have commenced. However this may be, and whatever the consequences are, the President is clearly right. Treason and rebellion have been rank and insolent. The steps taken by Mr. Lincoln to uphold the authority of the government and to provision our garrisons were demanded by considerations which no government is at liberty to disregard. . . . Should there be a collision at Charleston to-day or to-morrow, the responsibility will rest, where it belongs, upon the heads of secession leaders. The government is simply discharging a plain, imperative duty. . . . If blood is shed, it must stain the garments of the aggressors. The government went to the verge of forbearance and

conciliation. . . . The refusal of South Carolina to permit ordinary supplies to be sent to Major Anderson was as much an act of war as a bombardment, and more inhuman. The government would dishonor itself and tarnish the national character, if it should succumb to such insolence. The civilized world would hold it culpable of the basest cowardice and imbecility, if it should surrender when thus insulted, and permit brave men to be starved into submission. Better any sacrifice than that! So long as a plank can float and an American can be found to guide it, so long as the stars and stripes wave over the bastions of that fortress, and so long as one man remains to defend them, Sumter should be supplied with whatever is needed for its defense. This it is the purpose of the government to do, and the people will applaud the effort."

"The waters of Charleston harbor are crimsoned with blood," wrote Mr. Weed, on the 12th of April. "This day will be remembered as the darkest in our history. . . . Why longer talk of peaceable separation? Every act of the seceders has been warlike. From the beginning there has been violence and outrage on one side, forbearance on the other, and now, when traitors have provoked and commenced war, why should it not go on? If there be power in the government, treason should be made to pay dearly for this crime."

On the 15th of April President Lincoln issued a call for seventy-five thousand volunteers.

"New York will not be derelict in this hour of trial," wrote Mr. Weed. "First in rank among the states, she should be first in the field. Millions should be devoted to the patriotic work of maintaining the authority of the government. New York must not hesitate or look back."

The next day the state legislature passed a bill to provide for the raising of thirty thousand volunteers.

"Our country, right or wrong," wrote Mr. Weed, "should now be the watchword of every lover of the Union.<sup>1</sup> The government has been challenged to fight or to succumb. Americans are not cowards, and they will not see their government

<sup>1</sup> At a Fourth of July dinner given at Philadelphia, during the war of 1812, a distinguished Federalist gave as a toast: "Our country, in her differences with other nations, may she always be right." Commodore Decatur instantly rose and gave the following: "Our country, right or wrong!"

overthrown by a band of brazen traitors. This is the verdict of the people of all parties. Let those who think otherwise stand from under. The die is cast, and rebellion must be crushed before the sword is returned to the scabbard. . . .

“Strike! strike hard! Arguments have been exhausted. There can be no settlement, no clamoring for peace, no sentimental whining about humanity, until the majesty of the American Union has been vindicated and this insult to the American flag has been avenged. . . . The war cannot be too vigorously prosecuted. Let us hear the tramp of men and the sound of bugles. Let there be no peace until traitors yield unqualified submission.”

## CHAPTER XXVI.

1860-1861.

EFFORTS TO CONFINE REBELLION TO THE EXTREME COTTON REGION. — A PLOT IN THE CABINET. — GOVERNOR CHASE. — SECRETARY CAMERON. — MONTGOMERY BLAIR. — EDWIN M. STANTON. — MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED. — GENERAL SCOTT'S PROGRAMME OVERRULED. — SCENES AND INCIDENTS CONNECTED WITH THE WAR.

As the secession movement advanced, conflicts between the two sections of the Republican party were constantly occurring.

Conservative leaders hoped that the Rebellion might be confined to the extreme cotton region. By recognizing and cherishing loyal elements in doubtful states, they urged, important communities could be saved from joining the Confederacy. But to admit the existence of Union sentiment along the border, radical leaders regarded as unwise, politically. They admitted that it excited their sympathy to witness the courageous efforts of Union men in such states as North Carolina, Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, and Tennessee, who, at the imminent peril of their property and their lives, were seeking to keep these wavering communities loyal to the government; but to such appeals it was regarded as prudent, for political reasons, to interpose successful resistance.

[GOVERNOR CHASE TO A FRIEND.]

WASHINGTON, *February 9, 1861.*

DEAR SIR, — Thanks for your note, and explanation of that vote. It may be useful. There is a greater disposition to compromise than I like to see. But I hope for the best.

Half a dozen of the border state gentlemen have been in our room to-night: Etheridge and Stokes, of Tennessee, Adams and Bristow, of Kentucky, Gilmer, of North Carolina, and others. I really sympathize with them, but see no reason why we should sacrifice permanently a *large* power to help them, for the purpose of gaining temporarily a *little* one.

Yours cordially,

S. P. CHASE.

Absorbed in the vast work which Providence had thrust upon his hands, President Lincoln gave no thought to the political aspects of secession. He was oblivious or indifferent to plots already on foot at Washington, looking to partisan glory and advancement. For a long time he did not appear to be in the least disturbed by the fact that influences were at work in his own official household against his administration, in the interest of the Secretary of the Treasury, "whose aspirations for high station," to quote the curious language of the late John W. Forney, "were as unconcealed as they were honorable."

The Cabinet was Mr. Lincoln's own selection, practically, uninfluenced by pressure of any sort. After it was named, accident threw upon it a burden of unequaled responsibility. Mr. Weed did not intimate publicly that in the choice of his advisers the President had made four terrible mistakes. But such was his positive conviction, on the day when selections were made. "A somewhat persistent discrepancy of feeling and opinion," once said Mr. Evarts, in his stately way, "between the President and the Secretary, in regard to an important office in the public service, induced Mr. Chase to resign his portfolio, and Mr. Lincoln to acquiesce in his desire." The simple fact was that Secretary Chase wanted to control the patronage of the sub-Treasury in New York, with a view to the presidency, and that Mr. Lincoln, convinced that the Secretary had pushed his canvass far enough, seized the opportunity to get him out of the Cabinet.

Nor was the President less willing to dispense with the services of his Secretary of War, when an occasion arose on which that gentleman's Cabinet career could be not too ungraciously terminated. The circumstances surrounding his appointment as Minister to Russia are well remembered. The first suggestion of the change was made to General Cameron by Mr. Weed, at Mr. Lincoln's request, in a conversation at the General's breakfast-table, in which the ladies of the household participated. "Repairing from the breakfast-room to the library," writes Mr. Weed, "I presented considerations which seemed likely, in my judgment, to induce General Cameron to go abroad. I informed him that the Secretary of State had received a letter from Cassius M. Clay, offering to resign the Russian Mission. Mr. Cameron finally remarked that his wife

and daughter, thinking he was working too hard, had urged him to retire, and that they would be much pleased with a visit to Europe. All things considered, he allowed me to ascertain from the President whether the suggested change could be made. I did not, for obvious reasons, inform General Cameron that I had called on him that morning in pursuance of an understanding with the President the previous evening. Soon after this arrangement I went with Archbishop Hughes and Bishop McIlvaine to England and France, and a few weeks later had a pleasant call in London from Minister Cameron, then on his way to St. Petersburg."

The assaults of Mr. Blair in the latter part of the year 1865 upon the loyalty of Mr. Seward and Edwin M. Stanton, Mr. Cameron's successor in the War Department, called from Mr. Weed a brief chapter of reminiscences touching events connected with this portion of our history. It was charged by Mr. Blair that Mr. Seward during the last three months of his term in the Senate "acted in concert with the Buchanan administration." It was said: —

He was, no doubt, advised through Mr. Stanton, who was in Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet, of the policy it had adopted in reference to the seizure of everything that appertained to the nation in the South; and it was to the coalition then formed between Mr. Seward and Mr. Stanton that the latter became Secretary of War to Mr. Lincoln. He apprised Mr. Seward of this treaty of the War and Navy Departments, under Buchanan, to make no resistance to the policy of dissolving the Union — to offer no coercion to impede its march to independence — and Mr. Seward's course shows that he approved and adopted this policy.

"This treason, for such is the charge," wrote Mr. Weed, "was committed, if at all, before Mr. Lincoln came into office. Why then did Mr. Blair not only conceal it, but sit with Mr. Seward in the Cabinet, claiming, all the while, to be Mr. Seward's friend and champion, quarreling with others, but even furiously supporting the Secretary of State? But the charges are untrue, viciously untrue.

"The truth is, that the first and paramount design of the secession leaders was to obtain before or on the 4th of March, by a *coup d'état*, possession of the capital, with the sanction of the government. That design was thwarted by Mr. Stanton.

As a member of Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet, he became informed of the treasonable objects of his colleagues, Cobb, Thompson, and Toucey, and of the imbecility, at least, of the President. Placing himself in confidential communication with Mr. Seward, he went to his watch and his work boldly and sagaciously.

"Traitors were, by degrees, weeded out of the Cabinet, and their vacant seats given to General Dix and Judge Holt, who coöperated with Mr. Stanton and Mr. Seward in preserving the government. The 4th of March approached amid treasons and conspiracies in the highest classes. Washington was, without doubt, disloyal. A conspiracy to assassinate Mr. Lincoln at Baltimore was discovered and thwarted. On the occasion of the inauguration, General Scott had scarcely more than 2,000 troops for the defense of the capital. But the chief traitors had been ejected from the Cabinet. Their plans were disconcerted. Mr. Lincoln was inaugurated, and the government prevailed. For that government's salvation the people are largely indebted to the Roman virtues of Edwin M. Stanton.

"It was, I doubt not, owing to the 'coalition then formed between Seward and Stanton,' that the latter was called into Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet. Such ordeals 'try men's souls.' The life of a nation was in the issue. It was saved as 'a brand from the burning.' The struggle bound Messrs. Stanton and Seward together with 'hooks of steel.'

"During the five or six weeks that Mr. Stanton was striving to preserve the capital, though in constant communication through a trusty third party, Messrs. Stanton and Seward never met. When the danger was over, and the day of rejoicing came, Mr. Stanton supped with Mr. Seward. I was present, then meeting Mr. Stanton for the first time. . . . It was then and there that I learned how large a debt we owed him before the Rebellion began. Of how immensely that debt has been augmented since I need not now speak." . . .

[THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *April 26, 1861.*

DEAR WEED, — Twenty steamers were ordered to be purchased and armed by the messenger who left the day the blockade was ordered. Do send men, money, and provisions forward, and don't complain of us for inefficiency without stopping to reflect. Think of the



Seventh New York and the Massachusetts Regiment lying seventy-two hours at Annapolis, within thirty-six miles of us, and we with only 3,000 men here, half of them district militia. All Virginia and Maryland are to be upon us en masse, it seems, from reports and our messengers there.

Up to this hour, with 75,000 men called out, we have n't got force here sufficient to spare a detachment to fortify the heights that overlook the town. A week ago the committee<sup>1</sup> came here to offer and urge upon us fourteen regiments. It was agreed and ordered by the President and Secretary of War. We pray night and day for troops. New York neither sends nor lets us draw them from elsewhere. The Governor appealed from the President's orders. The committee appealed to him, whereat he telegraphed both the Governor and the committee to come. Neither comes. How am I to reconcile? I don't know the grounds or merits of the controversy, nor at what hazard I intervene. You ought to be able to reconcile the parties, for you are near both of them.

WASHINGTON, *May 17, 1861.*

DEAR WEED, — I wrote you at Albany yesterday, after consultation with the P—— to warn you that the two C.'s here are trying to deduct the fourteen regiments expected from the committee out of the number ordered from the Governor.<sup>2</sup> It is the P——, General S—— and I against the two C.'s. Tell the Governor in God's name to send on the whole quota. I will take care of it. The P—— is all right.

Yours,

WM. H. SEWARD.

Was Mr. Weed's a false policy in regard to the Border States? In 1863 Mr. Greeley admitted that the loss of North Carolina was a needless as well as a grievous sacrifice. "The State of North Carolina," he then wrote, "was simply swindled into secession. Her people, after Mr. Lincoln's election, not only voted overwhelmingly that they would not secede, but — in order to guard against all possibility of mischief — voted further that their convention, though all but unanimously Union, should not meet. Yet, when Fort Sumter had been bombarded and reduced, and the President called for 75,000 militia to defend imperiled Washington, a concerted clamor was raised that Lincoln was waging unprovoked war upon the South, and

<sup>1</sup> The Union Defense Committee, of New York, of which General Dix was chairman.

<sup>2</sup> The Secretary of the Treasury opposed calling out troops, fearing that a large increase in the public debt during his administration of that department would injure his prospects of reaching the presidency.

North Carolina thereby lied into rebellion. Had the truth but been known to her people, she would have spurned her betrayers with indignant horror."

From one, judge of the rest. While Radicals in Congress gloried in unwillingness to sacrifice abolition for the Union, the wavering states were all "swindled into secession." Virginia gave a Union majority of 40,000 in February, 1861. She did not pass her ordinance until the 16th of April, and then by a vote of eighty-eight to fifty-five, after which forty counties — now called West Virginia — repudiated the action of the rest of the State. Arkansas did not secede until the 6th of May; Tennessee not until the 24th of June; Kentucky not until the 20th of November.<sup>1</sup> But before that, of course, the question of retaining any border state was triumphantly decided in favor of the Radicals; before that Mr. Weed's energies were entirely occupied in a new direction, in which, fortunately, he was more successful.

He did not believe that any political party was strong enough to defeat a united South. Writing to Jefferson Davis on the 6th of January, 1860, ex-President Pierce said: "If, through the madness of northern Abolitionists, that dire calamity [the disruption of the Union] must come, the fighting will not be along Mason and Dixon's line merely. It will be within our own borders, and in our own streets [at the North], between the two classes of citizens to whom I have referred." In other words, it was possible, as Mr. Weed believed, to organize Union sentiment at the North into an invincible army, but abolitionism could not be pressed without dividing the North into two great classes, almost, if not quite, ready to fight each other in the streets. Many weary, dreadful months were lost; millions of dollars and thousands of precious lives were sacrificed before the distinction was made plain; but, finally, emphasis was put upon the true test, when it was made clear that northern armies entered southern territory to preserve the government and Union, not to free the slaves.

"We have the high authority of Vice-President Wilson," wrote the editor of a leading newspaper, in 1875, "for the statement that an actual majority of the people of the South

<sup>1</sup> Kentuckians deny that their State seceded at all. A convention voted one way and the legislature the other.

were reluctant to enter the secession movement. In fact, they were dragged and driven out of the Union; dragged by the disunionists of the South, and driven by the disunionists of the North. What was needed was a policy on the part of influential friends of the incoming administration that would afford a solid ground for opponents of disunion at the South. Such a policy was favored by Mr. Weed, but was rejected with exultant hatred by his enemies and the enemies of the Union. Said he: 'What we ask, and all we ask, has direct reference to our obligations under the Constitution. And all we suggest is rejected, as we knew it would be, by disunionists; but if we had been seconded by Republicans in efforts which look to the preservation of the Union, the hands and hearts of loyal men in slave states would have been strengthened and cheered.'

"To fully understand Mr. Weed's position, it is necessary to go back to the closing weeks of 1860. The heights of patriotism to which he then rose will constitute his loftiest monument in that future day when real history shall be impartially written. As we contemplate the massive proportions of that monument now, criticism of prior mistakes is silenced, and we more highly honor the veteran the more we consider the prejudices he was forced to conquer, the associations he was compelled to sever, and the partisan leadership he was required to bury beneath patriotic devotion to the peace, prosperity, and progress of his country.

"Mr. Weed saw, with a clearness of vision which now seems almost preternaturally acute, the mighty sweep and terrible devastation of the fierce storm then angrily gathering on the southern horizon and around the northern sky, threatening a tornado of hissing shot and bursting shell over all the land, if the black, muttering clouds ever met. 'Shall we ignore these startling facts,' he wrote, on the 22d of December, 1860, 'and neglect to prepare for scenes which are to deluge the country in blood, carnage, and rapine?' and he thus explained: 'What we mean by preparation is to set ourselves voluntarily, cheerfully, and wholly right on questions involved, so that when the shock comes, the whole North will meet it shoulder to shoulder all hearts responding to the cry of "Union now and forever."' As a penalty for not adopting his counsel, more able-bodied male whites from the North alone were killed or disabled during

the war than there were able-bodied male blacks in slavery at the time; while the cost to the treasury of the Union alone has been thirty times a fair valuation of all the slaves."

At the beginning of the war, General Scott was our senior military leader. Knowing that efficient soldiers cannot be gathered together in a day from workshops, cornfields and dry-goods stores, he perfected a scheme of operation by which he expected to put an end to the Rebellion during the summer and fall. The characteristic feature of his plan was that raw troops from the North should not be hurried to the front when they knew nothing of military tactics, or even of military discipline. Camps of instruction were contemplated, where, during June, July, and August, volunteers might be subjected to drill, until they became fit for duty. With the force at his command, General Scott assured the safety of Washington, and then began operations near Fortress Monroe and in Western Virginia, in all possible cases coöperating with loyal Southerners. He made Washington his base of operations, and with the western wings of his army was to feel and fight his way, until, at the appointed time, having occupied designated positions, with men inured to service and thoroughly trained, all his columns were to make a simultaneous advance upon Richmond.

This plan, the merits of which need not be discussed, commended itself to Mr. Weed and to other friends of the Union. But it was not in accord with the eager spirit of radicalism, which insisted upon precipitate operations. Impatient editors and orators at the North scoffed at General Scott and his preparations. Mr. Greeley assumed command of our armies, reiterating his orders day after day in italics and capitals: "On to Richmond." Congress met on the 4th of July, 1861, and senators and representatives, with more zeal than knowledge, caught the infection. The Postmaster-General waited upon the President, with members of Congress, and complained of the "inactivity" of the army. In accordance with the views of the government, Senator Henry Wilson prepared bills, with a full knowledge of what legislation was needed. These measures met with but little opposition in the Senate, but when they reached the House were referred to the committee on military affairs, where they were held without action by the brother of the Postmaster-General. It was even intimated that the radical

directorship might pass a vote of censure upon the administration. "One Yankee is as good as a dozen rebels," was a favorite newspaper claim. "The cowards will run off when they sniff gunpowder," was another. Northern people caught their impressions from the tone of Congress and the public press. Millions were taught to distrust the President. Irreconcilable divisions were threatened. Finally, a reckless advance, right or wrong, became not a military but a political necessity.

"The first and only inauguration of a President I ever attended," writes Mr. Weed, "was that of Mr. Lincoln in 1861. It was known that designs upon his life, while on his way from Springfield to Washington, were providentially averted. It was also known that seizing upon the government and its archives had been contemplated. The few troops in Washington were therefore stationed around the Capitol. During the ceremony of inauguration, I walked about the grounds, encountering Major-General Wool, with a detachment of United States troops ready for action, and two pieces of cannon posted so as to rake an important avenue. I soon after found Lieutenant-General Scott, with the same number of cannon (on one of which the veteran was resting his elbow), posted in an equally advantageous position. This, in a country so long exempted from serious internal collisions, occasioned painful reflections. General Scott assured me that these precautions were not unnecessary, and that they had not been taken a moment too early. All, however, passed without either an attack or an alarm.

"But it was not long before unequivocal symptoms of rebellion were manifested. When in Washington, a few days afterward, I was awakened early one morning by Horace R. Riddle, formerly a resident of, and representative from, Allegany County, N. Y., but then living at Harper's Ferry,<sup>1</sup> who informed me that, unless immediately reënfined, the arsenal and armory at that place would be attacked and taken by enemies of the government, who were banding together for that purpose; adding that there was not an hour to lose. I went immediately to the Secretary of War with this information. He thought the danger could not be so imminent, but said that the subject should have immediate attention. I went from the Secretary of War to General Scott, who promptly said

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Riddle now resides in Baltimore.

that my information was confirmatory of that which he had received the evening previous. 'But,' he added, 'what can I do? My effective force, all told, for the defense of the capital, is twenty-one hundred. Washington is as much in danger as Harper's Ferry. I shall repel any attack upon this city, but I cannot hazard the capital of the Union, as I should do by dividing my force, even to save Harper's Ferry.' My friend Riddle's information was but too reliable. The next day brought intelligence of the loss of Harper's Ferry.

"Soon after this, our first taste of rebellion, I received information from an equally reliable source that Gosport, with its vast supply of munitions of war, was in danger. Of this I informed the Secretary of the Navy, at the breakfast-table of Willard's Hotel. Believing from his manner that he attached but little importance to my information, I reiterated it with emphasis, assuring him that it would be occasion for deep regret if Gosport were not immediately strengthened. Meeting the Secretary at dinner the same day I renewed the conversation, and was informed that the matter would be attended to. This did not quiet my solicitude; and, leaving the Secretary to the placid enjoyment of his dinner, I repaired to the White House. Mr. Lincoln, however, had driven out to visit some fortifications. I made another attempt in the evening to see him, but he was out again. Early the next morning, however, I found him, and informed him what I had heard of the danger that threatened Gosport, and how, as I feared, I had failed to impress the Secretary of the Navy with the accuracy of my information or the necessity of immediate action. 'Well,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'we can't afford to lose all those cannon; I'll go and see Father Welles myself.' And he did immediately. The result was that Admiral Paulding, who was then despatched to Norfolk, arrived just in time to enjoy an illumination occasioned by the burning of government property, and witness the capture of Gosport.

"I left Washington on the morning of the day that the Massachusetts Sixth regiment was attacked at Baltimore, meeting that regiment entering Baltimore as our train was leaving that city. The railroad bridges over the Gunpowder and Bush rivers were burned soon after we crossed them, after which there was no railway communication between Baltimore and Havre de

Grace. Late that night I received, at the Astor House, the following telegram from the Secretary of State :—

WASHINGTON, April 18, 1861.

The danger is imminent. Hasten the movement of steamers with troops, *via* Annapolis.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

“An hour later I received the following telegram from the Secretary of War :—

Charter steamers and despatch troops to Annapolis.

SIMON CAMERON.

“This, as I learned in the morning, was the last despatch that came over the wires, the line having been destroyed during the night. Early the next morning I chartered from Messrs. Spoford & Tileston, M. O. Roberts, Mitchell & Co., and H. B. Cromwell & Co., the steamers belonging to their respective lines. Meantime colonels of regiments and commandants of companies were astir, the city resounding with martial music. Citizens came together spontaneously, and appointed a Union Defense Committee, composed of the most wealthy, influential, and patriotic among us. On the following day (Sunday) the Eighth and Twelfth regiments were ready to embark. While the Twelfth regiment was going on board the steamer *Columbia*, the danger of an attack in Chesapeake Bay was suggested. I despatched the late Captain Joseph J. Comstock (who was rendering voluntary but efficient aid in arranging charter parties and fitting out steamers), with a note to Colonel Scott, requesting him to give an order to the officer on Governor's Island to place a cannon, etc., on board the steamer *Columbia*. That officer, who received Captain Comstock as he was preparing for church, replied that he ‘could not attend to business on Sunday.’ Learning, on Captain Comstock's return, that Major Heintzelman, an old friend, was in command at Governor's Island, I wrote a hasty note to him in pencil, asking him for a cannon, which came without a moment's hesitation or delay.

“Some months afterward, when Congress had authorized a large increase of the army, dining one day with General Scott, I availed myself of a break in the conversation to say that I hoped Major Heintzelman was well known to him. ‘And why,’ asked the General, ‘do you hope that I know Major

Heintzelman well?' 'Because,' I replied, 'I am about, if you will permit an outsider to take that liberty, to ask a great favor.' 'And what is the favor, sir?' 'A regiment for Major Heintzelman.' 'Major Heintzelman, sir, assuming that the Secretary of War and the President will accept my designation, will get a regiment, not as a favor, but in justice to his merits as an officer. Heintzelman, when a Lieutenant in command of his company, then stationed at a wilderness post, was aroused in the night by a sentinel's cry of fire. The alarm proceeded from the powder-house, a slight, temporary building, some distance from the encampment. The company was immediately formed and moved to the scene of conflagration. The Lieutenant's order was to follow him into the powder-house, each one seizing and bringing out his keg of powder. Lieutenant Heintzelman entered first and brought out the first keg. You will see, therefore, that, however pleasant it may be for an officer to have friends at court, Major Heintzelman does not need them.'

"The New York Sixty-ninth (Irish) regiment, for refusing to turn out on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales, was deprived of its colors. Though never actually disbanded, it had not since been doing duty. While occupied in getting other regiments off, Colonel Michael Corcoran brought me a letter of introduction from Archbishop Hughes. The Colonel said that the murder of Massachusetts men in the streets of Baltimore had greatly excited his men, and if the colors of the Sixty-ninth were restored and the services of the regiment accepted, he would be ready to march, with one thousand rank and file, in twenty-four hours. I informed Governor Morgan, at Albany, by telegraph, that the Sixty-ninth regiment, if restored to its former status, would immediately take the field. A few hours brought me a despatch accepting the services of the Sixty-ninth, and warmly thanking Colonel Corcoran, his officers, and men, for their promptitude and patriotism. The Governor's despatch was read in the evening to the regiment, and received with great enthusiasm. True to his promise, Colonel Corcoran marched through Broadway, amid enthusiastic acclamations, on the following day, to embark for Annapolis.

"Simultaneously I was accosted on the steps of the Astor House by a stranger, who informed me that he desired to raise a company of cavalry, which, if he could obtain the authority,



should be organized and ready to march in three days. I was so favorably impressed with his bearing and manner that I immediately telegraphed Governor Morgan, earnestly asking his authority for Thomas C. Devin to organize a cavalry corps. Captain Devin remained at my room until a favorable response from the Governor was received two hours afterward; and he also was faithful to his promise, for in three days, with a full company of men, he was on his way to the front. Captain Devin immediately attracted the attention of his superior officers, not less by the efficiency and discipline of his men than by his own gallantry in battle. He fought bravely through the whole war, rising by merit first to the command of a regiment and then of a brigade, and obtained the rank of brevet Major-General at the conclusion of the Rebellion. In the reduction of the army, my friend Devin was retained as Lieutenant-Colonel of a United States cavalry regiment.

"I left for Washington as soon as the number of troops required were on their way; but as the railroads were still obstructed between Havre de Grace and Baltimore, we took a small steamer at the former place for Annapolis, arriving early in the morning. General Butler, who was in command, invited me to breakfast with him, where I met the late General James S. Wadsworth, who had just arrived in the tug *Dunderberg*, loaded with provisions. While we were with General Butler, he invented, so far as the word is applicable to escaped slaves, the very expressive term 'contraband.'

"At Annapolis I found Colonel Corcoran with a part of his Sixty-ninth regiment, several companies having been disposed along the line of the railway for its protection between the city of Annapolis and Annapolis Junction. With this regiment I found my friend Charles G. Halpine [Miles O'Reilly], and the present Judge McCunn, acting as volunteer commissaries, or sutlers. The train was bountifully supplied with provisions from General Wadsworth's steamer, and left for Annapolis Junction about midday. I took position with Messrs. Halpine and McCunn in a baggage car loaded with provisions, which were distributed to small detachments of troops stationed two miles distant from each other. The abundant supply of bread, hams, butter, cheese, etc., thrown out by the acting commissaries whom I have named, was received by men who had been twelve,

eighteen, and twenty-four hours without rations with an avidity not unlike that witnessed in menageries when the animals are being fed.

“During this visit to Washington Generals Lee and Johnston, both esteemed as valuable officers of the army, abandoned the Union cause. The defection of General Lee, who was a favorite with General Scott, occasioned him surprise and regret. Many other officers of experience and capacity had previously joined the Rebellion, or had gone, as they expressed it, with their states. General Scott, then seventy-three years old, with impaired health, could not himself take the field. General Wool, though in good health, was about the age of General Scott. The President and his Cabinet were talking anxiously on the subject of officers qualified to lead our armies. I inquired of General Scott — who had kindly asked me to call frequently and familiarly at his headquarters — who, among his junior officers, was best fitted for the work that he had been doing in our wars since 1812. He reflected for some time, and then replied that I had asked him an exceedingly embarrassing question. He said that we had lost some valuable officers in the Mexican War, and that others, equally valuable officers, had since died of diseases contracted in Mexico, naming Generals Riley, Belknap, Worth, and others whose names I do not remember; adding, with excited feeling, that there were others for whom he would have cheerfully been responsible a month ago, but they were deserters now. The question evidently pained him, and I changed the conversation.

“From General Scott I went to Colonel Joseph P. Taylor, brother of the late President Zachary Taylor, an old officer of the army, then in the Commissary Department, asking him the same question. He replied that the Mexican War had deprived us of all or nearly all of our best army officers. ‘Are there not,’ I inquired, ‘colonels, lieutenant-colonels, or majors qualified to fill the places of those whom we have lost?’ He took the ‘Army Register,’ and looked carefully through it, without finding what was desired, but remarked that some of the best and most promising officers of the army had resigned and were now occupying civil offices. On my inquiring who they were, he replied McClellan, Sherman, and Dan Tyler. I reported the interview with General Scott and Colonel Taylor to President

Lincoln and Secretary Seward. McClellan was then connected with the Illinois Central Railroad, and Sherman was president of a university in Louisiana. Measures were promptly taken to bring these two gentlemen into the service. On the following morning a Connecticut regiment arrived at Washington on board of two New Haven steamers, under the command of Colonel Dan Tyler, to whom I repeated the remark of Colonel Taylor. Colonel Tyler observed that he fully indorsed the opinion of Colonel Taylor as to the military qualifications of McClellan and Sherman, but that he was distrustful of himself, though he would endeavor to do his duty.

“During the fortnight preceding the battle of Bull Run, I was much in Washington, and had frequent interviews with the President, Secretary of State, Secretary of War, and General Scott. It was apparent in all their conversations that a series of disasters from the outbreak of the Rebellion had greatly discouraged and mortified the northern people. Efforts were made, therefore, to concentrate a force sufficient to encounter the enemy, who awaited an attack. The pressure in Congress and by the press hastened the movement. On the Friday preceding the battle — that occurred on Sunday — I dined with General Scott. Two of his aids, Generals Hamilton and Van Rensselaer, and General Stone were the only other persons at the table. Nothing but the approaching battle was talked of. General Scott lamented, as was his constant habit, that his age and infirmities prevented his taking the field. He did not seem to be satisfied with the information he had obtained of the geographical position of the two armies, or of the general face of the country. After dinner, but before we left the table, General McDowell with two or three members of his staff were ushered in. They had come from the front, and General McDowell had called to take his final orders. Secretaries Seward and Cameron dropped in soon afterward. Conversation was then conducted by Generals Scott and McDowell, Secretary Cameron occasionally asking a question or making a remark. General McDowell left, apparently in good spirits and confident of success. General Scott became thoughtful, and, as I thought, anxious. Messrs. Seward and Cameron left soon afterward; I followed, overtaking them at Mr. Seward’s door, whence I walked home with Mr. Cameron. On the way, I remarked that so far

as I could learn from the conversation at General Scott's room, there was no apprehension of a movement by General Johnston, and asked whether, in the event of a junction of the two armies, General McDowell was to give them battle? Secretary Cameron was no better informed than myself on that point, but assumed that General Patterson would hold Johnston in check. But Mr. Cameron, as we continued the conversation, became so much disturbed, that he said he would himself ride out to General McDowell's headquarters the next morning, and be governed by information he might obtain there. On Saturday I put the same question to General Scott, who replied that General Patterson had a force superior to that of General Johnston, and had his orders to watch his movements. I inquired if McDowell was strong enough to engage two armies, to which the General replied, 'Johnston cannot get away from Patterson.' This made me very despondent all that day and night. On Sunday, when the battle was going on, I was excited and nervous, and could not help feeling that it was to be a day of disaster, if not of dishonor, to our cause. It was, of course, a day of anxiety to every one. In the evening all were breathlessly waiting for intelligence. About eleven o'clock, standing alone on the sidewalk in front of Willard's Hotel, I saw a horseman dash around the corner, down Pennsylvania Avenue. He alighted within two feet of me. It was Colonel Burnside, of Rhode Island. His looks imparted the intelligence I had dreaded. I asked no question and he made no sign. Others followed soon afterward, and the painful news circulated through the city, giving secret satisfaction to a large majority of its inhabitants. General Patterson had *not* held General Johnston, nor did he make the least movement to obstruct his rapid march to Bull Run.

“Early on the morning after the battle of Bull Run, I started with wine, fruit, and other articles suited to the condition of invalids, and visited the different hospitals about Washington, relieving, as far as I could, the wounded of our own State. • As I was leaving the hospital at Georgetown, the surgeon invited me into a ward which we were passing, to see a patient who had shown extraordinary energy and endurance. I found a young man upon a cot. The surgeon lifted a sheet and removed from a musket-ball wound some lint saturated with ice-water.

He then asked the young man to raise himself, so that, while resting upon his elbow, I saw that the ball had passed through his body, avoiding in some miraculous way any vital spot. The patient, the surgeon informed me, had, after being the last to leave the field, re-formed the thinned ranks of his company and marched at their head from the battle-ground to their former encampment near Washington, and then reported himself as a wounded officer. Notwithstanding this fearful wound, he was calm and hopeful. He came, as he informed me, from Minnesota, and was in command of a company in a Minnesota regiment. Though born in New Hampshire, his parents removed in his early youth, first to Indiana and then to Minnesota. He gave me his name, and I left, strongly impressed with the idea that such a man was not only entitled to promotion for services already rendered, but that, if his life was spared, he was destined for future usefulness. I went directly to the Secretary of War, who, before I had half finished my relation, directed a commission to be issued for my *protégé*. I went from Secretary Cameron to President Lincoln, who not only cheerfully approved the commission, but was only prevented by pressing duties from taking it over to Georgetown himself. Returning with it to the war office, Secretary Cameron despatched a messenger to the hospital, and in less than three hours after I left him, Captain Putnam, of the Minnesota volunteers, found himself designated as Captain Putnam of the United States army.

“Several weeks afterward, but during that disastrous summer, I was again in Washington, when the news of our appalling defeat at Ball’s Bluff was received. Coming as it did when we were disheartened by repulses in other quarters, it had a sickening effect upon the public mind. I was sitting about nine o’clock in the evening, alone with Mr. Lincoln, endeavoring to find encouragement or hope from intelligence received from the operations of the army in other places, when a messenger announced an officer from Ball’s Bluff. That officer proved to be a brother of Colonel Baker, who had fallen in that battle. He was accompanied by a young son of Colonel Baker, both brother and son having been engaged in the fight. An impression had already reached Washington that Colonel Baker had imprudently engaged a superior force, and was therefore responsible for the disaster. The Colonel’s brother handed to

the President the order from General Stone under which Colonel Baker acted. That order was found in the Colonel's cap, to saturated with blood (the Colonel was shot through the head) that it was scarcely legible. The President, however, succeeded in reading the whole of it. Its preservation, fortunately for Colonel Baker, was a perfect vindication of his conduct. He had acted in strict obedience to its letter and spirit. I left the brother and son of Colonel Baker with the intention of informing the Secretary of War that Colonel Baker had lost his life in the gallant discharge of his duty and in obedience to the orders of his superior officer. Near the residence of Secretary Seward I met Colonel Thomas A. Scott, the Assistant Secretary of War, who informed me that he was on his way to the office of the agent of the Associated Press, with a despatch in relation to Ball's Bluff. I informed him that I had information which might change the character of his despatch. He replied that he had just left General McClellan (whose house was but a few rods off), who had made up the despatch from the latest information. He went with me, however, into Secretary Seward's library, where, on reading the despatch, I found that it threw the responsibility of the battle and the defeat upon Colonel Baker, though expressed in kindly language and with mitigations. Colonel Scott, at my suggestion, went immediately to the White House, and, I believe, from there back to General McClellan's, where the despatch was so modified as to relieve the memory of a gallant officer of the greatest injustice.

"The body of Colonel Baker was rescued from the field by Louis Bierrel, a soldier from the city of New York, who stood by his gun until the enemy were upon him, when, with a comrade, he bore away the lifeless body of his commander. At the close of the war I obtained a situation in the Custom House for this faithful soldier.

"It will be remembered that early in the Rebellion a Russian fleet lay for several months in our harbor, and that other Russian men-of-war were stationed at San Francisco. Admiral Farragut lived at the Astor House, where he was frequently visited by the Russian Admiral, between whom, when they were young officers serving in the Mediterranean, a warm friendship had grown up. Sitting in my room one day after dinner, Admiral Farragut said to his Russian friend, 'Why are you

spending the winter here in idleness?' 'I am here,' replied the Russian Admiral, 'under sealed orders, to be broken only in a contingency that has not yet occurred.' He added that other Russian war vessels were lying off San Francisco with similar orders. During this conversation the Russian Admiral admitted that he had received orders to break the seals, if during the Rebellion we became involved in a war with foreign nations. Strict confidence was then enjoined.

"When in Washington a few days later, Secretary Seward informed me that he had asked the Russian Minister why his government kept their ships of war so long in our harbors, who, while in answering he disclaimed any knowledge of the nature of their visit, felt at liberty to say that it had no unfriendly purpose.

"Louis Napoleon had invited Russia, as he did England, to unite with him in demanding the breaking of our blockade. The Russian Ambassador at London informed his government that England was preparing for war with America, on account of the seizure of Mason and Slidell. Hence two fleets were immediately sent across the Atlantic under sealed orders, so that if their services were not needed, the intentions of the Emperor would remain, as they have to this day, secret. It is certain, however, that when our government and Union were imperiled by a formidable rebellion, we should have found a powerful ally in Russia, had an emergency occurred."

The latter revelation is corroborated by a well-known New York gentleman, who was in St. Petersburg when the Rebellion began, and who, during an unofficial call upon Prince Gortschakoff, was shown by the Chancellor an order written in Alexander's own hand, directing his Admiral to report to President Lincoln for orders, in case England or France sided with the Confederates.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

1861.

THE "TRENT" AFFAIR. — HOW MASON AND SLIDELL WERE CAPTURED. — MR. WEED'S FOREIGN MISSION. — ARRIVAL AT PARIS. — CONSULTATION. — MR. BIGELOW. — MR. SANFORD. — IN LONDON. — THE VISIT TO PEMBROKE. — EARL RUSSELL. — LORD KINNAIRD. — SIR HENRY HOLLAND. — MR. PEABODY. — LETTER TO THE LONDON "TIMES." — EDITORIAL COMMENT.

ON the 8th of November, 1861, Commodore Wilkes, returning to New York from the African coast, on the United States steamer San Jacinto, put into the harbor of Havana. The same day he heard of the departure from that port by the British mail steamer Trent of Messrs. Mason and Slidell, Confederate Plenipotentiaries to France and England. Overhauling the Trent in the straits of the Bahamas, he brought the ship to, by a shot across her bow, arrested the Confederate commissioners and their secretaries, and brought them to Fortress Monroe, where he awaited instructions from Washington. A few days afterwards, in obedience to orders, the Commodore sailed for Boston, and Messrs. Mason and Slidell were locked up in Fort Warren.

The English people put only one construction upon this proceeding. They regarded it as a deliberate insult to the British flag. Agents of secession had been at work in Europe for months before the affair of the Trent, and had created a disposition to take the southern side in all matters at issue between the South and the government. The letter of Senator Benjamin, of Louisiana, written to the British Consul at New York, and by him transmitted to Lord Lyons, shows more conclusively perhaps than any evidence which has heretofore been adduced, the adroitness with which Rebellion sought foreign alliances. Other and more direct influences were brought to bear. Prominent English statesmen and editors were given favorable opportunities to invest in Confederate securities.



Some of these gentlemen have denied that they ever "subscribed" for such securities. They were given what they had, "out of compliment."

Several days before the exploit of Commodore Wilkes, with a full understanding of the aspect of Europe, President Lincoln named a commission to visit England and France, and endeavor to counteract the feeling which existed there, of hostility towards this government. Mr. Weed has told how and why he consented to accompany Archbishop Hughes, of New York,<sup>1</sup> and Bishop McIlvaine, of Ohio,<sup>2</sup> on this most important mission. He sailed from New York, on the steamer *Arago* the day after Mason and Slidell were captured. He reached Havre on the 24th of November.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Weed went at once to Paris, where he was met in the railway station by Mr. John Bigelow, our Consul-General, and by Mr. H. S. Sanford, then our Minister to Belgium. These gentlemen are both living, and are equally well known in Europe and America. They greeted Mr. Weed warmly, inviting him to dine with them at the café of the Palais Royale. In the evening the party was joined by Mr. Dayton, the American Minister, and by Archbishop Hughes. Several hours were spent in discussing the situation and maturing a plan of action. Mr. Sanford had been connected with the American Embassy at Paris. Both he and Mr. Bigelow had familiar access to the clubs and to men in power. They pressed upon Mr. Weed the discouraging conviction that the French people would universally condemn the arrest of Mason and Slidell, of which tidings had just reached Paris.

Various contingencies were considered at this consultation.

<sup>1</sup> It was particularly hoped that Archbishop Hughes might undo the work of the Bishop of Charleston, who had confused the mind of the Pope.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop McIlvaine's name was suggested by Secretary Chase.

<sup>3</sup> Several sensational reports regarding the object of this mission were set afloat. The following from the London *Star and Dial*, of November, 1861, had wide currency: "Just as we are going to press, we receive a most important piece of information from a reliable source. It is nothing less than the expressed conviction of Mr. Seward, that the United States government cannot succeed in this war, and that the Confederacy will probably be recognized by European powers, and that peace will be the result in sixty days. In view of this, Mr. Thurlow Weed has been sent to England, and if he should find the British ministry determined to recognize the Confederacy, the American government will at once prepare for peace."

It was finally agreed that the Archbishop should immediately seek an audience with the Emperor. Mr. Weed, after inducing General Scott to outline a public letter, which Mr. Bigelow volunteered to write, was to cross the Channel, confer with Bishop McIlvaine, and see what could be accomplished in England. These arrangements perfected, Mr. Weed retired with his colleague, Archbishop Hughes, to their apartments in the Hôtel de l'Europe. Subsequently the Archbishop's audience resulted in a long, courteous, but inconclusive conversation with the Emperor, from which it was impossible to extract the slightest crumb of comfort. Mr. Bigelow's letter was signed by General Scott, as an expression of his own position; and taking several copies in his pocket, on the 5th of December Mr. Weed started for London.

While he was breakfasting at the Royal Cambridge Hotel, in Hanover Square, on the following morning, he received the card of Charles L. Wilson, Secretary of the American Legation, who had called to inquire at what hour it would be convenient to receive a visit from Charles Francis Adams, then American Minister to England. As Mr. Weed's relations with Mr. Adams while that gentleman was in Congress had been somewhat constrained, he decided to return with Mr. Wilson instead of waiting for Mr. Adams. A cordial reception awaited him at the Legation. Mr. Adams expressed the belief that much good would result from the appearance of General Scott's letter, which was published that morning simultaneously in London and Paris. Conversation then turned on the probable outcome of the Trent complication. "England," said the American Minister, "evinces a vehement determination to vindicate the honor of her flag. The difficulties of my position are greatly aggravated by this most inopportune occurrence. There can be no question but that war with America is seriously contemplated. Orders have gone out to all the arsenals and dock-yards to prepare for immediate service."

"Mr. Adams," writes Mr. Weed, "saw no possibility of averting war with England except by the release of Messrs. Mason and Slidell; and, doubting whether our government and people could be induced to surrender them, was very despondent. He expressed his readiness to accept the coöperation of Bishop McIlvaine and myself in any way that promised to disabuse the

English mind of the idea that the northern people or the federal government had provoked, or were responsible for the Rebellion. But as the Trent affair was the question of immediate danger, he said that he would obtain an audience for me with Earl Russell and Lord Palmerston, at the earliest day practicable. This interview, so cordial on the part of Mr. Adams that I even forgot to hand him my letter of instructions from the Secretary of State, entirely relieved any uneasiness I had felt that our Minister at the Court of St. James might regard the semi-official mission upon which I had been sent as an unnecessary interference with his legitimate functions."

[THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO MR. ADAMS.]

WASHINGTON, *November 7, 1861.*

DEAR SIR, — It is deemed important to the public interest that citizens of well-known high standing should visit Europe for the purpose of assisting to counteract the machinations of the agents of treason against the United States in that quarter.

This opinion having become known to Thurlow Weed, Esq., of Albany, N. Y., the bearer of this communication, he has kindly offered his services, which, as he has the full confidence of both the President and myself, have been promptly and cheerfully accepted. It is not intended that he shall take part in or interfere with your official proceedings. His unofficial character, however, as well as his great knowledge and experience in public affairs may enable him to be of usefulness to us in a way and to a degree which we could not reasonably expect from you.

I accordingly commend him and his estimable daughter, by whom he is accompanied, to your kind consideration during their abode in London. I do this more confidently, not only on account of Mr. Weed's intrinsic merits, but from an impression that you are well aware of the intimate relations between him and myself, which have existed for many years. I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Retiring from the American Legation, Mr. Weed called upon his old friend George Peabody, the distinguished philanthropist. At that gentleman's office, No. 22 Old Broad Street, a number of English and American merchants had assembled. They were panic-stricken by the clamor of war. A similar state of affairs existed at the office of Baring Brothers, our fiscal agents, where Mr. Weed next called. It was the general opin-

ion that the United States government and people sanctioned and would sustain the arrest of the Confederate embassy, and that nothing could prevent an armed conflict, possibly involving France, Germany, and Russia.

At Mr. Peabody's office Mr. Weed met Mr. McCullagh Torrens, by whose influence an interview with Earl Russell was arranged for the following morning. The Earl was at first disinclined to look upon the Trent question from any except the ultra English standpoint. Mr. Weed referred, as delicately as he could, to English precedents, reminding his lordship of instances when persons claiming to be British subjects had been taken from American ships. To this the Earl replied that the cases were not parallel and could not be accepted as precedents. After further conversation Mr. Weed incidentally recalled events in Earl Russell's career, which had been regarded with great interest by Whigs in America, and intimated that there was so much in common between English and American Whigs that we had come to rely upon him for favorable constructions upon questions of difference between the two governments. Specific references were made to several important and critical periods in the Earl's political history which had awakened solicitude on our side of the Atlantic. After this the interview became less embarrassing, and Mr. Weed ventured, after again conceding that we were in the wrong, to remind the Earl that in the impressment of American seamen our government submitted to more than six thousand violations of its flag, before resorting to war, in 1812. The Earl expressed a hope that the danger of a collision might be averted by the surrender of the rebel commissioners. Mr. Weed replied that our people were greatly exasperated with men who had left their seats in the Senate of the United States to inaugurate and lead a rebellion; that English history taught us that English noblemen had gone from the Tower to the block for offenses less grave than those which Messrs. Mason and Slidell had committed: and that our government would be strongly tempted to maintain that this seizure was sanctioned by the early practice of the English government; concluding with the expression of a hope that if the British demand for release was made in a friendly spirit, it would be complied with. At the end of an hour's conversation, more satisfactory in its conclusion than in its commencement,

lunch was announced, after which Mr. Weed bade good day to the Earl, and accepted an invitation from Lady Russell to walk through the Lodge gardens.

Mr. Weed accompanied her about the grounds, taking a lively interest in all the surroundings. Though the day was rather dark and blustering, yet through the openings, her ladyship pointed out Hampton Court, Kew, Kingston, Windsor, and other localities made classic by the residence of such men as Pope and Walpole. Mr. Weed's attention was attracted to a mound, some two or three feet above the level of the lawn, and he asked if that, too, had a history. "Oh, yes," replied Lady Russell, placing Mr. Weed upon it. Then she added: "Look through that avenue of elms. You are now standing precisely where Henry VIII. stood watching for a signal from the dome of St. Paul's church, announcing the execution of Anne Boleyn." After looking at a mimic fortification in process of construction by her children, Lady Russell, as if the idea had just occurred to her, turned toward him and said: "Ladies, you know; are not supposed to have any knowledge of public affairs. But we have eyes and ears, and sometimes use them. In these troubles about the taking of some men from under the protection of our flag, it may be some encouragement to you to know that the Queen is distressed at what she hears, and is deeply anxious for an amicable settlement." Assuming as he did that this significant intimation had been inspired by the Earl, who had taken Lady Russell aside a few moments before she received her hat and shawl, Mr. Weed departed from Pembroke Lodge with anxiety about the Trent affair greatly alleviated.

[THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO EARL RUSSELL.]

WASHINGTON, *November 7, 1861.*

MY DEAR LORD, — Allow me to introduce to you Thurlow Weed, Esq., an eminent citizen of the State of New York, for many years my intimate personal and political friend. He is not excelled on this continent for tact, knowledge, sagacity, and experience in public affairs generally, and especially in those of the United States. As with these he unites high personal character, he may be deemed warranted in expecting any opportunity for intercourse with one so deservedly eminent as you are, which your increasing responsibilities may permit. I have the honor to be

Your lordship's obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

While in London Mr. Weed was a frequent visitor at the residence of Mr. Arthur Kinnaird, to whom he had been presented by the Rev. Mr. Arthur, of Bishopsgate Street, London. He was also often with Sir Henry Holland, then physician to the Queen, and with Mr. Peabody. These gentlemen, as well as other friends, on the day after the interview with Earl Russell, suggested that a letter on the Trent affair published in the "Times," might have a tranquilizing effect; and after some discussion of the character and temper of such a letter, Mr. Weed was requested to prepare it. Mr. Peabody was well acquainted with the editor of the "Times," the late Mr. Delane, and undertook to procure its publication. After conferring with Mr. Adams, whose approval was given, the letter was written. When it was handed to Mr. Peabody, that gentleman remembered that he had introduced Mr. Weed to Mr. Delane several years before at the mansion of "The Patroon" in Albany. This obviated the necessity of Mr. Peabody's agency, and Mr. Weed drove at once to the "Times" office. Mr. Delane was out, but the financial editor, Mr. Sampson, to whom Mr. Weed had a letter of introduction from Mr. Minturn, said he would deliver the communication to Mr. Delane in person. About ten o'clock the same evening, a messenger from the "Times" office brought Mr. Weed "proof" of his article. The next day it appeared in a prominent column of the "Times," and was immediately republished in London, Paris, Liverpool, Manchester, Dublin, and St. Petersburg.

"The intimation in yesterday's 'Times,' " wrote Mr. Weed in his letter to the editor of that paper, "of a 'yearning in this country after' American views upon the new complication of our relations with England, followed this morning by relaxing and even kindlier strictures, tempts me to submit briefly some thoughts which an occurrence profoundly embarrassing suggests; not, however, upon international law, for, as an humble journalist, I have been accustomed only to the common-sense interpretations of public questions, and, were I at all qualified to enter into the legal argument, I should be inclined to accept your own view of the question, viz.: that time and circumstances have so far changed the practice and reformed the principles of international maritime law as to render the earlier precedents and authorities largely inapplicable to existing cases;

and further, while the concession, in proving my candor may impeach my patriotism, I am constrained to admit that in the ventilation of the Laurens seizure, as cited by Mr. George Sumner, the bottom has fallen out of our strongest precedent.

"Dismissing, therefore, the legal considerations of the Trent and San Jacinto question, I confess to a very strong 'yearning' that the English government, its press, and its people, may be disabused of an impression which has so generally obtained, that our government seeks occasion for disagreement, or cherishes other than such feelings as belong to the relations of interest and amity that blend and bind us together. I am even less surprised at the belligerent sensibility which the Trent affair has awakened here than by the pervading antecedent impression that our government entertains hostile purposes towards England, and that our Secretary of State has actually designed the disruption of relations which I had supposed, and still believe, almost universally regarded as essential to the welfare of our country and the happiness of our people.

"An alleged conversation of Secretary Seward's with the Duke of Newcastle, referred to in the 'Times,' conflicts with these assurances. Without precise information as to the language used by Mr. Seward, I cannot be mistaken in assuming that its spirit was misapprehended. The conversation occurred, I believe, at a dinner given by Governor Morgan to the Prince of Wales. The avowal of a prominent Senator, who had reason to suppose that he might be called to a more responsible position in the government, of a deliberate intention to 'insult your (the Duke's) government,' could not but have been highly offensive. But while I can readily excuse an English nobleman for misinterpreting idle or loose talk in an American statesman, by all Americans the badinage of Mr. Seward would have been readily understood. Perhaps it would have been wiser not to attempt to 'play with edged tools.' Indeed, from the mischief an attempted pleasantry has occasioned, any departure from the gravities of conversation is certainly to be regretted. After disclaiming, as I feel quite authorized in doing, for Mr. Seward, unfriendly intentions and feelings towards England, I beg to refer to such English gentlemen as have acquaintance with, or opportunities for consulting Mr. Adams, our resident minister, for a true reflex of American sympathies. That distinguished

statesman, whose eminent father and grandfather at different epochs represented our country, — first at the Court of St. James, and subsequently as President of the United States, — enjoys, in the best and broadest sense of the term, the confidence of his government; and after resigning his seat in Congress to assume diplomatic responsibilities, he is also familiar with the views and feelings of our public men.

“ Until I saw the accusation against Secretary Seward standing out prominently in the London press, the idea had not entered my mind, nor can I now persuade myself that it has any real foundation to stand upon. After the settlement of the Maine and Vancouver boundary question, in their final action upon both of which the course of the English government was characterized by enlightened justice and wisdom, I had supposed that no cause of misunderstanding remained, and that we might look forward to a long period of exemption from conflict or dissension. Subsequently incidental occasions for interchanges of national courtesies occurred, tending to confirm and strengthen feelings of good will. These were succeeded by the memorable visit of the Prince of Wales, whose advent among us afforded to the American people an opportunity to mark, in heartfelt ovations, both their regard for the future monarch of Great Britain and their high estimate of and their personal admiration for a Queen whose eventful and illustrious reign, in advancing civilization, in promoting public and private virtue, and in hallowing household shrines, will enrich the archives and brighten the pages of England’s history. I thought often, while witnessing, as I did, in several of our cities, the spontaneous demonstrations of unmistakable regard from hundreds of thousands of hearts warmed by remembrances of Saxon descent, that if all England could ‘be there to see,’ we should thenceforth, as nations, dwell together in peace and friendship. In that triumphal journey, extending many thousand miles, through cities, towns, villages, hamlets, and wildernesses, nothing occurred to mar its enjoyment. The American people, though enthusiastic, were considerate and respectful. The Prince, either from intuitive or inherited good sense and taste, while observing all the proprieties of his position, was so naturally gracious as to win nothing but golden opinions, to leave everywhere agreeable and enduring impressions; and even now, so



universal is the homage of our people for the Queen, that were her Majesty to deign us a visit, Earl Russell and Secretary Seward, were either or both of these eminent statesmen disposed to perpetrate a great national wrong, would find the bonds of affection stronger than ambition or strategy.

"Upon the course which our government shall deem wise or expedient in this abrupt emergency, it is scarcely necessary to speculate. We shall not remain long in suspense. Nor could I add to the calm, well-considered views contained in the letter of Lieutenant-General Scott, than whom America has no more devoted patriot, nor England a more sincere friend. That distinguished and veteran General led our army creditably through one war with England. I, in humble positions, shared in that conflict; and I speak for both — enjoying the confidence and friendship of our great chieftain — in saying that neither cares to survive another struggle so revolting to all who rejoice in a common ancestry and commingled blood, with kindred memorials and associations.

"Of the exact nature of the despatch from the English government I am ignorant; but I am constrained to express the opinion that if that despatch has taken the form of a peremptory demand, it will be met by as peremptory a refusal; for in temper and pride we are as unreasoning as the bad examples of our mother country, absurdly intensified, can make us. But I devoutly hope that the mastiff mode of diplomacy will not, on either side, be resorted to. There are no real interests of either country to be promoted or protected by a contest for the championship. Nor is it necessary to determine questions of relative courage or prowess. The battle at Lundy's Lane, in Canada, fought upon a fair field, with forces nearly equal, which consigned the remains of seven hundred British and seven hundred American soldiers to 'dead men's beds,' should be accepted as a satisfactory solution by both nations. The Mason and Slidell imbroglio, which has been sprung upon us, places both governments in a false position. England is running upon all fours across the track of her life-long practices and precepts, while America is forced, in maintaining the act of Commodore Wilkes, to ignore a policy earnestly insisted upon, — a policy which, at the conclusion of the war of 1812, was left to be determined by the future good sense and forbearance of both gov-

ernments. In this 'muddle,' should either nation be too tenacious? I do not say or think that in this matter we have done quite the right, or that we are wholly wrong. The temptations in this case were far greater than can be understood in Europe. Messrs. Slidell and Mason were responsible leaders in the unnatural and causeless rebellion which has set brother against brother in fierce and brutish civil war. As senators in the Congress of the United States, while unanimous millions supposed men incapable of such perfidy, they committed acts of treason far more flagrant than the offenses which have consigned the heads of British noblemen, through the Tower, to the block. It will require, therefore, calm deliberation and a large measure of forbearance in our government and people to bring them to an acquiescence in the views taken of this question here, — views which, I am compelled to admit, have obtained across the Channel.

"But if events are not precipitated; if time is to be given for reflection, so that the cost and consequences of war may be calculated, apprehension will be greatly relieved. I quite concur in the opinion that these rebel emissaries are not worth a war, and, individually, would not hesitate to make large concessions, in feeling, for peace. With England, whose canvas whitens every ocean and sea, 'catching the dawning rays of the rising, and mellowed by the departing beams of the setting sun,' the honor of her flag is everything. In defense of this flag, England, with her blood heated, will not sacrifice the 'avoir-du-pois of a hair.' Surely, then, if appealed to in a neighborly spirit, we can afford to do for England what we should, touched upon the same tender point, expect England to do for America."

In publishing the above article, the "Times" accompanied it with a leader, personally kind, but replying to the views advanced by Mr. Weed and presenting the question from an English standpoint.

It is very seldom [said the "Times"] in the present polite and decorous age that we are able to accumulate so much evidence of a deliberate and long-cherished intention to do us an injury as we are able to bring against Mr. Seward, the present Prime Minister of the Northern States of America. During the visit of the Prince of Wales to the United States, Mr. Seward took advantage of an entertainment which was given to the Prince and his suite to tell the Duke of Newcastle

that he was likely to occupy high office ; that when he did so it would become his duty to insult England, and that he should insult her accordingly. A few months after this sally Mr. Seward found himself in the position he had anticipated, a quarrel between North and South was imminent, and the advice which Mr. Seward tendered to the hostile parties was to abandon their dispute, and combine their forces in a wholly unprovoked attack upon the British colony of Canada. The next step of Mr. Seward was to publish a circular, calling upon the States to fortify the sea and lake frontier, — a circular which was understood by everybody to refer to Great Britain, and was, indeed, capable of no other construction. An English packet is then boarded by an American ship of war, four passengers are removed from the packet by violence, and placed at the disposal of the American Secretary of State. He orders them into strict confinement, without any diplomatic communication with the English Minister at Washington, and by so doing appears to adopt and ratify the action of the American commander. This is all we know at present of the feelings, intentions, and proceedings of Mr. Seward. But it is quite enough to lead to a general persuasion that upon his ability to involve the United States in a war with England Mr. Seward has staked his official, and, most probably, also his political existence, and that whatever may be the advantage to America of a war with this country, to him it has become an article of the very first necessity. It is no business of ours to speculate on the motives or to enlarge upon the guilt of a man who has deliberately plotted, and, perhaps, by this time actually accomplished, this great crime, the greatest, perhaps, of which a human creature can be guilty, — the bringing war upon his own country and upon us, who have never willfully or intentionally done him or it any evil. The facts are as we have stated them.

An American gentleman, Mr. Thurlow Weed, now resident in this country in a *quasi* diplomatic capacity, thinks it necessary, under these circumstances, to come forward in defense of Mr. Seward, and certainly we must admit no one ever stood more in need of an able and discreet apologist. Whether Mr. Seward has found such a person in Mr. Weed our readers will be better able to judge when they have read the letter with which he has favored us. For ourselves, we must confess we have arrived at the conclusion that Mr. Weed has made the case of his client and his country considerably worse than he found it.

Mr. Weed begins by an admission that the present quarrel is an occurrence profoundly embarrassing. Not at all to us, we beg to say, for we never remember an instance where the line of duty was clearer or better defined ; but profoundly embarrassing to Mr. Weed, because

he is very much inclined to think that we are right in our view of the law, and that "in the ventilation of the case of Mr. Laurens the bottom has fallen out of the strongest precedent." Dropping, therefore, the legal question, Mr. Weed seeks to show that we are entirely in error in supposing that the American government in general, and Mr. Seward in particular, is actuated by any ill-feeling towards us. That we should think so is to Mr. Weed even more wonderful than our "belligerent sensibility" with regard to the Trent. As for the conversation with the Duke of Newcastle, of which Mr. Weed says he knows nothing, he says it must have been a bad joke — that kind of agreeable badinage which passes after dinner between Dukes and embryo Secretaries of State. As to the chain of facts which connect this bad joke with what we fear will turn out to be a much worse earnest, Mr. Weed says nothing, but refers us to the present American Minister in London, Mr. Adams, as a true reflex of American sentiment towards England, the misfortune being that Mr. Adams, who has the good will, has not the power, and Mr. Seward, who has the power, has not the good will.

Perhaps thinking that something was yet wanting to the vindication of Mr. Seward, Mr. Weed proceeds to argue that he must be our friend, because, we having settled all our boundary disputes with the United States, there is nothing left to quarrel about. It would be exceedingly agreeable if Mr. Weed could convince his countrymen of this fact, and he will excuse us if we do not find, in his admission that there is nothing left to quarrel about, any palliation of the conduct of Mr. Seward in fastening a quarrel upon us. The Queen has won the respect and the Prince of Wales the regard of the American people, — good reasons why they should respect her government, but surely no extenuation of conduct which our correspondent admits to be, in his view, a violation of the Law of Nations. If the Queen would only pay America a visit, there would be no chance of a rupture. But, then, the Queen most certainly will not pay America a visit, and we therefore derive but little comfort from this suggestion. After that indispensable appeal to our common ancestry which has hitherto availed us so little in dealing with our transatlantic relatives, we come at last to the real point. Mr. Weed, who believes us to be in the right, and who has tantalized us with all this show of ardent affection, and who has proved so entirely to his satisfaction that the best feeling exists towards us in the American government and people, informs us that if, relying on the right he admits and the affection he asserts, we demand that the persons who have been taken by violence from our protection be restored to us, we shall meet with a refusal. The affections of America may be lacerated, but once having begun to insult us, she will continue to do so.

In his own pleasant, familiar way, Mr. Weed tells us that America is as unreasoning as the bad example of her mother country can make her. But if, instead of requiring as a preliminary to any further discussion the restoration of the captives, we are content to give the American people time for deliberation; if we are willing to forget that the discussion began by seizing the thing in dispute, and to recognize a debate commenced under such circumstances as having nothing in it either degrading or unusual; if, in fact, to use the expression current in America, we will enter into "protracted negotiations," there is reason to hope that America may yet relent, and condescend to the opinion that, after all, Slidell and Mason are not worth a war. We fear Mr. Weed in this is over-sanguine, and that, so long as America is allowed to retain what she has taken from us at the cheap price of an interminable correspondence, she will too keenly appreciate her own gain and our degradation to put an end to so agreeable an interlude.

But her forbearance will never be tried. We can, we think, convey to Mr. Thurlow Weed the sentiments of every Englishman on this painful subject. We do not ask from America courtesy or affection, respect for our Queen or regard for our Prince. These things are hers to give or to withhold. We do not even ask that amount of fair treatment which we are in the habit of receiving from other nations. We have long ago made up our minds to dispense with that; but we do demand that she shall abstain from actual outrage, or that, if it is committed, she shall make reasonable reparation. If she will do this, it is well; if not, the alternative will not come in the desired form of "protracted negotiations."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

1861.

A RECEPTION AT LORD KINNAIRD'S. — MR. WEED AND GEORGE PEABODY. — CAUSES OF THE WAR REVIEWED. — POSITION OF THE MILLIONAIRE PHILANTHROPIST. — MR. BIGELOW TO MR. WEED. — GENERAL SCOTT'S RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES. — ENGLISH SOLDIERY EN ROUTE TO CANADA. — LETTER IN REPLY TO LIEUTENANT MAURY.

WHILE waiting for the response of our government to the demand of England for the release of Mason and Slidell; intense and painful solicitude pervaded London. Mr. Weed was in constant communication with the comparatively few eminent Englishmen who sympathized with the North. But even such steadfast friends of the Union as the Duke of Argyle, Sir Roundel Palmer, Lord Houghton, and Messrs. Cobden, Bright, and W. E. Forster, did not believe that war could be averted, in case of a refusal to liberate the Confederate emissaries.

A short time before the assembling of Parliament the Honorable Arthur Kinnaird, now Lord Kinnaird, and Mrs. Kinnaird, who were warm friends of the Union, gave a reception at their London residence, No. 2 Pall Mall East, in order that the Bishop of Ohio and Mr. Weed might have an opportunity to present their views on the American contest to several gentlemen prominent in English politics and society. When the company assembled in the drawing-room, Mr. Kinnaird explained his object in calling his friends together. It was his hope, he said, to aid in removing misapprehensions which existed in regard to the conflict in the United States. It could not be denied that among certain classes in England there was a disposition to favor the South. It was also undeniable that there was a general lack of information respecting the causes of the Rebellion. He had taken this opportunity to ask his American friends to give explanations as to these causes as well as the probable results of the war. Bishop McIlvaine then made a lengthy statement, covering the general subject.

Mr. Weed gave some details in regard to the policy of the Whig and Republican parties, with which the President had uniformly acted. He said that he, the speaker, not only desired but expected emancipation. That result must inevitably follow from the success of the Union army.

On other occasions and in many ways Lord and Lady Kinnaid took pleasure in showing their friendship for this government.

The statement has been made that Mr. Peabody, at whose house Mr. Weed was a frequent visitor during the early years of the war, was not a true friend of the Union. This imputation Mr. Weed, who was certainly in a position to know whereof he spoke, emphatically resented. That Mr. Peabody doubted the ability of the North to cope with the Rebellion he admitted. Such doubts were entertained by many gentlemen, both in the United States and England, whose loyalty to the Union was never questioned. At Mr. Peabody's bank Mr. Weed heard the course of English sympathizers with secession constantly and freely reprobated. Mr. Peabody has been criticised because he did not attend 4th of July and 22d of February celebrations. It was his habit, both before and during the Rebellion, upon the recurrence of these anniversaries, to entertain his countrymen munificently at his own expense. Mr. Weed was his guest on two such occasions, which furnished stronger evidence than mere professions of Mr. Peabody's patriotism. Expressions of regret that Mr. Peabody did not show more zeal in our cause were frequently heard in London; but it was never intimated that he favored the cause of the rebels.

Mr. Weed first met Mr. Peabody in 1843, and their relations soon ripened into a friendship which was not interrupted until Mr. Peabody's death. In 1852 Mr. Weed was apprised of those benevolent purposes which Mr. Peabody afterwards so nobly carried into effect. They discussed together his first great project for relieving the poor of London. When Mr. Peabody visited this country, in 1866, he communicated to Mr. Weed his then immature scheme for the education and elevation of the southern poor. He urged Mr. Weed to act as trustee, but this honor was declined in favor of Robert C. Winthrop. On the day when Mr. Peabody sailed from New York for the last time, he passed two hours in confidential conversation with Mr. Weed.

"If I am spared to come again to this country," he said, in parting, "it shall be as a poorer man than when I left the United States in 1837."

Reference has been made to Mr. Weed's first visit to Mr. Peabody's bank in 1861. Their interview on this occasion was not wholly satisfactory. Mr. Peabody opened the conversation by expressing surprise and regret that the United States should have become involved unnecessarily in a civil war. Mr. Weed responded briefly, admitting that the war was a great calamity, but maintaining that it had been forced upon us. "The government might have averted it," said Mr. Peabody. "That question," Mr. Weed replied, "opens the whole question. I shall be glad to take an early occasion, when you are at liberty, to discuss it fully." "It will require strong evidence," said Mr. Peabody, "to satisfy me that wise and good men could not have prevented such an unwarrantable and unnatural conflict as that which now devastates America." The conversation then turned upon the Trent difficulty. "Both nations are so tenacious and aggressive," said Mr. Peabody, "that I apprehend the most serious consequences."

A day or so after this conversation Mr. Weed reviewed, at Mr. Peabody's request, the causes which had occasioned the Rebellion. He spoke of the attitude of South Carolina, under the inspiration of John C. Calhoun, and of the coöperation of other southern politicians, whose purpose was to preserve slave supremacy in the Union, or to establish a slave confederacy out of it. He recalled the adjustment of 1820, and described how the South, immediately availing itself of that compromise, brought slave states into the Union. He recurred to the resistance of the slave power to the admission of California, with a constitution prohibiting slavery; and described the dramatic interview between Stevens, Clingman, and Toombs, on the one hand, and "Old Zach" Taylor, on the other. He recalled the Kansas conflict, and showed how its consequences destroyed the equilibrium between the Slave and the Free States. He then referred at length to later aspects of the controversy, asserting the manifest duty of the government, when ruthlessly attacked, to defend its own existence.

Mr. Peabody was an attentive listener. For several months, he said, his conversations had been with Americans who pre-



sented the question in a widely different aspect; the business years of his American life had been spent in Georgetown and Baltimore; his sympathies while in England had not been with the Abolitionists; during the many years of excitement on the subject of slavery, he had regarded fanatics in the North and those of the South as equally mischievous; the extremists of either section were enemies of the Union. "I must acknowledge," he said, finally, "that the side of the North is much stronger than I had supposed. Indeed, such is my devotion to the Union, that, painful as is the thought of a war with my own people, if I were in the United States I should stand by Mr. Lincoln. So long as you remain in London, it shall be my pleasure to coöperate, in whatever manner I may, with you and Bishop McIlvaine."

[MR. PEABODY TO MR. WEED.]

LONDON, *January 17, 1862.*

DEAR MR. WEED,— One cloud between this country and ours is no sooner dispersed than another appears. To-day the "Times" and "Post" are at us again, backed by "little dogs and all." So, with ugly extracts from the "World," and other New York papers, referring to this country, the feeling is almost as bad as it was before the Trent affair was closed.

The "Post," I learn, takes up strongly the blockade of Charleston harbor. Lampson told me that he thought both Sir Emerson Tennent and Mr. Adams were in rather a gloomy mood on our affairs, both with England and France, and Sir Emerson told me that France was pushing England very hard to join and recognize the Southern Confederacy.

We talked over the mystery hanging over the Seward and Newcastle affair. Sir Emerson said that there can be no doubt but that what the Duke reported of Seward's remarks has strongly influenced the government in war preparations for several months past. The Bishop said that he had received the account from Sir Henry Holland, and, I think, Lord Shaftesbury, both of whom had the exact words from the Duke's own lips. You should at once write to Mr. Seward for a letter to the Duke, and have the matter cleared up.

Ever yours,

GEORGE PEABODY.

During the second week of Mr. Weed's stay in London, affairs assumed such a threatening aspect that General Scott, who had been a fellow-passenger on the *Arago*, determined to return to America by the same steamer.

[MR. BIGELOW TO MR. WEED.]

PARIS, *Tuesday Evening.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — General Scott leaves for the United States to-morrow in the *Arago*. Every effort has been made to keep his departure a secret, and this will doubtless be the first notice you will have of it. The General was alarmed by the leading paragraph in the “*Constitutionnel*” this evening, purporting to give an account of a meeting held in Washington on the 22d, at which many members of Congress assisted. They are reported to have resolved that Mason and Slidell were lawful prizes, and that England has no claims for satisfaction. I told the General that that meeting signified nothing; that the whole tone of the American press gave no indication of a disposition to brave England in this matter; that no one defended the seizure in contemplation of its involving trouble with any foreign nation, and the fact that everybody argued the question at home was proof that there it was seen to have two sides, which was a tolerable security against any rash course of procedure. But the General was not in a humor to be convinced.

He had determined to go home. If we are to have war with England, he thought, he might still be of some use to his country; and if not, he preferred dying there in trying to serve her, than here of vexation, if he were absent.

Mrs. Scott and the General’s family remain, and go soon to Italy, so the General has told Mr. Dayton. He is very anxious that his departure should not be known, as he fears it might give needless alarm here, and also might tempt some of those pirates in England to chase him. He would make a good offset for Slidell and Mason.

The sentiment here seems to be improving in certain quarters every day since the American papers arrived. The “*Constitutionnel*” is laboring to provoke England to war. The Paris correspondent of the London “*Post*” told me last night, at my house, that Persigny and the Emperor were both anxious for conciliation and a *réglement* of the rights of neutrals. He was perfectly sure there was no war in the breeze. At the same time he admitted that England wanted the separation of our Union, on the ground, as he said, that we never could unite again, and the war was unprofitable to us and disastrous to Europe. M. Demarest, one of the most eminent of the French lawyers, was here also. He said England must maintain friendly relations with us, for the moment she began to fight she ceased to occupy the position of a first-class power in Europe. He had no doubt she would see too many obstacles in her path to be over difficult when negotiations begin.





Winfield Scott.





Your letter of Saturday knocked all the pluck out of me, but I rallied on Monday, and since then I have felt quite at ease. The absence of any offensive bravado at home and the reasonable tone of all parties and presses there, shows the world that the feeling towards England which was charged to have prompted the seizure of the Trent does not exist at all, and, unless I am mistaken, will bring the English government to account with the people for having created an unnecessary and most expensive panic in Europe. Master Pam<sup>1</sup> must explain this to the faithful who sold out, at a loss of one per cent., a third of their yearly incomes. . . .

I have faith that we shall get the better of John Bull in this, as in all past time.

Yours very truly, JOHN BIGELOW.

In connection with General Scott's departure Mr. Weed wrote the following card, which appeared in the London "Star and Dial," on the 13th of December:—

TO THE EDITOR, ETC. :

SIR,—I hasten to ask permission through your columns to correct a sensational telegram from Paris, which affirms on the authority of the "Patrie" that Lieutenant-General Scott's return to America was in consequence of an urgent despatch from the Washington Cabinet.

I was advised yesterday by letter of the veteran General's intended return home on the steamer Arago; but he had received neither order nor suggestion from his government. His change of purpose was the result, under changed circumstances, of his own sense of duty.

Deploring, as I know he did, most painfully, the occurrence which occasions general solicitude, and ardently hoping for its amicable solution, the impulse which creates in an old soldier the desire in times of threatened danger to be at his post will be understood and appreciated,—certainly by Englishmen.

Your obedient servant, THURLOW WEED.

"We are all waiting breathlessly," wrote Mr. Weed to friends in America, "for the response of our government to the demand for the release of the rebel emissaries, for upon that response, it is believed, must hang the question of peace or war. I have little inclination or leisure to enjoy London, presented, as it now is, under favorable auspices. . . . Though really nobody, distinguished people receive me with a consideration not a little embarrassing. . . . Our Minister, Mr. Adams, and his amiable family, are exceedingly cordial in their attentions and hospitali-

<sup>1</sup> Lord Palmerston, then Premier.

ties. . . . Sir Henry Holland, of world-wide medical fame, drops into our hotel familiarly, and is off to Windsor, to see Prince Albert, who is seriously ill. . . . Sir John Wilson, Governor of the Chelsea Hospital, who received five wounds at the battle of Chippewa, called upon us last evening. . . . Every day brings its breakfast or dinner in the highest circles. Yesterday, dining with Mr. Evans, at the Reform Club, I met Mr. Thackeray, who told me he had recently received a barrel of beer from our friend Dunlop, of Watervliet.

“Heretofore, when in Europe, my thoughts were absorbed by objects which surrounded me. Home, except in its domestic remembrances, was forgotten. All business cares and political responsibilities were dismissed. Not so now. The condition of our beloved country presses constantly and heavily upon my mind. For the first time in my life my pillow fails to bring repose. And reflection is aggravated by the evidence which meets you everywhere that the public mind of Europe has been abused and perverted; that the causes of the war are either wholly misunderstood or totally ignored. . . .

“I rose early on Friday morning and went down to St. James’ Park Barracks to see a regiment of Guards take up their line of march for Canada. Nearly fifty years had elapsed since I had seen ‘British red-coats,’ whose muskets were turned against us. Something of the old feeling — a feeling which I supposed had died out — began to rise, and, after a few moments of painful thought, I turned away.<sup>1</sup>

“The despatch of M. Thouvenel to the French Minister ap-

<sup>1</sup> The outrage savored so much of contemptuous defiance that the national feeling was wounded to the quick. “Bear this, bear all,” was the prevailing cry, and not an hour was lost in making preparations for the war, which it seemed to be the object of the Americans to provoke. Among other measures, which showed how thoroughly we were in earnest, troops, to the number of eight thousand, were despatched to Canada. — Theodore Martin’s *Life of the Prince Consort*, vol. v. p. 347.

Troops were despatched to Canada with all possible expedition, and that brave and loyal colony called out its militia and volunteers, so as to be ready to act at a moment’s notice. Our dockyards here resounded with the din of workmen getting vessels fitted for sea, and there was but one feeling which animated all classes and parties in the country, and that was a determination to vindicate our insulted honor and uphold the inviolability of the national flag. — *Annual British Register* for 1861, p. 254.



pears in the evening papers of to-day. The instinct which prompted me before hearing any opinions on the subject to sit down and write letters home urging the surrender of Mason and Slidell — hard as such fortune was — shows the value of first impressions. Instinct and reason, unaided by much knowledge of international law, taught me that it was not right to take these men from the deck of a neutral ship. . . . We do not want war with England. Above all, we do not want it unless our cause 'be just.' We may well pause in the present case when other and friendly governments are against us." . . .

Among Secessionists in London whose published utterances received Mr. Weed's attention was Lieutenant M. F. Maury, formerly of the United States Navy.

"Lieutenant Maury's letter to Admiral Fitzroy," wrote Mr. Weed, to the London "Globe," "induces a desire that your readers may have the opportunity of seeing a relief view of that highly-colored picture of the American civil war; and for this purpose I beg to tax your courtesy and their patience with a brief reply.

"Long in charge of our National Observatory, and the author of that valuable work, the 'Physical Geography of the Sea,' Lieutenant Maury enjoys a world-wide scientific reputation, of which all his countrymen were justly proud. It is fortunate that this distinguished officer, in seeking submarine 'knowledge under difficulties,' completed his nautical discoveries before his mind became affected with political prejudices, — else their accuracy and value might be questioned and impaired.

"In America, where Lieutenant Maury is universally known, his letter will awaken painful surprise, — painful, in that a gentleman who belonged to the Union is found laboring for its destruction; surprise, that he should look at the war from a standpoint which either obscures his vision or clouds his judgment.

"Perhaps no portion of his letter is more pregnant or suggestive than its opening paragraph: —

MY DEAR ADMIRAL, — Since this nefarious war was forced upon us, my hands have been busy in preparing for it; and I have not had either the time or the opportunity to let my friends and former fellow laborers on your side of the water know what has become of me. My country was torn; the Union was gone; a number of states had

renounced it. In this breaking up of our once happy and great Republic it became me to take sides. The path of right and duty was clear; and here I am.

“A very few words will suffice to show that the bold but naked assumption, that ‘this nefarious war was forced upon’ the Southern States, has neither leg nor crutch to stand on. The election of Mr. Lincoln for President was the ‘forced’ cause of ‘this nefarious war.’ That *cause* was deliberately created by the Southern States — created *intentionally*, as the provocation or pretext for war. The Southern or Confederate States had the votes to elect a pro-slavery President instead of Mr. Lincoln. The Democratic national convention, which met first at Charleston and then at Baltimore, by the nomination of Mr. Guthrie, former Secretary of the Treasury, or Justice Nelson, of the United States Supreme Court, would have beaten the Republican nominee. But this would have thwarted the long-cherished purposes of South Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Senators Chesnut, Slidell, Toombs, and Mason, impatient for a southern confederacy, would brook no further delay. Hence the Democratic national convention, rent in twain, ran two candidates (Breckenridge and Douglas) in order that Lincoln might be elected, and ‘this nefarious war forced upon us.’ These facts are of record. Again:—

On the 20th of April, finding that this, my native State, in the exercise of her high prerogative, had withdrawn from the federal Union and appealed to her sons to rally around her, I would not, I could not, and did not hesitate to obey the call and hasten to her relief.

“The Virginia convention, after a protracted struggle, with the convictions of a majority of its members adverse to secession, was finally, in secret session, by the influence of leading politicians, dragooned into a vote of secession; without, however, submitting the question to the people, to whom the edict was so distasteful that Western Virginia revolted. Its inhabitants reorganized their state government, and are now, as the sovereign State of West Virginia, loyal to the Union. So that Lieutenant Maury, in his hot haste for rebellion, responded only to a *section* of the ‘Ancient Dominion.’ Again:—

I left the Observatory at Washington once more a free citizen of Virginia. Its associations, the treasures there, which, with your help,

and that of thousands of other friendly hands, had been collected from the sea, were precious to me, and as I turned my back upon the place a tear furrowed my cheek, for I could not but recollect that such things were.

“It is easier to understand why these sacrifices ‘furrowed’ the ‘cheek’ of Lieutenant Maury with a ‘tear,’ than that an officer who had been petted all his life was capable of turning his back upon his country and its flag!

The Yankees, as only those who are making war upon us are now called, have shown themselves vindictive to a degree; they have vilified me; they have set a price upon my head.

“I am mortified to find a gentleman, in whose veracity I had ever placed implicit confidence, drawing upon his imagination for his facts. No ‘price’ has been ‘set upon’ Lieutenant Maury’s ‘head.’ Highly as it was once appreciated, he errs in supposing that it would command a premium now.

“Lieutenant Maury, through several paragraphs, enumerates imaginary grievances, to which I would reply with alacrity if it would not transcend the limits to which I propose to restrict this letter: —

Finally, in 1812, to protect northern interest and to vindicate the commercial rights of New England — for the South had neither ships to be searched nor seamen to be impressed — we went to war with old England. The New England States ignobly backed out of that war, and left the others to bear the brunt of it.

“The war of 1812 was declared while Mr. Madison, a Virginian, was President. Congress acted upon a strong warlike message from the President. The bill declaratory of war was introduced by Mr. Calhoun, of South Carolina, father of the existing rebellion, as he was of nullification (rebellion in another form), in 1832. The war bill, which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 78 to 45, was carried by the representatives from the Slave States. Nearly two thirds of the votes against the bill came from New England and New York; while full two thirds of the affirmative votes came from the Slave States, including all their leading statesmen, with one exception, John Randolph, of Roanoke. Mr. Williams, of North Carolina, it may be even yet remembered, invoked the ‘thunder and lightning of Heaven to descend upon and sink the island of Great Britain.’

With this temper in the northern heart and mind the federal government found itself seized with a vast extent of unpeopled lands, the common property alike of all the states. Much of it had been given to the federal government by the Southern States for the benefit of the commonwealth; some of it had been acquired from the Indians by treaty and purchase, — and some had been bought from France, Spain, and Mexico, — but all was paid for out of the common treasury. Into these territories the North now insisted that the Southerners should not go unless they left their slaves behind.

“Of the territory thus acquired, *seven* slave states, viz., Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Missouri, Florida, and Texas (more than half of the number of original states, which constituted the old confederation) were formed and admitted into the Union. The wilderness portion of that territory, lying west and north of this belt of slave states, had, by the Missouri compact, been reserved for free men; but when, after entering upon and enjoying the more fertile and ‘lion’s share’ of a common inheritance for thirty years, the wilderness began to bud, slavery demanded admission into Kansas.

Upon this the Northern or “Free States,” as they are called, combined. Exceeding us in number of states and polls of people, they drew a geographical line, and formally divided the country into sections — North and South. This act, lawfully determined, placed, according to the forms of the Constitution, the whole federal machinery — executive, legislative, and judicial — in the hands of a faction formed of fanatics, and banded together for the purpose of making war upon our rights, our property, and our liberties.

“This wild departure from indisputable facts shows that Lieutenant Maury’s mind is in a state of hallucination. After the election of Mr. Lincoln the political complexion of the House of Representatives was undecided, with the chances in favor of a pro-slavery majority; in the Senate there was a decided pro-slavery majority; while the Supreme Court, always pro-slavery, had just decided that a negro, in its judgment, not possessing any attribute of the human species, had no civil rights. The executive department of the government alone, therefore, was in hands opposed to the extension of slavery. The States of South Carolina, Missouri, Georgia, etc., etc., had seceded from the Union, without provocation or excuse, before Mr. Lincoln had been inaugurated. There was, as will be seen,

no power, if the disposition existed, to 'make war' upon the 'rights, property, and liberties' of the South.

The contrast is frequently drawn by our old men between the conduct of the English in the war of 1812, and the conduct of the hordes of Lincoln now. The English invaded us, but respected the property and regarded the rights of unarmed citizens. The same countries have been invaded by Lincoln. He has devastated and laid them waste.

He has set aside the civil authorities and declared martial law to rule in their stead, and, under the tyrant's plea he is proceeding to do a great many acts and things which would more become the savage and the brute. He has sent against us an army, and provided them with manacles to bind us in his prisons. His Zouaves who fell at Manassas were equipped with halters already adjusted for our necks and the lamp-post.

"That individual cases of excess and rapacity, incident to raw troops of every nation, have occurred, I do not deny. But that our government has authorized or tolerated them is not true. Our treatment of prisoners, and our respect for non-combatants, is a distinguishing feature in our favor. Indeed, it has been hard for our northern troops to engage in this war 'with a will.' While our enemies lie in ambush to shoot sentinels, and in battle aim systematically at officers, we have failed to retaliate in either respect. The 'halter' and 'manacle' are unworthy of the Lieutenant Maury I once knew and respected.

"Nor is Lieutenant Maury more fortunate in the 'contrasts' he challenges. The federal army, wherever it goes, spares towns and respects household property. Not so with the rebel army. In retreating from Gosport, Harper's Ferry, and Hampton, they kindled incendiary fires, leaving the old, infirm, and poor, homeless and destitute.

"Lieutenant Maury seeks favor from England by impugning history. England did in the war of 1812 invade, capture, and burn Buffalo, Frenchtown, Havre de Grace, and Alexandria. We have taken Alexandria, Beaufort, Accomac, and other towns without burning any one of them.

"With much that follows, designed to excite prejudice in England against the North, I forbear to deal, because it can only be answered by rebutting generalities. But I dwell a moment upon a tangible averment:—

New Englanders are proverbially sharp, keen, and cute; so having once tasted of the treasury pap, through cunningly devised tariff bills, they soon discovered that heavy expenditures from the federal treasury would necessitate high tariffs; then they went for an extravagant government, and engineered with Congress for large appropriations. To create demands upon the national purse, they established navy yards where they were not required; built forts where they were not wanted; erected lighthouses where they were not needed; and actually studded the northern seaboard with establishments of this sort, while the whole southern coast, from the capes of Virginia all the way round to the mouth of the Rio Grande in Texas, was but badly lighted, though the navigation along the southern bays is most difficult and dangerous.

“This statement when read in America will create very general astonishment. In the Northern States there are four navy yards, namely, at Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Boston, and Portsmouth; and while materials and labor are much more expensive, and other facilities inferior, an equal number of navy yards were established in the Southern States, namely, at Washington, Norfolk, Pensacola, and Memphis. And in reference to fortifications, vastly more money has been expended upon southern than upon northern fortifications. This fact is patent to every eye that contrasts the formidable and massive fortresses at the Rip Raps, Old Point Comfort, Charleston, and Pensacola, with the inferior structures designed for the defense of Boston and New York. Nor do I doubt, though I cannot speak with knowledge, that the southern coast is as well lighted as the northern.

“Lieutenant Maury quotes from an act of the Virginia legislature of 1788, in which he affects to find the right of secession, but which does not exist, although the act itself is emasculated to enable him to reach an unauthorized conclusion. Virginia entered unconditionally into the Union. Her early and ablest statesmen, whose wisdom and patriotism confound the fallacies and rebuke the treason of their degenerate descendants, lived and died in the faith of Washington, whose farewell address admonished his countrymen to ‘frown indignantly upon the first dawning of an attempt’ to separate the states, or dissolve the Union.

“Although Lieutenant Maury’s letter invites it, I will not

presume further upon a journal whose columns have been so liberally devoted to American topics; and conclude by reversing his assertion, concerning 'this nefarious war' (and history points to none so wanton and causeless) which was 'forced' not upon the South, but upon the North."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

1861.

DESPATCHES TO LORD LYONS. — "A PEEP INTO THE BAG." — RELEASE OF THE REBEL COMMISSIONERS. — HOW THE NEWS WAS RECEIVED IN LONDON. — JOHN CASSELL. — EDWARD ELLICE. — SIR HENRY HOLLAND. — HIS CALL ON COMMODORE VANDERBILT. — LETTERS TO MR. WEED. — JOSEPH PARKES. — THE "JUNIUS" QUESTION. — AN APT ANECDOTE. — SIR CURTIS LAMPSON.

DESPATCHES concerning the Trent affair which were to go out to Lord Lyons for transmission to our government were forwarded by Lord John Russell to the Queen, at whose request Prince Albert, though then dangerously ill, reviewed them carefully. In an unofficial conversation with Lord Lyons, before any message reached this country, Mr. Seward intimated that everything would depend upon the wording of it; and it is easy to see that this was the literal truth; for, had England called for the release of Slidell and Mason in insolent or aggravating language, it would have been impossible for the American Secretary of State, acting for a proud, sensitive, and excited nation, to comply.

Information received by Mr. Weed at this time from a confidential source greatly lessened his anxiety touching the tone of these despatches. Lady Kinnaird, whose devotion to our cause entitles her to grateful remembrance, was a relative of Lady Palmerston, with whom she frequently passed the afternoon and evening. After the House adjourned, Lord Kinnaird, then a member of Parliament, drove home with Lord Palmerston. On leaving Lord Palmerston, Lord and Lady Kinnaird drove immediately to Mr. Weed's lodgings for the purpose of imparting, in strict confidence, information of the utmost importance. When Lord Palmerston returned from Windsor, after an interview with the Queen, he left his portfolio on the table in the library, where the ladies were sitting, and repaired to the dining-room.



In his absence, one of the ladies of the family, remarking that she would "have a peep into the bag," opened the portfolio containing the despatches to Lord Lyons. With these papers there was also inclosed the following memorandum in the handwriting of the Prince Consort, with corrections and interlineations in the handwriting of the Queen :

[MEMORANDUM BY PRINCE ALBERT, CORRECTED BY THE QUEEN.]

WINDSOR CASTLE, *December 1, 1861.*

The Queen returns these important drafts, which upon the whole she approves; but she cannot help feeling that the main draft, that for communication to the American government, is somewhat meagre. She should have liked to have seen the expression of a hope that the American captain did not act under instructions, or, if he did, that he misapprehended them, that the United States government must be fully aware that the British government could not allow its flag to be insulted, and the security of her mail communications to be placed in jeopardy; and her Majesty's government are unwilling to believe that the United States government intended wantonly to put an insult upon this country, and to add to their many distressing complications by forcing a question of dispute upon us, and that we are therefore glad to believe that upon a full consideration of the circumstances of the undoubted breach of international law committed, they would spontaneously offer such redress as alone could satisfy this country; namely, the restoration of the unfortunate passengers and a suitable apology.

The despatches to Lord Lyons were then taken from the portfolio by the lady who held it in her hand, and read as follows:—

Her Majesty's government bearing in mind the friendly relations which have long subsisted between Great Britain and the United States, are willing to believe that the United States naval officer who committed this aggression was not acting in compliance with any authority from his government; or that, if he conceived himself to be so authorized, he greatly misunderstood the instructions which he had received. For the government of the United States must be fully aware that the British government could not allow such an affront to the national honor to pass without full reparation; and her Majesty's government are unwilling to believe that it could be the deliberate intention of the government of the United States unnecessarily to force into discussion between the two governments a question of so grave a character, and with regard to which the whole British nation would be sure to entertain such unanimity of feeling.

Her Majesty's government therefore trust that, when this matter shall have been brought under the consideration of the United States that government will of its own accord offer to the British government such redress as alone could satisfy the British nation; namely the liberation of the four gentlemen, and their delivery to your lordship, in order that they may again be placed under British protection and a suitable apology for the aggression which has been committed.

The information communicated to Mr. Weed, that in place of a harsh and peremptory demand for the surrender of the rebel commissioners, considerate language had been substituted, was a source of great encouragement. When, finally, news reached London that the American government had determined to release Messrs. Mason and Slidell, Mr. Weed was overwhelmed with a sense of obligation to the Prince and Queen, whose humane intervention, at a most critical moment, were so exercised as to avert a third war between the United States and England.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *December 27, 1861.*<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR WEED, — Of course I am unable to write a reply to your many letters, which are very useful; and now, when possible, are shown to the President, and hailed with pleasure by the Cabinet.

You will see what has been done. You will know who did it. You will hardly be more able to shield me from the reproach of doing it, than you have been to shield me in England from the reproach of hostility to that country, and designs for war against it. I saw the Duke of Newcastle at Albany, and there had only the few words possible on the way from the hotel to the cars. The whole story, as I see it here, is a mistake. I never said or thought a word like it, but all I could have said is so opposite, that I am amazed that he lets it pass, except it be on the ground I do, that it is impossible to correct popular errors engendered in political heads.

Why not go and ask him about it?

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

“London was jubilant yesterday,” wrote Mr. Weed, the day after the American decision reached England. “I was in the city, among the bankers, at half past three o'clock, when a telegram from Queenstown announced as a rumor that the Trent affair had been settled. It gave instant life to a drooping stock

<sup>1</sup> The day after the reply of this country was sent to Lord Lyons.

market. In a few minutes information came that a despatch in cipher from Lord Lyons was going over the wires to the Foreign Office. Up went the stocks again. Then came the report that the rebel commissioners were on their way to England, and another jump in consols.

“With this very satisfactory intelligence I took a hansom and came to the West End, stopping on the way to exchange congratulations with friends warmly with us for the Union. Soon after I reached my lodgings came Sir Henry Holland, Sir J. Emerson Tennent, Sir John Wilson, and others, to exchange congratulations. At dinner came Commissioner Parkes, to say that Earl Russell’s despatch from Lord Lyons informed him that the Confederate emissaries had been unconditionally surrendered, whereupon we repaired to the Legation, to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Adams.

“Viewing the Trent affair as I have viewed it from the beginning, the surrender of Mason and Slidell is an act as just in itself as honorable to our government. An officer in our navy, devoted and zealous, acting from his own convictions, may err; and if so, it is no reflection upon him if his government, upon due consideration, corrects his error. The maritime governments of the world are all deeply interested—and none more so than America—in defining, maintaining, and protecting neutral rights. This noble example of deference to international law is worth vastly more to us in principle than it costs in feeling.

“There are two classes here to whom the action of our government is distasteful, namely, the English, who from hatred or envy—and this is not a numerous class—wanted war; and the Secessionists. Out of the Trent affair they hoped everything for the Rebellion. . . . I am sorry to add that, although the Trent trouble is out of the way, we shall need the services of all our friends in England. The moment Parliament meets, agitation of American questions will begin. The blockade will be attacked from one quarter, while another section will demand recognition of the independence of the Confederate States. Nor is it from England alone that this kind of pressure will come. France is even more restive than England under the blockade.”

Among congenial acquaintances formed by Mr. Weed while

in London was Mr. John Cassell, whose publishing house was then the largest in England. Mr. Cassell was a staunch friend of the American Union. Many pleasant evenings were spent at his hospitable home, on Avenue Road, Hyde Park, where Mr. Weed met, among other celebrities, Mr. George Cruikshank, then apparently about fifty years of age, but really sixty-nine, — “a quiet gentleman,” he wrote, “who attributes his good health to abstinence from strong drink.”

Another English friend in whose company many happy hours were passed was the late Edward Ellice, — a man after Mr. Weed’s own model. Mr. Ellice was a passenger up the Hudson on Fulton’s first steamboat, “a dreadful apparition” watched by Mr. Weed himself in 1807. Mr. Ellice represented Coventry in Parliament from 1818 to 1863, with the exception of the period from 1826 to 1830. The first English merchant to go from the counting-house to the Cabinet, in 1830 he became Secretary of the Treasury, and in 1833 Secretary of War. A peerage was within his reach, but was unsought. Shortly after his death, his son, also for many years a member of Parliament, and also a friend of Mr. Weed, wrote : —

[EDWARD ELLICE TO MR. WEED.]

INVERGARRY, *November 2, 1863.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — . . . The last letter but one which my father wrote was directed to you. The last was to myself. I was at this place, a few miles from where he was staying, and he wrote to me, late on the evening of the 16th, telling me what his plans were for the next day. When the letter came he was no more. . . .

Your friendship was reciprocal. During your stay in London he conceived a great regard for you, and often expressed to me the pleasure he derived from your society and conversation. I remember well his saying, one day, after you had left, when you had been breakfasting with him and discoursing of events, “What a good fellow Weed is! If there were half a dozen men with the same common sense, there would yet be hope for a settlement.” You knew his views upon America. His letters to you sufficiently indicate them. He was a citizen of the world, but all his associations, from the earliest period of his life, were connected with your country, and made him take a warm interest in what concerned its welfare. But he could not bring himself to view the present state of its affairs in the popular light.

He thought the Northern States risked too much in striving to main-

tain a nominal mastery, and lost sight of the practical object. He seemed to think that by a concentration of their power they would obtain a more real control, and must of necessity remain, whatever might be the changes in other parts, masters of the continent. . . .

But I did not take up my pen to enter upon politics. It was to thank you for your kindly remembrance of past days, and to express a hope that when you again come to England you will allow me the advantage of the same friendly relations which gave my father so much enjoyment. Mrs. Ellice desires to be most kindly remembered to you, and believe me, my dear Mr. Weed,

Your sincere friend,

EDWARD ELLICE.

Sir Henry Holland was one of the survivors of the generation which was in its prime when Sir Walter Scott and Wordsworth were flourishing in England. He was the physician of Lord Brougham, Sydney Smith, Macaulay, Hallam, Lord Lansdowne, Sir W. Pepys, and Madame D'Arbly. Both he and Mr. Ellice were friends of Lord Byron. Between Sir Henry, who was a zealous friend of the Union, as well as a warm personal friend of President Lincoln, and Mr. Weed there were for many years affectionate relations. In London they were together constantly, and, presumptuous as the plan was, they determined, when Mr. Weed was over seventy years of age and Sir Henry over eighty, to make a journey together to California and Oregon.

The last time that he was in this country Sir Henry, on the morning of his departure for Liverpool, breakfasted with Mr. Weed. "Now let us see," said the host, when the meal was finished, "have we got through with everything?" "No," Sir Henry answered. "There is one of your merchant princes of whom I have heard a great deal — Mr. A. T. Stewart, whom I should like to see." "I will take you to him," said Mr. Weed. But, as he spoke, another well-known American came to mind, and he added, "There is another friend of mine I should be glad to have you meet first," and together they drove to the private office of Commodore Vanderbilt. After the usual expressions of introduction, Sir Henry said, "I should like, if you will permit me, sir, to see your bureaus of affairs." "What bureaus?" asked the Commodore. "Your departments of business. Where do you conduct your affairs?" "There," said Mr. Vanderbilt, pointing to a boy at the opposite end of the

room seated on a stool. "The rest is there," said Mr. Weed, pointing to the Commodore's head. "But come, pull out your business drawer for Sir Henry. Show him your materials for work." The Commodore pulled out the drawer, when to the astonishment of the eminent Briton, its contents were found to be a check-book and a box of cigars.

Subsequently Sir Henry went over "Stewart's," and, as he drove back to Mr. Weed's, remarked, "I see that Mr. Stewart is a keen, close man of business; that he directs everything. But your Commodore is a genius." Mr. Weed then spoke of Mr. Vanderbilt's passion for trotting-horses and his habit of spending many hours in the open air. "I divined as much," said the physician, "from the freshness and ease with which he transacts affairs."

[SIR HENRY HOLLAND TO MR. WEED.]

LONDON, August 8, 1863.

DEAR MR. WEED, — I cannot feel satisfied in leaving London, as I shall soon, for my autumnal vacation, without writing a few lines to thank you for your letter of the 5th July. It is gratifying to me to obtain the friendly intercourse we established during your stay here; still more gratifying would it be, could you tell me of the success of those upright and patriotic endeavors which you are ever directing toward the reestablishment of peace and union in America. Hitherto, alas! I see no light through the gloaming, nor any avenue through which good counsel and prudent action may find their way to the object desired.

Looking at the whole series of events as dispassionately as I can, I confess that I am unable to reach any other conclusion than that of separation, — a fulfillment of the prediction which I heard Daniel Webster utter on the subject seventeen or eighteen years ago. There can be no such conquest as to compel reunion. If it ever occurs, I think it far more likely to happen after a temporary and amicable separation. I know and well appreciate the peculiar difficulties of territorial arrangement, and a border line; but out of the necessity of finding a solution, a solution will come. I believe the North would eventually gain more by separation than the South. I fear any protraction of the war, as endangering the unity and integrity of the former.

The idea of any intervention on the side of Europe is, I think, wholly without foundation; I cannot, indeed, speak for France, — but I am persuaded, from private intercourse, as well as public declaration here, that the intention of our government at present is not to

intervene in any way whatsoever. The speech of the Queen on prorogation of Parliament is a simple but clear expression of this intention.

You will be solicitous to know the state of public feeling here, as well as the course of government policy. I fear I can say little that is satisfactory on this subject. Events that have occurred since you left England have all tended to obliterate sympathy with the northern cause, even among those who were most attached to it at first. It may be well to mention to you (who take so much practical interest in the good feeling of the two countries toward each other) some of the causes which I see have contributed most to this effect. I would name as such the confiscation, and other strong measures of recent adoption; the conduct of General Butler, and some other local authorities, on the scene of war; the report of the committee on fraudulent contracts by persons in high office; the proofs variously given of the excitement of more southern sentiment in the North than of Union feeling in the South; the absence of all negro insurrection, which here has been fully expected; the arbitrary form the government has assumed in the North; and your recent tariffs, adding much to the distress created in our manufacturing districts by the want of cotton. I might name one or two other causes which I perceive to have effect, namely, a certain sympathy with the South as the weaker party, and an admiration of their unexpected vigor and unity of action, and the dignified tone of such of their public documents as have reached us; and further, the intimation we get, by letters and otherwise, of the still-continued violence of feeling in the North against England,—a feeling which is regarded here as fully unwarranted by anything that has occurred in the course of events. It is felt here—and in this feeling I cannot but concur—that the conduct both of the government and Parliament has been one of consistent forbearance throughout. I will say no more on this subject,—perhaps I have already said too much, in making myself thus far the interpreter of opinions here; and still more in expressing my own judgment on points so difficult to reason or act upon, even with far better information than any I possess.

Everything of English news you will gather from the papers. But for this local distress (which has been admirably borne thus far) we should be in a very prosperous state. But there are clouds still resting on Europe. The Pope and Garibaldi agitate bitterly in different directions. In Servia, and other of the Slavonian provinces of Turkey, there are disturbances which gain importance by involving higher questions and greater powers. It would seem as if the human race had the destiny of unceasing war and formation inscribed upon it. No international exhibitions are of avail against this primeval curse.

I am on the point of taking my own departure from London in a few days, first to visit the Duke of Argyle and Edward Ellice, in Scotland, where I shall remain nearly a month; then to see some of the northern parts of Spain, with which I am less familiar than other parts of that kingdom. I shall pass a week in London about the middle of September, between these two journeys, and should gladly have a few lines from you at that time, giving me, if you are able to do so, some happier news from America as to the progress of events there and the prospect of the future. In reference to the latter, I earnestly wish (as I have always done) that some other terms than "rebellion" and "rebels" had been adopted at the outset of this struggle. Words and names govern the world, and these names add to the difficulty of a speedy and satisfactory close of the war. But I cannot close my letter without repeating my conviction that it must be brought to an end as the sole means of averting other internal changes, still more disastrous in their effects. I have some apology to make to you for writing so long and so conclusively on this subject. But I feel that I am writing confidentially to one who has a still deeper and more enduring interest in it. I am sure your efforts will always be directed to what is for the best. Pray remember me with all kindness to Miss Weed, and believe me,

Yours sincerely, H. HOLLAND.

BROOK STREET, LONDON, *May 14, 1864.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — So long a time has elapsed since our last communication by letter that I am becoming solicitous for a renewal of our correspondence, — partly from my earnest desire to hear good tidings of yourself and of Miss Weed, partly from my wish to know your opinion of all that is going on around you at this critical time. You are well aware of the great interest I feel in American affairs, and of my anxiety that this unhappy struggle should be brought to a speedy end by any means that may be honorable in themselves and safe for the future. You know that I have thought much on the subject, and with the advantage of more knowledge than perhaps is common on this side the Atlantic. On all main points my opinion remains the same as it was two years ago. It has been confirmed, indeed, by all the events which have occurred. You know the tenor of these opinions, and therefore I will not weary you by repeating them, more especially as some of the suggestions I venture to find in them are unhappily less applicable now than they might possibly have been when I was with you. The near approach of the presidential election has added to the other complications of the subject.

It is particularly on this latter point I am anxious to hear from you. Of military events the newspapers give us information more or less



exact; but of the internal movements arising out of party or personal interests, in an election of such vital importance to the United States, I am most solicitous to obtain the judgment of one so well fitted as you are, by sound sense and integrity, to give a just opinion. I cannot myself hazard even a surmise on the subject. All I see is the necessity (for I would use no less a word) of having a President at this juncture able, by his high personal character, moral and intellectual, and by his freedom from party taint, to meet the emergencies of the time and those which must inevitably follow a war of this character and duration, whatever be its result. The certainty I feel that such emergencies will progressively augment and become more difficult of solution as the war goes on makes me most earnest for all or anything that may tend to pacification. No one can see more strongly than I do difficulties which stand in the way of peace. But they are difficulties hardly susceptible of being removed by any probable events of war, and I therefore would fain hope that they may be met speedily by the firm and honest desire of removing them, if possible.

The main difficulty is doubtless concentrated in the question as to separation or reünion. In seeking to establish the latter, regard must ever be had to the danger of creating further separation. You may remember my aspirations for "a convention called for the reconstruction of the Union and for such changes in the Constitution as time and events may have rendered necessary."<sup>1</sup> I think an invitation should be addressed to the South to join in such a convention. Refusing which, they injure their own position: accepting which, the door, at least, is opened for pacification. I am convinced that the present Congress can do nothing towards ending the war. It will require an assembly of those citizens of the commonwealth who have acquired public esteem by their public virtues. I fear, however, it is not at this moment when such a convention may be reasonably spoken of. The excitement of the impending election and the bloody struggle in Virginia supersede for a time anything besides.

I had not designed to have written so much on this distressing subject. I will now pass to others.

Mr. Evarts you will probably have seen already. He will tell you of all your friends in England. He has well kept up here the high esteem he gained on his first visit. My family, or rather I may say the four families of which I have the headship, are all well and very prosperous. I am fortunate in most excellent children, whom I can blame only for multiplying grandchildren rather too rapidly.

The newspapers will tell you of our European war, overwhelming

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Weed favored such a convention late in 1860, hoping that it might be the means of averting war.

brave little Denmark. The feeling in England is strong and almost unanimous, and yet there is nothing to make a *casus belli*. It will perhaps, however, favorably impress the conference now sitting here to settle the question. I sent by the mail bag last week a copy of the second edition of a volume I published a year or two ago. I beg you will give it a place among your books, as some slight token of friendship and regard. I often refer with great pleasure to the memory of my visits to you and Miss Weed. Pray remember me to her with all kindness. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me,

Ever yours faithfully,

H. HOLLAND.

LONDON, *March 10, 1865.*

DEAR MR. WEED,— I received your letter of the 22d February, which is very welcome to me with the expressions of friendship it conveys, both from yourself and Mr. Evarts. If your suppers together lead to such communications as in the present instance, I pray that they may be repeated often. You are very good in expressing so much desire to see me again in the United States. If anything could seduce me to another passage across the Atlantic, it would be the earnest wish to see you all again under restored peace and reunion, of which there now seems so much fairer and speedier a prospect than at any time heretofore.

Events are at this moment going on so rapidly that I should probably be out of date already in commenting upon your marches and victories. The obvious exhaustion of the South and the growing disaffection to the Richmond government are indices as to the future which most strongly impress my mind, both in private reflection and in conversation with Mr. Adams.

I must still repeat the earnest hope I have so often expressed to you that the time of victory and superiority will be now also the time of conciliation— that reunion assured for the future may be based on good will and forgetfulness of the past rather than on harsh and vindictive conquest. I see clearly the many difficulties which beset the reconstruction of that Union which has been torn asunder so rudely; but, giving my own judgment with all humility, I cannot but think that the principle just stated is that which most safely and most expediently can be brought to the termination of the struggle. It would be presumptuous in me to go one step beyond expressions of this general view, which I am not without the hope of seeing embodied in the President's inaugural address, and continued through his new term of presidency.<sup>1</sup>

Without knowing any details of the case, I am happy in learning

<sup>1</sup> How Sir Henry must have rejoiced on reading that inaugural!

that I may congratulate you on the issue of the trial in which you have been engaged. I hear that Mr. Evarts, a host in himself, was your counsel. I should gladly have his services in my own case against the legislature of Pennsylvania, who, in direct contravention of an act of 1840, guaranteeing the interest of their state debt "in specie or its equivalent," are now paying it in paper currency. As I and my family hold nearly — of this state stock, the wrong we suffer is serious. I feel it the more, because several friends who are much less able to bear it than I am have been led by my example and opinion to invest in the same stock.

I have just been writing and despatching to Paris a letter to the Emperor, expressing my thanks for a splendid volume he has just sent me as a present, — the first part of his history of Julius Cæsar. Five of the presentation copies of the folio edition have been sent to England, and of these mine is one, — the fulfillment of a promise the Emperor made me over twenty years ago when I visited him at Biarritz. It is seldom that promises thus distant in date are so well fulfilled. The preface I do not like. Everything else in the book is excellent, in thought, style, and method.

I am interrupted here, and must hastily finish my letter to save this mail. Farewell, my dear sir, and pray believe me ever,

Yours with greatest regard,

H. HOLLAND.

There may be added some references to another old, intimate, and cherished friend of Mr. Weed, whose name has already occurred in this narrative, — the late Mr. Joseph Parkes, of London. Though a most hospitable man, Mr. Parkes was also eminently industrious. He held a responsible position in the taxing office, but at intervals of leisure labored upon his "Life of Sir Philip Francis." The manuscripts of this work he showed to Mr. Weed, whom they convinced that Sir Philip was the author of the "Letters of Junius." On one occasion Mr. Parkes took Mr. Weed to breakfast with the venerable John Taylor, author of "Junius Identified." Mr. Weed described Mr. Taylor as "veritably 'a fine old English gentleman,' past eighty, but hale, active, and genial." After disposing of the "Junius" question, — which possessed more interest to our forefathers than it does to the present generation, — Mr. Taylor was drawn into conversation about Charles Lamb, Hannah More, and Horace Walpole, "of whom his reminiscences," says, Mr. Weed, "were delightfully fresh and graphic." Mr. Parkes, it need scarcely be added, was an out-and-out friend

of the Union. It was his invariable habit to breakfast with Edward Ellice on Sunday mornings.

At a dinner given to Mr. Weed, late in December, 1861, by Mr. George Moffat, M. P., the guest was seated next to Lord Morpeth, then the Hon. Mr. Howard. Mr. Weed's wonderful memory for incidents of a certain description, as well as his tact in selecting the proper time to bring them out, was illustrated by one of the stories which he told on this occasion. "You may not be aware, sir," he said, addressing Mr. Howard, "that the Earl of Carlisle, when in America, in 1825, was given a dinner by Daniel Webster. The Hon. Mr. Stanley, afterwards Earl Derby, Henry Labouchère, ex-Minister of State, and Mr. John E. Denison, who was first chosen Speaker of the House of Commons, I believe, in 1857, were of the party. They had just entered Parliament and, during the recess, were making a tour of America. Mr. Stanley remarked to Mr. Webster, that most of our members of Congress appeared to be familiar with parliamentary law and the rules of legislative business. 'Your representatives,' he said, 'discourse as learnedly on matters of procedure as though they were lord chancellors;' and Mr. Denison added: 'We leave all that to the ministers on one side and a few old chaps on the opposition benches on the other.' Mr. Webster somewhat earnestly chided his visitors on their lack of parliamentary information, to which Mr. Denison said: 'Well, it may be all right for Stanley and Labouchère to study up the subject; but why should I bother with all that rubbish?' In his clear voice and emphatic manner, Mr. Webster replied: 'It is to you, sir, particularly, that this sort of information is important; for you are to be Speaker of the House of Commons.'" The aptness of this story consisted in the fact that the Earl of Carlisle was Lord Morpeth's brother-in-law. It was told to Mr. Weed by Gulian C. Verplanck, of New York, whose congressional life began in 1825, and who, as a guest at Mr. Webster's dinner, himself heard the prediction.

At dinner one evening in London with Mr. Curtis Lampson, Mr. Weed was seated next Mrs. Lampson, who inquired if he was acquainted in the western part of New York. In reply, he said that he had resided in Rochester several years, and had many friends in that section. She then asked if he knew her

brother, who lived at Le Roy. "I know a merchant in Le Roy," said Mr. Weed, "who bears your name; but he cannot be your brother, as he is what we call a Yankee,—from Vermont." "Why," said Mrs. Lampson, with a merry twinkle in her eyes, "what do you take us for?" "I should certainly say," replied Mr. Weed, "that you are, in every sense of the word, English." Not concealing her amusement, Mrs. Lampson informed her husband, who was sitting at the other end of the table, that Mr. Weed supposed him to be an Englishman. "I would have you know, sir," said the host, addressing Mr. Weed, "that my native town is Poultney, Vermont, where I worked with my father on a farm until I was eighteen years old. I was digging potatoes on the side of a hill one afternoon, when I came to the conclusion that there must be some easier way to earn a living. That night, when I went home to supper, I asked my father if he would let me go to Montreal, where I thought I could get employment. He consented, and the next day I started, with my clothes in a pack. I first found employment in a warehouse, and in six months was promoted to a clerkship. In less than a year afterwards I was sent into upper Canada as a clerk for the Northwest Fur Company. Thus I became acquainted with Mr. Ramsey Crooks, an agent of John Jacob Astor's. When Crooks was transferred to New York I was appointed his successor. Two years afterwards Mr. Astor made me his agent in London, and here I have resided ever since."

After the death of Mr. Astor, Mr. Lampson established himself in business and amassed a large fortune. For the prominent part which he took with Mr. Cyrus W. Field, of New York, in laying the first Atlantic cable, this Vermont farmer's boy received, in 1866, a title of nobility.

## CHAPTER XXX.

1862.

THE BLOCKADE AT CHARLESTON. — HOW IT WAS REGARDED IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND. — THE EMPEROR'S SPEECH. — MR. WEED AND M. LOUBAT. — INTERVIEW WITH THE DUC DE MORNAY. — CITING THE TREATY OF UTRECHT. — PRINCE NAPOLEON. — THE EMPEROR'S MESSAGE MODIFIED. — AN AFTER-DINNER CONVERSATION REPORTED BY MR. SENIOR, OF ENGLAND.

ON the 15th of January, 1862, Mr. Weed received a despatch from Mr. Dayton calling him to Paris. He left London at eight o'clock that evening, taking the steamer at Dover, and sitting on deck to watch the flickering beacons on the English coast until lights appeared in the harbor of Calais. He reached Paris at six o'clock in the morning.

After breakfasting with Archbishop Hughes, he drove to the American Legation, where he found Mr. Dayton and Mr. Bigelow in consultation. They had learned that the Emperor, in his usual New Year speech to the legislative chamber, would demand the abrogation of our blockade. By this information friends of the Union in Paris were panic-stricken. There was a long and anxious conference. But no plan which solved the situation was suggested.

Mr. Weed left the Legation to confer with the Archbishop and to deliver Secretary Seward's letter to Prince Napoleon. As he was on the way, the name of the street through which his carriage was passing called to his mind the fact that he had a letter of introduction to a gentleman residing on that thoroughfare, — a letter which had been handed to him in New York, as he was leaving for the steamer, by Mr. Anthony J. Hill, a West India planter with whom he had been long intimate. The introduction was to M. Alphonse Loubat. Obeying an irresistible impulse (which he once said, years afterwards, must have been caused by special intervention of an all-wise Providence), Mr. Weed determined to deliver this letter at once.

He changed his direction accordingly, and a few moments later was ushered into M. Loubat's parlor.

Here, after the first formalities had been exchanged, he was received with the utmost cordiality. "I hope it may prove," said M. Loubat, "that you have arrived in season to prevent a great calamity." It had been intimated to him, also, that the Emperor in his annual address, while reviewing relations existing between France and other powers, would assume an aggressive attitude towards our government. Unlike most Parisians at this period, M. Loubat was a zealous friend of the Union. His expressions of interest in the success of our armies were a delightful surprise. The conversation had lasted but a few moments when he said: "An interview with the Emperor must be arranged. Leave that to me. But no," he added, after a few moments' reflection, "the Emperor is hostile. For you to see him might avail nothing. You must see his brother, the Duc de Morny,<sup>1</sup> — shall we say at ten o'clock to-morrow morning?" Under ordinary circumstances Mr. Weed would have distrusted the promises of a private citizen to obtain immediate audiences with royalty. But there was about M. Loubat a certain air of reserve power which won implicit confidence. "Yes," said Mr. Weed without hesitation, "if I may see the Duc de Morny, I shall be most grateful for the privilege." A few moments afterwards, remarking that he would embrace an early opportunity to deliver his letter to Prince Napoleon, he rose to take his departure. "The Prince is out of favor," said M. Loubat; "but he sympathizes with the North, and may make some valuable suggestions."

At his rooms that evening Mr. Weed talked over events of the day with Archbishop Hughes, who was incredulous. At the Legation both Mr. Dayton and Mr. Bigelow declared that Mr. Weed's friend had mistaken his position.

Still later in the evening M. Loubat called at Mr. Weed's apartments to say that the Duke would see him in the morning,

<sup>1</sup> He was the son, it is conceded, of Count Flahault and Hortense, Queen of Holland. A gentleman by the name of De Morny was paid to claim him as belonging to that family, and he was educated by the Count de Flahault's mother, receiving on the death of Hortense a handsome legacy. He assisted in the *coup d'état* of 1851, and was President of the Corps Législatif in 1854. He was Minister to Russia, and married the Princess Troubetzkoi.

and to announce, in addition, that the Emperor in the first paragraph of his message would take ground against the blockade at Charleston as "a monstrous and barbarous policy, which, from a mere sentiment of revenge upon a people struggling for freedom, would forever close and destroy harbors necessary for the commerce of mankind."

The main channel at Charleston had been obstructed, it will be remembered, by the sinking of sixteen vessels of the "stone fleet," which sailed south from Connecticut and Massachusetts on the 19th of November, 1861. There was a powerful secession sentiment both in England and France, stimulated and entrenched by several important Confederate victories, and with this sentiment the Emperor did not conceal his sympathy. He felt, as many other Europeans felt, at this time, that Union disasters, followed as they were, by the suspension of specie payments in New York, argued that the Washington government must collapse speedily.

The feeling in England is shown by the following article from the London "Post," government organ, of January 17, 1862:—

We rejoice to perceive that the destruction of the port of Charleston is encountering that general condemnation in this country which it has already received from the French press, and especially from the official organ of the French government. Mr. Beresford-Hope may stand for an example. He has just characterized it as "an atrocious barbarity, almost unparalleled in the history of the world." And the practical significance of the question it involves at this moment is, not only that an outrage has been committed upon the rights and laws of civilization itself, but that there is the best ground to apprehend that similar barbarities are in course of perpetration or design against the other great commercial ports of the Southern Confederation. We apprehend that nothing but the firmly expressed views of maritime Europe can avail to arrest the further development of this horrible project.

The commercial interests of great seaboard countries have always formed one of the most cherished objects of European diplomacy. The rights of blockade, meanwhile, have been preserved intact; because blockades, being created only by the actual presence and effective operation of ships of war, are in their nature temporary, and necessarily terminate with the settlement of the difference in which they have arisen. But, subject to these rights,—still most rigorously defined and limited, both in point of character and point of time,—the free navigation of rivers and the free entrance of ports are princi-



ples which every government of Europe has addressed itself to promote. It would have seemed incredible until a few weeks ago that, after a century of international legislation, marked by gradual mitigation of the severities of war and unbroken progress in the interests of commerce, an ostensibly civilized government should prosecute a war, of the original legality of which grave doubts have been entertained, on principles of barbarity and destruction to be equaled only by the captains of piratical junks in the East Indian Archipelago. . . .

The barbarities now perpetrated by the Federal government are equally bracing the energies of the South and rousing European governments to a common sentiment of indignation. We hardly know why Europe has hitherto acted toward the Northern government with so much more long-suffering than she showed towards Holland in 1831 and 1832. Holland was never guilty of the barbarities committed by the Washington Cabinet; but France and Great Britain, as soon as the Belgians showed that they could hold their own, and the war grew destructive to commerce and general security, recognized unhesitatingly the independence of Belgium.<sup>1</sup>

His pillow did not "bring repose" to Mr. Weed that night. He knew that, in all probability, an unfriendly declaration in the Emperor's message would be supplemented by a similar declaration from England, and that soon afterwards the navies of these nations would appear along the defenseless seacoast of the United States, ostensibly to protect the interests of neutrals, but really to paralyze our government. Brief reflection convinced him that it would be idle to approach the Emperor directly. Archbishop Hughes had visited his majesty without making any visible impression. In seeking to influence the Duc de Morny, Mr. Weed felt that he was on the right track. But what arguments could be brought to bear? That was by no means a simple question. Mr. Weed prepared for the interview by revisiting the Legation, where volume after volume was eagerly searched for citations and precedents. He particularly desired to find a certain record thought to be applicable in the present instance.

In the morning at the appointed hour, in company with M.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Beresford-Hope was a member of Parliament, proprietor of the *Saturday Review*, vice-president of the Manchester Southern Independence Association, treasurer of the Stonewall Jackson fund, and a large owner of Confederate bonds. Mr. Rideout, proprietor and editor of the *Post*, was also a holder of Confederate securities.

Loubat, Mr. Weed sought the palace of the Duc de Morny. A servant, taking their cards, ushered them into the luxurious *salon* reserved for visitors in waiting. It was customary for callers, while De Morny was engaged, to beguile the time by walking through his art galleries, which were the talk of Paris. Several gentlemen of distinction were thus occupied when M. Loubat and Mr. Weed entered. Returning in a few moments, the servant said that the Duke wished to see the American gentleman immediately. Mr. Weed was introduced by M. Loubat, who, remarking that a pressing business matter required his attention withdrew. "Do what you can with the Duke," he had said to Mr. Weed that morning. If you gain him, the way is clear. If you fail, the result cannot but prove most unfortunate."

The Duke assumed at once the leading part in the conversation. He was exceedingly affable and unreserved. It gave him great pleasure, he said, to meet Mr. Weed. He extended an invitation to the opera. The season was rather dull, to be sure, but a new singer was soon to make her appearance.

Mr. Weed referred to public topics by gradual stages. He could not let the Duke know that he had been informed of the nature of the Emperor's message. He was obliged to criticise a policy which France had not adopted, and which he was not supposed to have any information that she intended to adopt. But he was equal to the occasion.

"After some general remarks in regard to the tone of the British press," writes an ex-diplomat, "Mr. Weed finally succeeded in breaking ground.

"'Nothing,' he said, 'could be more absurd than for England, which had never hesitated at any miscreancy requisite to uphold or extend her power, — for England, yet bloody to the armpits from the massacre of many thousand unarmed Sepoy prisoners, — belligerents as much as our southern rebels, — to pretend to affect horror at our attempted blockade of southern ports by means of sunken vessels. Certainly England had no right to become the champion of humanity or civilization, whatever claim might be put forward on the part of France to that distinction.'

"De Morny acknowledged the compliment to France with a cold bow. In this matter, however, he must think that Eng-

land's complaints were justified. Harbors were places of refuge for distressed ships, as well as ports of entry for commerce. They were constructed by nature, and should not be held subject to the wrath of man. To turn from an unpleasant subject, however, if Mr. Weed and his charming daughter would do him the honor, and afford him the pleasure, etc., etc.

"The disinclination to discuss the question of the stone fleet blockade, on the Duc de Morny's part was so obvious, and yet so courteously expressed, that our American diplomatist—plain, farmer-like person that he was, in appearance—had no little difficulty in returning to the charge. To return, however, was a necessity; and, mentally deciding that his next sentence must either close the conversation or arouse De Morny's interest, he made a dash at that point of character which his experience told him is the most sensitive in every true Frenchman's organization.

"Pushing aside the social invitation with a polite and complimentary acknowledgment, he resumed: 'But, let England's course be what it will, France certainly, with her very peculiar position in history (De Morny suddenly became attentive), cannot afford to take sides with her on this question.'

"'Ah,' said the Duke, 'you were saying'—

"'I was saying,' continued Mr. Weed, who saw that the point of the barb was in the palate, and only needed a scientific jerk to be sent home, — 'I was saying that, from the historical position of France on this question, and the noble pride of your nation, which so keenly dislikes to be placed in a self-condemnatory or in the least humiliating attitude, that we of the United States expect the cordial support of your government in our right to blockade or destroy any ports on our own seacoast.'

"'Ah—ah—indeed!' The Minister was evidently troubled, — evidently at sea as to what could be the meaning of the farmer-like personage, with shaggy gray eyebrows and a long forefinger, from the working of which some mysterious power of electricity seemed to radiate.

"At length De Morny brightened. He had, he thought, caught the meaning, and it was not so serious as he had supposed. 'Ah, yes. You doubtless allude to Napoleon the First's blockade of the Scheldt with piles, — but that was an entirely different matter'—

“‘No, no, no,’ was the slow but impressive rejoinder, made impressive by three shakes of the long forefinger, — a smile, as if in half sympathy for unfortunate France, and half at the Minister’s error passed quickly over Mr. Weed’s face. ‘I allude — but pardon me. You are a Frenchman — almost the highest Frenchman. I do not wish to give you pain. Let me take my leave. The interest awakened by your conversation led me further than I intended. If my daughter be well enough, we shall certainly have much pleasure,’ etc., etc.

“Oh! subtle angler of men, your hook was well home by this time. The leviathan of the French Cabinet could now be played as easily as a drum-fish in Port Royal harbor.

“‘Stay, stay, Mr. Weed,’ said the Minister. ‘If any precedents have escaped me, which could have the effect you imply, it might possibly be of importance that my attention should be drawn to them.’

“Mr. Weed shook his head. The chief and controlling precedent, to his view, could not possibly have escaped the Duc de Morny. Perhaps he had overestimated the punctilio of honor, — the sensitiveness of the French people. For his part, he could not imagine that the Duke could, by any stress of affairs or other occupations, have overlooked that painful paragraph in one of France’s most important treaties which bore upon this subject. As it had been one of England’s greatest and most durable triumphs — indeed her most durable, and, therefore, the most afflictive to French pride, he was not able to do more than thus remotely refer to it. Even for this distant reference he apologized sincerely; and would now beg to be allowed to take his leave.

“No more coldness in the Duc de Morny now — no more disinclination to discuss the topic of the stone fleet. He paced the room with fingers locked behind his back and twitching nervously. He was ransacking his memory vainly for the treaty in which this disastrous paragraph was encased. At length, recovering himself, he sat down, and motioned Mr. Weed, who had risen as if to take his leave, to be again seated.

“‘It is important, my good friend — that is to say (correcting himself), it is not important to my government, but it would give me personal pleasure to know the treaty to which

you refer, and the character of the paragraph therein to which you but now alluded.'

" 'The treaty of Utrecht' —

" 'Ah. Well, what of that?'

" 'Its second paragraph' —

" 'Well — well.'

" 'The principal advantage therein taken by Holland and Great Britain of the temporary weakness — But pardon me! This reference, made as delicately as possible, will recall all the facts to your remembrance.'

" 'No — no; spare me nothing. Punish my memory for its default by telling me all our humiliation; for to this, I see, though you would avoid it, you must come.'

" 'Since you compel me, then, thus briefly: The second paragraph of that treaty provides for the destruction by the French of the second best harbor in their Empire; for the permanent sealing up and total destruction of Dunkirk, the Hollandaise and British averring openly that the continuance of this harbor was injurious to their maritime interests, and a constant menace against their coasts.'<sup>1</sup>

" 'And France submitted?'

" 'Two years after that treaty you will find a formal complaint from the government of Holland to the Court of St. James, that France had not fully carried out the destruction of

<sup>1</sup> "The Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the most Serene and most Potent Princess Anne by the grace of God Queen of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, and the most Serene and most Potent Prince Lewis XIVth, the most Christian King, concluded at Utrecht 31 day of March, 1713. . . .

"IX. — The most Christian King shall take care that all the fortifications of the City of Dunkirk be razed, that the harbour be filled up, and that the sluices or moles which serve to cleanse the harbour be levelled, and that at the said King's own expense, within the space of five months after the conditions of peace are concluded and signed, that is to say, the fortifications towards the sea within the space of two months, and those towards the land, together with the said banks, within three months; on this express condition also, that the said fortifications, harbour, moles or sluices be never repaired again.

"All which shall not, however, be begun to be ruined till after that everything is put into his Christian Majesty's hands, which is to be given him, instead thereof, or as an equivalent." — Extract from "The Treaty of Utrecht," from the copy which was published by authority in 1713.

the works and harbor; that ships of light draft could still pass in and out.'

" 'And after this, what?'

" 'England represented the alleged breach of faith to the French Court, demanding, in her own name and that of Holland, that instant measures should be taken by France for the total sealing up, by stone barriers, of the harbor.'

" 'And it was done?'

" 'The harbor is sealed up to this day for all but smacks or vessels of the lightest draft. You see no large river emptied into the harbor of Dunkirk, and there was no current to cut new channels for the imprisoned waters. With us, at Charleston, Mobile, and the mouths of the Mississippi, the thing is different. Our stone fleets are a farce — a scheme of folly. One week of the river-flow will, beyond any doubt, cut deeper, because narrower, channels than those we are attempting to blockade. Our action, therefore, will have no practical ill effect upon the commerce of the world. But any discussion of it at this time could not fail to embarrass France by directing the attention of her proud and gallant people to the desolate memorial in the harbor of Dunkirk of British ascendancy at one time, and the brutal manner in which that ascendancy was exercised. The Emperor still continues on terms of friendship, does he not, with the British Court?'

" 'The best terms — the best,' said De Morny, suddenly rousing himself out of a profound reverie, which had not been a pleasant one, to judge by his countenance during its continuance. 'I confess with something of shame that the Utrecht treaty, or rather the second paragraph of it, had escaped me. You have put me under an additional obligation by recalling it. Adieu, my very good friend, I have an engagement with the Emperor, and already the interest of your conversation has detained me past my time.'

" Mr. Weed retired, bowing, to the door, well satisfied with his interview. Never in state or national convention did he feel more certain of the success of his arts. Leviathan was hooked and might struggle. But the hook was tangled round and round, backwards and forwards, in and out, through all the tissues of national pride, and the hook would hold.

" Driving home, our farmer-like diplomatist called upon the

Prince Napoleon, and briefly gave an outline of the interview here roughly but faithfully sketched.

“‘You have him,’ said the Prince, rubbing his hands and laughing heartily. ‘You have him, my dear sir, and may now go to your hotel and enjoy yourself. Think no more of the matter. It is all settled. The speech will be silent about the stone fleet. I rejoice that you have succeeded. You know that my heart is with you in American affairs; but I am regarded as a northern partisan, and can do nothing with the Emperor.’”

A few words conclude this curious story. When the address was delivered, it was shorn of the passage relating to our blockade. The paragraph referring to America was short and non-committal. Something had plainly been suppressed. “The civil war which desolates the United States,” declared the Emperor, “has greatly compromised our commercial interests. So long as the rights of neutrals are respected, however, we must confine ourselves to expressing wishes for an early termination of these dissensions.” Commenting upon the message, the London “Times,” in its editorial and financial columns, took sharp notice of the “sober second thought” which had mollified this important official utterance.

We dined with Mr. Dayton, American Minister in Paris in 1862 [writes the late Mr. Senior, of England<sup>1</sup>], and met Mr. and Mrs. Adams, Mr. Weed (the American commissioner sent by Lincoln on a private mission to conciliate Europe), Mr. Doremus, the first chemist in America, and Mr. Bigelow, a lawyer.

After dinner, all the men, except Mr. Adams, retired into the smoking-room.

We trust [they said] that we now see the beginning of the end. In a few weeks our troops will be in possession of Richmond, of New Orleans, and of the other important southern towns. The Unionist party will be able to show itself. It will hang or drive out the traitors who have deceived the country, and will offer, or accept from us, fair terms of reconciliation.

*Senior.* — And what will be the terms which you will offer?

*Weed.* — Very simple ones, — merely the abolition of the law by which a master has a vote in respect to his slaves.

<sup>1</sup> *Conversations with Distinguished Persons during the Second Empire.* By Nassau William Senior, Master in Chancery, etc. London: Hurst & Blackett, publishers, 1880. Vol. ii., pp. 136-142.

*Senior.* — And also the prohibition of slavery in the territories, or in new states?

*Weed.* — It will not be necessary. As soon as the political value of slaves is gone, slavery, though it may continue where it exists, will not be introduced into any country not now polluted by it.

*Senior.* — Will you give them a fugitive slave law?

*Weed.* — Certainly, and a better one than they have now. The state which assisted the escape of a fugitive, or has even connived at it, will have to repay to the master his value. We offered this law several years ago, but the southern agitators rejected it. They chose to keep the sore open, to force the officers of the Union and the inhabitants of the Free States to be their slave catchers.

*Senior.* — Will you repeal the state laws which keep the negro ignorant, allow the separation of families, and the internal slave trade, and exclude the testimony of blacks against whites?

*Weed.* — We cannot do so; we cannot interfere with the municipal laws of the state.

*Senior.* — But you must have a convention, in order to deprive the master of his vote in respect of his slave; a convention is omnipotent, and might abolish the slave laws of the states, or establish a mild, and so far as a slave law can be, a just slave law throughout the Union.

*Weed.* — We shall not do so; we shall do nothing that will increase the difficulty of the reconciliation.

*Senior.* — What will you do with the southern debt?

*Weed.* — Assume it as a part of the debt of the Union.

*Bigelow.* — The North will have to pay the costs on each side.

*Senior.* — And if the South refuse your offer?

*Weed.* — Then we employ our last and worst weapon, — we emancipate the slaves.

*Senior.* — By an act of Congress?

*Weed.* — No, by virtue of the rights of war. Every General will have the power to declare the slaves of a district in his military possession, free. Frémont did this, but it was thought premature.

*Senior.* — But what is to become of four millions of negroes — ignorant and helpless — suddenly set adrift?

*Weed.* — That is a question which we choose not to examine.

*Senior.* — And what is to become of the millions of whites, whose property will be valueless when their slaves are set free?

*Weed.* — That, again, is a question which we refuse to examine. They have been guilty of the most wicked rebellion that history records. If they refuse not merely fair, but generous terms of reconciliation, their ruin, even their blood, be on their own heads.



*Senior.* — But you *must* examine these questions. You cannot do acts implying enormous consequences, without inquiring what these consequences will be. If you do, the ruin and the bloodshed will be on your heads. Do you look calmly on the prospect of a St. Domingo? Of spreading devastation over a country as large as Europe?

*Bigelow.* — With respect to the slaves, the North, by emancipating them, will obtain a right, and will incur a responsibility. It must provide for them, and must require them to do all that they can to lighten that heavy burden. The best mode will, perhaps, be to transplant them to some country where the soil and the climate will allow them to subsist with little labor. I am told that you want people in Jamaica.

*Senior.* — Yes; but we want thousands, not millions. We do not want men to squat on our waste lands. We want voluntary and hard-working emigrants, not transported slaves.

*Bigelow.* — Then there is Central America.

*Senior.* — Yes, but there is no land there without a master; there is no capital to employ them. If fifty thousand of your freed negroes were endeavored to be put ashore on any of the coasts of Central America, I doubt whether they would be allowed to land, and I am sure that they would die of hunger.

*Weed.* — My belief is that we shall provide for them in a different way. We shall confiscate all the lands and estates of the rebels and sell or grant them to loyal northern men; they will be rewards for the army. The slaves on those estates will naturally remain on them. We shall subject them to a kind of apprenticeship, as you did when you emancipated the slaves in your island.

*Dayton.* — As we did in New Jersey. We did not give to the emancipated slaves perfect or immediate freedom.

*Weed.* — We shall treat the South as William the Conqueror did England. We shall divide it into territories, make a military man the governor of each territory, give the estates to well-deserving officers and men, and let the slaves, who cultivate them for the rebels, now cultivate them for loyal men. As for the whites, they will not be eight millions; they will not be five millions, for the Border States will return to the Union. Of the five millions in the Gulf States, three fifths own no slaves, and therefore will be uninjured. The million of slave-owners will be ruined, and they will deserve to be ruined.

*Senior.* — It will be the destruction of the whole aristocracy of the country.

*Weed.* — It will, and it deserves to be destroyed.

*Senior.* — But when you have emancipated the slaves in the Gulf States, what will you do with those in the Border States?

*Weed.* — Of course they cannot remain slaves, surrounded by free states. We must buy them up. There are about a million of them, worth, at a rough calculation, four hundred dollars, or eighty pounds, a head. It will cost about eighty millions sterling.

*Senior.* — And will they be able to provide for themselves?

*Weed.* — I think so, if they are not too quickly freed from all restraint and thrown on their own resources. They must probably be subjected to an apprenticeship. But I trust that it will not come to this. I trust that the South will accept our terms, and that in six months' time the Union will be restored.

*Senior.* — Still you will have to buy up the slaves in the Border States?

*Weed.* — If those states consent; but it will not be absolutely necessary, for slavery will in that case continue in the Gulf States. In the Border States I hope that it will gradually cease, as it has done in the North, not, however, so slowly, for the President's message offering the assistance of the whole Union in its eradication is a new element.

*Senior.* — It appears, then, that slavery can become extinct only in one of three events. If the Gulf States achieve their independence, slavery will continue. If the Gulf States reënter the Union, slavery will continue. Slavery will be extinguished only in case the Gulf States stubbornly resist and are conquered; and you believe this to be very improbable.

*Weed.* — I believe their resistance to be improbable; but if, to use your words, they "stubbornly resist," I feel no doubt as to their being eventually conquered. In the mean time we shall exert ourselves to raise a supply of cotton for ourselves, and also for Europe, from the countries in our possession. We cannot but feel that the war would be protracted if Europe were to raise the blockade, and you and the French are becoming impatient. The French nation sympathizes with us, but not the Emperor, and the distress is greater here than with you, as it comes on a poorer people. The French, too, are less acquainted with international law, and care less about it. You respect our blockade, because you think that you may yourselves have to use blockades. The French have no such expectation; they probably would not be sorry to see the whole law of blockade abolished. With the slightest encouragement from you, or, to speak more correctly, if not discouraged by you, they would break the blockade and probably acknowledge the South.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

1862.

RETURN TO LONDON. — APPEALS TO THE ENGLISH MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS. — THE EFFORT IN PARLIAMENT TO SECURE FOREIGN INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF THE REBEL STATES. — ARRIVAL OF THE CONFEDERATE EMISSARIES. — AUGUST BELMONT. — MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED. — THE FREEDOM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK. — LETTER TO THE MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES.

RETURNING to London, Mr. Weed found that a very different reference to America in the address to the French Chamber had been anticipated. A prominent member of the House of Commons who warmly espoused the cause of the South had been in conference with the Emperor, and had brought back assurances that the blockade would be denounced, and that commercial nations would be invited to intervene, against our government. Stock speculators had received kindred assurances from the French Minister at the English capital. It was part of the secession plan to have the Emperor's appeal promptly responded to by a movement in Parliament; but his speech, as delivered, occasioned embarrassment and delay.

Writing to Mr. Weed, Mr. J. S. Morgan, of London, said: "It occurs to me that there may be some sort of understanding between England and France. Suppose they decide to ask us to open southern ports, and Lincoln declines, would not that mean war *instantly*? Are they blind and deaf at Washington, that they neglect such important interests and leave you to work single-handed?"

In the effort to secure foreign intervention, English cupidity was skillfully played upon. An extract from the American correspondence of the Manchester "Guardian" shows what sort of argument was advanced to excite the ire of the manufacturing districts. The information here subjoined was indorsed as coming from "a firm of the highest respectability:" —

CHARLESTON, *November 20, 1861.*

You will have heard, ere this reaches you, that the great Yankee fleet of 130 ships made an attack on our batteries at Hilton Head, and, after a severe fight of five hours, our little fort of sixteen guns had to yield to 120. The Yankees then landed, under cover of their guns, and have occupied one or more islands on the coast. You are well aware that our seacoast, like that of Georgia and part of Florida, is adapted to the growth of sea island or long staple cotton. Now, the appearance of the Yankees has caused the abandonment of the plantations. The negroes run into the interior to escape Yankee freedom; the planters are burning their houses, their crops, and their fields; and we doubt if the vandals are able to steal more than 100 bags or so.

The island called Edisto, where extra fine cotton is grown, is almost in a state of ruin. One planter burned \$42,000 worth of cotton, besides houses, provisions, etc.; and we fully expect the action of the Edisto planters will be followed by all, whenever the Yankees make their appearance. Whether they confine themselves to this State alone, or Georgia and Florida share the same fate, we feel confident that the planters, rather than permit their crops to fall into the hands of these thieves and desperadoes, will all burn their crops and destroy their cotton. Thus the entire long staple crop, generally estimated at 40,000 to 45,000 bags, may be nearly, if not all, destroyed. But the mischief does not end here; the negroes are run off, the plantations abandoned, and no more long-staple cotton can be planted so long as the war lasts. Whether this is a very serious matter or not to your fine spinners and thread manufacturers, you can better determine. A vast amount of labor must be diverted to grain and meat. The short staple planters, finding no market for the crop of this year, will not plant a single seed of cotton the coming spring. Grain will monopolize their entire attention. These are serious matters to those on your side who are so deeply interested in the cultivation of cotton.

We foresaw all this months ago, and did not fail to urge you to induce your government to recognize the independence of the Confederacy, which would have put a stop to the war by the consequence of its moral effect alone; for, as to England having to fight the Yankees, they are too base-minded and cowardly for that; but it seems your ministry are more lenient to Yankee insolence than was ever expected of them. True, the Yankees are on the soil of this noble State, but they take care not to leave the islands. When they approach the mainland you will see some tall fighting on our side, and as for running, why Bull Run will not be a circumstance to it. But, laying aside jesting, we cannot be subjugated by these Yankees, though they are inciting our slaves to insurrection, and in fact arming them to

make war on us, our wives, and little ones; yet we fear them not. They may steal some cotton, burn a few villages, kill a few women and children, do us much real injury in the way of pillage and vandalism; but they can never take from us our liberty; and as for conquering us, the thing is impossible, with our means, resources, and determined spirit.

When Messrs. Mason and Slidell had been released, there was a strong disposition in England to censure that government for incurring such "vast expense" in preparing for war with the United States, without waiting for the reply of our government to the English remonstrances. In a great speech in the House of Commons, Mr. Cobden sharply criticised what he called Lord Palmerston's "sensation policy." The following letter, which appeared in the London "Herald," on the 13th of January, indicates the state of English feeling just prior to the arrival at the English capital of the belated Confederate emissary:—

I have observed for several days past that the style of coarse vituperation which characterizes the journalism of the city of New York has been adopted by some of the newspapers published in London, when speaking of the anticipated arrival of the southern commissioners unjustly taken from the royal mail steamer Trent. The Daily "News," "Star and Dial," and "Telegraph" seem to have lost their sense of propriety, and their misstatements have been followed by as vulgar a leader in the "Times" of this morning as could have been penned. It appears that the Yankees in London have industriously circulated a canard that Messrs. Mason and Slidell were to receive an ovation, which they considered would be tantamount to a recognition by the people. No such display, however, I am assured, has been intended, and the unostentatious bearing of their colleagues, Messrs. Yancey, Mann, and Rost, during a sojourn of many months in Europe, is a safe indication that no public demonstrations of regard would be acceptable to the gentlemen in question, or, to use the words of the "Times," "the fellows," who have "cost us a million apiece;" forgetting that the money has been spent for the honor of our flag, and most happily spent too, when we reflect that the reënforcements to Canada have brought Mr. Seward to terms, and that they may be found necessary before the winter is over to prevent that unprincipled politician from carrying out his long-cherished scheme of annexing that much coveted province.

Neither Mr. Mason nor Mr. Slidell are enemies of England; the

only affair of importance which occurred that particularly concerned the British people during their career in the Federal Senate was the matter of the derelict Arctic ship *Resolute*, found at sea by an American man-of-war, and carried into an American port. Upon the motion of Mr. Mason, supported by Mr. Slidell, that vessel was fitted out at the expense of the United States government, and returned to us under the command of Lieutenant Hartstein, now of the Confederate navy, who brought her into Southampton waters, where she was formally received by our Queen and the late lamented Prince Consort. This was an act of comity which was considered at the time to be the end of all wrangling between the two governments, and these southern gentlemen were the authors of it; the idea could never have originated in the penurious brain of a Yankee member of Congress, or that of the particular friends of the Thunderer, "Pompey and Cæsar," the "colored gentlemen," whom that journal places on a level with the distinguished statesmen who have been sent by President Davis on a mission of peace and Free Trade to the governments of Great Britain and France.

In heaping such insults upon the commissioners, the "Times" must forget that it is equally discourteous to Queen Victoria and the Emperor Napoleon. If, as is insinuated by your contemporary of Printing-House Square, "Pompey and Cæsar" are considered fit persons to hold the same position that is now occupied by Messrs. Mason and Slidell, President Davis might have retained those gentlemen at home, and despatched two individuals of the African race, who could have been readily spared at the present time from the cotton fields, at much less loss to the Confederacy than the absence of the gentlemen just surrendered, whose talents, education, and experience would render their services at home preëminently useful during this critical moment in the affairs of their country. Whatever views Mr. Mason or Mr. Slidell may entertain on the subject of slavery, they are precisely those held by Washington, Jefferson, and other illustrious founders of the American Republic. Slavery is an affair of their own and not ours; they have never attempted to impose it upon us, and we have no more right to meddle with their local concerns or legislation than they would have to interfere with us in a similar way. Such intrusion we would consider the height of impertinence. Whenever we have despatched ministers or envoys to America, they have been received with courtesy both by the press and the people.

It is understood that Mr. Thurlow Weed, a New York political trickster and wire-puller, and the secret agent of Mr. Seward, is here, and that he is using his influence against the Confederates. Can it be possible that such ill weeds, imported from beyond the seas, are per-

mitted to grow in the columns of the British press? or that a portion of the Federal secret service fund, of which we have heard so much, has been diverted from the system of espionage inaugurated in this country by our transatlantic [Yankee] cousins towards influencing the public mind? One journal has already received the cognomen of "The Organ of the Puritan Embassy." Fortunately, however, for the credit of your calling, it is a "lesser light," as its title indicates, and it is not regarded as being quite as Bright as it would like to be considered. Mr. Weed is the individual who, a short time back, wrote an offensive letter to the people of this country, which he published in the "Times," wherein he stated that if Earl Russell's demands were for the peremptory return of the "rebels" they would *not* be acceded to. This shows very clearly that either Mr. Weed is not a very good authority on American matters, or that his master, Mr. Seward, became frightened when he found Britannia pointing her guns while waiting for an answer.

1862. — Early in the session of Parliament, after the arrival of Mr. Mason, Confederate commissioner, Mr. Gregory, of Galway, a supporter of Lord Palmerston, introduced resolutions declaring foreign nations not bound to recognize the Charleston blockade. These resolutions were debated at length in March. They were opposed by John Bright, Richard Cobden, William E. Forster, Richard Moncton Milnes (now Lord Houghton), and the Solicitor-General, Sir Roundel Palmer. Other members of Parliament, among whom were Mr. Kinnaird, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Bazley, Mr. Potter, and Mr. Smith, of Stockport, would have spoken for the Union, had their services been required. But the capture of Fort Donelson was a strong argument against foreign interference, and when it came to a vote Mr. Gregory's motion was defeated.

Among Americans whom Mr. Weed met in France and England, who were outspoken in defense of the government, was Mr. August Belmont. Breakfasting one morning at the Hotel Bristol, in Paris, with Mr. Belmont and Mr. Edward Ellice, the conversation was wholly devoted to American affairs. The opinions of Mr. Ellice were high authority both in London and Paris. He maintained very earnestly that the North would be compelled by financial exhaustion to submit to a division of the Union. He believed that the war would become so onerous to the northern people that they would force the govern-

ment to make terms with the South. He thought also that a tariff which was so seriously affecting the manufacturing interests of England and France, must soon arouse the intervention of those governments. Mr. Belmont joined with Mr. Weed in controverting these assumptions. He insisted that if, as Mr. Ellice affirmed, foreign countries remained neutral, our government and people were strong enough in men and money to preserve the Union. There was particular significance in the opinions of Mr. Belmont at this time, as he was a prominent leader in the Democratic party, and the representative at New York of the Rothschilds, and there was perhaps even greater value attached to his utterances on account of the fact that he was allied by family connections to Mr. Slidell, then in Paris urging the Emperor to assert himself on the side of the rebels. During the early part of the war Mr. Ellice expressed himself freely as above quoted. But ere long his position was reversed, and when the attempt was made in Parliament to raise the blockade he coöperated with the majority.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *January 2, 1862.*

MY DEAR WEED, — If I had not nerves of steel I should give up my place and let some less offending man take it up.

They say I sent John Brown to Virginia to raise a slave insurrection. Everybody waits for me to prove that I did not. They charge me with "compromising." The press calls upon me to prove that I am not guilty. They charge me with gross vices. Friends ask, can it be so bad? and call upon me for refutations. They say I want war with England. Immediately I must prove that I love England better than our own country. The Duke of Newcastle, forgetful of the amenities of a dinner, gives the press a story about insulting the Prince of Wales and his whole party, and I must immediately go into a defense.

Now either I have character enough for sense and decency to live through silly falsehoods like these, caused by hatred of our country and her cause, or I have not. If I have not, I ought to be compelled at once to relinquish a place which some other can fill better.

I had prepared a note to the Duke of Newcastle, but have thrown it into the fire. Before this silly canard of his could be exposed, some new one would be started.

With love to Harriet, I am ever your unfortunate friend, who has faith in everybody, and enjoys the confidence of nobody,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.



WASHINGTON, *January 22, 1862.*

MY DEAR WEED,—If anything had been wanted to complete the embarrassments of my position here in relation to the disposition of foreign questions, it would have been the fact you have supplied; namely, that Mr. Adams and yourself have been living in the belief, that from the first inception of the recent difficulty, I knew and could have intimated from day to day, as was so much to be desired in London, what would be the solution of the affair — and that I would not. I must not allow myself to be set down as guilty of criminal neglect or obliquity.

Pray understand that I neither can advise Mr. Adams beforehand, nor even know for myself what will be the action of the government two days in advance of the actual decision it may make, when ready to make it, or, in other words, when obliged to make it. The consideration of the Trent case was crowded out by pressing domestic affairs until Christmas day. It was considered on my presentation of it on the 25th and 26th of December. The government, when it took the subject up, had no idea of the grounds upon which it would explain its action, nor did it believe that it would concede the case. Yet it was heartily unanimous in the actual result after two days' examination, and in favor of the release. Remember that in a council like ours there are some strong wills to be reconciled. Lord Lyons submitted the case to me only on Friday, and on the Friday following the matter was disposed of. . . .

I am concerned deeply about the agitation apprehended in Parliament. I fear that there may be precipitancy there. If there is, the world has never seen such a commotion as there will be.

The people are very determined to push the war; . . . they are ready for sacrifices heretofore thought impossible. If there is to be an onset in Parliament for recognition and the breaking-up of our blockade, and the temper of the ministry and the country is ripened to maintain that position, of course I do not know what we can do to prevent the disaster. It would be a foregone conclusion. No arguments will be heard against it. Moreover, if the distrust of our ability to put down insurrection is so deep and so universal in Europe as to encourage Great Britain and France into such a policy, that, too, is an evil that, though understood by us, we cannot avert. It results from the incapacity of Europeans to understand the magnitude of the United States, and the time and expense required to meet so extensive a conspiracy and subdue it. No nation can perform in sixty days so great a task as we have on hand. But if I am expected to be able to convince the prejudices of parties in Europe, I confess that I cannot. They discredit me so that they may not be convinced. Nevertheless,

I do know this, that whatever nation makes war against us, or forces itself into a war, will find out that we can and shall suppress rebellion and defeat invaders besides. The courage and the determination of the American people are aroused for any needful effort — any national sacrifices.

My dear Weed, you have wrung out of me what you yourself will regard as too sanguine expressions of my confidence in the success of our cause, and you will undervalue them, though I shall not give them up. But you must not insist on my writing in such a crisis my full thoughts, and you must trust that when I may seem to you to be doing nothing, I am doing all I am capable of doing to save our country, under embarrassments that you, while abroad, know nothing of.

Best love to Harriet. Don't lose your pocketbook, but if you are going to, burn my letters first.

WASHINGTON, *January 30, 1862.*

MY DEAR WEED, — Cyrus W. Field is the only man with conceptions equal to the difficulties of our correspondence.<sup>1</sup> I have just now your letters of 4th, 5th, 6th, and 8th of January. . . . We are doing all that we can do. Rains and storms for three weeks. They render marches or field movements impossible. . . . It will be a sad day for us if Europe intervenes. What we can do to prevent it we are doing, but if it must come we must meet the end. Everything you write tends to impress me with the conviction that we cannot be understood in England. But for all that my courage and confidence do not fail. The story about my speech in Canada which you contradicted was utterly groundless. What I did say was so flattering to the British that the French took offense. But how could I prevent such things, or even hope to correct them? The excitement of one day is chased off by the fresh excitement of another. I never saw until now the strength of the prophecy, "wars and rumors of wars." . . . At last blows begin to tell on the side of the Union. I trust that the news will reach Europe in time to produce a good effect.

Yours faithfully,

· WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

[MR. EVARTS TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *February 2, 1862.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — I was delighted to get your letter and to know that amid the attractions and distractions of your London life you had a few moments for me. I had read your public correspondence, and Mr. Blatchford had shown me most of your letters to him, so that I have kept up with your rapid movements in society and your continued and useful labors for the country.

<sup>1</sup> Referring, of course, to Mr. Field's efforts in connection with an international telegraph.

We were all exceedingly gratified with Governor Seward's conduct of the diplomatic question, through which he carried us so ably and gracefully. In the general judgment even of those least inclined to him, he showed, in substance and in manner, temper and abilities equal to the very difficult problem he had to solve. As our arms have made no progress and our generals have made no fame for themselves, as our finances are in disorder and the administration of our treasury in disgrace, Governor Seward and diplomacy have thus far carried away all the credit which has fallen to anybody in the disastrous course which our affairs have taken.

I had some hopes that Governor Seward would feel strong enough, upon the flood of his now popular favor, to attempt the formation of a public-spirited Cabinet, framed to the issues that have arisen since the election.

I expect foreign interference may come unless our arms have some speedy and decisive successes; and were I in Governor Seward's place, I should strive to have that interference, when it could be no longer averted, take the shape of mediation rather than recognition of the Confederacy. I have no doubt the two sections of the country have learned to correct some of their opinions of one another, and if neither can be allowed to whip the other, they would think twice before they would expose themselves to the mercies of foreign interests.

You cannot complain that I have not answered your letter, though I have sent you nothing worth reading. Yet it is about the staple of opinion and conversation when men talk freely. We all miss you as the only permanent institution in the ever-changing *personnel* of our public life. I shall be very glad always to hear from you, and with my kindest regards to Miss Weed and best wishes for her and your safe return, I am,

Very truly yours,      WILLIAM M. EVARTS.

[MR. STEWART TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *February 4, 1862.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — I was delighted to receive your letter from London. I know quite well the history of Sir Emerson Tennent, by whom you were entertained. He is one of those whose singular good fortune it is to rise by the force of circumstances and accident to a high position, due in great part to the wisdom which provided him with a good education. That is a blessing beyond almost all others which a parent can bestow, and particularly when the mind and character are improved together. I fear our system of public instruction neglects the latter too much. . . .

I have great hopes from your influence in behalf of our country on the public men of Europe, who seem to be drifting into an antagonis-

tic position to the United States, arising in part, no doubt, from their jealousy of free institutions of government, the success of which they probably suppose condemns the existence of others of an opposite character. I trust they will keep their hands off and leave us to master this rebellion, the wickedness of which is more apparent, when we see that it invites foreign intervention, and may yet involve many nations in terrible struggles. We, by acting on the policy that we could exhaust the South by holding them in check, have given a justification to intervention, which a vigorous policy, founded on the enthusiasm first created, would have prevented. It has given the South time which it wanted, and made the task of subjugation more difficult; but I have confidence, founded on personal knowledge, that the new Secretary of War will see that our army fights with the earnestness which the cause requires. I hope new strength will be infused into the Cabinet by selections from experienced men, and that the finances of the government, now wretchedly managed, will soon be in proper condition, as they may be, by establishing the national credit on a system of immediate and thorough taxation.

I should be glad to be with you in England. So rapid are the changes during war, that attention to health is omitted in the greater attention which business now requires.

Present my regards to your daughter, and believe me,

Truly yours,

ALEX'R T. STEWART.

[GOVERNOR MORGAN TO MR. WEED.]

ALBANY, *January 11, 1862.*

MY DEAR WEED, — You have done great good at home as well as abroad by your letters and counsel. Just at this moment there is a greater feeling of security against trouble with England than has been felt in many months.

When affairs looked the worst I conferred with several competent engineers and purchased about 380,000 feet of timber at the yards in New York city, at a cost of about \$80,000, with a view to using it as an obstruction to vessels crossing the Narrows. The timber was to be converted into rafts and booms, according to the most improved plans; which are now being made and will in a few days be submitted for adoption. It is not proposed to proceed with this expense if all appears right abroad, but it is important that the State should proceed to fortify her harbors upon the Lakes, and improve the fortifications in and around New York. The government talk about doing it, and promise pretty well, but thus far they have accomplished really nothing. Whether they are paralyzed by the discussions in Congress I cannot say: but I think they are really unable to cope with affairs immediately pressing upon them.

We may hear of some good results, and I think we shall, in the next ten days, but there is a very strong disposition to complain of the inactivity of our generals, as well as the enormous expense of the army.

You are aware that I have been quite apprehensive of the discretion of the law makers elected last November in this State, I begin to feel, however, without any real cause. They have been three or four days in session, and will commence business earnestly the coming week when the committees are named. I have directed one or more copies of the message sent you. I missed you greatly in its preparation. It was a rare thing not to have the benefit of your counsel.

Nothing whatever is said about the fall campaign. All are too much engrossed in the cares of the present hour to do that. I cannot, however, but feel that General Wadsworth will be willing, and will be far more available than any one yet mentioned as my successor. Upon this and many other important subjects we will have ample time to consult after you return home. Cordially yours, E. D. MORGAN.

Mr. Weed returned to the United States in June. As he stepped off the steamer he was met by a committee of the Common Council delegated to inform him that in recognition of his services in Europe he had been tendered, by a unanimous vote, the freedom of the city of New York; which would be presented in a costly gold box, at a public dinner given by the city in honor of the recipient, that custom having been established when this distinguished honor was conferred upon Washington and Lafayette.

[MR. WEED TO THE NEW YORK COMMON COUNCIL.]

ALBANY, July 1, 1862.

GENTLEMEN, — I receive, with a grateful sense of the honor they confer, the very flattering resolutions adopted by the Common Council of our commercial metropolis. I accept them frankly and proudly, as emanations rather of your own generous constructions than as merited by any service it may have been in my power to render our country.

If, during a temporary residence in Europe, I have been enabled, in some degree, to relieve the complications in which our affairs were involved; to do something towards vindicating our government from unjust aspersions; or to aid in turning back the tide of popular sentiment setting so strongly against our cause, it was owing to the prompt and generous confidence reposed in me by our distinguished representatives in England and France. In bearing testimony, as is both a duty and a pleasure, to the ability and fidelity of Mr. Adams and Mr.

Dayton, I cannot forbear to add that, rising above considerations which might have disturbed ministers less truly devoted to their country, they not only accepted unofficial coöperation, but disembarassed my colleagues and myself by cheerfully facilitating our efforts. It is a pleasure, also, to add that, on several occasions and in essential ways, I was efficiently aided by Mr. Sanford, our indefatigable Minister to Belgium. Nor could the government, in a season of trial and difficulty, have made happier selections of consuls in Paris and London. Messrs. Bigelow and Morse are discharging their responsible duties in a manner worthy of all praise.

Our government was by no means too prompt in inviting some of its citizens to visit Europe. It is to be regretted that two or three eminent gentlemen, to whom it is understood that invitation extended, were unable to accept, for the field was large and the laborers few. In the designation of Archbishop Hughes and Bishop McIlvaine, however, the government was peculiarly fortunate. The services of those enlightened and eminent divines and devoted Union men, the former in Paris and the latter all over England, were seasonable and effective. Their exalted positions, their high characters, and their fervid zeal, gave weight and authority to their statements and opinions.

Secession, while undermining for ultimate rebellion, was thoughtful of the importance of the favor of Europe. The South, with its long cherished purpose, worked as diligently abroad as at home. The North, unconscious of the great crime meditated, slept. Active emissaries of secession, aided too often by sympathizing ministers and consuls, settled the public mind on the other side of the Atlantic against us. Public opinion was formed against the Union before our side of the question was presented or heard. By turning truth end for end, and reading history backwards, we were held by Europeans as the aggressors! The last three months of Mr. Buchanan's administration were almost as injurious abroad as at home; for there, as here, loyal men occupied the places of disloyal Cabinet and foreign ministers too late to nip rebellion in the bud.

But there were causes, as well as pretexts, for the lack of sympathy which we encountered in Europe. The governments of the Old World remember that from the nature of our institutions, our own sympathies have generally run with those who struggled to overthrow monarchies, and that we have shown alacrity in recognizing the independence of such as struggled successfully. By the nations most intimately connected with us, the Morrill tariff was regarded with great disfavor. In England, it was believed that we not only cherished unfriendly feelings towards that country, but that we desired a disruption of friendly relations. The emissaries of rebellion seized upon these

causes and pretexts to turn the current of feeling in their favor. It was, too, plausibly urged, that the difference in climate, soil, habits, and "want of congeniality" between the North and South constituted such radical discordance that our Union had become an impossibility. These fallacies were so successfully pressed that Mr. Gladstone, in a speech at Manchester, stated that the Union was but a copartnership, dissoluble whenever passion or caprice prompted in any of the parties a desire to withdraw. That eminent statesman — if for a moment, we adopt his theory — overlooked or ignored the circumstance that our secession copartners, in retiring, broke open the safe, and stole valuable securities, the common property of the firm — or, in other words, that in separating, they seized fortifications, arms, custom-houses, post-offices, and public moneys — acts of treason in a public or of robbery in a private sense which would, if perpetrated in England, have consigned them to the Tower or the penitentiary.

While England, France, Belgium, and Germany begin to experience serious inconvenience from their short supply of cotton, I do not apprehend that these governments will intervene, immediately, though by the two former the subject has been considered. It is proper to say that France is even more impatient than England; not, however, from unfriendliness, but because the Emperor assumes, in the absence of employment, to supply his people with food.

But we have nothing to fear from Europe if we are successful in the prosecution of the war. Fort Donelson, Nashville, Winchester, New Orleans, and Memphis are our strongest arguments against intervention, with governments that determine all questions by military measurement.

There are, however, but too well founded reasons for apprehending future embroilment with England. Nor can I doubt the propriety of dwelling briefly, but earnestly, upon a danger fraught with consequences so vital to the welfare of both nations. The Trent affair, though happily, because rightfully settled, has left an arrow with poisoned barb festering in our flesh, and irritating our nerves. The impression that England, willing to take us at a disadvantage, availed herself of the erring judgment or impulsive zeal of a naval commander to wage war upon us has obtained throughout our country. That England expected war and intended war, making, with unparalleled alacrity and in gigantic proportions, preparations for war, is admitted to be true. But, with opportunities favorable to a correct understanding of the views of the English government and of the feelings that swayed the English mind, I am bound, in truth and fairness, to say, that that government and people sincerely believed that *we* desired a rupture with *them*; that we sought occasion to taunt and snub them; and,

egregiously unfounded as the supposition was, that the present Secretary of State was the representative of this hostile sentiment. In justification of these impressions, it was said that by "bullying" we obtained advantages in the settlement of the Northeastern and Vancouver boundary questions; that we abruptly dismissed their Minister, Mr. Crampton, and their Consul, Mr. Barclay; that our sympathies in the war with Russia were with their enemy; that we had threatened often to wrest Canada from them; and, finally, that Secretary Seward had avowed hostile intentions towards England.

Some of these grounds of complaint were, as we know, well taken; all were *believed* to be so.

We all felt that recognition of the Southern Confederacy as a belligerent, by England and France, was an over-hasty and ungracious act. But in submitting the proposition to the French Emperor, the English crown lawyers enforced it by arguments which, from their standpoint, were forcible. Each government supposed that the insurgent states had or could fit out vessels of war, and wished to relieve itself from the responsibility of treating such vessels as pirates. In this they erred, for, without the impunity thus extended to them, not even the Nashville or Sumter would have ventured to sea.

But, notwithstanding these adverse influences, and the existence, in certain high quarters, of views not friendly to the success of our form of government, the Union has many ardent, well-wishing friends in England, and can have many more if we act justly ourselves, and labor to correct impressions grossly erroneous. The paths of peace are the only paths of pleasantness for England and America. In view of dangers which I do not exaggerate — dangers growing out of mutual misapprehension of each other's real sentiments — it behooves the government, the press, and the people of both countries, by enlightened counsels, large toleration, and wise forbearance, to soothe rather than stimulate existing irritations. Nor, in forming our estimate of the degree and value of English sympathy during our domestic troubles, is the fact that her Queen and House of Commons modified harsh despatches and resisted unfriendly legislation without significance.

To have been deemed worthy, by the boards of aldermen and councilmen of the city of New York, of the high municipal honors which their resolutions confer, is a distinction of which any man would be proud, — to me it is a treasure "more precious than rubies or fine gold." In thanking you again for this undeserved honor, I beg to assure you that, while I may be unable to justify this partiality, I shall at least do nothing that will induce the common council to regret its action.



Born upon the banks of the Hudson River, my advent in the city of New York, in the year 1807, was in the capacity of cabin-boy to the sloop Jefferson, Captain Bogardus, of Catskill; and my first entrance to the city, from Coenties Slip up Broad Street, with the trunk of a passenger on my shoulder, is a well-remembered incident.

Subsequently, in 1816, '17, and '18, I wrought there as a journeyman printer. Having, therefore, obtained an early foothold in our great metropolis, and witnessed its wonderful growth, its unparalleled prosperity, and its unfolding material and intellectual glories, during a period which has augmented its population from less than one hundred thousand to more than a million, you will pardon the weakness which confesses its pride in being invested with the freedom of a city destined to become what London is, — a centre and depository of the wealth, power, and wisdom of the world.

In declining the hospitalities which your resolutions contemplate and your committee tender, — though your own generous sympathies need no prompting, permit me to suggest that the city's good cheer be reserved for and dispensed among the survivors of the gallant men who uphold the cause of the Union in sanguinary battles with a steadiness and heroism which entitle them to our affection and gratitude.

Respectfully and truly your obedient servant,

THURLOW WEED.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

1862-1863.

THE WAR FOR THE UNION. — STATE ELECTIONS OF 1862. — ATTEMPTS TO MODIFY THE NATIONAL ISSUE. — LETTERS FROM BISHOP McILVAINE, AUGUST BELMONT, AND GENERAL DIX. — DEFEAT OF GENERAL WADSWORTH. — GOVERNOR SEYMOUR AND GENERAL McCLELLAN. — MR. McELRATH TO MR. WEED. — GOVERNOR MORGAN ELECTED SENATOR. — WITHDRAWAL FROM JOURNALISM.

DURING the summer of 1862 the radical section of the Republican party, under the leadership of Mr. Chase, Charles Sumner, Benjamin F. Wade, "Zach" Chandler, and a number of prominent members of the House of Representatives, sought to establish the impression that the war was carried on by our armies not so much to preserve the government as to destroy slavery. Referring to the claim that the war must make an end of slavery, Mr. Sumner, at the Massachusetts state convention in the fall of 1861, defined his position by saying, "That is probable. But it is surer still that the overthrow of slavery will make an end of the war." "While Mr. Sumner was disposed," says his biographer, "to render all the aid he could to Mr. Lincoln, he everywhere advocated a widely different policy."<sup>1</sup>

An election was to be held in Maine in September, and Mr. Weed appealed to the Republicans of that State not to accept any modification of the spirit of the contest. He pointed out that, inasmuch as slavery was destined to disappear, in consequence of and as a penalty for secession, it was as unnecessary as it was hazardous to abandon President Lincoln's platform. "My paramount object," said the President, in August, 1862, "is to save the Union, and not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving

<sup>1</sup> Lester's *Life of Sumner*, p. 360.

others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save this Union, and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union.”<sup>1</sup>

Accepting advice, the Republicans of Maine kept the abolition question out of their canvass, and were rewarded by an emphatic victory. But in Pennsylvania and Ohio the Radicals succeeded in forcing their issue into the elections, and the Democrats reversed a Republican majority of 30,000 in one State and of 50,000 in the other.

In his own State Mr. Weed made a great effort to get his party out of shallow water before the November election, when state officers, including a successor to Governor Morgan, were to be chosen. Meanwhile he was also engaged vigorously in the work of forwarding troops, — not an easy task at this time, for men did not rush to arms in response to abolition watchwords. “Let the move be quick and strong,” telegraphed Mr. Seward to Mr. Weed on the 5th of July, “every man who goes into the service now counts for more than twenty men ever did before, and more than he could at any future time.”

[BISHOP McILVAINE TO MR. WEED.]

CINCINNATI, July 10, 1862.

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — Though I wrote you only the other day, I cannot but write again to thank you for the letter to the corporation of the city of New York, which I have read to-day. I do not mean merely for the kind terms in which you have mentioned me, but chiefly for the just views exhibiting our relations to England, and for the effort you have made to abate the excessive and perilous exasperation of the American mind towards Great Britain. . . . I accept entirely your explanation of the feeling and acts of England in the Trent affair. . . .

After reading your letter, one sees why the English government and people so hastily took up the impression that we intended to insult England, or supposed it could be done without trouble. However faulty that conclusion, there was a great deal in our history to excuse it. One can understand also much of the coldness towards our cause, and much of the disposition to feel tenderly towards the South. . . . I say this, not ignorant that there was, in certain English sections, an evil and hostile feeling which would rejoice in our downfall as a great

<sup>1</sup> See Raymond's *Life of Lincoln*, pp. 252-261.

nation, and which would not be averse to a cause of war with us, for the purpose of "teaching us our place."

Yours, very truly,

CHARLES P. McILVAINE.

[AUGUST BELMONT TO MR. WEED.]

NEWPORT, R. I., *July 20, 1862.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — I have made several attempts to see you during your fleeting visits to New York, but have not been so fortunate as to find you in.

Our national affairs are in a most critical position, more so than they have been at any time since the beginning of this unfortunate war.

What frightens me more than the disasters in the field is the apathy and distrust which, I grieve to say, I meet at every step, even from men of standing, and hitherto of undoubted loyalty to the Union.

You know my own feelings and convictions on the subject of our national troubles, and I am sure I can speak to you in all candor, without the fear of having my thoughts misconstrued, though you may, perhaps, not share my views.

My firm conviction is, that any other solution to our present difficulties than a reconstruction of but one government over all the states of our confederacy would entail upon us and our children an inheritance of the most fearful consequences, which would end in the utter disintegration and ruin of the whole country. . . .

Our army has been decimated by disease and the casualties of war. I am informed from reliable sources that McClellan has barely 70,000 men, all told; and Pope's army, including the corps of McDowell, Sigel, and Banks, is said to number barely 40,000 men. What can we expect to do with such a force against Richmond, which is defended by an enemy having probably double that number under arms, flushed with recent successes, commanded by generals at least equal to ours, directed by one master-spirit, and occupying a central position in a country hostile to us?

It is true the President has called out 300,000 men, but it would be a fatal delusion to believe that this number would be sufficient to crush the enemy, even if it were sure that, under the present system of volunteers, the men would come forward.

I think I make a liberal estimate if I put the figure of the Federal armies, all told, at 400,000 effective men, and this number will be reduced to at least 300,000 before the new levies can be brought into the field.

When we stopped recruiting in the midst of our successes, we dealt a fatal blow to our army, and it is really a wonder to me that our commanding generals consented to submit to such a measure, which

crippled them at a time when an overwhelming force became necessary to finish up the good work. It was a policy hardly less suicidal than if we had stopped sending supplies and ammunition to our men in the field. Where we would have found last winter ten men eager to enlist, anxious to share in our triumphs, we will scarcely now find one, so deep is the gloom and distrust which has taken hold of our people. It would be worse than folly to shut our eyes to this fact. I think ours is the first instance in history where a government shut off supplies of men in the midst of a gigantic war. Look at England. Her enlistments in the Crimean war lasted until the very day of the conclusion of peace.

There is only one way to remedy our fatal error, that is, for the President at once to establish a system of conscription, by which, instead of 300,000, *at least 500,000 men should be called under arms.*

A straightforward proclamation of the President, setting forth the necessities of the case, and appealing to the patriotism of the people, will give more confidence than all the ill-concealed attempts at palliating our desperate condition.

Instead of levying new regiments, commanded by inexperienced officers of their own choosing, and who, for a year to come, would barely add anything to our efficiency in the field, the raw recruits ought to be collected at camps of instruction, in healthy localities, east and west, where under the direction of *West Point graduates*, they should be drilled and disciplined.

From thence, as they are fit for active service, they should be furnished to the army to be incorporated into the old regiments, *without reference to States, and only where they are most needed.* This is the only way to create for this war an efficient *United States army*, and will strike a severe blow to that fatal heresy [state sovereignty and state pride] which lies at the bottom of all our misfortunes. Besides, such a mode would be infinitely more economical, and the raw recruits, mixed with our old soldiers, would be, of course, much more reliable and steady under the enemy's fire than in separate regiments commanded by officers just as inexperienced as themselves.

Simultaneously with these measures, which ought to be taken with the utmost vigor and despatch, we must infuse more life and energy into our naval department.

The fact is, we have made a great mistake to undertake a war on a gigantic scale by land, where our opponents are, at least, nearly as strong as we are, instead of throwing our best resources and energies upon that mode of warfare where we could have had the enemy at our mercy. Had we, at the very outset of the Rebellion, ordered fifty iron gunboats, even at a cost of one million dollars apiece, we should

before last January have been in possession of every southern port. With two hundred thousand men we could have held, by land, the line of the Potomac, Missouri, and Tennessee, and thus hemmed in, we would have brought the South to terms, just as Russia had to sue for peace after the fall of Sebastopol.

I think it is still in our power to accomplish this, though the task has become more difficult since Charleston, Savannah, and Mobile have been so strongly fortified during the last six months. No time, money, and efforts should be spared to build at least twenty more large new iron steamships, with which to take and hold every important city on the rebel coast, from North Carolina to Texas.

If authority for all these measures is not vested in the President, he ought at once to call an extra session of Congress.

I have thus far given you my views of the steps which I consider indispensable, if the sword is to be the arbiter of our future; but is there no other way of saving our country from all the horrors and calamities which even a successful war must entail upon us?

It may appear almost hopeless to attempt to bring the South back to the Union by negotiation. Men and women alike, in that distracted portion of our country, have become frantic and exasperated by the teachings of unprincipled leaders and the miseries of civil war. Still, I cannot bring myself to the belief that the door to a reconciliation between the two sections is irrevocably and forever shut. The losses and sufferings which have befallen us have been felt tenfold in the revolted states, and the thinking men of the South must see that a continuation of the war must end in the utter destruction of their property and institutions. The frightful carnage of many a battlefield must have convinced each section of the bravery of its opponents, and how much better it would be to have them as friends than foes.

While I am convinced that the President would be willing to see the South in the lawful possession of all its constitutional rights, I have not lost all hope, that with these rights guaranteed, a reunion of the two sections might be accomplished. In any event, it seems to me that an attempt at negotiation should be made, and that the time for it has not entirely passed away.

If one or two conservative men, who, without holding any official position, possess influence and weight enough with our people and the government to inspire confidence in their statements to the leading men of the South, could be found to proceed under the authority, or at least with the knowledge of the President, to Richmond, in order to open negotiations, I think success might crown their efforts. . . .

I firmly believe that the President would find the hearty support of the vast majority of our people in such a policy, and he ought not to

lose any time in carrying out these views. Such men, for instance, as yourself and Governor H. Seymour, would soon be able to find out whether the men who are guiding the destinies of the South could be brought to listen to the dictates of reason and moderation.

Before we enter upon a new phase in this terrible war, which must carry with it horror and misery far greater than what we have witnessed yet, I cannot but think that patriotism and humanity alike call for an earnest effort toward reconciliation and peace.

If our offers should be rejected, we shall stand justified before God and men, and our good cause will have His blessing and the world's sympathy.

Truly yours,

AUGUST BELMONT.

[GENERAL DIX TO MR. WEED.]

FORTRESS MONROE, *September 27, 1862.*

DEAR SIR, — I have not since the beginning of the war felt half so anxious as I do now. I cannot see into the action of parties. I do not think the magnitude of the danger is appreciated.

We ought all to unite in aiding the government to put down rebellion, leaving to the future the settlement of conditions, both in regard to measures and men. I am satisfied that if our people do not turn out in mass and rally around the President, so as to enable him speedily to drive the enemy out of Virginia, the prospect will be gloomy indeed.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN A. DIX.

[MR. WEED TO ROBERT B. MINTURN.]

WASHINGTON, *December 4, 1862.*

DEAR SIR, — I am happy to learn that the enterprise about which we conversed in New York on Tuesday last has been auspiciously inaugurated. The organization effected in New York will speedily aggregate the contributions of our citizens, and relief will soon be on its way to the suffering families of the cotton manufacturing districts of England.

There can be no form of suffering which appeals with such emphasis to intelligent American benevolence. Our unavoidable civil war is the immediate though blameless occasion of the want of employment and food which pervades and desolates the manufacturing towns of England. Their distress, therefore, appeals as earnestly to our heads as to our hearts. Nor is the fact that our war leaves the laborers of Lancashire without employment, and their families without bread, their only claim upon us. They are our friends. While the sympathies of many of the commercial classes of England are with the insurgent States, while the cotton houses of Liverpool were furnishing "material aid" to the Confederates, the operatives of the cotton dis-

tricts and their representatives in Parliament resisted reiterated efforts to secure coöperation against our blockade and in favor of foreign intervention.

Though often reminded of the source of their suffering, the operatives, reduced from short labor and diminished wages to idleness and starvation, bear their burthens with a patient fortitude which challenges more than our sympathy.

Their destitution and forbearance appeal to us, fortified by an argument founded in such eloquent justice that I am sure it will be responded to with equal alacrity and munificence.

Let us then make haste to "cast our bread upon the waters." Enclosed please find my check for \$1,000.

Very truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

Deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of sustaining the President and making the war issue so broad as to renew enthusiasm at the North, Mr. Weed sought to secure the renomination of Governor Morgan, who was serving the State so well that history classes him justly with Dennison, Morton, Andrew, and Randall, the illustrious "War Governors" of Ohio, Indiana, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin. Called to the executive station on the 1st of January, 1859, in an era of profound peace, during his incumbency more than 250,000 troops were sent to the front from New York. His term was closing in the midst of a desolating war, but the state debt was actually diminishing. His energy was tireless; his patriotism above question.

But during the summer Governor Morgan was opposed with so much bitterness and skill, that when the convention assembled, it was found that he could muster only about one third of the delegates. Mr. Greeley still aspired to the Senate, and Governor Morgan, a resident of New York, was in his way. He therefore urged the nomination of General Wadsworth, a western man, of Democratic antecedents, so that the field for the Senate might remain open. General Wadsworth, a gallant Union officer and a gentleman of unimpeachable character, was a personal friend of Mr. Weed's, though they had not agreed in politics while the General was a Democrat, nor since he had become an Abolitionist.

When it was plain that Governor Morgan could not be renominated, Mr. Weed suggested other Republicans, as brave and deserving as General Wadsworth, but more conservative.



Rejecting all such propositions, the convention nominated the radical candidate by acclamation. Mr. Weed then insisted that the ticket should be "ballasted," by yielding the selection of Lieutenant-Governor to the minority. But the Radicals were inexorable. Rejecting R. M. Blatchford, James M. Cook, E. W. Leavenworth, and other Republicans of Whig antecedents, put forward by Mr. Weed, the convention named for Lieutenant-Governor, Lyman Tremaine, another Democratic-Republican, who less than six months before had made a Copperhead speech at a Democratic mass-meeting in Albany. So as to "drive the nail home," the convention concluded its labors by appointing a state committee from which "Weed men" were carefully excluded. The headquarters of the party were then moved from Albany to New York, where, by the way, they have remained from that day to this.

Mr. Weed went to New York, shortly afterward, for the purpose of conferring with the committee, in session at the Astor House. Somewhat to his chagrin, he was informed by James Kelly, an accredited delegate, that his presence and coöperation could be dispensed with. Mr. Weed's room in the hotel was directly opposite the Republican headquarters. He was in New York again, about a fortnight later, when his friend Wakeman informed him that General Wadsworth was expected in the city, and had been invited by the committee to speak at a Republican ratification meeting. When General Wadsworth arrived shortly afterwards, he walked into Mr. Weed's room, who, as he entered, said: "James, for the first time in my life, I am not glad to see you," adding, in explanation, "you have been sent for to make an abolition speech. You will do it, and thus throw away the State." Mr. Weed then urged the General to discard the advice of the committee; tell the people what the army had done, was doing, and hoped to do; denounce Valandigham and other disloyal Democrats; leave the slavery question to take care of itself, and appeal to the friends of the Union, irrespective of politics, to rally in defense of the government. The meeting was held and General Wadsworth made an abolition speech. A few days afterwards the Democrats held a mass meeting in Brooklyn, and their candidate, Mr. Seymour, made a Union speech.

Instantly the bottom fell out of the Republican canvass.

Dismayed at the prospect, the radical managers finally implored Mr. Weed's assistance. They had been unable to raise funds. He sent for Abram Wakeman, James Terwilliger, and other zealous party workers, through whose vigorous efforts, at the eleventh hour, the Republican candidate fell only 11,000 votes behind his Democratic competitor. Two years before, Governor Morgan's majority was nearly 50,000.

1862. — There was great uneasiness during the latter part of the year with regard to the attitude of Europe, where rebel agents were still at work industriously.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *November 7, 1862.*

MY DEAR WEED, — I find it safe in these times of general surprise and mutual distrust to say as little as possible, and to write nothing at all.

But I think it will be wise for you to return to London to watch things there. On this just now there is happily no difference of opinion here. Can you go?

Dayton and Sanford write a thousand fears about France. It is true that we have the best assurances from there, but the diplomatic condition there is becoming alarming. If you could go to Paris for a few weeks it might reassure us all. I know it may be more desirable than ever for you to remain at home this winter. You must judge for yourself where it is most important that you should be.

Yours faithfully,                      WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Mr. Weed went to Washington to discuss with the Secretary of State the suggestion in his letter. While at breakfast, after briefly alluding to the objects of the proposed visit, Mr. Seward remarked: "You go this time with the approval of both the President and Secretary of the Treasury;" adding, "you had better drop into the Treasury Department during the day." Mr. Weed did so, and was received cordially by Mr. Chase, who after a brief conversation extended an invitation to dine with him that evening, which was accepted. In the afternoon Mr. Weed called upon the President, who spoke kindly of the first and hopefully of the second mission. At dinner with Secretary Chase and family, the war in its various aspects was discussed, and the contemplated visit to Europe pleasantly referred to. Mr. Weed then returned to Albany and made hurried preparations for departure.

[MR. WEED TO GOVERNOR SEYMOUR.]

ALBANY, *November 10, 1862.*

DEAR GOVERNOR, — If I go away without seeing you, let me entreat you to use the power and position the people have confided to you in such a way as will promote the interests of our whole country, and make your name illustrious and your memory blessed. Your Brooklyn speech contains all that is needful. Only stand by it, and our government can be preserved. Truly yours, THURLOW WEED.

[MR. EVARTS TO MR. WEED.]

WINDSOR, VT., *November 9, 1862.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — By a letter from Mr. Blatchford, received yesterday, I learn that you go to Washington on Monday, and to Europe on the 16th inst. This plan will, I suppose, deprive me of your expected visit.

I am pleased to see Mr. Blatchford nominated as Minister to Rome, both because it will be, very properly, gratifying to him, and because it shows that Governor Seward's tenure of his own office no longer requires the universal proscription of his friends. If Mr. Blatchford looks upon public affairs at home with as much solicitude as I do, he will hesitate about leaving the country.

I hear of your proposed absence in Europe with most profound regret. No one knows more fully than myself the great public need which led to your late visit, and the great public advantage which followed from it. I have not the least knowledge how important the occasion of your new voyage may be, but I am sure you will serve the public necessity, however urgent it may be, as well as you did before.

But I know that the next three months at home demand your presence here, and that no one can supply your place. Accumulated personal power and influence is a scarce article with us, and cannot be made to order. It is much needed to help the administration with the people, especially as the President seems resolved that no new ability shall be brought into its councils. If you are as indispensable on the other side of the water as you seem to be on this, we must take our luck in your absence.

The appeal of the government to the physical force of the country has been responded to nobly; but with great distrust of the ability of the administration to use the new means placed at its disposal. The people do not believe that lack of soldiers is, in the least, the cause of our deficiencies or disasters. They are waiting to see whether real difficulties will be remedied or not. If they are not, the administra-

tion will be overthrown, — a disaster to be averted by every public effort of all of us, for what would follow no man can foresee. As I believe you can do more than any one else to save us from these dangers, I regret your contemplated absence as a public misfortune.

But, dismissing these cares, I wish you a prosperous voyage and a safe return, and am

Yours very truly,

WILLIAM M. EVARTS.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *November 9, 1862.*

MY DEAR WEED, — It is necessary to give up definitely the thought of going to Europe. Just deny it at once. The reasons you can imagine. All is well and cheerful here to-day.

Faithfully yours,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

No time was wasted in seeking to account for this change of plan. Mr. Weed never even asked Mr. Seward upon what reasons his peremptory letter was founded.

One evening in December, 1862, Mr. Weed was sitting with the President, when Mr. Lincoln said, "Governor Seymour has greater power just now for good than any other man in the country. He can wheel the Democratic party into line, put down rebellion, and preserve the government. Tell him for me, that if he will render this service to his country, I shall cheerfully make way for him as my successor." Mr. Weed delivered this message to the Governor, and urged him to accept the suggestion. Their conversation occurred, of course, before the Governor was inaugurated. When the legislature met, in January, 1863, the Governor sent in a partisan message, dealing largely with the "rights of states." And thus Horatio Seymour, not rising to the level of the "War Democrats," though subsequently a candidate, never became President.

Again, in 1863, when the President, after the series of defeats which our armies had suffered, felt that the nation could not be saved if the Democrats, as a peace party, carried the Northern States, Mr. Lincoln made almost identical overtures to General McClellan, Mr. Weed acting again as mediator. It was arranged that a great war meeting should be held in one of the parks in New York, and that General McClellan should preside. This demonstration was intended to give him an opportunity to take unqualified ground in support of the government,

and to be the first step in an organized movement to secure his candidacy on a Union ticket.

Everything was satisfactorily arranged, when General McClellan suddenly evinced inability to rise above political associations and surroundings.

[GENERAL McCLELLAN TO MR. WEED.]

OAKLANDS, *June 13, 1863.*

MY DEAR SIR, — Your kind note is just received. For what I cannot doubt that you would consider good reasons, I have determined to decline the compliment of presiding over the proposed meeting of Monday next.

I fully concur with you in the conviction that an honorable peace is not now possible, and that the war must be prosecuted to save the Union and the government at whatever cost of time, treasure, and blood. I am clear in the conviction that the policy governing the conduct of the war should be one looking not only to military success, but also to ultimate reunion, and that it should consequently be such as to preserve the rights of all union-loving citizens wherever they may be, as far as compatible with military necessity.

My views as to the prosecution of the war remain substantially as they have been from the beginning of the contest. These views I have often made known officially. I will endeavor to write you more fully before Monday. In the mean time, believe me to be, in great haste,

Truly your friend,

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN.

The day on which this letter was written it was reported that General Grant would be obliged to raise the Vicksburg siege. A few days before, great meetings had been held in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and elsewhere, denouncing the government for arresting Vallandigham, and mobs in Indiana were resisting the draft and killing army officers.

1863. — Governor Seymour was inaugurated on the 1st of January. Nearly one half of the electors of the State voted against him, but there was deep sympathy for him in his avowed purpose to sustain the Union. On the day when he took office, Mr. Weed bespoke for him the coöperation of all loyal citizens, calling upon the people to hold party in subjection to country. "We shall hail as the best patriot," said he, "whoever does the most for the Union, to whatever party he has hitherto acknowledged allegiance."

On the same day President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was issued, and Mr. Weed wrote: "The most ungenerous enemies of our cause will be compelled to respect this document, and to stand rebuked by its deep and solemn emphasis. It must awaken responsive echoes in every land where liberty is loved and justice cherished."

One of the first duties which devolved upon the legislature of 1863 was the election of a United States Senator to succeed Preston King. Mr. Weed indicated his preference for Governor Morgan, but, as the canvass began, many friends, renewed an old suggestion.

[MR. McELRATH TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *January 3, 1863.*

MY DEAR SIR, — There is a deep feeling of solicitude in this State for your success as United States Senator. It is thought here that you can easily enough carry your own election, but that you will fail in an endeavor to transfer your influence to any one else.

Do not, for the sake of the country, — do not interfere with clear indications of popular and patriotic feeling in your favor. I don't suppose I could be of any service in Albany; I would walk there to secure your success. Truly yours, THOMAS McELRATH.

"You have full authority to act in my behalf in all respects," wrote Governor Morgan to Mr. Weed, on the 1st of February. "Unless there is positive necessity for my going to Albany, my feelings lead me to remain here."

The caucus was held on the 2d of February.

[GOVERNOR MORGAN TO MR. WEED.]

NEW YORK, *February 3, 1863.*

MY DEAR WEED, — It is difficult for me to express my personal obligations to you for this renewed evidence of your friendship, as manifested by the result of yesterday's proceedings at Albany.

At this moment I can only say I hope I shall prove worthy of the confidence placed in me by my friends, both in and out of the legislature.

It is a most pleasing circumstance to me that during the whole fifteen years that I have been in public life I have had your personal friendship, and for the greater part of the time, or rather in all the later years, your confidence also.

As ever yours,

EDWIN D. MORGAN.

At the end of the month of January, the New York Assembly had not organized, nor had anything been done in the House at Washington. Every day the South was becoming more and more united; the North more and more divided. Excited public meetings were held in the Union States, at which Abolitionists competed with Copperheads in the eloquence of animosity. Secret societies hostile to the government were organized in the West. In February, when the President called for 500,000 volunteers, hostility to the war became formidable. It was then that Mr. Greeley, with that candor which was one of his redeeming qualities, confessed that he was "beginning to see that the worst battle lost to the Union cause thus far was the New York state election," meaning of course, the election of 1862, lost because Mr. Weed's advice was rejected.

Many considerations combined during this trying period to confirm Mr. Weed in a definite determination to retire from editorial service. The field of his activity had greatly enlarged since the beginning of the war, and at the age of sixty-six it was natural that he should seek release from political journalism, particularly when his views conflicted with those held by a majority of his party.

"Though but a few hours have passed since the transfer papers were executed," he wrote, withdrawing from his Albany paper, on the 28th of January, 1863, "memory has been busy summoning back the dead past, in which good and evil are necessarily blended. . . . During thirty-three years I have, in some sense — and I hope the comparison may not be deemed irreverent — occupied an editorial pulpit, speaking daily to a large congregation, for whom I have come to feel the relation of pastor and friend; and from whom I have certainly experienced all the benefits and bounties that a generous flock bestows upon its shepherd. Never in the history of the State has an editor enjoyed so long and so largely the confidence and regard of those politically associated with him, nor in any other editor's experience have political and personal relations been blended more happily. . . . It is fifty-three years since I was first introduced as an apprentice to the 'space box,' and forty-five years since I became an editor. During more than half a century of toil and care I have experienced so much that is good and bright in life; partaken so richly of its blessings; have found so many of my race to

honor and love, that this hour of isolation prostrates the heart in thankfulness to man for his support, and gratitude to God for His abiding protection and mercy. . . .

“But we have fallen upon evil times. Our country is in immediate and imminent danger. I differ widely\*with my party about the best means of crushing the Rebellion. That difference is radical and irreconcilable. I can neither impress others with my views, nor surrender my own solemn convictions. The alternative of living in strife with those whom I have esteemed, or withdrawing, is presented. I have not hesitated in choosing the path of peace as the path of duty. If those who differ with me are right, and the country is carried safely through its present struggle, all will be well, and ‘nobody hurt.’

“If the country was not in a condition to awaken deep anxiety, I should look forward with cheerfulness and hope to that condition of life which

‘Exempt from public haunt,  
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.’

“But for an infirm leg and a broken arm I would go into the army, for the country is entitled to the services of all its citizens; and it is more a privilege than a duty to defend a government under whose beneficent sway and benign rule we have enjoyed protection, prosperity, and happiness; and in the destruction of which the best hopes of the highest civilization perish.

“So far as all things personal are concerned, my work is done. Should the occasion or the opportunity to serve my country or friends with head or hand offer, it will be embraced gladly. And now, with all that relates to material wants in life abundantly supplied; with no personal interest or aspiration ungratified; with a humbling consciousness of having experienced through life more benefits than I have deserved, and vastly more than I have been able to reciprocate; and with a determination to devote such brief time as may be allotted me to the practice of Dr. Franklin’s golden precept of doing ‘as much good and as little evil’ to others, as possible, I come to the inevitable — Farewell!”



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

1863-1864.

GOING TO NEW YORK. — RAISING MONEY FOR THE PRESIDENT. — THE GLOOMY PERIOD OF THE WAR. — MR. WEED'S PLAN FOR PUTTING AN END TO HOSTILITIES. — RADICAL EFFORTS AGAINST MR. LINCOLN'S RENOMINATION. — A PREDICTION WHICH WAS VERIFIED. — THE PUBLIC DEBT AND THE PUBLIC DOMAIN. — NOMINATION OF MR. FENTON. — ISSUES OF THE NATIONAL CONTEST.

LONG as he had been in harness at Albany, it hardly seemed an important change to Mr. Weed when he sold his newspaper property and his residence in that city, to make a home for himself and daughter in New York. For years he had spent a great portion of his time at the Astor House and in Washington, and he was glad to escape the necessity of passing so many hours on river and railroad. In New York he rented the residence of Henry J. Raymond, on West Ninth Street, for a year or more, and then purchased the sunny and comfortable house, No. 12 West Twelfth Street, adjoining Dr. Paxton's church, where he resided until his death. His determination to leave Albany was confided to none of his friends except Mr. Seward, who warmly approved of the plan. His "farewell" therefore was something of a surprise.

[THE PRESIDENT TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *January 29, 1863.*

DEAR SIR, — Your valedictory to the patrons of the Albany "Evening Journal" brings me a good deal of uneasiness. What does it mean?

Truly yours,

A. LINCOLN.

[VIVUS W. SMITH TO MR. WEED.]

SYRACUSE, *January 28, 1863.*

MY DEAR WEED, — I am almost ashamed to say that I could not read your "farewell" this morning without stopping to clear my eyes. It was so sudden, so unexpected, that I cannot realize it yet.

I had proposed to have a full and free talk with you about the situation, about your position and my own. . . . But do not abandon the senatorial issue. I am going down Sunday night. You can rely on this county for two votes.

Yours ever, VIVUS W. SMITH.

[GOVERNOR PATTERSON TO MR. WEED.]

GREIGSVILLE, N. Y., *January 28, 1863.*

MY DEAR WEED, — It is with deep regret that I learned by the morning papers that you have retired from the editorial chair of the "Evening Journal." As I have taken your paper from its first publication to the present time, it would have been but fair that I should have been consulted before this decisive step was taken.

My decision would have been that you must remain the editor of that paper. I know, too, that in this nearly all your friends in Western New York would agree with me. . . .

I hope and trust, however, that nothing will ever occur to sever those ties of personal friendship which have existed between us for more than thirty years, and you will allow me to express my deep sense of gratitude for the many acts of kindness which I have received at your hands, for which I shall never cease to feel grateful while life and reason last.

Yours faithfully, GEORGE W. PATTERSON.

An incident which occurred shortly after Mr. Weed left Albany possesses interest in connection with the history of this period. On the date given the following despatch was received : —

WASHINGTON, *February 18, 1863.*

TO THURLOW WEED, ESQ., Astor House.

Can you be here to-morrow morning? Answer. NICOLAY.

To this question Mr. Weed sent an affirmative reply, and before eight o'clock the next morning was in Washington, where he breakfasted, as usual, with the Secretary of State. "The President will tell you," remarked Mr. Seward, "why you were summoned." An hour afterwards Mr. Weed went to the White House, and Mr. Lincoln, taking him by the hand in his cordial way, said : —

"Mr. Weed, we are in a tight place. Money for legitimate purposes is needed immediately; but there is no appropriation

from which it can be lawfully taken. I did n't know how to raise it, and so I sent for you."

"How much is required?" asked Mr. Weed.

"Fifteen thousand dollars," said the President. "Can you get it?"

"If you must have it at once, give me two lines to that effect."

Mr. Lincoln turned to his desk and wrote a few words on a slip of paper. Handing it to Mr. Weed, he said, "Will that do?"

"It will," said Mr. Weed; "the money will be at your disposition to-morrow morning."

On the next train Mr. Weed left Washington, and before five o'clock that afternoon the slip of paper which he carried in his pocket presented this appearance: —

WASHINGTON, *February 19, 1863.*

MR. WEED, — The matters I spoke to you about are important. I hope you will not neglect them.

Truly yours,

A. LINCOLN.

Charles Knapp . . . \$1,000	Novelty Iron Works, }	\$1,000
Marshall O. Roberts . . 1,000	Horace Allen, Prest. }	
Alexander T. Stewart . . 1,000	James T. Sanford . . 1,000	
Isaac Bell . . . . . 1,000	Spofford & Tileston . 1,000	
Wm. H. Aspinwall . . . 1,000	J. F. Winslow . . . 1,000	
C. Vanderbilt . . . . 1,000	Secor & Co . . . . 1,000	
James Mitchell . . . . 1,000	P. S. Forbes . . . . 1,000	
H. B. Cromwell . . . . 1,000	Russell Sturges }	1,000
	Henry W. Hubbell }	

That evening the \$15,000 were sent to Washington.

"During the sanguinary riots of 1863," writes Mr. Weed, "I was in New York, witnessing scenes which I hope may never occur again. When sitting at the police headquarters, while Commissioner Acton and Superintendent Kennedy were issuing orders and receiving reports, a United States officer came in, who had been directed to disperse the rioters who had murdered Colonel O'Brien. He had performed that duty promptly and came for further orders. As he was about to leave the office, Mr. Acton introduced him to me as Captain Putnam. Our recognition was mutual, as was the surprise and gratification.

Captain Putnam, with much feeling, but very modestly, informed Messrs. Acton and Kennedy that when his commission came, he could not imagine who had interested himself in his favor or what influence had procured it, and that it was several months before he learned how much he was indebted to me. He continued active and vigilant, until the riots were over. I have not seen or heard of him since ; but that he is discharging his duty faithfully I have no doubt."

[MR. WEED TO HENRY J. RAYMOND.]

ALBANY, *July 18, 1863.*

MY DEAR RAYMOND, — I concur with you in believing that there are not spires enough in your city to avert the wrath of Heaven, if immediate relief and future protection be not extended to persecuted colored citizens. The page that records their wrongs during the three days of misrule in New York will be the blackest in its history. That the rioters should have deliberately marked for rapine and murder a class at once the least offending and the most defenseless is a fact in crime at which civilization and humanity revolt and shudder. . . .

For this persecution of the negro there is divided responsibility. The hostility of Irishmen to Africans is unworthy of men who themselves seek and find in America an asylum from oppression. Yet this hostility would not culminate in arson and murder but for the stimulants applied by fanatics. Journalists who persistently inflame and exasperate the ignorant and the lawless against the negro are morally responsible for these outrages. When all the circumstances have been reviewed, the popular condemnation of those who, while the United States was struggling for its existence, thrust the unoffending negro forward as a target for infuriated mobs, will become general and emphatic.

In South Carolina ultra Abolitionists have been hailed as the "best friends" of secession. Practically, they are the worst enemies of the colored man. Had it not been for the malign influence of these howling fanatics in Congress and with the President, rebellion would not, in the beginning, have assumed such formidable proportions ; nor, in its progress, would the North have been divided or the government crippled. . . .

Presuming that steps will be taken for the relief of the colored people whose dwellings were robbed and who were driven from their employment, I inclose my check for five hundred dollars as a contribution to that object.

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

“ During the summer and autumn of 1863,” Mr. Weed continues, “ the Rebellion assumed aspects which not only discouraged many loyal men, but occasioned very general solicitude. The Union army, frequently repulsed and almost everywhere held at bay, required to be reënforced largely. Volunteers no longer rushed to the field, and recruits could be obtained only by the payment of large bounties ; and yet it was apparent that the government could not be sustained except by a large increase of its army. After long and anxious reflection, I worked out a plan, by the adoption of which I believed not only that the war could be more vigorously prosecuted, but that the Rebellion would be speedily ended. After explaining the plan to two or three experienced and enlightened friends, whose approval of it was very earnest, I proceeded to Washington and submitted it to the President, who, after discussing its prominent features, requested me to commit them to paper ; which I did, on the afternoon of the same day.”

The plan submitted by Mr. Weed was subdivided into four sections, as follows : —

1. The President to avail himself of the first decided military success to issue a proclamation offering pardon and amnesty to all persons engaged in making war upon the government.

2. Declaration of an armistice for ninety days, during which time all persons should be protected in traveling to and from the Northern and Southern States.

3. If, within these ninety days, citizens of the Confederate States, or any of them, embracing the terms offered in the proclamation shall return to their allegiance and duties, they shall, as a state or states, or as citizens of such state or states, be restored in all respects to the rights, privileges, and prerogatives which they enjoyed before their secession from the Union.

4. If, after the expiration of ninety days, the citizens of all or any of the states engaged in making war upon the government reject these offers of pardon and amnesty, persist in denying the authority of the federal government, and continue their warfare against the Union, the President shall submit a proclamation announcing that in the future prosecution of the war for the maintenance of the government and the preservation of the Union, all territory, whether farms, villages, or cities, shall be PARTITIONED equitably between and among the officers and soldiers by whom it shall be conquered.

[MR. WEED TO THE PRESIDENT.]

WASHINGTON, D. C., November 7, 1863.

DEAR MR. LINCOLN, — The advantages of the plan for the more vigorous prosecution of the war which I have submitted to you verbally and in writing are, briefly, these: —

*First.* That in exhausting the highest and last attribute of humanity, in an unavailing effort to restore peace, it makes our record so clearly right, that you stand justified in the eyes of the whole world for permitting war to assume its severest aspects.

*Second.* The armistice occurring when the season interrupts active army movements, it would cause little practical delay, but give ample time, with uninterrupted facilities of travel through the Confederate States, for widespread circulation of the proclamation.

*Third.* In offering to restore the Union as it was, you will, when that offer has been rejected, secure a united North in favor of war to the knife.

*Fourth.* In partitioning rebel territory, as fast as it may be conquered, among the officers and soldiers of the armies by which such territory is conquered, the question will not be how many troops can be raised, but how many can be equipped, organized, and advantageously employed in the field. The demoralizations and desertions consequent upon large bounties will immediately cease. Your armies will be voluntarily and promptly recruited, and their ranks filled with enterprising, earnest yeomen, who have an intelligent reason for entering the army, and who know that the realization of their hopes depends upon their zeal, fidelity, and courage. And by thus providing homes and occupations when the war is over for our disbanded soldiers, you leave scattered over rebel territory an element that may be relied upon for the reconstruction of civil government in the seceded states.

In answer to those who may object to the sanguinary feature of this plan, I think it quite sufficient to say that in maritime wars this feature has long been recognized and practiced by all civilized nations. Argosies of merchant vessels, laden with untold millions of the wealth of non-combatants, captured in time of war, are divided as prize money among the officers and sailors by whom they are captured. This, therefore, in all wars upon the oceans and seas of the world, being a part of the law of nations, cannot, in reason or common-sense, be objected to, whereas, in this case, the sufferers are in rebellion against their government, and have been warned of the consequences of rejecting the most liberal offers of peace, protection, and prosperity.

I have, acting upon your suggestion, submitted this plan to the Secretary of State and to the Secretary of War. It did not, if I may

judge from his silence, strike Governor Seward favorably. But Mr. Stanton, after listening attentively to the plan, asked me to repeat it to him, and then expressed his unqualified approval of it. In talking it over, he became very much animated, saying that it would greatly lessen his labor and anxiety, save hundreds of millions of dollars to the government, and put an early end to the Rebellion. He said he would see you on the subject to-day. I also explained it to Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, at the Astor House, in New York, who was favorably impressed, and said that unless it should be found defective or impracticable he would sustain it. Before I left New York, as I remarked to you this morning, I had a long conversation with Dean Richmond on the subject. Mr. Richmond took the same view of it that occurred to Mr. Stanton, and was equally anxious that it should be adopted. Mr. Richmond authorized me to say to you that, in his opinion, this plan, fully and fairly carried out, would make the North a unit in support of the war, that it would immediately give us as many good soldiers as the government wanted, and that the Rebellion would be crushed out within six months after the expiration of the armistice.

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

The President considered these suggestions attentively, and was disposed to admit their wisdom and practicability. Just before he left Washington to deliver the address at Gettysburg he characterized the plan as "water-tight," and it was hoped that it would be incorporated in some form in his annual message. General Grant's success at Chattanooga or General Hooker's "Above the Clouds," late in November, might have been regarded as sufficiently decisive victories upon which to base an amnesty proclamation, as contemplated. But, much to Mr. Weed's regret, the message contained no feature such as he had recommended, though clearing the way for the "confiscation act" of 1864, a measure which failed to secure even the partial advantages anticipated.

1863. — During the year Mr. Weed occupied ground identical with that upon which he had stood in 1862. In other words, he maintained that the Republican party should make a canvass singly for the Union. In no state was the issue plainer than in New York, where, although an Abolition-Republican ticket had just been defeated, a Union-Republican ticket now received 30,000 majority. It was well that in the North there was a man of commanding influence who had sufficient courage and consistency to insist upon this distinction, at all hazards of temporary

misconception. Had it not been thus enforced, the Union might not have withstood the strain.

Though his position became identical with Mr. Weed's in 1864, Mr. Lincoln was disposed at this time to be rather tolerant of radicalism. So good natured was he, indeed, in recognition of men whose opposition to the administration was but half-concealed, that Mr. Weed was sometimes a little annoyed by his complacency. "They will all be against him in '64," he wrote to Judge Davis; "why does he persist in giving them weapons with which they may be able not only to defeat his renomination, but to destroy the government?"

[THE PRESIDENT TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *October 14, 1863.*

DEAR SIR, — I have been brought to fear recently that somehow, by commission or omission, I have caused you some degree of pain. I have never entertained an unkind feeling or a disparaging thought towards you; and if I have said or done anything which has been construed into such unkindness or disparagement, it has been misconstrued. I am sure if we could meet we would not part with any unpleasant impression on either side. Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.

As the war went on the conviction was gradually driven home that no political party was strong enough to conquer the South. It could no longer be denied now that divisions among the people of the Northern States were more to be dreaded than all the armies of Johnston and Lee. At the beginning of the year 1864 a large Democratic element began to clamor for peace "on the best attainable terms," and, at Mr. Greeley's request, the President yielded his consent to a ridiculous "peace" conference in Canada. With an army terribly decimated and discouraged; with gold ranging from 160 to 285; with less apparent strength and less hope than when the first gun was fired, the North now knew what it is to suffer what Washington in his "Farewell Address" warned his countrymen against, "in the most solemn manner," — "the baneful effects of the spirit of party."

Foreseeing the heavy burden of debt which the war must entail, Mr. Weed wrote to Senator Morgan, urging the repeal of the homestead law, so that the proceeds of sales of public lands might be made to strengthen the national credit.



[MR. WEED TO SENATOR MORGAN.]

ALBANY, *January 29, 1864.*

MY DEAR SIR, — The time approaches, if indeed it has not arrived, when the duties of statesmen, in importance and difficulty, will rise even above those of generals. If the Rebellion, on the one hand, has been the most wicked and destructive the world ever witnessed, it has, on the other, been met by the loyal people with a spirit and determination, and by sacrifices of treasure and blood, wholly unparalleled in the history of wars and of nations. Great as the emergency, and terrible as the ordeal, the people have proved themselves equal to both. Three years of eventful experience and observation have taught us one priceless and precious truth, namely, that this Rebellion is sure to result in its own overthrow, in the vindication of our government, and in the restoration of our Union. And the penalty for rebellion will be the inevitable subversion of the power which caused it, — the only retribution proportioned to the magnitude of the crime.

Assuming that we are, no matter at what further cost, and in defiance of all obstacles, to preserve our government and Union, it behooves statesmen to divide their time and thoughts between the present and the future. When the war terminates we shall find that it has cost at least four thousand millions of dollars, three fourths of which amount will remain as a national debt.' Is it not time to gird up our fiscal loins, and gather strength to bear this heavy burden? Should we not cast a financial anchor that will enable the Treasury to ride safely through a crisis equal, if not greater, than England ever encountered?

When the federal government was established, the old states ceded their respective rights to the territory wrested from Great Britain to the United States. By the purchase of Louisiana from France, in 1803, and the cession of Florida by Spain, in 1819, we became possessed of a domain almost boundless and fabulous in extent and value. This domain was encumbered by the Indian right of possession. But soon, though at immense cost, it worked itself free, leaving its proceeds applicable to the support of the government, and the payment, first, of the revolutionary war debt, and next, of the war debt of 1812.

Though ever prodigal with the public lands, the government found, in the revenue they yielded, an unfailing resource. In various forms of bounties, endowments, and benefactions, Congress has parted with hundreds of millions of acres, and yet the aggregate revenues derived from the public domain cannot be less than one hundred and fifty millions of dollars.

An early Congress, with a wisdom and foresight which I hope did

not die with it, anticipating the value of the public domain, established a uniform price for these lands, and turned the proceeds into the Treasury. That Congress discerned in the vast wilderness of that day a gradually increasing deposit, ample for past and future exigencies. The most sanguine, however, failed to compute its value. Though impaired — nay, even frittered away — by subsequent legislation, all changes, and each fresh demand upon that reserve, failed to exhaust the fund. The Indian wars, and the War of 1812, created debts only to afford the government the luxury of extinguishing them with the proceeds of the public domain. And when, under the administration of General Jackson, we had nothing more to pay, that fund accumulated so rapidly that its distribution among the states was ordered, lest so much surplus money in the Treasury might exert a baneful influence upon the action of Congress.

After years of discussion and debate, the popular idea of “voting yourself a farm” obtained, and in 1861 the “homestead law” was enacted. This, in effect, rendered the public domain valueless to the government. The argument in favor of the homestead measure, that the government did not need the proceeds of the public lands, was *then* conclusive. Is it so *now*? Shall we not, when the din of war ceases, need every resource to maintain the national credit? . . .

With the public domain immensely augmented by valuable acquisitions, sacredly devoted to the payment of the national debt, national credit will be placed upon an impregnable basis. In the proceeds of that domain we should have a fund annually increasing in amount, and as enduring as time. The war ended, we know with what an elastic spirit our people will return to their ordinary pursuits, and with what giant strides our country will resume its march of improvement. Railways already pointing to the Pacific will presently be pushed to their destination, rendering the whole public domain available. The population and wealth of Europe will purchase, people, and cultivate these territories, whose teeming citizens will soon organize new states for admission into the Union.

In view, therefore, of an approaching momentous financial crisis — a crisis which if not, so far as possible, seasonably provided for, may prove as severe a trial as the war which may produce it, will not Congress immediately rescue the public domain by a repeal of the homestead law? There is no surer way of fortifying the nation's credit. There is no easier, simpler, or more equitable mode of providing for the payment of interest on the public debt. The proceeds of this domain, under a proper system, will ballast the Treasury. With that vast deposit, facilitating the other financial operations of the government and easing the burdens of the people, the country will shoulder

its debt; and the people, with confidence in the wisdom of the government, will go cheerfully to their work, that a destiny of greatness and glory for the Republic, temporarily arrested by rebellion, may be triumphantly accomplished. . . .

The repeal of the homestead law would submit no one who voted for it to a charge of inconsistency. All the circumstances and conditions of the country and people have changed. The claims of the government, even if those claims conflicted with the interests of the people, are paramount. But there is no such conflict. Those for whose benefit this law was enacted are now giving their services and blood to the government. And what is a prospective "homestead" worth without a government to protect, and a Union to consecrate it? Is it not the imperative duty of Congress to reclaim and husband every acre of this broad, fertile, and rich domain? Held inviolably as a trust fund for the protection of the national credit, our national debt, however large, instead of depressing agriculture, manufactures, and commerce would furnish guarantees for the fidelity of our rulers and representatives, and impart strength and stability to the government.

Very truly yours, THURLOW WEED.

[MR. WEED TO JOSEPH PARKES.]

NEW YORK, *April 17, 1864.*

DEAR FRIEND, — All eyes and hopes now centre upon Grant. If he wins in Virginia, it will brighten the horizon and make him President. . . .

We are beset by dangers, — foremost of which is the presidential canvass. There is a reckless, money-making spirit abroad, which, profiting by our disasters, favors a long war.

Regiments are returning home, worn, weary, maimed, and depleted. Our cities and villages swarm with skulking, demoralized soldiers.

But it seems impossible that a rebellion so wanton can, in this century, and in the sight of God, prosper. I believe that we shall yet be carried through. . . .

Faithfully yours, THURLOW WEED.

"You, my dear old friend," wrote Mr. Parkes to Mr. Weed, "ought to settle your affairs before the crash comes. It may be that your government will be reunited for a time; but it cannot last, after this era of tremendous passion. Buy yourself some pleasant spot on the Hudson, where, a few years hence, Mrs. Parkes and I may visit you and Harriet. I should really like to go to the United States, if only to see your Lincoln. But will he soon be in Fort Lafayette, or here in exile?"

1864. — Early in the summer a movement was started to secure for Reuben E. Fenton, then serving his fifth term in Congress, the Republican nomination for Governor of New York. There soon appeared to be, whether there really was or not, a popular sentiment in this candidate's favor. Realizing that the influence of Mr. Weed's friends was desirable, not to say essential, efforts were quickly set on foot to secure their coöperation. So successful were these advances that, in August, when Mr. Fenton called upon Mr. Weed at the Astor House, in company with E. D. Webster, one of the "Old Guard," who trusted, and by whom Mr. Weed was trusted, implicitly, although he had not been on friendly terms with Mr. Fenton, Mr. Weed said that he should not oppose that gentleman's aspirations, believing him to be the clear choice of a majority. In September the convention met at Syracuse, and nominated Mr. Fenton on the first ballot.<sup>1</sup>

When discussion began in relation to presidential candidates the Republican party was divided as to the propriety of renominating Mr. Lincoln. Those now most emphatic in opposition were they who, in 1860, had been foremost in professions of friendship — Mr. Chase, Mr. Greeley, Mr. Opdyke, Henry Winter Davis, William Cullen Bryant, and David Dudley Field. The President had no more loyal friends than Mr. Weed and Mr. Seward. At the White House, one evening, in company with Leonard Swett and Mr. Weed, Mr. Lincoln gave the first intimation in connection with his desire for a second term. "Do you know that the people begin to talk about your renomination?" said Mr. Swett. Turning in his chair, after a moment's pause, the President replied: "Swett, do you know that same bee has been buzzing in my bonnet for several days?"

[JUDGE DAVIS TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *March 21, 1864.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — I showed your letter to the President. It pains him when you are not satisfied with what he does. He stated to me that he has the highest esteem for you, knows that you are patriotic, and that it hurts him when he cannot do what you think advisable.

<sup>1</sup> He was elected in November, receiving 368,557 votes to 361,264 cast for Horatio Seymour.

I think he ought to act, and act promptly, but his mind is constituted differently from yours and mine. We will have to wait for his decision upon the important matter. It must come, sooner or later. Mr. Chase's declination is a mere sham, and very ungraceful at that.

The plan is to get up a great opposition to Lincoln, use Frémont and others, and represent, when the convention meets, the necessity of united effort, that anybody can unite except Lincoln, etc., etc., and then to present Chase. . . .

There was a meeting of Chase's friends in the city last night. They resolved not to support Lincoln, etc., etc.; the greater part present were Treasury office-holders. How long can these things last?  
Truly yours,  
DAVID DAVIS.

[GOVERNOR MORGAN TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *May 29, 1864.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — Mr. Chase will subside as a presidential candidate after the nomination is made, — not before.

The administration is criticised so much by members of Congress that I say less against its mistakes than I feel or than I otherwise would. There has been fraud enough in sending supplies in and bringing cotton out of rebel states to destroy any administration at any other time than when the government is warring for its life.

You will understand what I mean when I say that military officers of the government, civil officers of government, and certain rebels, act in concert for profits in getting supplies into and beyond the rebel lines and bringing cotton out. The matter is too disgusting to write about.

I shall have the pleasure of meeting you at Baltimore.

Truly yours,

E. D. MORGAN.

[GOVERNOR PATTERSON TO MR. WEED.]

ROCHESTER, *July 4, 1864.*

DEAR WEED, — I am very glad that there is at least one man who agrees with me about Secretary Chase, and that you are the man. His inordinate anxiety for the presidency has made a fool of him. You will recollect that I went to Kansas, at your request, to look after the Lecompton constitution, and, when I got there, to my astonishment I found a letter written by Mr. Chase, urging the adoption of that instrument. I saw and read the letter. It was in the hands of an editor who went to Kansas from Cincinnati, and has returned to Ohio. I heard of several other letters of like import, but did not see them myself. .

The only reason assigned in Kansas for his course was, that, if it

came in as a state, he would expect a delegation from there to help nominate him for the presidency. Again, the present year, he wanted the delegates from Ohio and New Hampshire, thinking that Lincoln would not carry a majority of the convention, and that, if he should have the delegates from his native as well as adopted state, he would be nominated. But he could not get either.

He is like a jury in a justice's court, — always finds first for himself. He is like Greeley, too, because he was in favor of allowing the South "to go out and stay out," and that alone ought to have prevented his appointment to a place in the Cabinet. Let him go!

Truly yours,

GEORGE W. PATTERSON.

In convention at Cleveland, on the 31st of May, the Radicals sought to prevent the President's renomination by putting Frémont and Cochrane in the field. This movement was characterized by Mr. Weed as a "slimy intrigue." The Republican national convention was held at Baltimore, on the 7th of June. Every effort was made to secure control of New York delegates in the interest of Secretary Chase, but they voted for Mr. Lincoln, and he was renominated. There was a miniature contest over the vice-presidential nomination, which went to Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee. With the knowledge and approval of Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward, Mr. Weed sought to influence the Democratic choice. Through Dean Richmond, Peter Cagger, Sanford E. Church, Henry C. Murphy, William F. Allen, Cornelius Wendell, and other "War Democrats," he endeavored to secure the nomination at the national Democratic convention of Mr. Catton, of Illinois, Mr. Phelps, of Missouri, or Mr. Guthrie, of Kentucky; fearing that the government, in case of Lincoln's defeat, might pass into the hands of men committed to the heresy that the war was a failure. But these efforts failed, for, at Chicago, on the 29th of August, the Democrats nominated George B. McClellan, of New Jersey, and George H. Pendleton, of Ohio, each of whom was identified with the Copperhead "peace party."

"The objections to the election of General McClellan," wrote Mr. Weed, while the canvass was in progress, "are found less in himself than in his political surroundings. These are largely disloyal, and it requires a higher degree of moral courage than he possesses to shake them off. The influences which surround a President usually shape his action. Of all our presidents

General Jackson alone had the will to determine and pursue his own course, — or, in other words, to ‘take the responsibility.’ Knowing this, we should have nothing but evil to expect from Democratic success in this election. . . . The convention, which nominated McClellan and Pendleton would, had the power resided in it, have made an instant peace, ingloriously recognizing the Confederate government, and shivering this Republic into fragments. Can we, then, after all the sacrifices rebellion has occasioned, and when, as we hope, these sacrifices are soon to be compensated by the overthrow of our enemies, submit to such wrong and humiliation? If, as I assume, we cannot and will not so dishonor our country, so degrade ourselves, and so outrage the memories of hundreds of thousands who have written their devotion to the Union in their own red blood, let us vote the ‘peace party’ down; let us not consign all there is left of this priceless government and precious Union to the hands of those who are impatient for an ignominious, shameful peace ‘upon the best attainable terms,’ whether they conspire at Chicago under Vallandigham and Wood, or in Canada under Sanders and Greeley. . . .

“Every sickly cry for peace aggravates and protracts the war. Until, by military mastery, the Rebellion is subdued, we can have no peace on enduring terms. White feathers at the North are more dangerous to our government and Union than the swords and bayonets of the South. Our best and most effective peace commissioners are Sherman and Farragut, Grant, Hancock, and Sheridan. Meanwhile, the administration itself should work out of its false position, and by some unequivocal act or declaration, solemnly avow that the war is prosecuted to maintain the government and to restore the Union; and that when misguided states and peoples return to their allegiance, the Angel of Peace will revisit and bless our severely chastised country. . . .

“The Democratic party is demoralized by a ‘Copperhead’ element, whose disloyalty ran that party under in 1863, and whose successful resistance at Chicago to enlightened and patriotic action will occasion a second Democratic collapse this year. . . .

“The responsibilities of the administration have been, during its four years’ trial, so great, that the Democratic party, had it been patriotic — or even if it had even seemed to be so —

would have taken the government. Its disloyal state organizations finally culminated at Chicago, where the right path was so clear and straight that only those who were previously bent on pursuing the wrong could mistake it. In seasons of common danger, there is no difficulty in discriminating between patriotism and disloyalty. In a war which exhausts their substance and drinks their blood, the people are never deceived. In such times they think and feel deeply. Instincts and impulses anticipate argument and 'jump at conclusions.' Now, as in 1812, a questionable patriotism is virtual disloyalty. Now, as then, the political barometer rises or falls with the changing fortunes of our armies. Victories depress, while disasters encourage the opponents of the administration. . . .

"The political 'signs of the times' are full of hope and joy. Recent results convert confidence into assurance. And the sense of relief comes when the danger was most imminent. In Indiana, where treason was most rife, and traitors boldest, the triumph is overwhelming. So, last year, in Ohio, where Copperheads had the hardihood to present Vallandigham for Governor, popular indignation crushed them out of political existence. Thus, if the illustration be not irreverent, where disloyal sin abounds, patriotic grace abounds much more abundantly."



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

1865-1867.

“WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE.”—MR. LINCOLN TO MR. WEED.—THE ASSASSINATION.—ANDREW JOHNSON.—MR. RAYMOND’S VISITS TO THE WHITE HOUSE.—ATTITUDE OF CONGRESS.—THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION.—LETTER FROM GERRIT SMITH.—RETURN TO JOURNALISM.—A POLITICAL RÉSUMÉ.—NOMINATION OF GENERAL GRANT.

WHEN Mr. Lincoln began his second presidential term, on the 4th of March, 1865, the collapse of the Rebellion was close at hand, and it was already clear that the great task of the new administration must be the reconstruction of the Southern States. With those delicate questions which were sure to arise in the wake of a fearful war, Mr. Lincoln was peculiarly well qualified to deal. Nothing could be more sublime than the spirit of that inaugural address, in which “with malice toward none, with charity to all,” he took up the great work of “healing the nation’s wounds,” and “achieving a just and lasting peace.” He seems to have felt that nothing which he ever wrote would sink so deep into the hearts of his countrymen, would live so long, would so entitle him to the gratitude and admiration of the world, as this same address. Shortly after it was spoken, and less than a month before his death, he wrote to Mr. Weed a letter, than which none in this volume is more worthy to be preserved.

[PRESIDENT LINCOLN TO MR. WEED.]

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, D. C., *March 15, 1865.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — Every one likes a compliment. Thank you for yours on my little notification speech and on the recent inaugural address.

I expect the latter to wear as well as, perhaps better than, anything I have produced; but I believe it is not immediately popular. Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case, is to deny that there is a God governing the world.

It is a truth which I thought needed to be told, and, as whatever of humiliation there is in it falls most directly on myself, I thought others might afford for me to tell it.

Truly yours,

A. LINCOLN.

On the 14th of April, 1865, Mr. Lincoln was assassinated, and Andrew Johnson became President. General Lee had already surrendered, and a few weeks later General Johnston, General Taylor, and General Kirby Smith followed Lee's example. On the 10th of May "Jeff" Davis was captured, and a skirmish near Boco Chico, Texas, constituted the last engagement of the war.

President Johnson's first message was equal to the occasion. "His first solicitude," writes Mr. Weed, "was to ascertain and carry out the policy of Mr. Lincoln. I know that he went to the White House with that determination." The truth of this assertion there is no reason to doubt. But, as Mr. Weed often said, "President Johnson did not inherit the temper or tact of his predecessor." The influences which had first sought to dictate to Mr. Lincoln and then to defeat his renomination engaged in an effort to teach Johnson his duty toward the South. Had Mr. Lincoln lived, he would have parried such interference; but Johnson's fiery disposition made him, when criticised, belligerent and aggressive. Thus, at last, he was led into an irreconcilable quarrel, not only with its radical element, but with the entire Republican party.

And yet, in justice to President Johnson, it cannot be denied that the Republican majority in Congress took up the reconstruction problem in a mood very different from that of the lamented Lincoln, when he bespoke for the disposition of this question "malice toward none" and "charity to all."

From 1856 to 1865 every Republican statesman and newspaper in the country maintained that states could not get out of the Union. It cost a war to establish that doctrine; but, when it was established, Chief Justice Chase, acting with Senators Wade and Sumner, insisted that states were out of the Union, and engaged in a plan to keep them out until after the presidential election of 1868.

"The feeling against the rebellious states is more bitter than it ought to be," wrote Governor Morgan to Mr. Weed, in May, 1865. "I think it is proper to institute careful inquiry as to







*A Lincoln*



their condition before we vote. Too many lives have been sacrificed and too much treasure expended not to do this; but that does not sanction the determination of Congress for lengthened and unnecessary delay."

"The Radicals are outwardly smooth and anxious for peace and union," Mr. Raymond wrote to Mr. Weed, "but only (at bottom) on their own terms. I talked with the President last evening for nearly two hours. His convictions are very clearly defined as to a policy, and as to the party through which that policy must be carried out. He says politics are in a strange transition state. He says the Union party ought to take the lead, and laughed at the notion that he could be captured by the Democrats. He thinks it important that Union men should not allow themselves to fall under radical leadership. He complains that Senator Wilson's manner towards him is dictatorial and insolent; but says he will not be forced into a collision. If it is to come, the other side must begin it. He will not make terms or conditions about suffrage; don't think universal colored suffrage would work well in the District of Columbia or anywhere else. He says the Radicals are inaugurating a conflict which will result in no real benefit to the negroes. On general questions he is firm and perfectly trustworthy."

Republican conventions held in the summer and fall of 1865 indorsed the national administration. Republican state officers were chosen in New York. There was no open rupture with the President until March, 1866, when the civil rights bill, designed to make freedmen citizens of the United States, was vetoed. "Mr. Seward, Mr. Morgan, and myself," wrote Mr. Raymond to Mr. Weed, in March, "met the President this morning, by appointment. The President said he had suggested the meeting, as it was time, he thought, for the collectorship appointment to be made. Morgan thought it had better be delayed on account of the temper of the Senate, which, he said, was very bitter, and might lead to the rejection or suspension of any one whom the President might send in. Mr. Seward thought it would be well to wait developments in Congress on the Tennessee question. It was finally agreed that we would meet again on Tuesday. The President assented, but said the appointment ought not to be much longer delayed. . . .

“Things do not improve. I think you had better come on here, for the purpose of having a talk with the President about the general policy of his administration. He seems, I think, a good deal depressed by the passage of the civil rights bill, though I could not detect any symptom of yielding. Unless he is wise, it seems to me he is ruined. Seward agrees with me that he would listen to you with attention, and that it would be well for you to come.”

“We had a caucus last night,” Mr. Raymond continues, on the 12th of July, “full, venomous, reckless, the worst yet. The ruling sentiment was to sit all summer, so as to prevent the President from making appointments. Banks named an ultra radical committee to consider and report. They passed a resolution taking away from the President control of government arms and ordnance, and distributing among the loyal states. Stevens submitted a resolution denouncing the Philadelphia movement, and reading out of the party any one who has anything to do with it. The Radicals are terribly excited. Seward says he is anxious for some movement in New York for a convention. If you are not engaged, he would like to see you here. I fear that giving the Democrats half the delegates has damaged the movement. It allows the opposition to charge that the convention is designed to throw everything into Democratic hands. By and by, perhaps, its real object will be better understood, but just now everything is below par. The stories of the ‘Tribune,’ ‘World,’ and ‘Herald,’ about my remarks are utterly false.”

It was near the inauspicious close of this protracted session of Congress that a call was issued to loyal citizens of all the states, “favoring a speedy restoration of the Union,” to assemble in convention at Philadelphia. The purpose of the movement was to defeat radical schemes for making party capital. Naturally, therefore, the majority at Washington was “terribly excited,” and the “real object” of the Philadelphia meeting was “persistently misstated.” Indeed, Republicans often refer contemptuously to that convention even to this day, although the position there taken became Republican “law and gospel” when it was thought necessary to carry some of the Southern States for Hayes and Wheeler in 1876.

Many able and patriotic gentlemen participated in the Phila-



delphia movement, among whom were John A. Dix, Henry J. Raymond, Hamilton Fish, Dean Richmond, Samuel Sloan, Marshall O. Roberts, Francis B. Cutting, Alexander W. Randall, Moses Taylor, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Daniel Drew, Leonard W. Jerome, A. J. Dittenhoefer and R. M. Blatchford. Though not a delegate, Mr. Weed was active in the organization, and hopeful that it might effect good results. But it required more genius than he possessed to amalgamate the heterogeneous elements which assembled at Philadelphia in 1866.

“Who is now to lead the country back to peace, tranquillity, and union?” wrote Mr. Seward to Mr. Weed, in November. “Shall we be spared to see it done? Europe is beginning to presume upon our distractions.”

“You are doing great good,” wrote Gerrit Smith to Mr. Weed. “But do not let the conservatism of your cool, calculating head have exclusive influence over the radicalism of your heart. Why should not the North and the South now come together in an honest union? I have written much to that end. . . .

“But, as I am an ‘Old Abolitionist,’ I must still be regarded as given to fanaticism, and therefore can never have much influence. You have influence, great influence. I beg you to use it for peace, for peace between the North and the South. . . . I often dissent from you, but credit you always with loving your country and caring for the poor.”

1867. — It was now just threescore years since Mr. Weed sent up his rimless wool hat when it was known that Tompkins had been elected Governor of New York. From 1817 to 1846 he had been constantly interested in elections, and each year through the three days which the polls, under the old system, remained open, had usually worked there personally in the open air, ballots in hand. In 1824, with a few friends, he aided in calling the first state convention held in New York, nominations having been made previous to that time in legislative caucus. Until 1864 he was associated with National Republican, anti-Masonic, Whig, and Republican conventions and committees. For more than thirty years the creation and action of such conventions and committees were in harmony with his views. It was not a relief, after all, to be exempt from political responsibility.

And thus in the spring of 1867, yielding to the suggestions

of old friends, he assumed editorial control of the New York "Commercial Advertiser."

The ordeal through which we are passing [he wrote in his introductory article] is trying the fortitude of the people and testing the strength of the government. We are in the second phase of rebellion, a phase, in some of its aspects, more alarming than the first; for its dangers are insidious and plausible rather than open and defiant. . . .

At the close of a long and bloody war, during which the iron and the steel had pierced the hearts and harrowed the souls of the people, they demanded a victim, as in the days of the passover. Taking advantage of the excitement of the multitude, the "chief priests" turned their wrath against the President, whose impeachment was demanded. When, at the opening of the first session of the late Congress, its leaders conspired against President Johnson, he had given no Union man cause of offense. He was, as he had been throughout the Rebellion, earnestly and truly loyal. Instead of having gone back to the Democracy, as falsely alleged, when members of the Cabinet resigned he supplied vacancies by the appointments of Messrs. Randall, Brown- ing, and Stanberry, eminent Whig-Republicans. But the spirit which contemplated the defeat of Lincoln and Johnson in 1864, through a radical convention at Cleveland, was on the rampage. Mr. Lincoln himself, had his life been spared, would have been assailed by the same leaders, with the advantage, however, of never having been a Democrat. In the beginning of the crusade against the President, he was in the right, and his opponents in the wrong. During its progress, unhappily for the country, this proposition, in the popular mind, has been reversed; so that a vast majority of the people are against the President. He has been thrown, by adverse and perverse circumstances and events, into a false position. Under the influence of a keen sense of calumny, ingratitude, and persecution, he has or is supposed to have affiliated with those who were his enemies during the war, and to have relaxed in the feeling of an earlier day which prompted that noble sentiment, "Treason is a crime and must be made odious." The idea falsely worked up that the President is now unpatriotic, has turned popular feeling against him. In adhering, as he has inflexibly, to the opinion that the people would come round to his standpoint, he forgets the lesson which all history teaches, that "Revolutions never go backwards." The Rebellion cost too much to be lightly estimated or easily forgotten. . . .

Things have gone on in this way for nearly two years. A despotism has controlled Congress. Its members named a directory of fifteen, in

caucus, by which they were ruled during a session of eight months, sinking their own individuality as well as their convictions and independence. Before the President had, by any act, incurred the just displeasure of Republicans, he was denounced in Congress as an "enemy of his country," and as a "traitor." He was arraigned for impeachment before a committee which, after six weeks' labor, reports that while no evidence has been discovered sustaining charges of "high crimes and misdemeanors," yet, to "keep the ball rolling," bequeathes the accusation to its successors. In the Senate, the Secretary of the Treasury was assailed in terms so gross, that one Republican Senator pronounced the language "indecent," while another characterized it as "infamous." The distempered and prejudiced mind and action of Congress cannot, perhaps, be better illustrated than by reference to the fact that a member of the committee charged with the inquiry whether the government had made proper efforts for the arrest of Surratt reported, in substance, that the committee had no evidence that the government had been remiss, yet "its suspicions remain." And when this injustice was pointed out, Mr. Boutwell, with whom the investigation originated, replied that, although there were no facts to justify his supposition, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of State, and the President, "might have been remiss." Now it has been judicially established that in the conspiracy which resulted in the assassination of President Lincoln, and which all but accomplished the assassination of the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of State, including the Vice-President and Secretary of War, Lincoln, Johnson, Seward, and Stanton, were marked for attack. In numbers and desperation this conspiracy was formidable enough to accomplish its purpose. And yet Congress arraigned the very persons whom Surratt and his associates intended to murder, — one of whom almost miraculously survives, — and in the absence of testimony, and in the last hour of the session, endeavors to create the impression that the persons whom Surratt intended to murder "might have been remiss" in pursuing and arresting him! All this, too, in face of the fact that the government did pursue and arrest him, and that he was imprisoned almost within hearing of members of Congress who thus shamefully disregard truth, justice, and humanity. . . .

If the war had not been obstinate, bloody, and protracted, arousing and contracting the popular demand for retributions and indemnities, selfishly ambitious leaders could not, as they do, beguile and betray the people. The war over, but that presidential aspirants desired to keep the Union divided until after another election, all would take up the work of tranquilizing the public mind and restoring general prosperity. Other wars, like storms and tempests, have been succeeded

by calms. But ours is a peace without significance and without fruits, other than of bitterness. We of the North have become as exacting and aggressive after, as southern men were before the Rebellion. . . .

What we need, and what we lack, in the management of public affairs, is Patriotism, — not the mere profession of that virtue, but itself, in the form that carried tens of thousands of gallant, devoted men, regardless of self, into the Union army, — men who, like Wadsworth, and Shaw, and Van Rensselaer, and Howland, left wealthy, luxurious, happy homes, for their country. That spirit in the councils of the nation would, ere this, have readjusted our difficulties, securing to our country and people permanent peace and restored prosperity. . . .

I resume with great diffidence duties from which I had intended a permanent withdrawal. Though reasonably familiar with journalism when in the harness, things have several years the start of me now; and whether, considering the disadvantage in years, I can catch up with events, and assist in giving shape to them, remains to be seen. While in the field, I had my share of readers; but two generations have passed away, and a third has risen to manhood since I began editorial life. I know that in all respects the world goes faster, and requires warmer blood and fresher thoughts than were needed before rails and wires, invested with attributes once supposed to belong only to omniscient power, toy with time and distance. But age, if moderately benefited by experience and observation, may impart something of interest and usefulness to newspaper columns. Inspired with that hope, I am about to try to do a little good in helping the people and the country out of their complications, — complications aggravated unnecessarily by passion and ambition. . . .

The first duty of the government at the end of the war was to reunite divided states, excited communities, and disturbed elements. To the accomplishment of these objects there were no insuperable difficulties. The southern people, it is quite true, hate us, as they have been taught, and have been accustomed to hate us. But, in view of the ruin and destitution which “stalks through their streets and shrieks in their corn-fields,” and of their powerless condition, it is for us to be tolerant, if not generous. Slavery forever abolished, the government can no longer be controlled or embarrassed by that “peculiar institution.” The amended Constitution confers upon Congress the power and duty of protecting freedmen. So that, admitting all that is alleged of ill will and discontent in the South, there are no sufficient reasons for keeping the Union divided. . . .

If I have in some things fallen behind, or failed to hew up to my party line, it is because I could not recognize perfection in all the lead-

ers of my own party, or deny to all opponents the merit of good intentions. Very early in life, when we were in a war with England, I did most fervently believe every Federalist an enemy to his country, and every Republican a political saint. But this impression wore off, and in 1819, when Federalism collapsed, and the Republican party, divided against itself, ran Tompkins and Clinton for Governor, it was dispelled. Then I espoused the Clintonian side, and for five years stood by that really great man, until in 1825 we separated, — he going for Jackson and I for Adams. During the intervening years, while I have been a zealous Whig and Republican, I confess to the weakness of always entertaining personal regard for honest men of the Democratic persuasion, and of withholding that regard from the dishonest men of my own. . . .

1867. — National politics were, indeed, as President Johnson said to Mr. Raymond, in a strange “transition state.” By a singular abandonment of all past professions, the Republican majority, in holding that states lately in rebellion must be treated as conquered territory, embraced the theory, which was high treason in 1860, that the Union could be dissolved. Radical Republicans insisted upon confiscation and division of land. Wendell Phillips wanted to partition the South and give every negro a forty-acre farm. Mr. Boutwell urged that owners of large estates in the South should be compelled to divide and subdivide their property. The country became so weary of partisan strife that it was ready to welcome almost anything which would but put an end to the plots and counterplots of radical politicians.

Early in the summer Mr. Weed began to look forward, not without apprehension, to the presidential canvass. In seeking for a candidate who would be free to conduct his administration with an eye single to the general welfare, and whose nomination would arouse popular enthusiasm, attention was naturally directed towards Ulysses S. Grant, who had never been a partisan, and who was regarded by the American people as the greatest General of modern times. At conferences in New York, at which the advisability of this nomination was canvassed, it met with immediate favor, and, when a public meeting in General Grant’s interest had been arranged, Mr. Weed went to Long Branch, where the General was staying, to apprise him that a movement intended to secure for him the nomination at

the Republican convention would be initiated immediately. After referring to the fact that generals who had carried the country through its former wars had been successively rewarded with the presidency, Mr. Weed remarked that a General who had saved the Union, would now, like Washington, Jackson, Harrison, and Taylor, be similarly honored. After an hour's pleasant conversation, Mr. Weed took his departure, remarking that a demonstration had been arranged to take place in New York within four or five days, the proceedings of which would be formally communicated to General Grant by Thomas Murphy, who was to be chairman.

Three or four days afterwards occurred the first demonstration in favor of General Grant's nomination for the presidency. Among those who took part were Thomas L. James, Pierre C. Van Wyck, Isaac Dayton, Sheridan Shook, Owen W. Brennan, John A. Kennedy, James Kelly, Robert Murray, William A. Darling, William Allen, James B. and Joseph Taylor, David Miller, Hugh Gardner, John V. Gridley, John P. Cummings, Thomas C. Acton, Abram Wakeman, Samuel P. Russell, Lewis Lounsbury, Gideon J. Tucker, Ransom Van Valkenburg, John J. Shaw, John J. Silcocks, Horatio N. Sherwood, George M. Van Nort, James Bowen, W. R. Stewart, John Keyser, George H. Sheldon, E. Delafield Smith, Andrew Bleakley, Harry Huelat, James E. Coulter, and Nathan Hall. Had these gentlemen been less prompt, General Grant would have been nominated and elected by the Democrats.

"I learned that Peter Cagger, Dean Richmond, and others, successors of the old Albany Regency, were quietly preparing the way for General Grant's nomination," writes Mr. Weed, "and remembering that in 1828 Tammany Hall took the wind out of the sails of the Clintonian party by making General Jackson, an active Clintonian, its candidate, I determined that the adversary should not steal our thunder a second time."

## CHAPTER XXXV.

1868-1882.

THE NATIONAL CANVASS OF 1868. — MR. WEED'S HEALTH FAILS. — HE GIVES UP SMOKING. — MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED. — A VISIT TO EUROPE. — GOING TO AIKEN. — POLITICAL GOSSIP. — LETTERS OF GOVERNOR MORGAN AND MR. BLATCHFORD. — RECONCILIATION BETWEEN TWO OLD FRIENDS. — CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

WHEN it was apparent that the Republican presidential nomination would fall to General Grant, it was natural to expect that, the first place on the ticket going to Illinois, the second might be secured by New York. Friends of the Governor intimated, early in 1868, that the state convention ought to instruct for Grant and Fenton. So far as the plan related to General Grant, Mr. Weed favored it, but he urged that for Vice-President, James G. Blaine, Schuyler Colfax, Henry Wilson, George F. Edmunds, or Galusha A. Grow should be nominated. When Mr. Fenton's friends called a convention to meet at Syracuse, on the 5th of February, 1868, the movement was denounced by Mr. Weed as "representing nothing except the management under which the party was buried last fall by 50,000 majority." On the 20th of May the Republican national convention nominated General Grant and Mr. Colfax. On the 4th of July the Democrats nominated Governor Seymour and F. P. Blair. In the fall, New York, Oregon, and New Jersey stood alone at the North in choosing Democratic electors.

Into the early work of the campaign Mr. Weed entered vigorously; but the strain of the contest, together with his resumed journalistic activity, and the superadded excitement of the presidential impeachment trial, to which he was summoned as a witness, soon compelled him to seek temporary relaxation. His physician advised a trip to Saratoga, whither he went, with his daughter Harriet, the first week in June. He was sitting on the piazza of his favorite hotel one afternoon, when he rose to greet Dr. Freeman, of Saratoga, an old friend, whom he saw approaching.

“Ah,” said the physician, when some reference had been made to the reason of Mr. Weed’s visit, “I see the time has come when *that* luxury must be foregone.” As he spoke he pointed to the half-consumed cigar which was burning in Mr. Weed’s hand.

“Do you mean it?” asked Mr. Weed.

“I do.”

“Then that is the end!”

As Mr. Weed spoke he threw the cigar away, and, though he had been an incessant smoker for more than fifty years, never touched tobacco again.

It was thoroughly characteristic of the man,—the way in which this habit was overcome. He was not only inflexible when his mind was made up, but he decided questions one way or another in less time than most men would require for statement and explanation.

For nearly a year before this incident occurred his health had been very poor.

[MR. SEWARD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, July 22, 1867.

DEAR WEED, — During my long season of impaired vigor, any inquiry or even expression of sympathy from near friends depressed me more than a relapse. Supposing it may be so with you, I have resisted the impulse to inquire what reports about you from Saratoga and New York mean. I should go to New York to see, if I could without losing as much strength as I can hope to gain by going to Auburn for the short visit allowed to me. If it would not be a privation and trouble to you, I could most earnestly wish that you and Harriet would come out to Auburn, and get there the rest which you will not take anywhere else. . . . I have your letter of yesterday, and am glad to hear that Harriet is better. I begin to be nervous, and take alarm at any sickness of relative or friend.

Faithfully yours, WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

On his return to New York, with health unimproved, Mr. Weed was advised to take a trip abroad. He would not heed the suggestion, however, until he had been prostrated by a sunstroke, on the 26th of June. He then took passage on the *Cimbria*, and sailed for Liverpool on the 7th of July. But to a man of his temperament Europe was now not so much a relief as an aggravation. Unable to bear the fatigue, uncertainty,



and deprivations incident to travel, he said, "I shall be better off in my own house," and with that conviction went back to New York. Then, on the plea that winter was at hand, though really to get him away from politics and office-seekers, physicians prescribed a milder climate. Accordingly, in January, 1869, he went to Aiken, South Carolina, where, under his daughter's devoted ministrations, and in the congenial companionship of Thomas C. Acton, Hugh Maxwell, and other friends, he soon began to regain vitality. But it was plain that he had attempted too much in renewing editorial connections, and permanent withdrawal from active journalism followed immediately after his return to New York.

[GOVERNOR MORGAN TO MR. WEED.]

411 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, SUNDAY, *October 25, 1868.*

DEAR MR. WEED,—I resolved this morning that nothing should prevent me from writing to you to-day. Political affairs, as you can very well understand, are occupying much of my attention. Before this letter reaches London you will have heard through the cable the result of our presidential contest. I do not doubt but that your own mind is made up as to what that result will be. There is scarcely a question of Grant's election. There is, however, doubt in most minds as to this State. If frauds in this and other cities are not too great, we shall triumph even here. Griswold will not get as many votes as Grant by five or six thousand; but if we do as well as we expect, we shall elect Griswold. I certainly hope we shall, for he is an honorable fellow, and don't know how to do a mean thing.

There will be a sharp contest for members of Assembly, but I think the Republicans will have the next Assembly, and that a majority thereof will be friendly to my reëlection. In this city it is doubtful if we elect any, and they will be doubtful if we do. In Brooklyn we may elect two or three. They are all my friends. . . .

I was glad to hear by the latest accounts that your health was improving. I hope it will continue to improve, and that it will be effectually restored by your trip.

Truly your friend, E. D. MORGAN.

[MR. BLATCHFORD TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *February 23, 1869.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED,—I was truly glad to get Harriet's satisfactory letter of the 15th, and to learn that you are really better and building up. God grant that the next letter may confirm it all!

I came here yesterday at Governor Seward's request. He is very well; will stay to the inauguration; then goes to Auburn to begin preparations for his long tour. All the talk here is still about the Cabinet. Fessenden may be offered the State Department. Pierrepont expects to be Attorney-General. Evarts says his chances are fair, as Stanton especially asks the appointment from Grant, wanting nothing himself. Seward says Dix is coming home from France at once. Everybody assigns Fish to that place. I never saw Seward more happy than he is now, — so different (without his stilts) from what he has been the last ten years.

It must seem somewhat like home to you, having Andrews and Maxwell with you; but take care of your head, and commit no indiscretions, and you will surely get well. What joy would such a result give your troops of friends. Morgan loses his election because, you being sick, his backbone was missing. . . .

Ever affectionately your friend, R. M. BLATCHFORD.

An interesting incident of the summer of 1869 was described in that year by the newspapers.

It will afford the friends of both distinguished gentlemen infinite pleasure [said the New York "Times"] to learn that the long personal estrangement between ex-President Fillmore and Mr. Thurlow Weed was brought to a happy close a few days ago at Saratoga, by a meeting of reconciliation so magnanimous, creditable, and characteristic on both sides, that we trust we violate no private confidence in stating the facts. Mr. Fillmore made the first advance by intimating to Miss Weed, on the occasion of an accidental meeting at the dinner-table of the hotel, that if he were sure it would be agreeable to her father he would call upon him at his rooms. On hearing this, Mr. Weed immediately sought the rooms of Mr. Fillmore, where, with scarcely a momentary reference to bygones, personal or political, hearty good neighborhood and kindly understanding were restored, and these great co-workers in the old Whig vineyard, both grown gray in the service, are again friends, after an estrangement of nearly twenty years.

Of the various questions which came under review while Mr. Weed was editing the "Commercial Advertiser," none has occupied so large a share of public attention as that first definitely brought before the country in 1867 by Mr. Jenckes, of Rhode Island, the "father of civil service reform." Mr. Jenckes, then a member of the House of Representatives, introduced a bill proposing changes in our method of making government ap-

pointments. The President was deprived, to a large degree, of the power of selection, which was conferred upon "boards of examiners." In short, Mr. Jenckes began a movement to model the civil service of the United States, in a general way, upon that of England.

Mr. Weed was not a believer in the system advocated by Mr. Jenckes. "These theories," he wrote, "ignore the principle that in a republican form of government, all the offices of the government should be within the reach of all its citizens." He opposed "competitive examinations" as tending to create a privileged office-holding class, not privileged by reason of merit, but because of dexterity in answering irrelevant problems. "Such examinations," he used to say, "close the avenues of advancement against ninety-nine out of every hundred electors."

"Civil service reform," he wrote,<sup>1</sup> "first came into prominence as a political issue during the first administration of General Grant. One of its chief apostles headed a commission to work out this modern miracle. There was a good deal said, but nothing done. President Hayes in his letter of acceptance and in his message avowed himself an ardent civil service reformer. In a pleasant conversation with him, I ventured to assure him that he would not only find the civil service reform theory impracticable, but that he would himself violate it in the very first appointment he would make. I then added in explanation that if this new idea was sound, it would apply with emphasis to the diplomatic service; that Mr. Washburne in his eight years' residence abroad discharging important duties with eminent success had acquired information and experience which could not fail in the future to render his continued residence abroad important to his country. And yet, in disregard of these considerations, Washburne would be recalled for the purpose of giving the place to a personal and political friend as a reward for effective services rendered in the then recent presidential canvass. Mr. Washburne's recall and Governor Noyes's appointment confirmed this anticipation. While, however, civil service was thus stultified, Governor Noyes's appointment was in all respects a proper and creditable one. The next and most brilliant achievement in favor of civil service reform, under the

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from several of his articles on this subject, written at detached intervals, are here quoted.

Hayes administration, was conceived and executed in the belief that a political regeneration could be effected in this State. Mr. Cornell, the Naval Officer of this port, was asked to resign the chairmanship of the Republican state committee, the holding of which brought him into conflict with the much-needed reform of the civil service. General Arthur, the Collector, was not supposed to be in sympathy with the civil service reform policy of the administration. Mr. Cornell offered to withdraw from the state committee as soon as the meeting of the state convention afforded him an opportunity to resign. This, however, did not satisfy the requirements of civil service reform. When the Secretary of State came to New York for the purpose of selecting successors to the Collector and Naval Officer, in two interviews with that gentleman I endeavored to show that the reasons for such removals were insufficient and would be so regarded, concluding my last conversation with the prediction that one of these victims of civil service reform would be elected Governor of the State and the other United States Senator. Mr. Cornell was elected Governor, and General Arthur would have been chosen United States Senator if he had not been nominated for Vice-President. Again, the resignation of Mr. Dutcher as General Appraiser left that office vacant. Here was an opportunity, by the promotion of a subordinate appraiser of capacity and experience, of carrying out civil service reform principles. But instead of doing that, President Hayes again confounded his precept by his example in transplanting Mr. Howard from Ohio to New York. The latter gentleman's fitness for the duties of General Appraiser consisted in his having been a newspaper correspondent and the author of a Campaign Life of Rutherford B. Hayes, the Republican candidate for President.

“The demand made by civil service reformers for life tenures in office conflicts with vital principles of our form of government. Pending the adoption of the United States Constitution, considerations and arguments relating to this question, in favor of limited tenures for executive and congressional offices, were so cogent and clear that nothing was left for the advocates of life, or even long, tenures to stand on. It was then urged that all power resides in the people; that the stability of the government and the responsibility of representatives depends

upon frequent elections. So much has been written and said in denunciation of the 'spoils' system, that few men are bold enough to attempt a defense of what, when properly understood, is entirely defensible. With Governor Marcy's explanation, fair-minded men will admit that the 'spoils' about which parties contend belong justly to the 'victors.' In a canvass for state officers are not the 'spoils' awarded to the 'victors'? When an election is decided in favor of Republican candidates for Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, Secretary of State, Comptroller, Treasurer, State Engineer, etc., do not these gentlemen step into the offices occupied by Democrats? And in these cases are not the 'victors' rewarded with the 'spoils?' If this point be conceded, as it must be, why should candidates for subordinate offices in the same departments be refused their share of the rewards of victory? 'Rotation in office' was formerly a doctrine avowed and acquiesced in by both parties. In earlier days the first political lesson impressed upon the youthful mind was that every American elector is eligible and may aspire to all the offices of honor and profit under the government. The elector, therefore, who aspires to a subordinate office, as a reward for political service, is as well entitled to his place as those who seek the higher positions. No man since the organization of the government ever reached the presidency except as a reward for his military or political services. And all this is just as it should be. No party has ever made indiscriminate removals from office. Men found to be exceptionally well qualified for the discharge of clerical or other duties are seldom removed. A careful examination in the various departments of the national and of our state government will fully vindicate this assertion. Take, for example, Mr. Hunter, Chief Clerk in the State Department at Washington, who has held his position half a century. Mr. Forester, who was appointed to a clerkship in our Post Office by Samuel L. Gouverneur in 1824, instead of being victimized by the 'spoils' system has been from time to time promoted, and is still doing good service, having been in the Post Office fifty-six years. Lambert Tree, who recently resigned on account of age and its infirmities, had been in the postal service at Washington almost half a century. The late Charles P. Clinch was Deputy Collector for forty years, and, though always a Democrat, served

through every Whig administration, and until, at the earnest request of his sister, Mrs. A. T. Stewart, he was induced to resign. Archibald Campbell, the Deputy Secretary of State, and Philip Phelps, the Deputy Comptroller, both held offices, always voting the Democratic ticket, through every Whig and Republican administration, dying finally in their harness. There are numbers of Whig and Democratic clerks in the New York Custom House and Post Office, who have been left undisturbed through half a dozen administrations.

“Nor is the claim that subordinate offices are filled better by competitive examinations well founded. Two thirds of all the ‘competitive’ questions asked may be answered without bearing in the slightest degree upon the candidate’s fitness for the duties he is called to discharge; and, what is worse, after the conundrums have been answered, they furnish no guarantee for industry, fidelity, or honesty. Your sharp-witted fellow often lacks the better elements of character. Under none of the ‘competitive examinations’ held at the Custom House or Post Office during the last two or three years would Commodore Vanderbilt, Dean Richmond, or George Law have been found qualified to discharge the duties of a custom house night-watch man or a post office letter-carrier. And yet those three gentlemen were confessedly among our most intelligent, enterprising, and successful business men. . . .

“If this theory be really useful, why is it limited to subordinate federal appointments? If letter-carriers and tide-waiters are required to be experts in grammar, history, geography, arithmetic, etc., is it not still more important that the same test should be applied to the heads of federal bureaus? And above all, if there be any sense or reason in these competitive examinations, should they not be applied to candidates for diplomatic appointments? And yet Presidents Grant, Hayes, and Arthur made and make all their diplomatic appointments in utter disregard of their civil service reform professions. . . . The questions which applicants for custom house and post office appointments are required to answer ought to be sufficient to excite general contempt for ‘competitive examinations.’ Here are a few specimens:—

Express in figures the following amounts:

Thirty millions, three hundred and thirty-one.

Forty-one billions, two millions and five.

Express in words the following figures: 3000600; 200002000002.

What is the total quantity of molasses in 4 casks containing respectively, 55 1-7, 31 3-20, 27 2-15, and 49 9-17 gallons?

If I own  $\frac{3}{4}$  of 12-15 of a ship, and sell 15-20 of my share, how much of the whole vessel will I have left?

A grocer having a capital of \$10,000 invested 1-5 of it in tea at 9-16 of a dollar per pound, 5-20 of the remainder in coffee at 1-3 of a dollar per pound, and 8-25 of the rest in sugar at 5 3-16 cents per pound, what quantity of each did he buy, and how much money had he left?

In a mass of alloy, weighing 291.42680 pounds, was found 40.0921 pounds of silver, 160.09690 pounds of copper, 22.002 pounds of iron, and .426900 pounds of zinc. The remainder was lead. What was the weight of the lead?

A merchant bought 30 pieces of cloth, each containing 41.5 yards, for \$3.875 per yard, and 25 pieces of 36.8 yards each for \$4.125 per yard. He sold the entire lot for \$3.96 per yard. How much did he gain or lose?

An importer received a box of chemicals weighing 122.49 French grammes, each gramme containing 15.432 English grains, on which he paid a duty of .05 of a dollar per grain. What was the amount of duty?

A merchant bought 6-8 of 4-6 of a cargo and sold 2-9 of his share. What part of the whole cargo did he sell, expressed in decimals?

A and B formed a copartnership. A's original capital was to B's as 5 is to 7. A withdrew  $\frac{2}{3}$  of his capital and B  $\frac{3}{4}$  of his. Their profits were \$5,650. How should it be divided on the basis of the reduced capital?

A goldsmith melts together 12 ounces of gold 22 carats fine, 60 ounces 20 carats fine, and 24 ounces 14 carats fine. He sold it at the rate of \$15 per ounce of pure gold (24 carats fine). What was its fineness, and what was the amount received?

A vessel loaded with coffee lost 20 per cent. of her cargo and landed only 2,000 bags. How many had she at first?

An inspector discharged a cargo of salt in tubs containing 5 bushels each. The cargo weighed 112 t., 2 cwt., 1 qur., 10 lbs. (ton 2,000 lbs.). The bushel weighs 80 pounds. How many times were the tubs filled?

A man bought 3 hogsheads of molasses for \$94.60, and found that one third the contents had leaked out. At what price per gallon must he sell the remainder to secure a profit of \$9.35 on the original purchase?

“This will suffice, — conundrums like these are multiplied to a hundred, to which candidates for day and night custom house inspectorships, like schoolboys, are required to furnish answers. Not one out of every ten of these questions has the remotest practical application to the duties of a subordinate custom house officer. Nor could more than one out of ten of these questions be answered by hundreds of our most enterprising, useful, and respected citizens.

“If Presidents Jackson, Taylor, and Lincoln had been subjected to such a competitive examination they would have been found at the bottom of the class, while Shipherd, now occupying the attention of the congressional committee on foreign relations, and Henry Lee, who was arrested as he was entering church on Sunday, against whom a large number of complaints for a variety of adroit, skillfully-arranged, and successfully-perpetrated frauds and swindles have been accumulated at Police Headquarters, would have stood at the head. . . .

“It is claimed that by the civil service reform process, appointments are made upon ‘business principles.’ Did N. T. & G. Griswold, Robert Lennox, Charles H. Russell, Grinnell & Minturn, Jonathan Sturgis, Samuel Willet, Moses Taylor, Aymar & Co., A. A. Low, Borman & Johnston, Spofford & Tileston, A. T. Stewart, and other old, enterprising, and successful New York merchants, subject applicants for clerkships to ‘competitive examinations’? Or do E. D. Morgan & Co., R. H. Macy, Arnold & Constable, Park & Tilford, Altman, Lord & Taylor, Stern, Lake & McCreery, and other eminent merchants, employ as clerks applicants whose fitness has been determined by their answers to a hundred idle and preposterous questions? Are bank clerks, whose duties and responsibilities are in the highest degree important, accepted because they have shown themselves experts in answering schoolboy questions?

“I have not yet seen, in all that has been written on this subject, any reference to the real difficulties which occasion serious embarrassment in the appointment of subordinate public servants. That difficulty, simple and apparent as it is, has been entirely overlooked. It has its origin in our universally demoralized domestic education. Fifty years ago, as a rule almost without exception, our youth learned from their parents or guardians that their future welfare and happiness depended



largely upon themselves; that if they grew up industrious and honest, they would become useful, respected, and independent. Parents prepared their sons for occupations to which their tastes, habits, and inclinations pointed. The various industries of the country furnished occupations for all; the largest number became either mechanics or farmers. In our commercial cities thousands became sailors; some were educated for clerks; while others, giving promise of usefulness if not eminence, were sent to college, to become lawyers, physicians, or clergymen.

“Now, apprenticeships are things of the past. Who now knows or hears anything about indented apprentices? Whose sons now learn trades; work first as journeymen, become wealthy as master mechanics, and then rise to representative and executive honors and responsibilities? Sixty-eight years ago the then village of Utica was distinguished for the number, intelligence, industry, social and moral worth of its industrial classes. The tailor, the shoemaker, the cabinet-maker, the hatter, the builder, etc., were recognized as equals of the merchants and professional men. Nobody was ashamed to work, and consequently everybody prospered. To such influences Utica was indebted for an impulse, the effects of which proved equally auspicious and enduring. Very recently there died a venerable and eminent citizen of Utica, distinguished not more for his industry, enterprise, and integrity, by means of which he acquired wealth, than for the discriminating judgment and the benevolence of heart with which that wealth was devoted to educational, charitable, and religious objects. Theodore S. Faxton, the subject of this tribute, commenced life in Utica seventy years ago as a stage driver. Though the president of a bank, a director in many important business companies, a pioneer in express, railway, and gas enterprises, and Mayor of the city of Utica, he would, if subjected to a ‘competitive examination,’ have failed to obtain an appointment as letter-carrier.

“Civil service reform will prove wholly ineffectual until salutary reforms shall have been effected in the domestic education of rising generations. Until young men grow up with the knowledge that their success in life depends upon their becoming identified with some of the various industries of the country, government departments will be besieged by importunate office-seekers. In a country developing as rapidly as

ours, there is employment for all who are willing to work. In the beginning, however, if need be, we must work hard for small pay. Those who are diligent and trustworthy, beginning at the lowest, rise to the topmost round of the ladder. Examples are alike numerous and distinguished. Benjamin Franklin was a journeyman printer, working at his trade first in Boston, then in Philadelphia, and finally in London. Roger Sherman, signer of the Declaration of Independence, was a shoemaker. Henry Wilson, United States Senator and Vice-President, served his time as a shoemaker's apprentice, and worked several years as a journeyman shoemaker. Abraham Lincoln worked on a farm and was a deck-hand on a Mississippi flat-boat. Joseph Henry, the distinguished scientist and head of the Smithsonian Institution, was a silversmith's apprentice at Albany. Andrew Johnson, a member of both Houses of Congress, Vice-President and President of the United States, was a tailor. Millard Fillmore, member of the legislature, Comptroller of the State, member of Congress, Vice-President and President of the United States was an apprentice in a Cayuga County fulling mill. Obediah German, Speaker of the House of Assembly and United States Senator, was a Chenango County farmer. George W. Patterson, Speaker of the House of Assembly, member of Congress, and Lieutenant-Governor of the State, was a farmer and fanning-mill maker. John Taylor, Lieutenant-Governor of the State, president of the State Bank, and for many years a wealthy and influential citizen, commenced life as a day-laboring street-paver in Albany. Azariah C. Flagg, an influential member of our legislature, State Comptroller and Comptroller of the city of New York, was a printer. Among the best mayors of our city were Stephen Allen, a sail-maker; Gideon Lee, a tanner; James Harper, a printer; William F. Havemeyer, a sugar refiner. Jacob Westervelt was a ship carpenter. George Peabody, who gave half a million of dollars to the poor of London, and a million for educational purposes in his own country, was a New-England workingman. An equally illustrious example will be found in the business history and enlightened philanthropy of the venerable Peter Cooper, whose remarkable intelligence through a long life was rewarded with a fortune which is now fitting thousands of both sexes for occupations that will render their lives prosperous, useful and happy. Leland

Stanford, the son of a Watervliet farmer, and some twenty-five years ago one of my Whig 'boys,' instead of seeking office at Albany took Mr. Greeley's advice and went 'West,' where he embarked in useful enterprises, acquired great wealth, and was elected Governor of California. He is now president of the Central Pacific Railroad, and one of the best known and most highly esteemed and hospitable citizens of that State. . . . Thus munificently, in the earlier and better days of our history, were industry, perseverance, capacity, and integrity rewarded. Kindred rewards await those who imitate these examples. And when our young men, stimulated as their predecessors were, resolve to rely under Providence upon their own strong arms, clear heads, and honest hearts for the support of themselves and their families, we shall all experience a grateful sense of relief from the importunities of office-seekers, money-borrowers, and street beggars.

"Among agencies best calculated to relieve the civil service would be to add mechanical training as a feature in our common schools. Among those now seeking in vain for employment are many who urge their knowledge of several languages. If instead of such qualifications our boys were taught mechanical trades, they would have no difficulty in finding employment. . . .

"Theoretical civil service reform is about to be put to a severe practical test in our neighboring city. The Republicans of Brooklyn, after an earnest, zealous, and well organized canvass, elected Mr. Seth Low, their candidate for Mayor. Mr. Low is strongly committed in a recent public lecture to all the theories of civil service reform. The Mayor-elect has a liberal share of patronage. The question which he will be called upon to decide is, whether ardent, influential, capable, and trustworthy Republicans, to whose efforts he is indebted for his high office, will receive their reward, or whether they are to be turned over in common with a horde of mercenaries to the capricious and arbitrary results of a 'competitive examination.' This will bring things to a square issue. If competent and deserving Republicans receive what they are so well entitled to, their share of the 'spoils,' the Republican party of Brooklyn, strong and united, will be prepared to enter with renewed zeal and confidence into another canvass. On the other hand, if

Mayor Low, in the dispensation of his patronage, confers appointments upon such 'shysters' as are most expert in answering irrelevant, impracticable, and absurd questions, his triumph will be a brief and barren one, while the Republicans of Brooklyn in the next campaign will be as cold, indifferent, and heartless as the leaders by whom they have been defrauded.

"Evils complained of do not arise so much from the present method of appointment, as from the constantly increasing number of applicants. The remedies proposed are impracticable and impossible — impossible because members of Congress will not vote for laws which would inevitably prevent their reelection. That the evil exists no one will deny. The real and only remedy will be found in largely reducing the numbers of candidates for subordinate offices. When rising generations learn to obey that 'higher law' which teaches us that bread is to be earned by the sweat of our brow, and that in the office-seeking lottery there are nine blanks to one prize, competitive examinations will not be in request. . . .

"Current discussions on this subject are much more successful in describing evils than in suggesting practical remedies. The strongest point made is in contrasting the views of Representative Garfield on this subject with those of President Garfield. The Representative demanded, with his accustomed earnestness, that appointments to office should be made by competitive examinations, and that tenures should be 'during good behavior;' but President Garfield, when called on to make appointments, not only failed to reiterate such views, but acted as every President with a just sense of his responsibility to his party and friends must and will act. When the time arrives that presidents of the United States, governors of states, mayors of cities, and others, confer appointments by competitive examinations or otherwise, without inquiring whether the recipients are political friends or foes, the people will lose their interest in elections, and our government will drift into a monarchy. We ought to profit by a lesson within the memory of all which the fate of a sister Republic teaches. Louis Napoleon was elected President for a limited term; but the people of France were beguiled into the fatal errors of first making him President for life, and then he made himself Emperor. Our State was never better governed than during the forty or more years when the

Whig and Democratic parties were so equally divided that the utmost watchfulness of one was required to prevent the success of the other in every annual election. The party in power was required to render a rigid account of its stewardship. If mistakes in administration were made, or if laws were passed hostile to the general welfare, the opposition availed themselves of their vantage ground; the result being a change of rulers. During the forty years referred to, the political power of the State changed from time to time by the election of Yates, Van Buren, Throop, Bouck, Wright, Marcy, and Seymour, as Democratic Governors; and of Clinton, Seward, Fish, Hunt, King, Clark, and Morgan, as Whig Governors. As often as the power changed, active and influential friends, by whose efforts the state officers were elected, received their share of the 'spoils.' Removals, however, were neither sweeping nor indiscriminate, and instead of howls for civil service reform, there was a general acquiescence in the fairness and propriety of methods now denounced so vehemently. . . .

"Practically, I am a better civil service reformer than Mr. George William Curtis, or any of his followers, as my record proves. I am forced to make this statement to vindicate my position. Many governors and several presidents voluntarily assigned to me the selection of large numbers of public officers of every degree. I always chose men for their fitness, and have usually been able to find them within the ranks of those who had helped my party to power. But often Democrats have been retained because they seemed to be expert and useful, and I have kept a good many Democrats in office during the last forty years because of their exceptional efficiency. I organized and established, through governors who yielded to my urgent request, the first non-partisan commissions ever created for this city, — the Police Commission, the Commission on an Exterior Water Line on the East River, the Castle Garden Commission, and several others, — insisting that each should be made up of an equal number of the members of both parties. . . .

"If, as is often said, men are to be judged by the company they keep, it may be added that a politician may be judged by the men whom he elevates to high official station. In this connection it may be proper to remark that upon the 'slate,' of which so much was said during the many years that I en-

joyed the confidence of the Whig and Republican parties, the following names were at different periods inscribed: Governors William H. Seward, Hamilton Fish, Washington Hunt, John A. King, and Edwin D. Morgan; Lieutenant-Governors Bradish, Fish, Patterson, Raymond, and Selden; Secretaries of State John C. Spencer, Christopher Morgan, E. W. Leavenworth, and Horatio Ballard; Comptrollers Bates Cook, John A. Collier, Millard Fillmore, Washington Hunt, Philo C. Fuller, James M. Cook, and Robert Denniston; Attorney-Generals Willis Hall, Ambrose L. Jordan, Ogden Hoffman, and Charles G. Myers; Treasurers Jacob Haight, Alvah Hunt, James M. Cook, Benjamin Welsh, Jr., E. G. Spaulding, and George W. Schuyler; Canal Commissioners Samuel B. Ruggles, Asa Whitney, S. Newton Dexter, George H. Boughton, Thomas Clowes, Charles Cook, Nelson J. Beach, Henry Fitzhugh, and Hiram Gardner; Speakers Erastus Root, Luther Bradish, George W. Patterson, Peter B. Porter, Jr., Robert H. Pruyn, Henry J. Raymond, and Dewitt C. Littlejohn. My political opponents chose to give me more credit than I deserved for the election of N. P. Tallmadge, W. H. Seward, Hamilton Fish, Preston King, and Edwin D. Morgan to the Senate of the United States. These are among the prominent public men with whom I have been closely identified."

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

1868-1872.

APPROACH OF OLD AGE. — LETTER ON THE DEATH OF GENERAL LEE. — SOCIAL LIFE IN OLD NEW YORK. — THE KENT AND HONE CLUBS. — REPUBLICAN STATE CONVENTION OF 1872. — NOMINATION OF GENERAL DIX. — MR. WEED NOT IN FAVOR OF RENOMINATING GENERAL GRANT. — MIDSUMMER PROSPECTS. — REASONS FOR DECLINING TO VOTE FOR MR. GREELEY.

FROM the effects of the partial sunstroke by which he was prostrated in June, 1868, Mr. Weed never entirely recovered. His mental faculties were by no means impaired, nor did he look upon himself as an invalid; but his hair was blanched; his sight began to fail; he could no longer read or write; his step became slow and unsteady. On compulsion, he gradually relinquished the active life he had always led, though he did not, nor would it have been wise for him to try to withdraw entirely from politics and society. Until the very last he was surrounded by friends, with whom he discussed public affairs; he never took more lively interest in any election than in those which occurred after he had passed his seventy-fifth year.

After the visit to Aiken in 1869, he wrote with his own hand only when it was necessary that he should affix his signature to documents of importance. His last letter not written by dictation was addressed to the writer of these memoirs.

[MR. WEED TO A GRANDSON.]

AIKEN, S. C., *March 21, 1869.*

MY DEAR GRANDSON, — I was gratified to receive your letter, and regret that I can do little more than express the hope that you may become a good printer and a good man.

When James established himself in business I wrote him a letter of advice, which he carefully preserved. I hope you will read it attentively and accept the advice as intended to regulate your own habits of business and your relations with the affairs of life.<sup>1</sup>

Remember me to your father, mother, and sisters.

Affectionately,

THURLOW WEED.

<sup>1</sup> The letter referred to is printed in Mr. Weed's *Autobiography*, p. 552.

The death of General Robert E. Lee occurred on the 12th of October, 1870. Shortly afterwards a meeting was held in honor of his memory, at which Mr. Weed was asked to act as vice-president. He replied:—

[MR. WEED ON THE DEATH OF GENERAL LEE.]

NEW YORK, *October 23, 1870.*

GENTLEMEN, — I have received your letter inviting me to participate as a vice-president of a meeting for the purpose of giving expression to sentiments awakened by the death of General Robert E. Lee.

I regret that you should so far have misunderstood my feelings as to include me among those anxious to do honor to the memory of an officer who distinguished himself in a war against the government by which he was educated and to which he owed allegiance. If the object of your meeting had been to honor the memory of that General Lee who, until the year 1861, was distinguished alike for his high personal and military character and for devotion to his country, I should esteem it a privilege to unite with you. But the strongest feelings awakened in me by the death of General Lee are those of profound sorrow that an early and brilliant military record should have been blotted out by a subsequent inglorious career. I cannot, therefore, participate with those who desire to honor the memory of the commander-in-chief of a rebel army, — an army that struck at the life of the best government in the world.

General Lee had acquired a national reputation. A large portion of his life had been passed in and about Washington. He perfectly understood the causes which led to the rebellion and the means by which the southern people were beguiled into it. He knew that the southern political leaders deliberately and understandingly ran Mr. Breckenridge for President, in 1860, so that, in the assured election of Mr. Lincoln they would find a pretext for rebellion. If the State of Virginia, for which General Lee felt called upon to abandon the Union, had been oppressed, or if her citizens had been wronged by the federal government, he might have found in such oppression or wrong an excuse, if not a justification, for his course. But no such provocation existed. His high character, coupled with his pronounced ability as an officer of the United States army, inspired the Confederate government and people with strength and confidence. So much the greater, therefore, was his offense.

Admiral Farragut, over whose remains the earth has but recently closed, served his country faithfully for more than sixty years, bearing its flag in honor and triumph through all the seas and oceans of the navigable world. In purity of character, in gallantry, in patriotism,



in the value of his services, and in the glory of his achievements, he had no superior. But his death awakened no feelings of sorrow with those who were engaged in the Rebellion; no meetings were held in Richmond or Charleston, New Orleans or Mobile, to do honor to his memory, nor, under the circumstances, were such tributes expected. Human nature has not yet attained to that degree of perfected magnanimity. Why, then, are we of New York, believing as we do that treason is a crime, called upon to do honor to the memory of a military chieftain who did his utmost to overthrow our government and destroy our Union, — and this, too, before the sables worn by mothers, widows, and sisters, in sorrowful memory of slaughtered sons, husbands, and brothers, have faded into second mourning?

I am as anxious as any other citizen that the wounds occasioned by the Rebellion should be healed, and that all its bitter memories should be forgotten. I am anxious, too, that prosperity and happiness should return to reward the hearts of the citizens of the Southern States, and I deplore the temporary misrule to which some of them have been and are subjected. But as, in the physical world, violent agitations occasion an uneven and rugged surface, so, in political demoralizations, unworthy men are elevated to place and power. However desirous to see the government of southern states restored to southern hands, I cannot consent, in furthering that object, to confound wrong with right, or to pay to treason tributes which are due only to loyalty.

Very truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

In the summer of 1870 Mr. Weed made a trip through Canada and some of the Western States. The winter was passed quietly in New York, and in 1871 he visited Europe for the fifth and last time.

Among articles which he contributed to the press during the latter year, the following, describing a great Webster dinner in New York, in 1831, and giving a brief history of the Kent and Hone clubs, may be preserved.

The late Philip Hone, an old merchant prince and a former mayor of our city, is remembered by all who enjoyed his acquaintance, not only as eminent among those who laid the foundations of our commercial prosperity, but as a gentleman of refinement and culture, who, during his long life, was the centre of attraction in social and literary circles. The very mention of his name to those who were familiar with New York society from 1820 to 1850, brings up a world of pleasant memories. An article recently published, giving a brief account of a public dinner to Mr. Webster in 1831, has elicited the following letter: —

NEW YORK, *March 3.*

MY DEAR MR. WEED, — Like many others, I was much interested in the publication, over your initials, a few days since, of the names of the subscribers to the great Webster dinner of March 24, 1831, and surprised to find that my father's [Philip Hone's] name was not among them; so I referred to his manuscript journal, of which I have thirty-two volumes, and under the impression that his account of this dinner would be of interest to you, my daughter made the inclosed copy.

Yours, very truly,

ROBT. L. HONE.

*Thursday, March 24, 1831.*

A splendid dinner was given this day by a number of our citizens to the Hon. Daniel Webster, for his able defense of the Constitution. The company consisted of about two hundred and fifty of the most respectable persons in the city. Chancellor Kent presided, with Treasurers Jay, Greeney, and John Hone as Vice-Presidents. The following were the regular toasts. . . .

6. Our Guest, — Daniel Webster, — to his Talents we owe a most Triumphant Vindication of the Great Principles of the Constitution. . . .

After the applause which followed the sixth had subsided, Mr. Webster arose, and made an address of an hour and a half, which no one who heard it will ever forget. It was patriotic, fervent, eloquent, imbued with no party violence, purely American; it was "our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country." There were many fine things in it. I remarked most particularly the following beautiful train of metaphor. The orator in portraying the character of Hamilton, eulogized his exertions to raise the credit of the country in its day of peril, and the system of finance which he established, and said: "He struck the flinty rock, and copious streams of revenue flowed from it. He touched the lifeless corpse of public credit, and it sprang upon its feet, a living body, — the fabled birth of Minerva was not more sudden than that of the system of finance which his head produced." . . .

Our commercial metropolis about the period of that dinner to Mr. Webster, and for several years afterward, was unostentatiously, but eminently social and intellectual. The various professions, whether commercial, judicial, medical, or divine, were represented by men of rare enterprise, profound knowledge, and recognized skill, along with gifted eloquence and practical piety. In the various departments of material and intellectual progress, there were men who stood up confessedly head and shoulders above their fellows. Indeed, "there were giants in the earth in those days." And these elements found their highest forms of expression in the Kent and Hone Clubs.

The Kent Club was formed at the residence of Peter A. Jay, in December, 1836, and the number of members was limited to forty-five. It was an association of lawyers, designed for intellectual improvement and social enjoyment. The following is a list of the original members of the club: —

David B. Ogden,  
 Samuel Stephens,  
 Frederick Depeyster,  
 William Kent,  
 John Duer,  
 Thomas L. Ogden,  
 Richard Ray Ward,  
 James W. Gerard,  
 Daniel Lord,  
 Richard M. Blatchford,  
 Thomas L. Wells,  
 Murray Hoffman,  
 William Samuel Johnson,  
 John Slosson,  
 Edward Curtis,  
 Abel T. Anderson,  
 James L. Roosevelt, Jr.,  
 Francis B. Cutting,  
 James Campbell,  
 William Betts,  
 Robert Emmet,

Peter A. Jay,  
 Seth P. Staples,  
 Hugh Maxwell,  
 Beverly Robinson,  
 Robert Sedgwick,  
 Dudley Selden,  
 Francis Griffin,  
 Ogden Hoffman,  
 William H. Harrison,  
 J. Prescott Hall,  
 Isaac A. Johnson,  
 Elijah Paine,  
 George Griffin,  
 Matthew C. Patterson,  
 George C. Goddard,  
 Hiram Ketchum,  
 William M. Price,  
 Charles O'Connor,  
 Charles A. Clinton,  
 Joseph Blunt,  
 Thatcher T. Payne.

Chancellor Kent was made an honorary member, and the Judges of the United States Circuit and District Courts, the Judges of the Supreme Court, the Vice-Chancellors, the Recorder, the Circuit Judge, with the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas, were made *ex officio* members.

The club met punctually every Saturday evening, at half-past seven o'clock, at the residences of its members respectively, in accordance with a programme designating the places of meeting for the first year. At supper but two dishes other than oysters were allowed. Fruit, coffee, and tea, but no ice creams or confectionery were served. Each member was permitted to introduce one stranger. It was my good fortune to be frequently received as a "stranger" at these ever-to-be-remembered meetings. On such occasions the best thinkers of this and of neighboring cities were brought together. Conversation, though interesting and animated, was never loud or excited. I can remember as if it were but of yesternight, how words of wisdom used to drop from the lips of Kent, Duer, Ogden, Jay, Maxwell, and O'Connor, and how immensely the quiet but true wit and humor of Robert Emmet, Ogden Hoffman, J. Prescott Hall, William Kent, and others, used to be enjoyed. I remember to have attended the meetings of the Kent Club at the residences of William Kent, Samuel Stevens, Richard M. Blatchford, William S. Johnson, Francis B. Cutting, Dudley Selden, J. Prescott Hall, David B. Ogden, and Elijah Paine.

The Hone Club was formed October 22, 1838, at a dinner given by John Ward, at his house in Bond Street, to ten gentlemen. It was there arranged to dine at each other's houses every Monday, at five o'clock. The host was allowed to invite four gentlemen outside of the club.

The club consisted at first of Philip Hone, in honor of whom it was named, and who was its President, Moses H. Grinnell, John Ward, George Curtis, Prescott Hall, R. M. Blatchford, Simeon Draper, Roswell L. Colt, William G. Ward, James Bowen, Charles H. Russell, Samuel Jaudon, and Edward Curtis. The following four gentlemen were subsequently elected members of the club: John Duer, Thomas Tileston, Paul Spofford, and James Watson Webb. These gentlemen, all prominent Whigs, had been actively engaged for many years in an exciting struggle, which resulted finally, in 1838, in the complete overthrow of the Albany Regency. At the first meeting of the club after its organization, Daniel Webster and William H. Seward were chosen honorary members. The club was dissolved soon after the death of Mr. Hone, in 1851.

In 1842 the club purchased a portrait of Daniel Webster, painted for them by Healy, which adorned Mr. Hone's dining-room until his death, when it was raffled for by the club, while dining at Mr. Tileston's. Each member threw the dice three times, and there were three ties. Mr. Spofford and Mr. Jaudon each threw 31; Mr. George Curtis and J. Prescott Hall, 34 each; R. L. Colt and J. W. Webb, 35 each; R. M. Blatchford, 36. While waiting for an absentee (Edward Curtis), Mr. Blatchford was regarded as sure of the prize. Finally, when Mr. Curtis did not appear, Hugh Maxwell was requested to throw the dice for him, which he did, with the following remarkable results: 14, 15, 15 — 44. After the death of Mr. Curtis, the picture was again raffled for, when it was won by Mr. Blatchford, whose dining-room it still graces.

The members of the Hone Club were noted for their hospitalities. They not only entertained bountifully, but added a peculiar zest to their inimitable dinners by the charm of their conversation. You inhaled at their tables an atmosphere so charged with intelligence as to inspire all present. Your host was not only the centre of repartee, but the cause of it in others.

Mr. Hone was distinguished for his intelligence and enterprise as a merchant, for his public spirit and liberality as a citizen, and for his exact observance of all the principles which characterize men of integrity and honor. In person and manner he strongly resembled the late Sir Robert Peel, so long the accomplished premier in the British Cabinet. His hospitalities were munificent and refined. His dinners,

like himself, are remembered as possessing all the accessories and conforming to all the proprieties of the palmyest condition of social life. These dinners were always animated and joyous. Indeed, it could not be otherwise at an entertainment over which Mr. Hone presided, for

“A merrier man,  
 Within the limit of becoming mirth,  
 I never spent an hour’s talk withal;  
 His eyes beget occasion for his wit;  
 For every object that the one doth catch  
 The other turns to a mirth-moving jest.”

Mr. Tileston served a regular apprenticeship to the printing business, but formed a copartnership with Mr. Spofford more than fifty years ago, commencing business with a capital consisting solely of industry, integrity, and enterprise, and rising step by step until the first rank among the shipping houses of the world was attained. It is pleasant to remember that I enjoyed the friendship and hospitalities of these departed merchant princes nearly forty years.

While attending diligently and acceptably to his financial duties, George Curtis, the first cashier of the Bank of Commerce, was as diligently storing and enriching his mind with the treasures of knowledge and literature. He was a quiet but delightful companion at all social gatherings. His mantle rests gracefully upon his still more gifted and universally known son, George William Curtis.

Edward Curtis was distinguished for the depth and strength of his understanding. I was intimately associated with him politically, personally, and socially, from 1835 until he died; and can say truthfully that I have never known a man possessing a greater, if an equal, degree of political common sense, tact, and efficiency. These qualities, to which zeal and fidelity were added, commended Mr. Curtis, at an early day, to the regard and confidence of Mr. Webster. All the poetic ideas of friendship were realized in the endearing relations which grew up between these two men. There were no bounds to the affection Mr. Webster entertained for Mr. Curtis, no limits to the confidence he reposed in his judgment. In everything that affected or concerned Mr. Webster’s political aspirations, the judgment of Edward Curtis was conclusive. When Mr. Webster should speak, and what he should say upon great public questions, depended largely upon the opinion of his friend. How often have I listened admiringly to conversations between them, when views deferentially suggested by Mr. Curtis were confidently accepted and acted upon by Mr. Webster. On one occasion, when not only Mr. Webster but Mr. Curtis had been beguiled too far into the support of the compromises of 1850, I learned through

Philo S. Shelton, of Boston, that Mr. Webster was about to make a political speech in Massachusetts, the character of which, as foreshadowed by my friend, caused much uneasiness. In a conversation with Mr. Curtis, my information as to the character of Mr. Webster's contemplated speech was confirmed. When I also learned from Mr. Curtis that topics to be discussed and ground to be taken had been carefully considered, I startled him by declaring with much emphasis that such a speech would bring reproach and ruin upon the political character and fortunes of Mr. Webster; that in fact he might date his departed power and usefulness from the day and hour of its delivery. After half an hour's conversation and reflection, Mr. Curtis became so far satisfied with the views presented as to take the first conveyance to Boston, with the intention either of squelching the meeting or of suppressing the objectionable features of the speech. But the Sound steamer was detained several hours, so that Mr. Curtis reached Boston only to encounter Mr. Webster on his way to the hall, where a large audience had already assembled. All, therefore, was lost. Mr. Curtis listened with apprehension and sorrow to sentiments which, twenty-four hours previously, from a different standpoint, he had approved. It was in that ill-omened speech that Mr. Webster inquired, "Where shall I go?" Unhappily for him, his friends, and the country, the answer to his question, after the delivery of that speech, was a matter of little or no importance. Politically, the great constitutional lawyer and statesman who had rendered eminent services to the government and the people, ceased to be a power in the land.

J. Prescott Hall was a deservedly eminent member of the New York bar. How he attained and sustained his high character and position as a lawyer, were questions which always perplexed me. He gave so much of his time and expended so much thought upon almost every other conceivable occupation, that I could not understand how or when he found time to read and to keep himself up in his profession. He knew all about fishes and fishing; he was an enthusiastic sportsman; in court he was dry, clear-headed, and luminously posted, while at the dinner-table he possessed such a fund of various information, and conversed with such wondrous familiarity upon questions of science, literature, theology, mechanism, the drama, etc., as to induce a belief that he was even better fitted for usefulness in either of those departments than as a lawyer. . . . His mantle, professionally and socially, rests gracefully upon the shoulders of his student and junior partner, William M. Evarts.

A few doors from the residence of Mr. Hall in Bond Street was that of John Ward, another deceased member of the Hone Club, the memory of whose virtues, by all who knew him well, is fondly cher-

ished. The mention of his name brings back to the mind's eye his manly form and kindly greetings. Without disparagement to others, for there are many to whom the appellation belongs, John Ward was the "honest broker." His dinners, like himself, were unostentatious, but bountiful, served simply, but in order. His ample joint of beef, like his well-fed turkey, was roasted to a turn, while his rotund Princess Bay oysters were unimpeachably fried. His sherry and champagne and madeira (for he seldom introduced "thin potatoes") were of the best. The hearty manner, the quiet but cheerful conversation, the radiant countenance and beaming eyes of our host, had a cheery effect upon his guests. I am quite sure that no man ever rose from his table without feeling that the occasion had been alike pleasant and profitable.

Simeon Draper, a prominent member of the Hone Club, then resided at No. 10 Warren Street. Though politically, personally, and socially identified with Mr. Ward, yet in manner no two men could be less alike. Mr. Draper was impulsive and demonstrative. With the advantages of a fine person, good conversational powers, and ready wit, his genial presence and cheerful voice imparted life and spirit to the numerous social circles in which he was ever a welcome guest. But it was not at club dinners, nor at the dinners of his numerous friends, that Mr. Draper appeared at his best. It was at the head of his own table, surrounded by his estimable family and a few chosen friends, that "Richard was himself." On these occasions his cheerfulness and humor seasoned the dishes and flavored the wines. Next to the luxury of eating a canvas-back duck, was that of seeing one gracefully carved by Mr. Draper.

Roswell L. Colt resided in Park Place. He was a widely known, highly enterprising, and universally respected merchant and manufacturer. In 1808 or 1809 two New England boys [George Peabody and R. L. Colt], the former from Massachusetts and the latter from Connecticut, with a fair common-school education, struck out, as was then the habit of New England boys, into the world, to make their fortunes. One became the clerk of Elisha Riggs, of Georgetown, D. C., and the other of Mr. Oliver, of Baltimore. Toward the close of the War of 1812, Mr. Oliver sent young Colt to Europe to purchase depreciated American securities and to lay in a large stock of goods for shipment by the first vessels that should leave England upon the restoration of peace. These trusts were so successfully executed that Mr. Oliver not only took young Colt into partnership, but gave him his daughter in marriage; and finally, when Mr. Oliver died, Mr. Colt conceived himself to be eminently fortune's favorite, for he inherited the well-chosen varieties of old madeiras, protected by dust and cobwebs in the wine-vault of his father-in-law.

No man enjoyed social life with a keener relish than Roswell L. Colt. His dinners in Park Place, and visits at his splendid mansion in Paterson, N. J., by members of the Hone Club and numerous other friends, are among the last things to be forgotten, — dinners and visits which were frequent during the whole of Mr. Colt's life-time. I remember, on one occasion, to have been present together with Mr. Hone, Mr. Grinnell, Mr. Blatchford, General Bowen, General Webb, Edward Curtis, Charles King, Governor Seward, and others, at a dinner given by Mr. Colt to ex-President John Quincy Adams. Madeira wines had not then gone out of fashion. Indeed, except a glass of hock with oysters on the half-shell, a glass of sherry after soup, and champagne with meats, madeira was the staple during and after desert. Gentlemen who on these occasions passed the largest number of approved brands, such as "Essex, Jr.," "Donna Gama," "Bingham," "Rapid," "Reserve," "Farquhar," "Benefactor," "Butler," "March and Benson of 1809," "Black Cork," etc., etc., excited the admiration, if not the envy, of their neighbors. At this dinner, Mr. Colt, after the cloth had been removed, produced fourteen different kinds of delicious old madeiras, and the circumstance which occasioned general surprise was that the peculiarly delicate taste of Mr. Adams enabled him to name eleven of these wines, as unannounced they passed around the table! . . .

During the interval of twenty years since the subsidence of the Kent and Hone Clubs, I have seen much of social life in its best aspects, both at home and abroad. I have enjoyed the hospitalities of the best and most distinguished families in London, Paris, Brussels, Rome, and elsewhere, without finding either higher intelligence or more refinement than characterized those associations. Indeed, I have no memory of equal intellectual enjoyment, except at dinners at Cruttenden's, in Albany, when most of the members of the Kent Club, together with Elisha Williams, Thomas J. Oakley, Judge Van Ness, Francis Granger, John Greig, Myron and Orville L. Holley, Alderman Brasher, Charles L. Livingston, Peter R. Livingston, Robert Tillotson, John Suydam, and others were present, Mr. Cruttenden himself, the prince of hosts, presiding.

Perhaps I ought also to except the dinners of Mr. Joseph Gales at Washington, who, in his palmy days, drew around his hospitable table the intellectual giants and jewels of the Republic. At those dinners, from 1824 and the several ensuing years, although Webster and Clay, and Marshall and Southard, and Everett and Mangum, and Granger and Seaton, were present, all felt that the dinner and the wines, rich and delicate as they were, lacked something of their inspiration, if by chance the seat of Matthew St. Clair Clarke was vacant.



Mr. Weed was enjoying the hospitality of his friend, Mr. Seward, in August, 1872, when notified that he had been elected a delegate to the Republican state convention about to assemble at Utica. Forgetting the infirmities of age and the commands of physicians, he telegraphed to New York, thanking his district for the honor conferred, and saying that he would serve in the capacity suggested.

1872. — The Republican state convention was held at Utica on the 21st of August. William H. Robertson, of Westchester County, was the leading candidate for Governor. An able man, experienced, conservative, and popular, it was generally conceded that he was certain to be nominated. “Unless something unthought of turns up,” telegraphed George Dawson on the morning of the convention, “Robertson will be the candidate.” So everybody thought. So strong, indeed, were the influences combined in his favor, that discussion related chiefly to the second place on the ticket, and to electors-at-large; for this, it will be remembered, was the presidential year in which Governor Fenton, who supported Mr. Greeley, predicted that New York would defeat the Republican ticket by 50,000 majority.

Mr. Weed reached Utica the day before the convention met. It was natural that his opinion should be sought by a large number of delegates from all parts of the State. “Highly as I esteem Judge Robertson,” he said, “I do not think he ought to be nominated.” When asked whom he did favor he said, “Any man who will unite the party. Why not John A. Dix?”

But Judge Robertson’s friends were able to figure up an easy majority, and were not disconcerted by the opposition of Mr. Weed. The Judge himself, in the best of spirits, left Utica at four o’clock in the afternoon. Before he reached Little Falls General Dix was nominated.

“From the outbreak of the Rebellion,” writes Mr. Weed, “I knew no party, nor did I care for any, except the party of the Union. Soon after reaching Utica I saw that Judge Robertson, though other candidates were named, would probably be nominated. He had always been my personal and political friend, and, under any other circumstances, I should have warmly urged his nomination. General Dix, when there was danger that the city of Washington would fall into the hands of the rebels, severed his relations with the Democratic administration, and in

concert with Secretary Holt, Mr. Stanton, and Mr. Seward, gave information and rendered services which saved the nation's capital. A few weeks afterwards, when in command of Fort McHenry, by a prompt movement against a treasonable design of members of the legislature, he prevented Maryland from joining the Secessionists. I believed that his nomination and election would unite, invigorate, and strengthen the Union cause, and for this reason I did what I have done on other occasions, sacrificed a friend to promote the general welfare."

There is no reason to doubt [writes the Rev. Morgan Dix,<sup>1</sup>] that among the persons chiefly interested in bringing about this result [General Dix's nomination] was Mr. Weed, and the nomination was due, in part, to his influence in the Republican party. And I deem this a striking episode in my father's history, — that two men who entered politics about the same time as antagonists, and remained in opposition to each other during the greater part of their lives, should yet have become fast friends at the last, standing shoulder to shoulder on a national platform. Such changes are not uncommon where men of pure conscience and strong convictions prefer principles to names, and find each other out through their common sympathy for whatever is held by both to be the right and the true.

Nor was that the only good thing which he inspired [writes George Dawson, referring to Mr. Weed's connection with the Dix nomination]. Some of us were anxious to put Mr. Weed at the head of the list of electors-at-large, but, knowing that, if consulted on the subject, he would promptly decline, we decided to do it "on the sly." Shortly before the convention reached that order of business, however, a delegate dropped into Mr. Weed's room and let out the secret. Mr. Weed immediately sent for several influential delegates, who, he well knew, must be at the bottom of the plan, to whom he said, "This is very kind of you, and I appreciate the honor so highly, that, if I do not suggest a better name, I will consent to leave the convention to do as it pleases." His friends admitted that this was fair, but expressed doubts whether any name could be so acceptable. Mr. Weed replied that he felt sure that they would cordially approve of that which he was about to suggest, adding that, in his judgment, the best name to be associated with Gerrit Smith as elector-at-large, was that of Frederick Douglass. This suggestion was received with great satisfaction, and was responded to by acclamation in the convention. The nominations of Dix for Governor and of Douglass for presiden-

<sup>1</sup> In his *Memoirs of John A. Dix*, vol. ii, p. 175.

tial elector, possessed national significance. Dix had struck the first high, clear-ringing note for the Union in his order to shoot the first man who attempted to haul down the American flag. Douglass possessed not only the courage to emancipate himself from slavery, but the intelligence to raise himself to intellectual equality with the most gifted of our race. He had fairly earned the distinction which his nomination conferred, and such a recognition of an enlightened freedman appealed forcibly to colored voters in all parts of the United States.

Except in the year 1852, when he was in Europe, Mr. Weed up to this time had always been actively interested in the national conventions of his party. In 1872, when General Grant was renominated, the régime of former days was not without representation at the Republican convention, but Mr. Weed was not present. Several of his old friends — A. Carter Wilder, Pierre C. Van Wyck, and others — were among the delegates from New York, but those delegates now began to represent new political predilections and personalities.

Although he had favored General Grant's nomination in 1868, Mr. Weed was emphatically opposed to renominating that distinguished gentleman. At one time, in 1872, he hoped that he might aid a third member of the Adams family in reaching the presidency. It was believed that the opposition to General Grant, discreetly guided, would prove irresistible, and the name of Charles Francis Adams came prominently forward as that of a candidate in whose support the anti-Grant vote might be easily united. Several weeks before it was time to take definite steps, Mr. Adams went to New York to embark for Europe. In familiar conversation with him the night before he sailed, Mr. Weed intimated that he would in all probability hear of his nomination for the presidency soon after his arrival in England. "If such a nomination is contemplated," Mr. Adams replied, "my letter, to be published to-morrow morning, will render it impossible." The event proved the accuracy of Mr. Adams's remark. It became necessary at once to abandon all thoughts of his nomination.

Afterwards, when Mr. Greeley secured the leadership of the forces opposed to General Grant, there was for several weeks every reason to believe that he would have a great majority; just as it was thought, in July and August, 1880, that General Hancock would defeat his Republican competitor.

When Mr. Greeley was a candidate for Governor or Lieutenant-Governor, in 1854, and for United States Senator, in 1861, Mr. Weed withheld his support, for reasons which have been explained in the course of this narrative. It remains to explain why support was withheld when Mr. Greeley was a candidate for State Comptroller, in 1869; a candidate for Member of Congress in 1870; and the Democratic candidate for President in 1872.

[MR. WEED TO THOMAS C. ACTON.]

NEW YORK, *October 10, 1870.*

DEAR SIR, — A year ago, when you made an earnest appeal for my vote in favor of Mr. Greeley, then a candidate for State Comptroller, you urged, very properly, assuming that I had personal grounds for refusing him support, that these should yield to public considerations. I readily acquiesced in that view of the question, and resolved to govern my action in accordance with it. I examined calmly the relative qualifications of the two candidates. Mr. Greeley had been educated a printer, and had devoted himself exclusively to his profession. He had, therefore, no knowledge or experience in respect to the duties of the office of Comptroller. Nor were his talents, his habits, or his tastes adapted to financial duties. The idea that the editor of a leading daily journal could so divide his time between New York and Albany as to discharge the duties of Comptroller in addition to those of editor seemed to me preposterous.

The office of Comptroller is most laborious and responsible. I have known its incumbents for considerably more than half a century. Among them were Archibald McIntyre, John Savage, William L. Marcy, Silas Wright, Jr., Azariah C. Flagg, John A. Collier, Millard Fillmore, Washington Hunt, Philo C. Fuller, James M. Cook, Thomas Hillhouse, and others distinguished for ability and industry, not one of whom ever attempted to attend to any other business, and all of whom found constant and full occupation, physical and mental, in the discharge of their public duties. Without regard to other reasons for withholding my vote for Mr. Greeley, I considered those which I have stated sufficient.

In his opponent, William F. Allen, I found a capable and enlightened man, with some experience, much industry, and peculiar fitness for the duties of that office. I had known him first as an able and useful member of our legislature, and next as an eminently upright Judge. My only difficulty, therefore, in deciding to vote for Mr. Allen was that he was a Democrat and a nominee of the Democratic party.

But this objection was obviated in my mind by the fact — a fact well known to both political parties — that from the beginning of the Rebellion in 1861, to the end of the war in 1865, Judge Allen was an avowed, earnest, active, war Democrat, and this rendered it easy to support him, as I did, for Comptroller. . . .

Mr. Greeley now turns up as a candidate for Congress from the district in which I reside. You urge me again to vote for him, and I have taken the subject into calm and serious consideration. Lifting my thoughts above all things merely personal, I have endeavored to ascertain whether Mr. Greeley, upon public grounds, is entitled to my vote. Having reached the conclusion that I cannot vote for Mr. Greeley, I will give you my reasons which, in my judgment, constitute a perfect justification.

For several months before the Rebellion, while that question was rife in the Southern States, Mr. Greeley was an avowed, earnest, and persistent Secessionist. As the editor of a leading and widely-circulating Republican journal, he exerted an influence at once powerful and malign. Indeed, but for that influence it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to have withdrawn North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia from the Union. To show you that I do not state this point too strongly, let me refresh your memory with editorial extracts from his newspaper: —

[From the "Tribune" of November 9, 1860.]

If the cotton states shall become satisfied that they can do better out of the Union than in it, we insist on letting them go in peace. The right to secede may be a revolutionary one, but it exists nevertheless. When any considerable section of our Union shall deliberately resolve to go out, we shall resist all coercive measures designed to keep it in. We hope never to live in a Republic where one section is pinned to the other by bayonets.

[From the "Tribune" of November 26, 1860.]

If the cotton states unitedly and earnestly wish to withdraw peacefully from the Union, we think they should and would be allowed to go. Any attempt to compel them by force to remain would be contrary to the principles enunciated in the immortal Declaration of Independence, contrary to the fundamental ideas on which human liberty is based.

[From the "Tribune" of December 17, 1860.]

If [the Declaration of Independence] justified the secession from the British Empire of three millions of colonists in 1776, we do not see why it would not justify the secession of five millions of Southrons from the Union in 1861.

[From the "Tribune" of February 23, 1861.]

Whenever it shall be clear that the great body of the southern people have become conclusively alienated from the Union, and anxious to escape from it, we will do our best to forward their views.

Such was the language of Mr. Greeley, and such the teachings of the "Tribune" during the autumn and winter of 1860-1861, while secession and rebellion were at work in severing the Union, and while states like stars were dropping out of their orbits. A Governor of South Carolina in urging that state to inaugurate treason informed his hearers that the New York "Tribune" had openly declared that the Southern States had as clear a right to rebel against the federal government as the thirteen states in 1776 had to rebel against the government of George the Third, adding that, "in this emergency our worst enemies have become our best friends."

The State of Georgia held out long and manfully against the traitors in its legislature who advocated the ordinance of secession, but finally and reluctantly broke from its moorings when Robert Toombs, in one of his vehement speeches, produced and read from the New York "Tribune," the articles from which I have taken brief extracts. You will see, therefore, that Mr. Greeley invited and encouraged the Southern States to go out of the Union; that he promised them aid and comfort; and that he denied the right of the federal government to interfere. Why, then, is he not, up to the breaking out of the war, as obnoxious a Secessionist as Jefferson Davis, James M. Mason, or John Slidell? Indeed, if there be any difference, Davis, Mason, and Slidell occupy vantage ground, for Mr. Greeley has not the excuse of being a Southern man.

When the war began, Mr. Greeley arrogantly assumed the right to dictate a policy for the administration and to command the army. Long before the President, Secretary of War, or the Commander-in-Chief of the army deemed it prudent to make a forward movement, Mr. Greeley issued and reiterated in the "Tribune" his well-remembered and ominous order of "On to Richmond." And such was its power over the minds of an impulsive people and an impatient Congress that, wholly unprepared as we were, our army was prematurely forced into a disastrous battle. For that cruel slaughter of our undisciplined troops, and for that humiliation to our government and people, Mr. Greeley, in a remorseful moment, confessed himself "greatly to blame."

Subsequently, during the darkest days of the Rebellion, and especially when our armies were defeated, or at bay, the "Tribune" either howled for peace, or teemed with denunciations against the President or commanders of the Union army. In the gloomy autumn of 1862, Mr. Greeley headed a raid upon the President in favor of an Abolition Cabinet. Wendell Phillips, who was brought to New York to further that movement, made the leading speech. After expressing his belief that "Lincoln himself is as honest as a man born in Kentucky can be,"

he said: "But I have no confidence in the counsels about him. I have no confidence in the views of your son of New York, who stands at his right hand to guide the vessel of state in this tremendous storm." In the same speech Mr. Phillips said, that in "December 1860, James Buchanan wrote a message to Congress which he submitted to William H. Seward, and from that time to the 4th of March, 1861, no fortnight passed that he did not consult your New York Senator in regard to the policy of the government. . . . If the history of the closing months [of Buchanan's administration] is written over with treason, I say that the Secretary of State has his share of the responsibility."

Mr. Greeley, who knew that this charge of treason against Mr. Seward was utterly untrue, made himself tacitly responsible for the calumny by following his leader with a brief speech, so icy as to dishearten all the timid, and awaken the indignation of all earnest friends of the Union. In the speech referred to he said: "Fellow citizens: when this struggle commenced, I think I was not as gay and as sanguine as some of you were. I did not believe if we had a civil war at all, it could be a little war. I did believe, and I believe now, it might have been made a little war by striking so soon, and striking so strongly, that it would not have been a civil war at all. We are now in the midst of this war. I do not see the immediate result of the war. I am not sanguine that, under the leaders we have, the management we have, an immediate triumph is at all certain. We may have that; we are more likely not to have that."

Returning to the "Tribune" office from Cooper Institute, where Messrs. Phillips and Greeley were delivered of speeches, Mr. Greeley complacently issued the following comprehensive edict: —

1. Reorganize the Cabinet, and compose it of seven of the ablest and most loyal men in the whole country, — men who thoroughly believe in the war, and who do not believe that loyal Americans ought to be treated as chattels.

2. Dismiss from the service every officer who persists in caviling at, and exciting hostilities to the policy of the government.

3. Stop the coast survey, and shut up the West Point Academy.

4. Call out the uniformed militia of the loyal states for three months, and employ them to garrison Washington, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Louisville.

Such are our notions of the war. We cannot doubt that our soldiers will speedily put down the Rebellion, if our generals will but let them.

During the progress of the war none were more jubilant over our successes than Mr. Greeley; but when reverses came his voice was heard in shrill and discordant demands for peace. At a time when

a series of discouraging defeats had occasioned intense solicitude, when southern traitors and northern Copperheads were rejoicing in the prospect of the destruction of our government, Mr. Greeley, in a double-leaded editorial, said:—

If after sixty days more hard fighting the enemy is not beaten, it will become the duty of the Government to make peace upon the best attainable terms.

Thus encouraged and stimulated by this cowardly demand for peace by the leading Republican journal, the enemy prosecuted the war with renewed confidence and vigor.

Soon afterwards, at the suggestion of W. C. Jewett, Mr. Greeley obtained the President's consent that he might make a peace pilgrimage to Canada, where George N. Sanders and other traitors were hatching conspiracies and raids. With these congenial spirits he was so much pleased that he reproached Mr. Lincoln for not confiding to him the power of making "peace upon the best attainable terms." And the conspirators were so charmed with Mr. Greeley that one of them [Clement Clay] drew up a call for a public meeting in the city of New York, commending Mr. Greeley for his patriotic and laudable efforts to negotiate a peace. That call was sent to New York by G. W. McLean, but fell into the hands of Richard Schell, a loyal Democrat, who "took the responsibility" of suppressing it.

Jewett's letter to Mr. Greeley ran as follows:—

NIAGARA FALLS, *July 5, 1864.*

MY DEAR MR. GREELEY, — In reply to your note I have to advise, having just left Hon. George N. Sanders, of Kentucky, on the Canada side, I am authorized to state to you, for our use only—not the public—that the ambassadors of Davis & Co. are now in Canada with full and complete powers for a peace. And Mr. Sanders requests that you come on immediately to me at the Cataract House, to have a private interview, or if you will send the President's protection for him and two friends, they will come on and meet you. He says the whole matter can be consummated by me, you, them, and President Lincoln.

Yours, W. C. JEWETT.

With no other or better reason or authority than this letter Mr. Greeley immediately assumed the language and authority of a diplomatist, and wrote a long, suggestive letter to the President, of which the following is an extract:—

NEW YORK, *July 7, 1864.*

I venture to inclose to you a letter and telegraphic dispatch which I received yesterday from our irrepressible friend, Colorado Jewett, at Niagara



Falls: I think they deserve attention, as evidencing the anxiety of the Confederates everywhere for peace, and therefore I venture to remind you that our bleeding, bankrupt, almost dying country, which longs for peace, shudders at the prospect of fresh conscriptions, of further wholesale devastations, and of new rivers of human blood; and a wide-spread conviction that the government and its prominent supporters are not anxious for peace, and do not improve proffered opportunities to achieve it, is doing great harm now, etc., etc.

Do not, I entreat you, fail to make the southern people comprehend that you and all of us are anxious for peace, and prepared to grant liberal terms.

Mr. President, I fear that you do not realize how intently the people desire any peace, consistent with the national integrity and honor, and how joyfully they would hail its achievement and bless its authors.

Accompanying this letter was Mr. Greeley's plan of adjustment, in which he proposed to pay four hundred million dollars, which sum was to be apportioned *pro rata* among the Slave States, and placed at the absolute disposal of their respective legislatures. In a subsequent letter, Mr. Greeley informed the President that Clement Clay, of Alabama, and Jacob Thompson, of Mississippi, were the peace commissioners referred to. Before the bubble burst, the following letter was received from Sanders:—

CLIFTON HOUSE, NIAGARA FALLS, C. W., July 12, 1864.

DEAR SIR,—I am authorized to say that the Hon. Clement C. Clay, of Alabama; Professor James P. Holcombe, of Virginia; and George N. Sanders, of Dixie, are ready and willing to go at once to Washington, upon complete and unqualified protection being given either by the President or Secretary of War. Let the permission include the three names and one other.

Very respectfully,

GEORGE N. SANDERS.

HON. HORACE GREELEY.

To Mr. Greeley's importunities Mr. Lincoln finally yielded, and in a letter to Mr. Greeley said:—

If you can find any person, anywhere, professing to have any proposition of Jefferson Davis in writing for peace, embracing the restoration of the Union and the abandonment of slavery, say to him, he may come to me with you, and that he shall have safe conduct to the point where you shall have met him; the same if there be two or more persons.

That, however, did not satisfy Mr. Greeley, who required something more definite, and Mr. Lincoln, after another letter, in which he said, "I not only intend a sincere effort for peace, but I intend that you shall be a personal witness that it is made," sent his secretary to New York, with an authority to guarantee the safety of Mr. Greeley's Confederate friends in their proposed journey to Washington. In accord-

ance with that authority, Mr. Greeley departed for Canada with the following order in his pocket:—

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, D. C.

The President of the United States directs that the four persons whose names follow, *i. e.*, the Hon. Clement C. Clay, the Hon. Jacob Thompson, Prof. James B. Holcombe, and George N. Sanders, shall have safe conduct to the city of Washington, in company with the Hon. Horace Greeley, and shall be exempt from arrest and annoyance of any kind from any officer of the United States during their journey to the said city of Washington.

BY ORDER OF THE PRESIDENT.

JOHN HAY, Major and A. A. G.

On his arrival in Canada, Mr. Greeley despatched Colorado Jewett with a letter to the Confederates, informing them that he had an order from the President guaranteeing their protection, and inviting them to accompany him to Washington, whereupon the mountain proved to be a mole hill.

To Mr. Greeley's letter inclosing the President's protection Messrs. Clay and Holcombe replied; expressing their "regret that the safe conduct of the President of the United States has been tendered us under some misapprehension of facts. We are not accredited to him from Richmond as bearers of propositions looking to the establishment of peace; but we feel authorized to declare that, if the circumstances disclosed in this correspondence were communicated to Richmond, we would be at once invested with the authority to which your letter refers. We respectfully solicit, through your intervention, a safe conduct to Washington, and thence, by any route which may be designated, through your lines to Richmond. We would be gratified if Mr. George Sanders was embraced in this privilege."

Any other man but Mr. Greeley, on finding himself thus duped and trifled with, would have thrown up the diplomatic sponge. But Mr. Greeley sent a telegram to the President, admitting that he did not find the gentlemen referred to so empowered as he was previously assured, and forwarding their request for the President's safe conduct to Richmond.

To this telegram the President responded as follows:—

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, *July 18, 1864.*

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

Any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery, and which comes by, and with an authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States, will be received and considered by the Executive Government of the

United States, and will be met by liberal terms on substantial and collateral points, and the bearer or bearers thereof shall have safe conduct both ways.

(Signed)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

To this offer of the President the Confederate agents replied in a long letter to Mr. Greeley, from which the following is an extract:—

If there is any citizen of the Confederate States who has clung to a hope that peace was possible with this administration of the federal government, it will strip from their eyes the last film of such a delusion; or if there be any whose hearts have grown faint under the suffering and agony of this bloody struggle, it will inspire them with fresh energy to endure and bear whatever may be requisite to preserve to themselves and children all that gives dignity and value to life, or hope or consolation to death. And if there be any patriots or Christians in your land who shrink appalled from the illimitable vista of private misery and public calamity which stretches before them, we pray that in their bosoms a resolution will be quickened to recall the abused authority and vindicate the outraged civilization of their country.

And here, for the time being, ended Mr. Greeley's miserable negotiations for peace. He left Canada, however, with friendly feelings for conspirators whose last letter to him expressed the hope that our people would "recall" the "authority" which President Lincoln had "abused," and we have George Sanders' authority for saying that Mr. Greeley expressed his regret that President Lincoln's conduct had not been that of a gentleman. Sanders is not a witness on whose veracity I should rely; but it is well known that Mr. Greeley was highly exasperated with the President.

Before Mr. Lincoln had been renominated in 1864 by the national Republican convention, Mr. Greeley led a movement in favor of a radical convention at Cleveland, Ohio, for the purpose of nominating a rival Republican candidate. He wrote letters to Republicans in New England, urging them to join in this movement, — a movement which could have no other effect than to surrender the government of the Union into the hands of its enemies. . . . When the war was finally over; when a peace had been achieved, — not by the cowardly croakings of the "Tribune" nor the officious or ill-omened negotiations of Messrs. Greeley and Blair, but by the gallantry of Grant, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, and Farragut, and the courage and fidelity of the soldiers and sailors under their command, — Mr. Greeley, faithful to his promise to those whom he had inveigled into secession, rushed to Richmond for the purpose of releasing Jefferson Davis from imprisonment. Simultaneously he proclaimed universal amnesty for rebels, including those who had conspired to burn New York, to introduce

contagion into our cities, and to assassinate the President! He then wrote to Mr. Breckenridge and other traitors, inviting them to return to a country which they had deluged in blood, and to enjoy the protection of a government which they had endeavored to destroy.

This is a truthful record of Mr. Greeley's sentiments, sympathies, and actions on the questions of secession, rebellion, and war. . . . For how many millions of treasure and how many thousands of lives he is responsible, I will not undertake to say. But I will say that, while these undeniable facts are fresh in my memory, he will not receive my vote.

And now, after a few words in relation to his fitness for legislative duties, I will bring this long letter to a close. The act of our legislature authorizing the call of a convention to amend our Constitution contained a provision which secured the election of thirty delegates by a practically unanimous vote.<sup>1</sup> Its object was to secure the services of fifteen of the ablest and most experienced men in either of the two great political parties of our State. Mr. Greeley engineered the Republican state convention, and, although urged to place on the ticket such men as Hamilton Fish, Francis Granger, George W. Patterson, Alexander S. Johnson, John K. Porter, Charles P. Kirkland, Edward Dodd, John A. Kennedy, or Richard P. Marvin (several of whom had been enlightened members of the third constitutional convention), he refused to do so, preferring as colleagues, for the most part, a very different class of men. In conversation he had often expressed a desire to be a delegate to such a convention, believing, as he said, that his services would be useful to the people. In the late convention there was a decided majority of Republicans. Mr. Greeley, therefore, found himself with congenial associations and surroundings; but the first few days disclosed the fact that he was out of his element. . . . Long before the convention brought its labors to a close, he gathered up his effects, and, pronouncing an unclerical benediction upon his colleagues, left the Capitol. The result was, that, instead of framing a wise and beneficent constitution, so much needed by the changed condition and circumstances of our people, several months were lost in profitless debates, resulting finally in the production of an instrument that was rejected by the electors. That failure added nearly half a million of dollars to our state debt.

In view of these facts, you will not, I feel assured, complain of my second refusal to support Mr. Greeley. My congressional vote will be given to James W. Booth, who, though not a candidate, is a Republican of unquestioned patriotism.

Very truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the constitutional convention of 1867-1868.

At the election in the fall of 1872, General Dix received 445,801 as the Republican candidate for Governor, against 392,350 cast for Francis Kernan.

Mr. Greeley lost strength constantly from the day of his nomination until the polls closed. He was defeated by General Grant, and died before the meeting of the Electoral College.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

1873-1875.

RESUMPTION OF SPECIE PAYMENTS. — GAMBLING IN GOLD AND GRAIN. — THE "EIGHT HOUR LAW." — DEGENERATION AT WASHINGTON. — AN ALARMING SIGN OF THE TIMES. — GOVERNOR DIX TO MR. WEED. — THE INEFFICIENCY OF CONGRESS. — ELECTIONS OF 1874. — CAUSES OF THE REPUBLICAN REVERSE. — MR. WEED TO GOVERNOR DIX. — A POLITICAL RÉSUMÉ.

IT is the privilege, or at any rate the practice, of old men to lament and condemn modern political incapacity and mismanagement. Nor is the fact that they do cause for complaint or wonder. Saying nothing of certain vast blunders since the year 1860, was there no provocation for indignant censure in the series of events which culminated in the disastrous financial convulsions of 1873?

"Without impeaching the motives or intentions of leading representatives in Congress at the close of the Rebellion," wrote Mr. Weed in the year last named, "I confidently assume that they signally failed to render the service which the emergency demanded. It is enough to refer to the failure to consolidate the national debt, and to reduce the rate of interest from six to five per cent. This, had the question been wisely matured, might have been accomplished, thus relieving the people from one sixth part of their annual burden. . . .

"The government and people are losing a golden opportunity. Both should insist peremptorily upon resumption of specie payments. The obstacles which stand in the way of this consummation would be brushed aside by a vigorous movement. Sustained by the people and the press, the government would encounter less difficulty than is apprehended. . . . Resumption is hindered by the artificial rather than by the intrinsic value of gold. If, as in apostolic days, the tables of the money-changers could be upset, our eyes and hearts would soon be brightened and gladdened by the reappearance of specie.

“If, as was generally conceded, the temporary closing of the Stock Exchange was a relief, would not the abolition or demolition of the Gold Exchange be a positive blessing? Indeed, it is almost certain that if the purchase and sale of gold ‘on time’ could be prohibited for ninety days, resumption, without other aid, would be an accomplished fact. The causes which retard our returning to specie payments are just as patent as those which occasion existing financial derangements, — derangements wholly unnecessary, so far as the general business of the country is concerned. Our agricultural and commercial circumstances and conditions were never more prosperous. The evils from which we are now suffering are the legitimate fruits of gambling, — gambling in its worst forms and aspects, because while faro bank gambling injures only those who put down their money, Wall and Broad street gamblers rob and ruin thousands who suppose their earnings advantageously invested or safely deposited. In other words, half a dozen individuals, whom I could name as leading gamblers in Wall and Broad streets, do vastly more public harm, and are more rapacious and profligate men, than the same number of reputed gamblers doing business in the vicinity of the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

“In some emergencies vigilance committees have been found to be not only a necessity but a salutary remedy for universal and overwhelming crimes and vices. The highest and most beneficent expressions of justice have occasionally been revealed in an unwritten code familiarly known as lynch law. If the chief gamblers who occasioned the gold panic of 1869, and the North West ‘corner’ of 1872, together with the usurers who brought about a state of things which enabled them to loan money at one per cent. a day, had been suspended by the neck in the streets which they desecrate, the city would now be exempt from present and prospective sufferings.

“The future of our country is by no means unclouded. There are specks on its horizon bigger than a man’s hand. Generations of idlers grow up to consume what their fathers produced. Agriculture and the mechanic arts are neglected. The practical industries of the country languish. Without emigration we should be unable to cultivate the soil or supply our manufacturing establishments and workshops. Parents no longer charge themselves with the duty of preparing their sons by precept and

example for lives of industry and usefulness. Hence we have an army of young men seeking a precarious subsistence in offices or clerkships, ending sooner or later in destitution and suffering. . . . The amount of gold annually expended abroad is computed at over one hundred millions, every dollar of which is practically sunk, for even the passage-money goes into the pockets of Europeans, for the support of foreign, to the exclusion of American commerce. . . . The moral of all this is that our country has grown too rich. Nations, like individuals, are most happy and virtuous while by industry and frugality they are making their fortunes. It requires great wisdom and thoughtfulness, therefore, on the part of the government, the press, and those who mould opinion, to guide and guard the people against the fatal consequences of idleness and luxury.

“There is a significance in the proceedings at Cooper Institute which should not be lost upon considerate and reflecting minds. There is no element among us so pregnant with mischief and evil as the doctrines taught by ‘internationals’ or ‘communists.’ That spirit crops out in the proceedings of those who call themselves ‘workingmen,’ a class which labors most diligently and assiduously to obtain the largest amount of money for the smallest pretense of work. Unhappily, the legislature was induced to pass an eight-hour law, which not only lends the sanction of authority to idlers, but affords them abundant leisure to extend their pernicious organizations. Among the most injurious effects of trades-unions is the restriction imposed upon master-mechanics in regard to apprentices. Thousands of boys who formerly learned trades by means of which they became useful citizens are now denied that privilege by the despotism of unions, a power unknown to our government and hostile to its principles. In a few years, if this alarming evil is not reformed, we shall have no American artisans or mechanics. I earnestly hope that there will be wisdom and firmness enough in the next legislature to repeal the eight-hour law, and to declare illegal all combinations to limit, restrict, restrain, or embarrass master mechanics from receiving as many apprentices as may be required for the successful carrying forward of the various industries of the country.

“I cannot reason or persuade myself out of the conviction that changes in reference to public affairs have not been in the



right direction. The class of public men by which our government and institutions were inaugurated, and those who for the thirty or forty years immediately succeeding occupied the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the government, gave their thoughts and their time to the enactment and execution of laws calculated to promote the general welfare. Those men have passed away. And where are their successors? Where are we to look now for the wisdom which inspired Congress in the earlier and better days of the Republic? To say nothing of the more distinguished men whose names are familiar to every household, where shall we look for successors to John Sargent, of Pennsylvania, Elisha Whittlesey and Samuel F. Vinton, of Ohio, Truman Smith, of Connecticut, John Davis, of Massachusetts, Gulian C. Verplanck and Victory Birdseye, of New York? . . . Statesmanship in Congress is now so low that it will take many years to build it up to a higher tone. Probably the most influential man in Congress to-day is Benjamin F. Butler, — as he is the worst. Massachusetts never served the country so badly as when she sent General Butler to Congress. . It is an alarming sign of the times that a man of his astuteness thinks that the course he chooses to adopt is one which will give him a large following.”

[GOVERNOR DIX TO MR. WEED.]

ALBANY, *January 9, 1874.*

DEAR MR. WEED, — I cannot tell you how gratified and flattered I am by your commendation of my message. I can sincerely say that there is no quarter from which such a testimonial would be more gratefully received. . . .

I think it would be the gravest of political errors to treat the Liberals with coldness, or to repel them if they desire to unite with their old associates; but I have had no communication with any of them, politically, since 1872.

*March 30, 1874.*

I have taken a step, in the favorable result of which I have not much confidence, to save the country and the Republican party from a disastrous reverse. I inclose you a copy of a letter which goes by mail to-day to the President . . . to induce him to resist any further inflation of the currency.

Yours ever, JOHN A. DIX.

[MR. WEED TO THE SPEAKER OF THE NEW YORK ASSEMBLY.]

NEW YORK, *February 6, 1874.*

SIR, — The resolutions offered by the Hon. Mr. Batcheller, and adopted by the Assembly, tendering to me the privileges of the floor of the House, an engrossed copy of which resolutions you, in company with the clerk, had the kindness personally to present, impress me with a deep but pleasant sense of the honor they confer. I am still more profoundly impressed with a sense of Divine favor in being among the very few members elected to the legislature in 1824 spared to become the recipient of such flattering recognition by the legislature of 1874.

Of the members of that Assembly, so far as I am informed, there are beside myself but three survivors. The Hon. James D. Mott, a highly respected citizen of Seneca County, although upon the shady side of eighty, is in the enjoyment of mental and physical health. The Hon. James R. Lawrence, an eminent member of the Onondaga bar, who is also past his eightieth year, though as blind as Belisarius, enjoys good health, and is passing the evening of life cheerfully. The legislative experience of the other survivor, Mr. Quackenboss, was exceptional, he having at different periods represented four different constituencies. He was elected to the Assembly from Delaware County in 1824, from Greene County in 1829, and from New York in 1835, and to the Senate from the Third District in 1830.

The election of 1824 brought several young men of much ability and promise into public life. In their subsequent history their aspirations were largely realized. Samuel Stevens, of Washington County, removed to Albany and devoted himself to his profession with distinguished success. Robert Monell, of Chenango, became successively a member of Congress and Circuit Judge. Ambrose L. Jordan, of Columbia, was elected to the Senate from the Third District in 1825, and chosen Attorney-General in 1846, after which he removed to the city of New York. He attained the first rank at the bar of the metropolis. Of the high executive and judicial officers of 1824, the Hon. Enos T. Throop, now in his ninety-first year, is the only survivor.

In one respect I have been privileged probably beyond any citizen of the State. While a member of the Assembly of 1830, the Albany "Evening Journal" was established, and from that time until 1862 I was personally acquainted with each and every member. Your resolution, therefore, opens a long vista for reflection. In the seats which you now occupy, so familiar to my memory, I see and hear in my imagination forms and voices once elastic and eloquent, but now formless and silent.

Prominent among the legislative statesmen to whom I listened in former days were Elisha Williams, James Tallmadge, James McKown, David B. Ogden, Peter R. Livingston, Ogden Hoffman, Thomas J. Oakley, John C. Spencer, Elisha W. King, Michael Ulshoeffter, James Mullett, Henry G. Wheaton, Azariah C. Flagg, Francis Granger, George R. Davis, Millard Fillmore, George W. Patterson, George P. Barker, Peter Gansevoort, Silas M. Stillwell, Philo C. Fuller, Samuel B. Ruggles, Francis B. Cutting, Dudley Selden, Charles Livingston, Charles P. Clinch, Michael Hoffman, John A. King, Luther Bradish, Greene C. Bronson, John A. Dix, Preston King, Abijah Mann, Willis Hall, Sanford E. Church, etc., of the Assembly, and Abram Van Vechten, Cadwallader D. Colden, Silas Wright, John Suydam, William H. Maynard, William H. Seward, Albert H. Tracy, Gulian C. Verplanck, Daniel S. Dickinson, Erastus Root, A. B. Dickinson, Samuel Young, James M. Cook, Benjamin D. Silliman, Richard P. Marvin, Samuel Gouverneur, etc., of the Senate.

The remains of one of my colleagues in the Assembly of 1830, the Hon. Aaron Vanderpoel, then of stalwart frame and stentorian voice, now repose under the sod, scarcely twenty feet from the window of my library, where I am now writing. But this letter is unconsciously reaching beyond its appropriate limit. Its purpose was to convey to the members of the House over which you preside my thanks for the honor they have done me, and to express the hope that, after discharging the responsible duties of the session — duties which, in the present financial condition of the State, deeply concern its welfare — in a manner alike useful and creditable to your constituents and yourselves, you may return in health and safety to your homes and your friends.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THURLOW WEED.

Hon. JAMES W. HUSTED, Speaker, etc.

1874. — “The first session of the present Congress,” wrote Mr. Weed, in June, “approaches the day of adjournment, and yet its first duty, the duty paramount to all others, is no nearer being accomplished than it was when the session began. Indeed, the question of resuming specie payments, instead of being advanced, has been retarded. At the opening not merely high hopes, but a confident belief was universally cherished. These hopes and that belief have been disappointed. And yet many will not, cannot, relinquish the idea that Congress will, ere the session closes, discharge a duty which its members cannot fail to regard as indispensable to the honor of the country and the prosperity of the people.

“Other governments, like our own, in prosecuting expensive wars, have been compelled to suspend specie payments, but on the restoration of peace, those governments, in obedience to injunctions of duty and honor, have made it their first business to provide at as early a day as practicable for the payment of their debts in coin, thus restoring their varied industries to the prosperous condition from which they had fallen.

“Congress might have been aided essentially in the discharge of its financial duties by a capable Secretary of the Treasury. The too-long-delayed, but finally auspicious change in the head of that department may even yet encourage and stimulate Congress. Of one thing members may be assured, and that is, if they adjourn leaving the country in the wretched financial condition they found it, the places which know them now will hereafter be unknown to most of them forever. So strong will be the popular feeling against a delinquent Congress that the good will be confounded with the bad.

“The recent publication of the financial views of the President, designed to explain and fortify his veto message, — a message reflecting the highest credit upon his wisdom and courage — is in one respect at fault, and will, I fear, weaken the chances of any wholesome legislation. The President has fallen into a once popular delusion relating to small bank-notes. The attempt to exclude from circulation notes under the denomination of \$5 was tried in this State under circumstances as favorable to the success of the experiment as could possibly exist. Relying then, as now, upon the example of England and France, federal and state administrations demanded a specie currency. Our legislature passed a law prohibiting the issue by our state banks of any note under the denomination of \$5. The result proved not only inconvenient and unsatisfactory to every business interest, but accomplished the signal overthrow of the Democratic party in this State in 1838, and the Union in 1840. What the American people require, and what will best promote their convenience is a mixed currency, consisting of coin and paper, the latter properly restricted and regulated, and convertible at all times and places into gold and silver. Small bills (not fractional) are a positive convenience, while the substitution for them of gold and silver would prove as positive an inconvenience. I will not stop to show why in this respect our

circumstances and conditions place the question of small bills upon a financial basis differing from those which exist in France and England. But I venture to affirm that of the 50,000 Americans traveling in Europe, ninety-nine out of every hundred would prefer notes of the value of \$1, \$2, \$5, and \$10 of the Bank of England to the gold and silver with which they are burdened. If, either by congressional or legislative action, the circulation of small notes were prohibited, the border states from Maine to Wisconsin would be inundated with the small bills of Canadian banks." . . .

At the Republican convention in the fall General Dix was renominated, but his opponent, Mr. Tilden, was elected by a majority nearly as great as that by which the State was carried for General Dix only two years before. After learning of this reverse, a distinguished United States Senator, Mr. Bayard, is said to have remarked that he would now give up trying to understand New York politics.

[GOVERNOR DIX TO MR. WEED.]

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, ALBANY, *November 6, 1874.*

DEAR MR. WEED,—The results of the elections in other states indicate beyond the possibility of misapprehension the true cause. Yet, if reports are true, General Grant does not understand it and is confident of being installed in public confidence in 1876! No doubt commercial depression had its influence; but the chief reason is the feeling of deep-seated dissatisfaction with General Grant's administration.

It is hardly to be expected that party journals will admit the truth; but it is well for us to act upon it and see now whether in the approaching session of Congress we can lay the foundation of a reconstruction of the Republican party.

If General Grant cannot be made to see that the errors of his administration have resulted in this defeat, I suppose there is no alternative but to let everything drift, and trust for our recovery from this heavy blow to the errors of our opponents when they shall come into power. . . .

I am very much amazed at a representation in the number of "Harper's Weekly," which came out yesterday, of the indulgences granted to Tweed by the Commissioners of Charities. While this malefactor, with millions of stolen money in his hands, is permitted to live at ease and to dress like a gentleman, convicts who have appro-

priated a few dollars of other people's money are compelled to wear prison costume and submit to established discipline. It seems to me that this distinction is very disgraceful to all concerned, and I am not sure that it is not my duty to make an inquiry.

Truly yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

[MR. WEED TO JOHN A. DIX.]

NEW YORK, *November 7, 1874.*

DEAR GOVERNOR, — There were many, and I must add sufficient provocations for the overthrow of the federal administration. Unhappily, the Republicans of New York, or rather the Republican administration of New York, amid the storm, could not be heard or regarded. You were really not in the fight. The merits or demerits of your administration were wholly ignored. The strain upon the party on account of incapacity and persistent wrong-doing at Washington was too great to be tolerated. Under wise administration, specie payments would have been resumed, and the industries of the country rendered moderately prosperous.

The record from the beginning of General Grant's second term, with the single exception of his anti-inflation veto, is bad, and his refusal to disclaim the "third term" accusation unendurable.

With common sense and common honesty in the party now triumphant, its full restoration to power in 1876 is assured. But will common sense and common honesty return to men so long bereft of both? We shall see.

I have not seen "Harper's Weekly," and cannot understand why you should be in any way associated with Tweed's indulgences. The matter belongs to the Mayor and his appointees. If, however, what is said and feared proves true, Tweed's condition is not likely to be made harder by the result. A few days before election his friends and money were actively at work for your opponent.

Very truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

The Democratic party began the year 1875 greatly encouraged and strengthened by Governor Tilden's brilliant victory in New York. State officers were to be chosen by Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and Wisconsin in the fall, and it was confidently expected that at these elections emphasis would be added to the verdict of 1874. Nothing was easier than to ascribe the general depression in business to Republican corruption and imbecility. So popular became the demand for a change, that "Tilden and Reform" seemed destined to prove irresistible catch-words in the presidential canvass.

[MR. WEED TO VIVUS W. SMITH.]

NEW YORK, *January 30, 1875.*

DEAR OLD FRIEND, — Harriet read to me yesterday morning your letter to Speaker Blaine, explanatory of the causes which have overthrown the Republican party. I listened to every word with intense interest. It is very able, and in my judgment, for the most part, very wise. I greatly wish that the Republican city journals would republish it, for it could not fail to do much good.

The causes you assign for our last fall's disastrous defeat are quite sufficient for the overthrow of any dominant party held responsible by the people for pervading financial, commercial, manufacturing, and mechanical derangement and distress. And yet this general stagnation in business was inevitable, resulting as it did from the exhaustive consequences of a long and expensive war. While no administration could have averted such evils, ours, it must be admitted, failed to do much that might have been done to relieve and mitigate them.

It might, also, in doing some things and in omitting to do others, have calmed rather than exasperated popular feeling. The administration was seriously weakened and wounded by the congressional "back pay grab," by Treasury Department imbecilities, by Sanborn contracts, and by Washington city government frauds.

Still another and damaging element entered into the canvass of 1874. I refer to it reluctantly, and only because if we earnestly intend to recover our lost ascendancy we must understand clearly the causes of our defeat, that abuses may be reformed, errors corrected, and illusions dispelled. When the press began to agitate about a "third term," few men supposed that such an idea was seriously entertained. No such thought found responsible expression. But the agitation continued until considerable popular solicitude was awakened. As the elections approached, Republicans grew apprehensive and anxious. Republican members of Congress not only wrote to, but visited Washington in the hope of being authorized to contradict this accusation. But no word was spoken, no sign given by the only person who could by the utterance of a single sentence have disarmed his opponents and reassured his friends.

There has not been a day or an hour since General Washington's enlightened and patriotic views, enforced and fortified by the strong, clear, and conclusive arguments of Alexander Hamilton, were submitted to the people, that any President, however wise, useful, and popular may have been his administration, could have secured or approached an election for a "third term." Nor was it ever alleged that Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, or Jackson (who served two terms), either per-

mitted their friends to entertain such an idea, or deluded themselves with such an aspiration. If there be anything unalterably fixed and determined in the American mind and heart, — if there be any one principle to which our people have anchored, it is the “third term” example of Washington. And I am devoutly thankful that there is so much left of the teachings of our political fathers to which their descendants cling. These things, added to the causes which you so clearly present, both explain and excuse the feeling which found expression through the ballot-box against the administration.

The Republican party, for the good work it had done before and during the Rebellion, ought to hold the government at least one or two presidential terms longer. The Democratic party, both on account of its misrule before and its disloyalty during the Rebellion, justly forfeited the confidence of the people. Nor has it evinced since the Rebellion anything of the wisdom which formerly characterized that great party. On the contrary its teachings and tendencies justify apprehension that a malign element, now as heretofore, exerts a preponderating influence in its councils. Connecticut, for example, having returned a Democratic legislature, elects a United States Senator whose sentiments and proclivities were against the government in its struggle to suppress the Rebellion. I am happy to admit, however, that our own legislature did not make itself obnoxious to this charge. Its Senator, Mr. Kernan, though always a pronounced Democrat, was loyal to the government and the Union, voting in Congress with his loyal Democratic colleagues, Ganson, Nelson, Odell, and Steele, for men and money to prosecute the war. It will be useful, in our recuperative efforts, to remember that the Republican administration was beaten in 1874, not by the augmented strength of its opponents, but by the alienation and apathy of its friends.

Could you and I confer personally on the great questions of the day, our differences of opinion now, as heretofore, would be found very slight. I believe the resumption of specie payments entirely practicable within a reasonable time, and without serious injury to the industries of the country. It is not so much that specie is required for general use or circulation as that the people should be assured that specie can be obtained when it is actually needed. A general determination to resume would go more than half way toward its accomplishment. There is more sense and truth in the remark that “the way to resume is to resume,” than at first meets the eye. Our real and only serious difficulty relates to our foreign creditors, the holders of our bonds, and those from whom we purchase luxuries. There are modes, however, of dealing with both of these questions. Let Congress, for instance, pass a law imposing duties on silks, velvets, jewelry, wines, etc., lim-



ited in its operations to two years; that would virtually prohibit during that period their importation, and resumption follows without an effort. The home obstacles to resumption are largely artificial, produced by the few who profit at the expense of the many. Usurers and speculators are interested in keeping up the "rate of usance" on gold.

The New York Gold Exchange Board is the heaviest drag in the way of resumption. If the transactions of that board were *bonâ fide*, if that board went no further than to purchase and sell the gold required to pay duties and buy exchange, no objections would be heard. But, whatever may be the *theory* on which the board is based, its *practice* is in conflict with it. The real, every-day business of the board is *speculative*. Gentlemen meet there to make bets upon the fluctuating price of imaginative gold, the intrinsic value of which does not enter into the transaction in the remotest degree. And yet, unfortunately, the standard value of gold is assumed and governed throughout the country by the quoted prices in the New York Gold Board, while the millions of sales reported would, if scrutinized, dwindle down to thousands.

Then, as you truly say, comes the gold sent to Europe for luxuries. The evidences of this infatuation are flaunted before our eyes upon Fifth Avenue, at balls, receptions, operas, and wherever else fashionable ladies "most do congregate." There are 10,000 New York ladies whose costumes, when in full dress, cost at least \$1,000 each. Fifteen years ago the same number of fashionable ladies would have appeared adorned quite as attractively at an average expense of \$250. Ten thousand children under ten years of age are now elaborately and fantastically arrayed at an expense of from \$100 to \$150 each, while the children of wealthy citizens, fifteen years ago, were simply but appropriately attired at an expense of from \$20 or \$25. And it is painful to reflect that in consequence of this lavish expenditure upon a class that never earned a dollar, there are other tens of thousands without employment, and suffering for food, fuel, and raiment. And last, though not least, are the millions of gold sunk by Americans who idle away both their time and their money in Europe. Ireland is not now the only country demoralized by absenteeism. These great abuses and follies reformed, nothing would be easier than the resumption of specie payments.

Nor does resumption in any case necessarily involve onerous contraction. We have a strongly protected and uniform nationalized currency. For all domestic uses that currency is just as good as gold and silver. It is even better than the debased metallic currency of Austria. And when the fact shall have been established that this

paper can be converted into gold and silver, the people will prefer bank-notes, leaving gold and silver to meet the foreign demand. The President struck a chilling blow at resumption by advocating the prohibition of all notes under five dollars. Coupled with such a prohibition, resumption would be postponed indefinitely, for the people would never consent to be deprived of the small notes of solvent specie-paying banks.

Anxious as I am for the resumption of specie payments, I would not seek it by turning the financial screws so tightly as to arrest and paralyze business enterprises, upon the healthy working of which the prosperity of all classes depends. England, as a consequence of her protracted wars, waited patiently more than twenty years for the opportunity of resuming specie payments without deranging her great manufacturing and commercial interests, or distressing her people. We, however, can, if we will, reestablish our national credit much sooner. Indeed, had Congress and the Treasury Department paved the way, and the people with one mind bravely determined it should be so, the resumption of specie payments might have been hailed as the signal and crowning glory in the approaching celebration of the centennial anniversary of our national independence.

Worse than all other evils and follies, if possible, has been the blind, reckless, and criminal squandering of the public domain. Most prominent among the bad legacies bequeathed to the country by Mr. Greeley, is the homestead law. But I must do his memory justice by saying that, in his zealous and persistent advocacy of that law, he believed that he was serving the "toiling millions," for whose prosperity and elevation he ever labored. And yet how few, how very few, of those "down-trodden millions" ever possessed themselves of what he regarded as their greatest boon and blessing! The homestead law, so far as its most popular feature is concerned, has proved a failure and a delusion. Things which cost nothing are but slightly valued. There would have been a larger number of actual settlers growing up in industry and developing into usefulness and prosperity, as farmers, mechanics, and artisans, under the law which furnished lands from the public domain to actual settlers at \$1.25 an acre, than have been secured under the plausible congressional idea of "voting every man a farm."

If the public domain had been preserved, we should now have in the proceeds of that rich inheritance, as we had after our war for independence, our war with England, in 1812, and our earlier Indian wars, a fund sufficient not only to pay the annual interest of our debt, but ultimately to retire the debt itself. I never objected to liberal appropriations of land from the public domain to aid the construction of

needed railroads through that domain. Such aid, limited to meritorious enterprises, was wise and beneficent. But the abuses and squanderings of the system have been alike discreditable to the government, and disastrous to the public welfare. The land given to aid the construction of the Illinois Central Railroad, for instance, was not only sufficient to complete the enterprise, but continues to be a source of large income to that company. Untold millions, in the form of "land grabs," which should have been reserved for the uses of the government, have gone to enrich speculators and capitalists. If Congress, in its alacrity to dispossess the country of its domain, had reserved to the government one half or even one fourth of all precious metals, minerals, and coals, a handsome fund would have been rescued.

All you say on the subject of a protective tariff is historically true. I can never forget the high, prosperous, and palmy condition of our country under the benign influences of a wise protective tariff from 1818 until 1836, when the Democracy of the North, to strengthen and perpetuate its political affiliations with the South, began to agitate in favor of a "judicious tariff." During the administrations of James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, the welfare of our people and the strength of our government were promoted and augmented by an enlightened national policy. All our interests moved forward harmoniously. All the industries of the country thrived. Farmers, mechanics, manufacturers, merchants, importers, and capitalists found themselves working together with reciprocal interests and to mutual advantage. While all our domestic occupations proved abundantly remunerative, our canvas — the canvas of our own well-laden ships — whitened every ocean and sea. And amid all this individual prosperity and happiness, the nation was advancing by rapid strides to wealth and power. The national debt was paid off, after which the surplus proceeds of the public domain accumulated so rapidly, and became so large, as to create apprehensions that they might become dangerous to the integrity and stability of the government. If we had that domain now unbroken, to fall back upon, it would prove stronger to our government as a financial resource than is the Bank of England to the British Crown. But those golden days and halcyon hours exist only in remembrance. History will not, I fear, in reference to a protective tariff, and certainly cannot in regard to a squandered public domain, "repeat itself." And unhappily the statesmen to whose wisdom, industry, and patriotism the country was then indebted for its wholesome laws, have passed either from earth or into private life. Much as I desire, and greatly as we need, a wisely adjusted tariff, I see no way of obtaining it until successors in the administrative and congressional departments of the government equal to the emergency are found.

Nor dare I anticipate such happy changes until the fearful demoralization occasioned by a war of unprecedented magnitude has worked out its evil mission, nor until suffrage, now cheapened and degraded, rising to the intelligence, discrimination, and dignity of earlier and better days, asserts its prerogative in the elevation of representatives. For, let it be widely understood that the experience and teachings of a republican form of government prove nothing so alarmingly suggestive of and pregnant with danger as that cheap suffrage involves and entails cheap representation. But for the "good time" which it is to be hoped is "coming," we must wait patiently for a generation that will return to Congress such men as Henry Clay and John J. Crittenden, from Kentucky; Daniel Webster and John Davis, from Massachusetts; Timothy Pitkin and Truman Smith, from Connecticut; George Evans, from Maine; Horace Everett, from Vermont; Albert H. Tracy, Francis Granger, Millard Fillmore, and Thomas C. Love, from New York; Samuel L. Southard and Theodore Frelinghuysen, from New Jersey; John Sargent and Horace Binney, from Pennsylvania; John W. Clayton, from Delaware; Willis P. Mangum and Edward Stanley, from North Carolina; John Bell and Bailie Peyton, from Tennessee; Elisha Whittlesey, Thomas Ewing, Joseph Vance, Thomas Corwin, and Samuel F. Vinton, from Ohio, and Edward Bates, from Missouri.

While I agree and sympathize with you in all possible efforts to promote the welfare of the laboring classes, by securing to them steady employment with remunerative wages, I am quite sure that you will agree with me in reprobating the combinations and influences which seek to extort through trades-unions the largest possible amount of money for the smallest possible equivalent in labor. Ten and eight hour systems, and the "strikes" consequent upon them, have been a most prolific source of mischief and evil, pecuniary and social, to the laboring classes. The despotism of these "unions" has become unendurable. Master-mechanics are not permitted to labor in their own workshops. Less than half the number of bricks formerly laid by journeymen are now arbitrarily held to be a day's work. And the number of apprentices by whom trades are to be learned is limited and fixed, not by master-mechanics, but by the "unions." In a few years, therefore, we shall be wholly dependent upon foreigners, subject to the control of trades-unions, for our mechanical labor.

Meantime, thousands of boys who ought and, but for the evil influences just referred to, would have been learning trades, by means of which they would become useful citizens, are either variously seeking precarious support from temporary employments, or by unavoidable idleness acquiring habits which consign them to our houses of refuge

and penitentiaries. There are at this moment hundreds of fathers and other hundreds of widowed mothers looking in anguish and despair upon the fate which awaits their sons, — a fate which, but for the tyranny of unions in preventing boys from becoming apprentices, might be averted. Heretofore the intelligence, enterprise, public spirit, patriotism, and virtue, personal, political, social, and moral, of the mechanical classes have been our boast and pride. Through these agencies villages have grown into cities, and our cities developed into wealth and power. I knew nothing in early life of these miserable eight and ten hour systems, and I owe whatever I have since enjoyed of success and consideration, to the habit as an apprentice, a journeyman, and a small beginner on my own account, of devoting from eleven to twelve hours a day diligently and cheerfully to active and healthful physical labor.

What we want first is a governmental policy, state and national, which will place the necessaries of life within the reach of the laboring classes at prices that ranged through the forty years preceding the breaking out of the Rebellion. Consequent upon such a change, labor would be in free demand at rates which could not be injuriously affected by the exactions of capital on the one hand, or by pernicious trades-union despotism on the other. Let it be remembered always that the real purpose of these combinations — for which we are unhappily indebted to the worst specimens of English, French, and German radicalism — is, first as “socialists” and then as “communists,” to sow the seeds of agrarianism and infidelity among us. These insidious enemies to all that is good and virtuous and hopeful affect the welfare of the laboring classes. And yet not one of these agitators is found laboring himself or seeking employment for others, except through agencies that derange and embarrass the industries upon which the mechanical and laboring classes must ever rely for employment and support.

Reconstruction, from the beginning a most difficult problem, has been embarrassed by a want of wisdom at Washington, and by embittered memories in the South. The disorganized condition of the Southern States has attracted there bold and unscrupulous northern adventurers, who, associating with disbanded and demoralized soldiers, have remained to devastate a conquered country. These wretches have inflicted upon South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, and other States, the worst possible specimens of government. At the infamies perpetrated in these and other rebel states, civilization blushes. And yet those who suffer from “carpet-bag” dishonesty and oppression are themselves largely to blame for it. When rebellion was conquered, if the white inhabitants, yielding to the inevitable and recognizing their

former slaves as freedmen, had treated them kindly and offered them employment with reasonable wages, the designs of carpet-baggers would have been thwarted. I affirm this because there is undeniable evidence that in localities where the law of kindness prevails, where masters endeavored to conciliate their former slaves, they were uniformly successful, and that in such localities not only nothing is heard of a "war between races," but reconstruction has been practically accomplished. These instances of good sense and forbearance, I regret to say, are exceptional. For the most part those who rushed into a rebellion to divide the Union are now as aggressive and defiant as they were when Fort Sumter was fired upon. Unable to establish a Confederate government, they seem determined to avenge themselves upon the freedmen, who, but for the madness and folly of their masters, would have still remained in bondage.

The "White Leagues" of Louisiana were only too accurately described by General Sheridan. Such organizations are not needed to subserve the purposes of good government. They are banded together to hunt, hound, and, if needs be, murder the negroes. Reconstruction, therefore, seems as difficult and distant as it was at the close of the war. Georgia, always less ultra and more practical than South Carolina or Alabama, has reestablished law and order. North Carolina, infamously governed for two or three years, seems now to be doing better. That United States soldiers are required in some excited sections to protect freedmen cannot be doubted. The officers in command should be men of intelligence and prudence, acting only when the duty is clearly imperative. In Louisiana there has been nothing but misrule, disorder, fraud, corruption, anarchy, and violence from the close of the war. It is difficult to ascertain which party or what faction is the worst. General Grant was not, I fear, fortunate in his early appointments of federal officers; nor do I believe the Kellogg government worthy of the sacrifices required to maintain it. The congressional committee recently in New Orleans may find a remedy for evils which have so long scourged that fertile and rich but miserably-distracted state.

I cherished the hope, when peace was restored, that the old Whigs of the South, some of whom reluctantly consented to secession, and nearly all of whom were forced into rebellion, would form a nucleus for reconstruction. There was a numerous band of enlightened and patriotic Whigs who resisted nullification, and who for ten or fifteen years afterward, by boldly opposing the encroachments and aggressions of southern Democrats, bridged over many dangers, and prevented a catastrophe until ultra men and malign councils North and South precipitated secession and rebellion. The Union had no truer

or bolder or more devoted friends through all its political trials for twenty-five years than the Whigs of the South, whose representative men were distinguished alike for talents, integrity, and patriotism. Prominent among these eloquent and earnest friends of the Union were William C. Preston, of South Carolina; William A. Graham, Lewis Williams, and Kenneth Raynor, of North Carolina; John Taliaferro, Alexander H. H. Stuart, and John M. Botts, of Virginia; William C. Dawson, Thomas Butler King, and James L. Seward, of Georgia; John White and James T. Morehead, of Kentucky; Meredith P. Gentry, Christopher H. Williams, and Joseph L. Williams, of Tennessee. That Whig element bound Kentucky and Tennessee to the Union, and but for adverse influences would have held North Carolina and Virginia, thus so narrowing the boundaries of rebellion as to have greatly lessened its horrors. I am even yet unwilling to relinquish the hope that the Whig spirit of the South will reassert itself, and, uniting with congenial northern sympathizers, work out wholesome results.

I had hoped that Congress would be able to reach and remove some of the causes which paralyzed the business interests of the country,—something that, as spring advances, would give life and elasticity to trade and restore all classes to their accustomed occupations. If this object can be reached only by expansion, I cannot but think that even that dreaded alternative is preferable to the dead calm which has caused all our material interests to stand still for more than a year. I make this concession because I have come to the conclusion that we can resume specie payments without distressing the laboring classes by stringent “contraction.”

Too much of the time of Congress has, I fear, been consumed by the civil rights bill,—a bill, in its general scope and purpose, of questionable wisdom. All has been done by constitutional amendments and congressional enactments that is necessary to place freedmen upon a perfect equality with our own race. “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” has been guaranteed to them as to us. They are free to enter upon an open and fair field, competing with us upon equal terms for all the advantages and compensations of industry and enterprise. We enjoy, in common, all the rights and privileges, and are subjected to all the duties and responsibilities conferred and imposed by the Constitution and the laws. The disabilities of the freedmen, if they are to be regarded as disabilities, are providential, and cannot be relieved by human laws. The Almighty created two distinct races, giving to each a country and a climate adapted to their respective organizations. If one race has been more favored than the other, if, moreover, one race has been oppressed by the other, it is

for some inscrutable reason, into which it would be presumptuous to inquire. So far as our country is concerned, the wrongs of the subjugated race have been avenged. We have converted slavery into freedom, and elevated chattels into citizens. We have extended to the freedmen all the personal and political rights we possess ourselves. Further we cannot go. Social equality is alike impracticable and impossible. When we reach this point a "higher law" comes in — a law which no human enactments can annul — a law which will remain in full force and effect until white becomes black, or black becomes white. All enactments, however stringent, and with whatever penalties, designed arbitrarily to constrain social equality, will prove abortive. Such laws cannot be enforced. To insist upon social equality among ourselves would prove equally ineffectual. Indeed, nothing would be regarded as more absurd and preposterous than an attempt to regulate social intercourse by statute laws. Society has its own laws, unwritten to be sure, but clearly defined and well understood. These laws are founded in good sense, are adapted to the condition of all classes, and all classes recognize and accept them.

I do not believe it expedient or safe, with the existing organizations and proclivities of the Democracy, to intrust that party with supreme power. I do not say this in a partisan spirit, for at my time of life, and with the views and feelings I entertain and cherish, I desire nothing but to see the government of my country well and wisely administered. I should have learned little from the political ordeals through which I have passed, if, toward the close of a long life, I were to attribute all that is bad to one party, and all that is good to another. I would prefer the election of an enlightened and honest Democrat as President to the elevation of an incapable Republican of equivocal integrity. And when I speak of an honest and enlightened Democrat, I have in mind such men as General Hancock or General Ward, sometime Minister to China from Georgia; or, as far as I have been able to form an opinion of his ability and character, Governor Newton Booth, the newly-elected Senator from California. But with the purposes and passions of the Democracy, North and South, its nominee for President is not likely to belong to that category; and hence I ardently hope that the Republican party will so far reassure the people of its devotion to their prosperity and the welfare of our country as to be able to elect a capable, experienced, and inflexibly-honest man as our next President.

Of the chances and probabilities of our being able to recover in 1876 the ground lost in 1874, I cannot form a trustworthy opinion, for, as you know, I have been in constrained retirement for more than six years. I am, therefore, without the information and opportunities



upon which an intelligent estimate can be safely based. We must have constant access to the public journals from all sections of the Union, and as constantly inhale a political atmosphere, to be enabled to perceive and comprehend "events which cast their shadows before." You and I worked together as Whig and Republican journalists for nearly forty years. We had something to do all that time, in forming and informing parties and peoples. And when the candidates of both parties were in the field, the issues clearly taken, and the canvass in progress, we almost invariably foresaw the result of important elections. But, although you are several years my junior, we are both in the "sere, the yellow leaf of life." We must leave to others, therefore, the duties and responsibilities which were formerly confided to us. Instead of lagging, like a superannuated actor, "superfluous on the stage," it becomes me to accept the situation incident to old age and its infirmities. Nevertheless, while a kind Providence spins out the attenuated thread of life and preserves my faculties, I cannot become wholly indifferent to the welfare of my country. While in the world one must, to some extent, be of it. I hope, however, not to be seen or heard obtrusively, and that in my bushel of chaff some kernels of wheat may be found.

Faithfully yours,

THURLOW WEED.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1876-1879.

PRESIDENTIAL CHANCES. — HOW TO MAINTAIN REPUBLICAN ASCENDENCY. — MR. WEED TO MR. BLAINE. — REPUBLICAN STATE CONVENTION OF 1876. — GOVERNOR MORGAN NOMINATED. — MR. WEED AND THE TICKET. — ELECTION OF PRESIDENT HAYES. — LETTER TO THE STATE PRESS ASSOCIATION. — CIPHER DESPACHES. — STATE CONVENTION OF 1879. — NOMINATION OF MR. CORNELL.

“I SEE no reason,” wrote Mr. Weed, early in 1876, “if our ablest and best men are nominated for President and Vice-President, why the Republicans should not succeed in the fall elections. I rely as confidently upon the inherent weakness of the Democracy as upon the inherent strength of our own party. While, in the past, much has been done to weaken the Republican party, its opponents have taken only spasmodic advantages. Governor Tilden inaugurated his administration by a bold and praiseworthy demonstration against a ring of canal contractors, by whom the State had been systematically defrauded for twenty years of at least fifty per cent. of the millions appropriated for the repairs, improvements, and enlargement of our canals. For this he deserved and received the hearty approval of all good men. But by turning the results of an investigation designed to punish fraud and to protect the state treasury into a party channel, to advance, as is alleged and believed, personal aspirations, he has lost the opportunity not only of making himself stronger than his party, but of rising to an elevation which blends partisanship with patriotism. . . .

“At the close of the Revolutionary War, as at the close of the War of 1812, enlightened and patriotic statesmen in the national government set themselves diligently to work, inaugurating policies and enacting laws designed — by reviving commerce, establishing manufactures, and promoting agriculture — to restore public prosperity; while simultaneously the national credit was placed upon a firm footing by a policy which insured the payment of the public debt.

“These beneficent objects accomplished, all the great productive interests of the country, each acting advantageously upon the other, were soon in successful and harmonious operation.

“We came out of the war with England, in 1815, honorably, but crippled and impoverished. Except that the demoralization was far less fearful, we were as badly off then as when the war of the Rebellion terminated. But in three years, with wise and good men at the helm and on the lookout, the ship of state, with full and flowing canvas, had taken a new departure on a long and prosperous voyage. A protective tariff, with an economical and honest administration of the government under James Madison, James Monroe, and John Quincy Adams, brought palmy days, with increasing wealth to the people and strength to the country. Ultimately, by an ill-omened union between Democracy and slavery, these measures and policies were repudiated. Then ensued twenty years of misrule, culminating finally in a rebellion which wiped out both Democracy and slavery. This great result, however, cost much more than the blood and treasure shed and expended in its accomplishment. The complete triumph over rebellion did not ‘trammel up its consequences.’ We are still suffering from wounds no less serious than those which were inflicted during the war, while we are threatened with others in the form of ‘claims’ from rebellious states, which, if recognized, would bring the government to inevitable bankruptcy. In the hope of forcing these treasonable ‘claims’ through Congress, rebellion affiliates with Democracy. And thus the issue for the approaching presidential canvass is made up.

“The elections of 1874 resulted in the return of northern Democrats and southern rebels enough to constitute a majority in the House of Representatives. These elements fraternized; and the use they made of their power teaches a lesson not likely to be forgotten.

“A prominent and zealous traitor, whose hatred of the Union prompted him to give the name of Mr. Lincoln’s assassin to his son, was appointed secretary to the standing committee on ways and means, while, simultaneously, twelve maimed Union soldiers were removed to make places for as many rebel politicians.

“After such a beginning, supplemented by the speeches of rebel Generals Gordon and Hill, it seems evident that the followers of Jefferson Davis hope to recover by political strategy what they lost by a resort to arms.

“Forewarned of the character and intentions of their adversaries, friends of the Union ought, and I doubt not will, forearm themselves for the contest. In view of the importance of that contest, and of the intensity of feeling and effort which it will awaken, it behooves the Republican party, shaking off all incumbrances, to seek and occupy its highest vantage-ground. It cannot be denied, nor can we afford to conceal the fact, that the present administration has failed to justify the expectations of the people, or even to realize the hopes of its best friends. . . . There were difficulties, however, in General Grant’s way which no amount of wisdom could avoid. The ‘cankers’ of a long war had eaten into the heart of the nation. Demoralization, public and private, had become almost universal. Our country was doomed to pass through ordeals of fraud and corruption similar to those described by Sir William Pepys and Lord Macaulay, by which England was long dishonored, and in consequence of which her people were oppressed for many years by crushing and inexorable taxation.

“In his encounter with these difficulties General Grant has not been fortunate. His Cabinet, as a whole, was not wisely chosen; and when vacancies occurred, his original mistakes were not corrected. The late Vice-President Wilson appealed often and earnestly to the President in favor of elevating and strengthening his administration by associating with Governor Fish Cabinet Ministers of large experience, recognized talent, and pronounced integrity. All such appeals, however, were disregarded. At a crisis requiring the exercise of the highest intelligence and the most inflexible integrity, the financial department of the government was placed in the hands of an utterly incompetent man. Nor while evidences of Mr. Richardson’s incapacity were manifest and multiplied, would General Grant listen to advice, until, after obstinate refusals to regard the popular will, his eyes were opened by the disastrous defeats sustained by the Republican party in 1874. But even that ominous lesson failed to awaken the President to a just and full sense of his high responsibility.

“Other reforms were demanded and refused. Early in General Grant’s administration, Governor Cox, of Ohio, retired from the Interior Department for some reason unknown to the people. Nothing was then, or has been since, alleged against him. His successor, Mr. Delano, came into office with a good character and a clean record, both of which were soon lost. As in the case of Mr. Richardson, however, the President refused to listen to numerous and damaging accusations against Mr. Delano. For many months after that gentleman felt constrained to tender his resignation, the President perversely refused or neglected to accept it, and yielded at last only to an indignant popular demand, seconded by the other members of the Cabinet. I do not care to dwell upon more recent and still more startling official delinquencies. There is little or no compensation in the circumstance that our Secretary of War found discreditable examples for his misconduct in the wholesale traffic in offices by English Ministers of War during the reigns of the Georges. These delinquencies constitute, in the aggregate, a burden under the weight of which no administration can stand.

“Happily, however, the Republican party is stronger than its administration. But it must not encumber itself with the obloquy that attaches to official misconduct. It cannot afford to defend or excuse the errors of the President, or the frauds of his appointees. In return for the great service rendered to the government and the Union in putting down a fearful rebellion, and overthrowing an institution which occasioned it, the people will go far, and do much, to sustain and perpetuate Republican rule. Public confidence, in the mean time, must not be too severely tried, or too heavily taxed. Men are fallible, and may, as they often do, fall; but principles are indestructible. The Republican party will survive the overthrow of its unworthy representatives, provided always that the party is prompt and thorough in its purifications. We should be as quick to discern, and as ready to rebuke, the dishonesty of officials in our own party as in the party of our opponents. In this way only can Republicans hope to maintain their ascendancy, for much more is expected of us than of our opponents.”

The national conventions of both political parties were called to meet in June, the Republican at Cincinnati, the Democratic at St. Louis, under conditions which are well remembered.

[MR. WEED TO JAMES G. BLAINE.]

NEW YORK, *June 8, 1876.*

MY DEAR SIR, — The apprehension that our government may fall into the hands of its enemies occasions constant and painful solicitude. The conviction that this great calamity can be averted only by wisdom and patriotism at Cincinnati is my apology for asking your attention to some thoughts which seem to me important and seasonable.

All the industries of our country are paralyzed. Capital seeks in vain for investment. Shrinkages in real estate are pervading and exhaustive. Manufacturers either lose money or stop work. Commerce languishes. Laborers walk the streets in search of employment which cannot be obtained. For all these things, where power resides with the people, the administration is held responsible.

Inasmuch as we can neither deny nor disguise the fact that General Grant's second term has been a failure, is it not best that our national convention should look the question full in the face? We may forget the imbecilities of Secretary Richardson, and the infirmities (speaking charitably) of Secretary Delano, but they will be remembered in the canvass. If General Grant were now to come before the people for his second term he would be beaten out of sight. Nor, in my judgment, can any candidate be elected who is amenable to the opprobrium which attaches, justly and unjustly, to the administration.

I assume, basing the assumption upon information and observation, that the votes of the convention after an informal ballot, will be divided between Senators Morton, Conkling, and yourself. If I am not misinformed, most of the friends of Senator Morton will go over to Conkling. Under such circumstances, should they occur, your friends, should they be unable to gratify their first wish, will, I earnestly hope, unite with other delegates in securing the nomination of a candidate who can be elected.

We always believe that vital interests are involved in presidential elections. In the approaching canvass, we know this to be true. Democracy is now allied to rebellion, and if the government falls into such hands, the destruction which was attempted by a war will be effected in another way. In view of such consequences, I am more anxious than on any former occasion that the Republican national convention should not make a fatal mistake.

The malignant and persistent assaults upon your character — assaults which have been gallantly and triumphantly met and repelled — will strengthen the confidence and stimulate the zeal of your friends. Should you be nominated, I believe you would be elected. But I write with an impression that your friends will be disappointed in their first choice, and that you will be found prepared for and equal to such

an emergency. In that contingency, you have the power to render preëminent service to the Republican party, to the country, and to yourself; for in securing the nomination of a man who as President would inaugurate good government, your magnanimity and wisdom would be appreciated and rewarded.

Very truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

The last political convention attended by Mr. Weed was that held by the Republicans of New York at Saratoga Springs on the 23d of August, 1876. Under the lead of Mr. Tilden, who had become their candidate for President, the Democrats were making a vigorous canvass, and there appeared to be little prospect of Republican success in the State. Mr. Tilden occupied a very advantageous position. He was not only certain to receive the united support of his own party, which through all the vicissitudes of his career he carefully retained, but of a large floating element which was captivated by the word "reform." No candidates had yet been named on the Democratic state ticket, but it was safe to assume that, whoever they were, they would be carried through by Mr. Tilden's vote.

Believing that the Republican party was passing through a crucial ordeal, Mr. Weed reflected long and anxiously upon political prospects. Before deciding upon his course he consulted with those of his old friends who were still alive. Finally, when the convention was called, and he was asked whom he should support, he declared in favor of Governor Fish, Governor Morgan, or Mr. Evarts. Neither one of these gentlemen, he knew, was acceptable to Mr. Conkling, who, acting with General Arthur, was making a strong canvass in behalf of Mr. Cornell. It was doubted, therefore, whether Evarts, Morgan, or Fish could be nominated. "Mr. Weed will find," said one of the newspapers, "that age will not command the reverence due it unless it contemplates from afar off the hurly-burly of politics, without assuming to take part. Any attempt by him to outflank Mr. Conkling will be very roughly dealt with by very rough men."

"The convention was an intelligent and earnest body," said Mr. Weed to a newspaper reporter after his return to New York. "The question before the delegates was of more than usual importance, related as it is to the presidential canvass. A majority of the New York delegation, one third of the Brooklyn delegation, the Columbia and Dutchess delegations entire, and

scattering delegates from other parts of the State went to Saratoga in favor of Mr. Cornell.

“The first choice of the Brooklyn delegation was Mr. Woodford; the Westchester delegation and delegates from some other districts were for Judge Robertson, but the large majority were uninstructed and uncommitted. As soon as the sentiment of the convention was ascertained, it was evident that the question would be between Morgan and Evarts. The nomination of either would have been generally and cordially approved. The friends of Cornell and Woodford, when the names of those gentlemen had been withdrawn, generally decided in favor of Governor Morgan, whose nomination, after the graceful withdrawal of other candidates, was heartily made unanimous. I regard that nomination as giving the Republican party its best chance of success. . . . The nomination of Sherman S. Rogers for Lieutenant-Governor adds positive strength to the ticket. Mr. Rogers was a member of the constitutional convention, and to his enlightened course in that body the State is indebted to very important and much-needed amendments of its Constitution. The nomination of Mr. Danforth for the Court of Appeals was equally fortunate. Comparatively a young man, he is recognized as one of the most capable, as well as one of the most upright lawyers of Western New York. . . . Individually and as a whole the ticket is excellent.”

But Mr. Tilden's promises, following upon the mistakes of General Grant's administration, proved insurmountable obstacles to Republican success in New York State. The presidency itself remained in doubt during several months. On the 2d of March, 1877, it was formally declared that Mr. Hayes had been elected.

[MR. WEED TO CHARLES EMORY SMITH.]

NEW YORK, *June 7, 1877.*

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of the 5th instant, inviting me to attend the annual meeting of the New York Press Association, at Albany, on Wednesday next, was duly received. I very much regret that my engagements for Tuesday and Wednesday of next week will deprive me of the pleasure of meeting gentlemen with whom I am associated in sympathy, and whose occupation enables them to exert a powerful influence upon all questions which concern the prosperity and happiness of the people and the welfare and stability of the government.



Old men live in the past. My past was connected with the press. My life, from 1811 to 1868, was passed as an apprentice, journeyman, publisher, and editor in printing offices. These occupations were eminently congenial. Sixty-six years of constant labor were cheered by aspirations which were gradually but ultimately realized. Industry and fidelity were, under the guidance of a kind Providence, abundantly rewarded. And now, in the evening of life, my chief enjoyment consists in remembrances of the stirring events with which I have been connected, and of the army of patriotic and devoted friends of whom I cherish agreeable recollections—recollections saddened only by the reflection that most of them have passed away.

When I published my first newspaper at Norwich, Chenango County, there were about sixty journals in the State. Of their proprietors my friend Lewis H. Redfield, of Syracuse, is the only survivor.

With thanks for your kind invitation, and reiterated regrets that I am unable to accept it, please express to the members of the association the hope that in maintaining and preserving the dignity and purity of the press their own prosperity and happiness may be perpetuated.

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

[MR. WEED TO BENJAMIN K. PHELPS.]

NEW YORK, *September 18, 1877.*

DEAR SIR,—I was compelled several years ago, by severely impaired health, to seek in retirement from journalism and its incidental duties and associations the repose which old age requires. My friends will not be surprised, therefore, to learn that the same considerations impel a resignation of my seat in the Republican central committee as a delegate from the Seventh Assembly District.

Although in constrained retirement, I avail myself of this opportunity to say that there is no abatement either in my devotion to the Republican party or in my solicitude for its enduring ascendancy. That solicitude is indeed intensified by the severity of the ordeal through which we are passing. . . .

We shall have, I earnestly hope, under President Hayes, an enlightened administration of the Government. We need resumption as a means of restoring prosperity, but resumption must be beneficent, not cruel. The pressure upon the industries of the country, which has been gradually tightening, must relax. We have had our years of famine. Let us now anticipate our years of plenty. Providence is taxing the earth as it never was taxed before. It is doing more than its part to gladden the hearts of our people. If such bounteous interposition be supplemented by a generous response from human government, all will be well with our country.

Capital, under the protection of just laws, watchful, diligent, and farseeing, will take care of itself; labor, confiding and patient, relying more upon muscle than mind, requires guardianship and sympathy. Let it be the purpose, as it is the duty of a Republican administration, to adopt measures which will furnish employment to mechanics and laborers, and we shall in the future have nothing to fear from the insidious efforts and destructive influence of communists and strikers.

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

“I think the cry of fraud raised against the Republicans,” said Mr. Weed, in November, “has recoiled with crushing force upon the Democrats. What was attempted to be proven against the friends of President Hayes has been established beyond dispute against Mr. Tilden and his friends. I say Mr. Tilden, because the cipher despatches have been brought home so close to his confidential agents, his relatives, and his lieutenants as to render his complicity beyond doubt or question. It will be utterly impossible for him to assume leadership again. The party will fall away from him. . . . His habits of life will, of course, keep him in politics. Indeed, when a man once gets the presidency ‘on the brain,’ he is never curable.”

[JAMES WATSON WEBB TO MR. WEED.]

NEW HAVEN, *December 8, 1877.*

MY DEAR FRIEND, — You and I have suffered a great loss in the death of our dear and life-long friend, Grinnell. Younger than either of us, and blessed with a constitution which appeared to warrant contempt for precautions which we habitually observed, it did appear that he would, in all human probability, long outlive either of us. But alas! he has been taken and we are spared, — spared doubtless for some wise purpose, surrounded with a thousand things for which we should be, and doubtless are, duly thankful.

We have some, but not many, of the infirmities of age. Although your partial loss of a strong vision is in its nature depressing, yet my almost entire loss of locomotion is the greater infliction; but I thank God, as I am sure you do, for all the blessings which we do enjoy. You are doubly blessed. After upwards of fourscore years of active usefulness, such as could not be compressed in the lives of a dozen men of more than ordinary powers, you find yourself as powerful for good to your friends and the deserving as in the very zenith of your mental and physical activity. In fact, you have everything to be thankful for.

I am rejoiced to perceive in how flourishing a state Grinnell left his business affairs, and to know that he suffered nothing from that source. You, too, are surrounded by every earthly blessing; and, cheered by the devotion and affection of such a daughter as Harriet, yours cannot fail to be as bright and cheerful an evening of as long and useful a life as is rarely vouchsafed to man. God bless you and yours.

Affectionately,

J. WATSON WEBB.

[MR. WEED TO JAMES WATSON WEBB.]

NEW YORK, *December 13, 1877.*

Thanks, dear General, for your interesting and welcome letter. I was with our friend an hour and a half on the Wednesday evening before he died. He was feeling so much better that he hoped to ride out the first pleasant day. He talked most of the time of old associations, political and social, remembering sadly how many loved ones had departed. You and I knew him well and enjoyed his warm affection to the last.

Your letter recalls very pleasantly our long and uninterrupted friendship.<sup>1</sup> Differing occasionally upon public questions, our personal intercourse has ever been cordial, until, in

“The sere, the yellow leaf of life,”

our relations have become very endearing.

We had been meditating a visit to New Haven before the purpose was stimulated by Mrs. Webb's kind invitation. We now hope to go to Hartford while Moody and Sankey are laboring there, and if not disappointed in that, we shall see you at New Haven. With affectionate remembrances to Mrs. Webb, I am

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

“I fear that delegates will be aggravated by the presence, if not the importunities of candidates;” wrote Mr. Weed to General Sharpe, a few days before the New York Republican state convention of 1879. “I do not want to reflect upon gentlemen who act in accordance with changed methods of conducting a canvass, but I cannot forget that there was more freedom of opinion and less constraint in action when political assemblages were not thus embarrassed. . . . A new generation of public men has succeeded those with whom I was identified. I am less competent now than formerly to judge of their relative fitness for public duties; but, were I able to attend the conven-

<sup>1</sup> It began in 1814.

tion, I should vote for Judge Robertson, whom I have known long and intimately."

In carrying out Mr. Conkling's policy of opposition to Mr. Hayes, it became necessary, in 1879, to nominate a Republican candidate for Governor who was distinctively opposed to the federal administration. Such a candidate was obligingly provided by the President himself, who, to enforce the theory that office-holders ought not to "interfere" in politics, removed Naval Officer Cornell, then also chairman of the Republican state committee. "Crowns are reserved for martyrs in politics as well as martyrs in religion," wrote Mr. Weed, commenting upon the convention's choice. "Had Mr. Cornell been left undisturbed in the acceptable discharge of his official duties, he would have been in nobody's way as a candidate for Governor. He is indebted for this nomination, as he will be for his election, to the fact that he has been made the victim of an impracticable idea."

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

1873-1879.

A DEFENSE OF BIMETALISM. — NO STEPS TAKEN BY CONGRESS EXCEPT IN THE INTEREST OF BONDHOLDERS. — HOW SILVER WAS DEMONETIZED. — FRAUDS PERPETRATED TO KEEP GOLD AT A PREMIUM. — A CONVENTION OF BANKERS. — “EVENTS WHICH CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE.” — “NOT GOLD ENOUGH IN THE WORLD TO DO THE WORLD’S BUSINESS.”

BELIEVING that the government issued “greenbacks” not only to suppress rebellion but to relieve the business of the country, inasmuch as business had been in an exhausted condition a good part of the time from 1856 to 1861, Mr. Weed was dissatisfied with much of the more recent financial legislation at Washington, “the only effect of which,” he often said, “has been to make the rich richer and the poor poorer.” The “hard times” of 1873 to 1877 he ascribed to fickle and narrow-minded dealing with the currency question. The first of the objects sought by our issues of paper money was attained; but the importance of the second, Mr. Weed claimed, was often entirely overlooked, or willfully disregarded.

*July 25, 1876.*

“I have been a ‘looker on’ for several months during the discussions in Congress and in the press of the silver question. My merely superficial knowledge of finance leads to so much distrust that I approach the subject with much hesitation. Yet so strong are my intuitions that leading journalists are misleading their readers, that I have determined to break silence. The persistent effort to reject silver as an element in resumption seems to me so manifestly unwise, that I desire to call attention to facts which most of those who speak or write upon the question have forgotten, or choose to ignore.

“The Constitution of the United States confers upon Congress the power to ‘coin money,’ and in a subsequent section prohibits states from coining money or from making ‘anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts.’ Gold

and silver coin therefore is declared by our fundamental law a legal tender in the payment of debts, and hence gold and silver became the specie currency of our country. Every law of Congress authorizing the issue of bonds and notes, the proceeds from the sale of which were used to preserve the government and Union, provided that both the interest and principal of those obligations (amounting in the aggregate to nearly three thousand millions) should be paid 'in coin,' and finally on the 18th of March, 1869, when it was deemed important solemnly to assure the public creditors of the good faith of the government, Congress passed a declaratory law, saying that

The faith of the United States is solemnly pledged to the payment in coin, or its equivalent, of all the obligations of the United States not bearing interest, known as United States notes, and of all the interest-bearing obligations, except in cases where the law authorizing the issue of any such obligation has expressly provided that the same may be paid in lawful money, or in other currency than gold and silver. . . . And the United States also solemnly pledges its faith to make provision at the earliest practical period for a redemption of the United States notes in coin.

"The Court of Appeals of the State of New York having decided that a contract made before the passage of the legal tender act, payable expressly 'in gold and silver coin, lawful money of the United States,' might be paid and satisfied by a tender of United States notes, the case was taken to the Supreme Court of the United States, at Washington, by which the decision was reversed. Chief Justice Chase, in announcing the opinion of the court, in February, 1869, said, 'The coined dollar was a piece of gold or silver of a certain degree of purity and weight. The note dollar was a promise to pay a coined dollar.' By the Constitution of the United States, by the laws of Congress authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to borrow three thousand millions, and by the language of the Supreme Court of the United States, 'silver and gold' have been solemnly declared and affirmed to be legal tender in the payment of debts. The distinction, therefore, between the values of silver and gold, which has recently obtained, is in disregard of constitutional, legislative, and judicial authorities; and in view of the fact that throughout the commercial world silver has been for centuries, and is now, more largely used than gold, this new revelation

rests upon extrinsic, artificial, and arbitrary ideas. It might, with far better reason, be claimed that gold should not be a legal tender, because, unlike silver, it has never had international circulation. Even in England and France, divided only by a narrow channel, the English sovereign, with the queen's head on it, and the Napoleon, with the emperor's profile, circulate principally in their own dominions, while the Spanish milled dollar, the Mexican dollar, the French franc, and the English shilling have a world-wide circulation. Nor has silver been the currency of modern civilization only. It was a 'legal tender' when 'fine gold,' like 'rubies,' was 'precious' only for ornament. The Jewish shekel was silver. Joseph was sold to the Ishmaelites by his brethren for 'twenty pieces of silver,' and Judas, for the betrayal of our Saviour, received 'thirty pieces of silver.' As early as we have any knowledge of currency, silver was its basis, and was the medium of exchange for all commodities.

"It is claimed that the largely increased supply of silver from American mines is affecting its value throughout the world. This result, when we were augmenting our public debt, was anticipated. Our ability to pay both the principal and interest was based in part upon the value of mines then being developed in the far West. And now that these hopes are realized, shall we deprive ourselves voluntarily of a resource which will essentially aid in reëstablishing and restoring the credit and prosperity of the country? Congress, under authority derived from the Constitution, inaugurated the coinage of silver and gold, fixing the value of each. That authority remains. Congress has the power to-day, as it had the day after the Constitution was adopted, to coin silver into money, to fix its value and to declare it a legal tender. The discovery and development of our rich silver mines was providential. Why, if Europeans deprecate the abundance of American silver, should we join in a temporarily popular cry against it? If it be just or wise or patriotic to unite in efforts to depreciate the value of silver because our mines are too prolific, would it not be equally so to unite with foreign countries to cry down the price of agricultural products, when our bountiful harvests enable us to export largely to Europe? . . .

"It was in the power of the administration and Congress, had they set themselves diligently and wisely to the task ten

years ago, to have accomplished resumption without deranging, depressing, or disturbing any section, any class, or any interest. But, most unhappily, statesmanship, which the emergency demanded, was lacking. The administration and Congress have been distinguished as 'circumlocutionists.' Their efforts toward resumption so far have been in the direction of 'how not to do it;' and finally, when the proposed action of Congress on the silver question evinces a disposition to learn how to do it, resistance comes from influential journalists!

"Silver has quietly taken the place of fractional currency. Our eyes and ears are again gladdened by the sight and chink of bright silver dimes, quarter and half dollars. Had the advent of this precious currency been cheerfully accepted by capitalists, bankers, and journalists, resumption would have been more than half accomplished, while what remained to be done would have been much more easily achieved. But to return for a moment to the legal view of the question. The government agreed to pay its creditors 'in coin,' *i. e.*, in silver or gold. The creditor lent his money upon this stipulation. Has either party a right to impair the contract? If silver instead of gold had appreciated, could the government for that reason have refused to pay its creditors in silver? And is the creditor, because we have more silver than was expected either by him or the government, at liberty to refuse it? The government should be held strictly to its obligation as 'nominated in the bond.' The creditor in demanding his 'pound of flesh' may not, at his peril, draw 'one drop of blood.' Let the government pay all it owes, and all it agreed to pay to its creditors. I cannot sympathize with those who are so fastidiously watchful of the interests of bondholders, for I failed to discover in that class of creditors, either at home or abroad, anything which entitles them to more consideration than other and much larger classes who receive for their labor depreciated paper. The former, by forces which capital knows so well how to utilize, have been greatly favored. Large bondholders, foreign and domestic, paid less than par for securities which now bear a high premium. This was their privilege; but this does not give them, in justice or equity, the right to refuse silver and demand gold, because since the contract was entered into the manipulations of capital have depressed the former and appreciated the latter."



August 5, 1876.

“Congress is supposed to represent the interests of the whole people, but in making gold, and gold only, a legal tender, the interest of a small class only was consulted. The premium on gold is perpetuated by a law of Congress, while these premiums are squeezed, drop by drop, from the brow of labor. I take leave to ask representatives and senators how long, in their judgment, this process in favor of capital and against labor can be practiced with impunity? The citizens of the Western States demand a repeal of the wrong law. They oppose resumption, under the erroneous impression that resumption would aggravate evils from which we are all suffering. The real difficulty is that Congress has required resumption in 1879, without having taken any step to facilitate or aid resumption. Nor is the ‘masterly inactivity’ of Congress its gravest fault. The act of 1873, demonetizing silver, renders it impossible to resume without greatly increasing the burdens, losses, and sufferings of the commercial, manufacturing, and laboring classes. Meanwhile the bondholders and foreigners from whom we purchase luxuries profit largely.”

November 23, 1877.

“Conscious only of a desire to be useful, I can afford to be misunderstood, or even misrepresented, while claiming, under the authority of the Constitution of the United States, that silver is lawful money. Under that authority the government has borrowed and paid thousands of millions of dollars in coin. Until recently no one questioned the money value of silver. It was equally precious with gold until it was secretly demonetized in 1873. A bill ostensibly intended to regulate the government mints contained a clause demonetizing silver, but so cautiously drawn as to conceal its purpose. Nothing appears in the debate showing that any member of Congress was aware that a bill, apparently harmless, not only deprived the country of one half of its monetary power, but was in violation of the Constitution. The title of the law of 1873, ‘An act revising and amending the laws relative to the mints, assay offices, and coinage of the United States,’ furnished no intimation that it contained such a sweeping clause. Conspirators, however, did not accomplish all they desired by that act. The following section found its way into the Revised Statutes, which were enacted in bulk in 1874:—

The silver coins of the United States shall be a legal tender, at their nominal value, for any amount not exceeding five dollars in any one payment.

“The chairman of the committee who submitted the report assured the House that it contained nothing but what was found in special and separate enactments of Congress. And yet there was nothing in any act of Congress giving the semblance of authority for the section above quoted. These double frauds were perpetrated without the knowledge of those who voted for them, and without attracting the attention of newspaper correspondents. Nor did the President, in approving the bills referred to, know or suspect that either struck a fatal blow at the interests of the country and the welfare of the people. In a letter written by General Grant, dated October 3, 1873, seven months after the passage of the law relating to mints, etc., he said:—

I wonder that silver is not already coming into the market to supply the deficiency in the circulating medium. . . . Experience has proved that it takes about \$40,000,000 of fractional currency to make the small change necessary for the transaction of the business of the country. Silver will gradually take the place of this currency, and, further, will become the standard of values, which will be hoarded in a small way. I estimate that this will consume from \$200,000,000 to \$300,000,000, in time, of this species of our circulating medium. . . . I confess to a desire to see a limited hoarding of money. But I want to see a hoarding of something that is a standard of value the world over. Silver is this. . . . Our mines are now producing almost unlimited amounts of silver, and it is becoming a question, “What shall we do with it?” I suggest here a solution which will answer for some years, to put it in circulation, keeping it there until it is fixed, and then we will find other markets.

“The President did not know that he had approved and signed a bill prohibiting the coinage of a currency he valued so highly! It was not until 1874, when the code was adopted, that the coinage of subsidiary silver was authorized, and became a legal tender for \$5. And finally, when these frauds, perpetrated to keep gold at a premium for the benefit of bondholders, became known, no word of reprobation was heard. The press, generally alert, vigilant, and outspoken, has no word of condemnation against a conspiracy to cripple and op-

press the industries and labor of the country. On the contrary, leading journals bitterly assail those who seek to restore to the country a money standard of which it was deprived fraudulently. We are stigmatized as 'silver inflationists,' for asking the government to reestablish a financial basis under which the country and people were prosperous and happy for more than eighty years.

"This question, stripped of sophistry and verbiage, presents a naked issue of capital against labor. Shylocks, ever rapacious, are struggling to 'keep up the rate of usance.' In maintaining one standard — thus narrowing our specie basis one half — they strengthen and perpetuate their advantages. There has been, as there ever must be, between the thousands who labor and the hundreds who enjoy the fruits of such labor, an 'irrepressible conflict.' But it is the duty of governments to see that the faces of those who labor are not held too closely to the grindstone.

"The country is threatened, as is usual when capital takes alarm, with return of the bonds held abroad, should holders be asked to receive their interest 'in coin.' If foreigners choose to return their bonds because we offer to pay them in the precise currency which they agreed to receive, I do not see that either our character or our pockets would be injuriously affected. Foreigners, during our civil war, 'made haste slowly' in purchasing our bonds. Nothing of friendship or patriotism was manifested. Capital, ever cautious, waited and doubted a long time in Germany, and still longer in England. Most of these investments were made when our bonds cost but fifty cents on the dollar. Holders have been receiving their interest in gold until it is proposed to pay it 'in coin.' If for this reason, they choose to send home our bonds, we can afford to receive them, having large amounts of money seeking profitable investments. Nor is this the only method of intimidation resorted to. We are told that if the money standards of the Constitution are restored, the Syndicate will suspend its negotiations. How far this threat will be carried remains to be seen. . . .

"My confidence in the wisdom of returning to 'the financial policy of our fathers' has been strengthened by conversations with the venerable Thomas W. Olcott, for more than sixty years the successful financial manager of the Mechanics' and Farmers'

Bank of Albany. Mr. Olcott is not only the oldest bank president in the State, but is as widely known as a uniform, earnest, and enlightened hard-money man." . . .

*December 11, 1877.*

"I waited anxiously for the President's message, in the hope that it would advert to the fraudulent demonetization of silver, recommending its restoration, with such modifications as might be deemed proper. I have long believed that resumption can be reached easily and rendered permanent by the utilization of silver. That conviction has confirmed and strengthened by experience and observation. Silver has quietly and advantageously taken the place of fractional paper currency — a currency by which, saying nothing of its inconvenience, the people lost millions of dollars. But even subsidiary silver, precious as it is to the masses, offends advocates of a gold standard. A national convention of bankers, embodying and representing, it is to be presumed, the financial wisdom of the country, unanimously adopted, as the result of its deliberations, the following resolution: —

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this convention, silver money, as a subsidiary currency, is desired by the people, and that its "free" and not "enforced" use will greatly aid in restoring the value of our paper money.

"My great respect for individual bankers leads me to believe that, while this resolution was unanimously adopted, many bankers would hesitate, individually, to avow approval of it. While the whole country is enjoying the advantages of partial specie resumption; while the people everywhere hail the return of silver coin as a precious boon, bankers, though constrained to admit its usefulness in 'restoring the value of our paper money,' grudgingly consent to its 'free,' but not to its 'enforced' circulation. In other words, the bankers say that as the people in their ignorance 'desire' silver coins instead of paper stamps, it is well enough to gratify them by its circulation among themselves, provided banks are not 'enforced' to recognize it as a legal tender.

"The bankers' resolution reflects the spirit manifested generally by gold advocates. This remark is especially true in reference to the press. All the bitterness of denunciation against

paper inflationists and repudiators has been turned upon those whose offense consists in advocating the restoration of a money standard authorized by the Constitution of the United States, and enjoyed by the people, under Congressional laws, until they were fraudulently deprived of it in 1873. Indeed, hostility to silver is so absorbing that gold advocates begin to contemplate a paper currency with favor. The fact that greenbacks are worth more than silver is urged against its remonetization, while the other fact that the relative value of the greenback and silver dollar was fixed and determined by congressional law is concealed. If the silver dollar be now worth eight cents less than the gold dollar, it is because the government made it so. Gold, like silver and paper, owes its money value now, as ever, to the government stamp. How could silver be expected to retain its money value when it ceased, under a law of Congress, to be a legal tender?

“Heretofore, during the existence of our government, all parties have claimed that legislation should be so guided as to develop the resources of the country and stimulate the industries of the people. There have been conflicts between the planting, the manufacturing, and the mineral interests, but all interests which came into competition with foreign countries have demanded protection. New England required protection for her factories, New Jersey and Pennsylvania for their iron and coal, and Louisiana for her sugar. Later, when valuable deposits of lead and copper were discovered in the Western States, protection was required by and accorded to those interests. But when, in a trying crisis, kind Providence revealed treasures still more precious, instead of extending protection to silver, the government stealthily and secretly deprived it of its monetary character. Other metals, in their various ways, have been utilized. But the government, the bondholders, the press, and even the pulpit, now unite in refusing to repeal a law which was fraudulently enacted. While, therefore, other interests have been vigilantly guarded, we not only refuse to protect silver, but deny ourselves the advantages resulting from its use as money. Before silver was found in our own country, we cheerfully availed ourselves of the Spanish and Mexican silver dollars as a legal tender in the payment of all debts. Now, when we are rich in silver, we recklessly throw away all of these advantages.

“John Randolph, in a speech against a protective tariff, delivered in the House of Representatives, half a century ago, said that he ‘hated wool,’ and would go a mile out of his way to ‘kick a sheep.’ It is very much in this spirit that the warfare against silver is waged. The worshipers of gold hate silver, and go out of their way to ‘kick’ the ‘dollar of their fathers.’ And yet, from the close of our war with England, in 1815, the history of the world furnishes no parallel to the growth, prosperity, and happiness of the American people, up to 1860, when we encountered rebellion and war. During that long period, subject to occasional checks incident to all nations, commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, each cherishing and assisting the other, furnished remunerative employment to all willing hands, and a rich reward to the capital invested. During those ‘years of plenty,’ of industry and economy, wealth was acquired which has since been squandered. We are slowly working back to that palmy condition under the demoralizing legacies of a sanguinary and expensive war — greatly retarded by habits of extravagance and idleness which that war engendered. What we now need to restore prosperity is a return to the financial policy which gave us a paper currency, convertible at all times and places into specie. If it be urged against such a policy that certain foreign governments have adopted a single standard, and that we must conform thereto, my answer is, that we must have a fair start by righting the wrong perpetrated in 1873. Under providential laws, we are a wonderfully favored nation. We are producing silver in great abundance. It is our right and our duty fairly and honestly to make the most of it, as we do with other products of earth and ocean. If for reasons which concern the credit or honor of the nation it is deemed expedient to pay the bondholder in gold, even though he agreed to receive his pay in coin, let that concession be made. Silver would still remain a standard among ourselves, and with full two thirds of all nations and peoples related to us commercially. This was the financial ground that I fondly hoped the administration would occupy. Upon such a basis resumption and prosperity would have been reached and maintained.

“There is, however, one more chance left for averting evil. Gold men, if not lost to considerations of justice and duty, and to a sense of their own true interest, will, after it has been prop-

erly amended, accept and vote for the Bland silver bill. In this way manifold dangers will not only be averted, but resumption and prosperity achieved. Should this last chance be lost; if gold men persist in a course which protracts the hoarding and sweating financial policy, they will become responsible for the consequences. Already, signal lights are burning. There is danger, it is said, that the Bland bill will be passed by constitutional majorities in both Houses over a presidential veto. Now, I take leave to say to aggressive and rapacious capitalists that the worst thing possible for them and for the welfare of our country will be the defeat of a bill remonetizing silver, by a presidential veto. If gold men persist in sowing the storm, they must prepare to reap the whirlwind. Thoughtful men would be admonished by the fact that already nearly or quite two thirds of the members of both Houses of Congress are in favor of the remonetization of silver. But should the voice of the people and the votes of their representatives be overridden by an executive veto, no prophet is needed to foretell the consequences.

"Those who delude themselves with the idea that the present defeat of a silver bill terminates the controversy will soon find that illusion dispelled. Returned to the people, the question will be considered in the light which discussion has thrown upon it. Advocates of silver will not, as heretofore, be confined largely to the South and the West. The people of New Jersey, New York, and New England, whose business interests have long stood still, will speak and act, in ways that their representatives, who vote to deprive them of the use of money providentially provided for their prosperity and happiness, will not misunderstand.

"If I discern and characterize 'events' which 'cast their shadows before,' it is only in the hope of inducing good men to act wisely. I deprecate and deplore, as earnestly as any other citizen, possibilities which we may be forced to encounter. It is only to avoid shipwreck that I reluctantly point out reefs and rocks toward which we are drifting. My individual interests, in a small way, are identified with the class that differs so widely with me as to what methods are best for its security and protection."

*December 15, 1879.*

“The people are now rejoicing in the beneficent rewards of a financial policy which achieved resumption. But for the wisdom and firmness of the last Congress in passing the bill remonetizing silver over an ill-judged presidential veto, supplemented by the courage and fidelity of the Secretary of the Treasury in utilizing silver and greenbacks, there would have been neither resumption nor prosperity. If the silver dollar is not equivalent in value to the gold dollar, the fault and the responsibility belong to the banks, the press, and the Republican senators in Congress from New York and New England, by each and all of whom silver in any form was repudiated. The banks of our city made proclamation that they would have no transaction with the West not based upon gold. At a national bank convention, Mr. Hayes, a modern financial Solomon, objected to silver as money because in an age distinguished for ‘riotous living’ silver was ‘nothing accounted of for drinking vessels!’ And yet, while the bacchanalians of a dark age preferred gold for drinking vessels, Mr. Hayes will find silver recognized as ‘money current with the merchants’ in every book and almost every chapter of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. When, however, the Shylocks of the present generation determined to increase the purchasing power of gold, silver was demonetized by the Latin and American governments. That this was done by Congress, as is now alleged, because silver had largely lost its intrinsic value, is disproved by a letter from the Comptroller of the Currency, written in 1873, informing Congress that the silver dollar was worth three per cent. more than the gold dollar.

“Silver and gold are our constitutional money standards. The Constitution imposes upon Congress the duty of providing for the coinage of silver and gold bullion in such proportions as will equalize their market value. That duty was discharged from time to time as the relative value of the metals required, for more than eighty years, and until 1873, when the Constitution was violated by a law demonetizing silver. I have stated in former letters that but very few members in supporting a bill to regulate the government mints knew that they were, in violation of the Constitution, depriving the country of one half of its money power. And President Grant has said that he signed that bill without knowing that its most important effect was to demone-



tize silver. The Secretary of the Treasury, then a member of the Senate, and chairman of its committee on finance, did not, as far as I can learn, speak to the question. But, as the time for resumption approached, the people discovered that by somebody's sharp practice their faces were to be held down upon a gold grindstone. The remonetization of silver was promptly and loudly demanded. Happily, advocates of a single money standard are beginning to learn, to quote the terse expression of ex-Secretary McCulloch, that 'there is not gold enough in the world to do the world's business.'"

## CHAPTER XL.

1874-1880.

THE EFFORT TO RENOMINATE GENERAL GRANT FOR A THIRD TERM. — NEW YORK AND PENNSYLVANIA DEVELOPMENTS. — A SENTIMENT NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH. — “THE FIRST STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF A MONARCHY.” — AN EDITORIAL ANNIVERSARY. — ELECTION OF GENERAL GARFIELD. — MR. WEED’S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED. — SPEECHES AND LETTERS.

DURING the years 1874, 1875, and 1876, it was sometimes felt that the Republican party was destined to break into two great fragments on the question of renominating General Grant. Mr. Weed was urged to secure an expression against another Grant canvass from the New York Republican convention which renominated Governor Dix. Whitelaw Reid was often in consultation with him, strongly advocating a resolution of protest, as the only safeguard against party disintegration. Mr. Weed was himself inclined to take the same view, but other friends of the Governor thought differently, and they prevailed. In the following year, 1875, Mr. Conkling was regarded as a presidential possibility, and it became necessary to clear the way for his advance. When, therefore, the anti-Grant resolution was again suggested at the Republican state convention, it was warmly indorsed by Mr. Conkling’s adherents. Without dissent, a resolution was passed recognizing as conclusive the President’s public declarations that he was not a candidate for renomination, and avowing “unalterable opposition to the election of any President for a third term.” Again the scene changes. New York has no presidential possibility, it is thought, in 1880, and the Grant movement, now first swelled to really formidable proportions, is placed for guidance in Mr. Conkling’s hands. The Republican state convention assembles in mid-winter, and pledges the united vote of New York to the doctrine “unalterably opposed” in 1875, and declared to be “fraught with peril to our free institutions” by a Republican Congress in 1876.

1880. — Thus the struggle for a third term was not pushed to the bitter end until after Mr. Weed had passed his eighty-second year; nevertheless he felt great interest in all its developments. “Though withdrawn by age and infirmities from active participation in public affairs,” he wrote, in February, “I cannot be indifferent to the interests of the Republican party, believing as I do that the welfare of our country depends largely upon its continued ascendancy. It was my habit during half a century that found me an earnest working Whig and Republican, to remember that our successes depended largely upon our wisdom in the selection of candidates. Conventions should so discharge their responsible trusts as to insure zealous support for their nominees. . . .”

“In the judgment of a large class of Republicans there are objections to third term nominations. Usages, in the course of time, come to possess the strength of enactments. England, for example, has no written constitution, yet usage has given her a form of government as well defined and binding as it could have been by fundamental law. Should an exigency exist demanding the renomination of General Grant, it would be manifested by a spontaneous popular movement, — a movement which would insure his election. Under other circumstances his nomination would be undesirable. . . . I cannot but regret that state conventions were called in Pennsylvania and New York before the public mind was prepared to express its best judgment. President Grant, Senator Blaine, Senator Sherman, and Mr. Washburne are recognized by their respective friends as candidates for the presidency. Each and all of these gentlemen are capable and trustworthy. Either can be elected if his nomination can be reached harmoniously. Is it not important, then, that our delegation should go to the national convention without instructions? If the right sort of Republicans are designated as delegates, may they not be safely trusted to ascertain and express the best phase of public sentiment? . . . If bestowed by delegations appointed in accordance with the views of congressional districts, and left free to act upon the latest and best reflection of public opinion, the nomination of General Grant would be vindicated by his election. But should a nomination be secured by other methods, the success of our ticket will be hazarded.”

“The announcement that Governors Boutwell, Banks, Rice, Washburne, and other prominent citizens have appealed to the Republicans of Massachusetts in favor of General Grant’s re-nomination,” wrote Mr. Weed in April, “must occasion widespread surprise and regret. My own surprise and regret are measured by my high estimate of their wisdom and patriotism. Without in the slightest degree impugning their motives, I am constrained to believe that they have acted without giving themselves the benefit of the fullest and most careful consideration of the question, in all its aspects. Six months ago General Grant’s nomination was a ‘foregone conclusion.’ There was then a general belief that the country needed him. But circumstances and conditions have entirely changed. The wave which was wafting him onward has subsided, leaving him without that advantage over his competitors. In this aspect of the question, should not eminent Republicans in Massachusetts and elsewhere reserve their judgment upon the presidential question? It is of vital importance that those upon whose knowledge and experience the people are accustomed to rely for guidance should hold themselves free to act as the welfare of the country requires when the national convention assembles. All things else being equal, the nomination of either of the other gentlemen named would be preferable to that of General Grant, for the reason that he has been honored for distinguished services rendered his country, like Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Jackson, and Lincoln, with two terms, and can now, like his illustrious predecessors, ‘with all his country’s honors blest,’ find truest happiness in calm and dignified retirement. And here comes in another reason against General Grant’s nomination. A pervading and deep seated anti-third term sentiment, unless quieted by some great emergency, would imperil his election. This anti-third term element, whether it be a sentiment, or a prejudice, or compounded of both, must be recognized, like the ‘Maine law’ idea, as one of the obstructive forces encountered by the Whig and Republican parties. . . . If General Grant is kept well informed, he will not permit his name to go before the national convention. A ‘scrub-race’ would detract from the character and standing of one who has been twice chosen President by the spontaneous sentiment of a grateful country.

“Neither public nor even party considerations inspired the call for premature conventions in Pennsylvania and New York. The object of such action was purely personal; and that object is now so apparent as to provoke a powerful reaction, — so powerful, indeed, that were conventions to assemble now, the proceedings of the February state conventions would be repudiated. The Republicans of Kings County have repudiated those proceedings; and it is by no means certain that a Grant delegation could now be chosen in this city. Those conventions were mischievous in another respect. Other states are following the bad example of Pennsylvania and New York, by ‘instructing’ their delegates. In case such ‘instructions’ are obeyed, the national convention will be anything but a deliberative body; and, worst of all, the great states of Pennsylvania and New York, in so far as delegates obey their ‘instructions,’ will be misrepresented.”

A month before the national convention, several New York delegates, headed by William H. Robertson, then in the State Senate, responding to the demands of public sentiment, united in a letter declaring that at the national convention they would disregard instructions and vote against the third term candidate. These avowals Mr. Weed commended warmly.

“They prove,” he said in a published interview, “not only a determination to act from conviction in the nomination of a candidate for President, but also the unwisdom of embarrassing delegates with instructions before public sentiment indicates the relative strength of candidates. Every intelligent Republican in New York and Pennsylvania perceives that in conventions held now, as they should have been held, ‘instructions’ in favor of General Grant would be an impossibility. Conditions and circumstances which six months ago rendered the nomination of General Grant not improbable have all changed. That nomination is now neither expedient nor probable. . . . Nothing but some impending danger can reconcile the American people to the violation of a rule which, by the force of illustrious examples, has become an unwritten article in the federal Constitution. Nothing less than an emergency should secure the consent of a President, who has served two terms, to allow his name to go before a national convention.

“In the absence of any such emergency, I think it is the

imperative duty of ex-President Grant to withdraw from the canvass."

"But if he does not withdraw, what then?"

"The result must be inglorious; for should he be nominated at Chicago, he would be disastrously defeated at the polls."

"No matter who the candidate of the Democratic party may be?"

"I don't think it makes any difference."

"How about Mr. Tilden?"

"I think Tilden would be a stronger candidate than Grant."

"Do you think the General's friends are aware of the strength of the anti-third term movement?"

"If the supporters of General Grant would faithfully endeavor to ascertain and measure the length, breadth, and strength of anti-third term sentiment, they would realize the impossibility of electing such a candidate. Nearly five generations have grown up in the belief that a third term is the first step in the direction of a monarchy."

The "Evening Journal" was fifty years old in the spring of 1880, and responding to Mr. Dawson's invitation, Mr. Weed went to Albany to resume control for that day of the paper which first appeared under his hand on the 22d of March, 1830. This was an experience probably never paralleled in the history of journalism in this or any other country.

Half a century ago [he wrote] the first number of this paper was issued. Its editor, who is indebted to a kind Providence for length of days, is privileged to occupy for the hour his editorial chair, for the purpose of greeting old friends and their descendants.

The occasion carries us back in memory to the infancy of a journal which, during the thirty-five years of my connection with it, enjoyed the confidence of a great party, a generous people, and of statesmen whose lives constitute an important part of the history of our country. The remembrances of those years are exceedingly agreeable. My "lot was cast in pleasant places." The occupation was in all respects congenial. Its compensations, ample in what is generally regarded as the chief end of life, were most valued in relations and associations which furnish the surest guarantee of enduring happiness. . . .

Time has wrought marvelous changes among those by whom our various industries were then [in 1830] promoted. How few of those then of mature age, actively, usefully, and honorably employed, and who became friends and patrons of the "Journal," are now alive!

Not only most of those then associated with me in the battle of life, but many of their immediate descendants, have passed away. Of the ten or eleven sons and daughters of William James there is but a single survivor. When the first number of the "Journal" was issued (before my family came from Rochester to Albany), I was lodged at the Eagle Tavern with Richard Marvin, William Cook, John I. Boyd, Jared L. Rathbone, Henry L. Webb, and Weare C. Little, intelligent, prosperous, and esteemed merchants. Mr. Little is the only survivor. There is not now, from the foot of State Street to the Capitol, a single person left of all who were then either doing business or residing there. Nor do I remember more than two signs (Gladding's and Friend Humphrey's Sons) that have withstood all changes and reforms. Isaiah and John Townsend are remembered as eminent hardware merchants, and have transmitted this honored name to sons worthy of such an inheritance.

Another old and highly reputable hardware house, Stafford & Benedict's, has, with most of its immediate descendants, long been among things of the past. I believe that a son of Mr. Stafford and a son and two daughters of Mr. Benedict are the only survivors of two large families. Mr. Lewis Benedict became my warm personal and political friend in 1824, and acted with me efficiently and cordially ever after. I never knew a more untiring, zealous, and unselfish politician. He was for many years chairman of our state committee. And it occurs to me here and now to say that in at least one respect I am the most fortunate of men, for during a long life I have enjoyed friendships which brightened and cheered my labors through seasons of prosperity and soothed and solaced afflictions common to humanity.

It was my happiness to find such friends in the late Richard M. Blatchford, Robert B. Minturn, William Kent, and John L. Schoolcraft. Such a friend also was the late Rufus H. King, with whom I became acquainted in 1815, when he came from Connecticut to Albany as a clerk for his brother-in-law, Mr. McHarg. From that time until he was called to his final rest, he was a "friend that sticketh closer than a brother." When the "Journal" was established, and for several subsequent years, I gave my time and thoughts wholly to the advancement of our cause. Aware of my indifference to pecuniary matters, my friends Seward and Whittlesey looked after my worldly affairs. At the instance of those gentlemen, the proprietors of the "Journal" increased my salary as editor annually from \$750 in 1830 to \$2,000 in 1838. Subsequently, when the "Journal" became the state paper and I a partner, Mr. King kindly became my pecuniary guardian, taking the same care of my interests as of his own. Under his auspices, during the next twenty years, he saw, as he used

to say with much gratification, "the acorn grow into an oak." It is to his devoted friendship that I am largely indebted for the competency which not only renders the evening of life free from care and toil, but enables me to do something for those less fortunate. I am consoled for the loss of Mr. and Mrs. King by the affectionate regard of their sons and daughter.

The "Journal," representing a new political element, and one particularly obnoxious to influential men in both the "Clintonian" and "Bucktail" parties, found a "hard road to travel." The "Advertiser," with whose principles and proprietors I had but a short time previously been in accord, was even more bitter than the "Argus." But contrary to a very general belief, the "Journal," strong from the beginning in the West, made its way more rapidly in other parts of the State than was expected, and in 1834, when the Whig party was organized, became its recognized organ. The hitherto invincible Democracy, with leaders distinguished for talent and tact, though at first ignoring the "Journal," soon found in it a "foeman worthy of their steel."

The "Albany Regency," as the "Journal" christened the leaders of that party, consisted of Martin Van Buren, Benjamin Knowler, William L. Marcy, Charles E. Dudley, Benjamin F. Butler, Thomas W. Olcott, James Porter, Samuel L. Talcott, John A. Dix, Azariah C. Flagg, and Silas Wright, with Edwin Crosswell, then state printer, as the editor of their organ. This was an array of men strong in purpose and irreproachable in character. They all possessed qualities which fitted them for their several positions, and when united, rendered them invincible for many years. For the first two or three years I was left to contend with such antagonists almost single handed, while Mr. Crosswell, himself an able writer, was assisted by Governor Marcy, Mr. Flagg, and General Dix.

During the sessions of the legislature I was greatly strengthened by constant political communion with Francis Granger, William H. Seward, Albert H. Tracy, William H. Maynard, Millard Fillmore, and John C. Spencer. Strong as the Democratic party was in its leaders, in its organization, and in its following, watching our opportunity, and taking advantage of all the mistakes of our opponents, we elected a Whig Governor in 1838 and a Whig President in 1840. With occasional reactions against us, the State has been Whig or Republican more than half the time since, and in the character and services of the men to whose elevation it contributed, the "Journal" may reflect with just pride.

To speak only of those "who rest from their labors," the archives of the State show the names of William H. Seward, Washington



Hunt, John A. King, and John A. Dix as governors ; Luther Bradish, George W. Patterson, and Henry J. Raymond as lieutenant-governors ; John C. Spencer, Christopher Morgan, secretaries of state ; Bates Cook, John A. Collier, Millard Fillmore, Philo C. Fuller, James M. Cook, and Robert Denniston as comptrollers ; Jacob Haight, Gamaliel H. Barstow, Alvah Hunt, James M. Cook, and Philip Dorsheimer as treasurers ; Willis Hall, Ambrose L. Jordan, and Ogden Hoffman, attorney-generals ; Asa Whitney, S. Newton Dexter, David Hudson, George H. Boughton, Thomas Clowes, Charles Cook, Nelson J. Beach, and Henry Fitzhugh as canal commissioners ; Luther Bradish, George W. Patterson, Peter B. Porter, Henry J. Raymond, and Jonas C. Heartt, speakers of assembly ; William H. Maynard, Albert H. Tracy, Hiram F. Mather, Timothy H. Porter, Moses Hayden, William H. Seward, Philo C. Fuller, Trumbull Cary, John Birdsall, Isaac Lacey, Chauncey J. Fox, Frederick A. Tallmadge, Samuel Works, Gulian C. Verplanck, Henry A. Livingston, Martin Lee, John Maynard, Laurens Hull, Wm. A. Moseley, Gabriel Furman, Alvah Hunt, Robert C. Nicholas, Henry Hawkins, Erastus Root, Mitchell Sanford, Friend Humphrey, James G. Hopkins, Andrew B. Dickinson, Mark H. Sibley, John W. Taylor, Elijah Rhoades, Harvey Putnam, Frederick F. Backus, Joshua A. Spencer, Francis H. Ruggles, A. J. Coffin, Samuel J. Wilkin, James M. Cook, Benjamin N. Huntington, William Beach, George R. Babcock, Charles Colt, Azor Taber, W. H. Van Schoonhoven, Harmon Bennett, James Platt, James Monroe, Clarkson F. Crosby, Frederick P. Bellinger, Alexander B. Williams, Charles Cook, Ezra Cornell, as senators ; and of G. H. Barstow, John A. Collier, Bates Cook, John Dickson, John W. Taylor, Alfred Conkling, Phineas Tracy, Frederick Whittlesey, James Tallmadge, Samuel J. Wilkin, Millard Fillmore, Philo C. Fuller, Abner Hazeltine, Henry C. Martindale, Timothy Childs, Francis Granger, Thomas C. Love, David Russell, John C. Clark, Edward Curtis, Ogden Hoffman, Harvey Putnam, Mark H. Sibley, Daniel D. Barnard, Thomas C. Chittenden, Seth M. Gates, Moses H. Grinnell, Thomas Kempshall, Christopher Morgan, James Monroe, Luther C. Peck, Victory Birdseye, John Greig, Hiram P. Hunt, Archibald L. Linn, John Maynard, Thomas A. Tomlinson, Henry Van Rensselaer, John Young, Charles H. Carroll, Washington Hunt, Preston King, William A. Moseley, Thomas J. Patterson, J. Phillips Phoenix, Charles Rogers, Asher Tyler, Richards P. Herrick, Hugh White, William Duer, Daniel Gott, Horace Greeley, N. K. Hall, John M. Holley, Elias B. Holmes, Dudley Marvin, Joseph Mullin, Gideon Reynolds, Robert L. Rose, Frederick A. Tallmadge, Peter H. Sylvester, Henry P. Alexander, Henry Bennett, Charles E. Clark, John A. King, James G. King, Elijah Risley,

Abraham M. Schermerhorn, John L. Schoolcraft, Obadiah Bowne, Solomon G. Haven, Augustus P. Hascall, J. H. Hobart Haws, Jedediah Horsford, George A. Simmons, Gerrit Smith, Amos P. Granger, Wm. H. Kelsey, Killian Miller, John Williams, Samuel G. Andrews, William A. Sacket, Clark B. Cochrane, Abraham B. Olin, John H. Reynolds, and John A. Griswold, as members of Congress.

Among the oldest and most zealous political patrons and friends of the "Evening Journal" and its editor, with whom enduring relations exist and who have been associated with it in all its trials and all its triumphs, are Elias W. Leavenworth, Edward Dodd, Benjamin D. Silliman, Samuel B. Ruggles, Eldridge G. Spaulding, Edwin B. Morgan, Robert H. Pruyn, Judson W. Sherman, Richard P. Marvin, S. P. Allen, Oran E. Follett, Bloomfield Usher, John A. Cook, J. S. T. Stranahan, Seth C. Hawley, E. Peshine Smith, James Bowen, Theodore S. Faxton, Ambrose W. Clark, O. B. Matteson, A. D. Barber, Vivus W. Smith, George Geddes, Lewis H. Redfield, Henry W. Taylor, Governor Myron H. Clark, Gideon Hard, Dan H. Cole, D. W. C. Littlejohn, Duncan McDonald (the "Schoharie Poet"), George W. Ernst, Ebenezer Blakeley, Alonzo S. Upham, James M. Marvin, William A. Sacket, William H. Robertson, David Rumsey, George Dexter, Samuel Miller, William McElroy, Thomas McElroy, Lawson Annesley, and Joseph Mullen, together with William White, John D. Parsons, and Visscher Ten Eyck, who are pleasantly remembered as business associates.

Distinguished among those who came later into public life as cherished friends of the "Journal," are Governors Fish and Morgan, Vice-President Wheeler, and Secretary Evarts.

It is pleasant in this retrospect to remember that political differences, however sharp, did not prevent or disturb personal friendships. During our most exciting campaigns agreeable social relations existed with Governor Marcy and Governor Throop, Lieutenant-Governor Gardiner, Comptroller Flagg, Thomas W. Olcott, Benjamin Knowler, Dean Richmond, Governor Seymour, Henry H. Van Dyck, Michael Hoffman, Abijah Mann, Charles Van Benthuyzen, Erastus Corning, Charles L. Livingston, Dudley Selden, Francis B. Cutting, Dr. Peter Wendell, Sanford E. Church, Amasa J. Parker, J. H. Van Antwerp, and Charles P. Clinch.

Between the "Argus" and "Journal" there was "war to the knife" for more than twenty years, during which time their respective editors were not on speaking terms. But when a political and financial change in our relative fortunes came, an incident connected with that change occurred which brightened and solaced the lives of both. . . .

If friendships were convertible into pounds, shillings, and pence, I

should be a very rich man, for in this respect my investments have proved alike profitable and enduring. Notwithstanding the length of the above roll-call, memory is constantly busy in supplying omissions. While there are thousands of Whig and Republican friends whose generous confidence and coöperation is gratefully remembered, I will not now trespass farther on these columns than to pay a tribute of gratitude to James Wadsworth, of Geneseo, farmer, philanthropist, philosopher, and patriot.

Mr. Wadsworth was the wealthiest man in Western New York. He devoted his wealth and what was even more valuable, the wealth of his large intellect, to the improvement of rising generations. He founded Normal schools; he originated district school libraries. I was fortunate enough in 1823, as editor of the Rochester "Telegraph," to attract his attention and secure his confidence and friendship, — a friendship that strengthened until by his death the State lost one of its best and most distinguished citizens. Mr. Wadsworth was earnestly urged to accept representative honors, but he was inflexible in his refusals. The present State Comptroller, a son of the late General James S. Wadsworth, and a grandson of James Wadsworth, inherits the virtues of both.

In referring to personal relations, existing between myself and leading political opponents, I take pleasure in remembering the late General Peter Gansevoort, with whom a friendship existed from 1816, and who was my colleague in the legislature of 1830, the late Garret Y. Lansing, Henry H. Martin, and the late J. V. L. Pruyn, of this city, together with John McKeon and John E. Develin, of New York. The latter two gentlemen, as members of the Assembly in the long past, were, as they are to-day, cherished friends.

It was my intention, on this semi-centennial occasion, to confine myself to the past, but I feel constrained to suggest a few thoughts concerning the present and future of the Republican party. It must now be evident to all that premature calls for conventions in New York and Pennsylvania were, speaking mildly, mistakes; double mistakes, indeed, because they diminish General Grant's chances for the nomination, and if he should now be nominated after a struggle, his election would be doubtful. When an extra session of Congress revealed revolutionary designs, the public mind turned instinctively to General Grant. Should such apprehensions exist when our national convention meets, his nomination would be vindicated by his election, and under such circumstances only should his nomination be urged or desired. Delegates to the national convention ought to be left free to respond to public sentiment as they find it when they assemble. It is not the man so much as the cause that should be considered in the selection of a candidate.

On the 8th of June, 1880, James A. Garfield became the Republican candidate for President, and opponents of General Grant hailed this result joyfully.

"The party is to be congratulated," wrote Mr. Weed, "upon the auspicious close of the protracted and exciting labors of the national convention. The nomination of General Garfield will unite the Republicans of this and other states, who, after months of antagonism and rivalry, will now enter the canvass refreshed and invigorated. The action of the convention insures success in New York. Besides, it disposes of a question which, until now, was never seriously agitated. . . . General Grant is the only one of the Presidents who has been pressed upon the people for a reelection, after having served two terms. The issue has been squarely made; has been forever settled; and the victory is worth all that it has cost."

"Do you think that Grant men will support General Garfield?"

"I do, undoubtedly. Had Blaine, Grant, or Sherman, been nominated after such trouble as they had at the convention, there would have been strong opposition within the party, and in all probability we should have been defeated. It was necessary to unite upon some one who had been in the background."

The day after the election, Mr. Weed sat before the open fire in his study, looking cheerful, when asked what he thought of the result.

"The canvass," he said, "involved questions of vast interest. . . . But it is evident that the people have studied the work accomplished by the Republican party during the last twenty years. . . . If any evidence was needed of General Garfield's fitness for the Presidency, it has been afforded by his actions and utterances since his nomination. . . . I think General Hancock ought to congratulate himself that he was not elected. His life, as President, would have been anything but peaceful."

Just before Mr. Weed's birthday, in the fall of 1880, a reception was arranged in his honor by the New York Press club, to occur at the rooms of the club on that anniversary. Many guests were present and the occasion proved very enjoyable. One or two of the speeches and selections from the letters of absent friends seem to deserve a place in this chapter.

While others have been able, and wise, and patriotic [said the late J. W. Simonton], Mr. Weed, more than any other in the journalistic profession, has recognized that as the creator is greater than the creature, so the king-maker is greater than the king, at least in power for usefulness. And so he has preferred to be a conscientious king-maker, rather than to sit upon the throne and wield its sceptre. During his long career his efforts have been steadily addressed to moulding and shaping the public opinion which, in a free government, is king at last.

He realized that his influence could be best broadened and conserved by earnest work in the editorial chair. And so, while always striving faithfully and well to put whatever cause his pen espoused into the hands of capable administrators, he ever and resolutely pushed aside the honors of high office which were within his personal grasp. Thus no suspicion of self-seeking could impair his power for good; and thus, also, his thoughtful, wise, and unselfish use of the influence commanded by his exceptional talents, won for him that general respect, admiration, and love of which we, here and now, tender him our most cordial expression. . . .

A volunteer in the war of 1812, I believe he never again engaged in official service until 1861. Then, when our country was in the throes of revolution, Lincoln — recognizing his social charm, no less than his logical power, directness of purpose, and marked capacity for terse and vigorous statement — invited him to visit Europe, as a citizen representative of the Union cause, to mingle in the society of the capitals of England and France, and there to create and stimulate a sentiment against foreign intervention in American affairs. The danger of such intervention was the one half-hidden rock lying in the path of our ship of state, which, perhaps more than any other, imperiled its safety during the cloud and tempest of that critical hour.

Mr. Weed promptly accepted this call to duty, though unheralded by official proclamation, and with no hope of other reward than consciousness of duty done. Himself a printer, he followed in the footsteps of the printer Franklin, and served the nation as well at the Court of St. Cloud as Franklin did at an earlier crisis in our nation's life. The golden link which thus connects the names of Benjamin Franklin and Thurlow Weed will carry them down together in history, to be cherished among the choicer memories of a grateful posterity.

It is our proud distinction that their reflected light will also and ever illuminate the records of the journalistic craft to which we belong. Let this thought inspire us to higher aims, to nobler purpose, and to grander endeavor.

After speeches by Algernon S. Sullivan, Erastus Brooks, David M. Stone, James Watson Webb, and others, Dr. J. B. Wood, chairman of the committee of arrangements, called attention to a group of portraits which hung on one side of the wall, representing Mr. Seward, Mr. Weed, and Mr. Greeley; spoke of the presence of the only survivor of the famous copartnership, referred to a despatch just received from Mr. F. W. Seward, and called upon Whitelaw Reid to speak on behalf of the remaining member of "the firm of Seward, Weed & Greeley."

This call [said Mr. Reid] reminds me of the first time I ever had the pleasure of seeing your efficient chairman. I had just come from the wilds of Ohio, and had been drawn to the office of a newspaper which perhaps need not be further designated. I was not familiar with its ways, did not even know how to put the office marks for type, etc., on my copy, and was referred to the chairman of your committee for instructions. I shall never forget the first order he gave me, and it seems particularly appropriate now, — "cut it down one half." . . .

The time for speaking frankly and fully of that firm has not yet come. This, however, we may fairly say: It was the greatest political triumvirate this State, or indeed the country, ever knew. This, also, we may fairly say: When this partnership was dissolved, each member retained the highest respect for the commanding power and ability of each of his late associates, and each cherished it to the end. It shaped the politics of this State and of the country during a most critical formative period. It carried us safely through the death throes of the old Whig party, and shaped the development and growth of the Iusty successor that abolished slavery, put down the greatest civil war of modern times, and has ruled the country for well-nigh a generation. If it be true that one result of the dissolution of this firm was the nomination of Abraham Lincoln, then I am sure no man rejoices, or ever did rejoice, more heartily over the dissolution than does the venerable survivor to-night. [Mr. Weed, interrupting, "Yes, indeed!"] It is a pleasure that the acerbities of the separation have long faded out. There are some here who will remember that an arrangement had been made to bring about a meeting between the two great political editors, which was prevented only by the events of 1872, and the tragic close. They did come together, but it was only over the coffin of one, with the other among the first of the pall-bearers at a funeral where men represented alike the official dignity and the heart of the city and nation.

Both of Mr. Weed's old associates are long gone, each full of years

and of honor. Each fills a great space in our history. The memory of each is tenderly cherished. Who that remembers Seward and Greeley can fail in gratitude to this surviving Nestor of our politics, who guided the one and discovered the other? His way of life is, indeed, fallen into the sere and yellow leaf, but as he looks about him, here or wherever he goes, he may be sure that he has to the full —

“That which should accompany old age,  
Honor, love, obedience, troops of friends.”

Among letters of regret addressed to the secretary of the club were the following: —

PHILADELPHIA, PA., *November 13, 1880.*

DEAR SIR, — I have delayed answering your kind invitation of the 8th, to join your club in the reception to Thurlow Weed, hoping to be able to attend, but I find that it will be impossible.

It would be a special gratification to me to join you in honoring Mr. Weed, who has made himself single from his editorial associates in the country, in asserting the power and dignity of the newspaper press, by placing it above all official positions.

Very truly yours,

A. K. McCLURE.

WEST NEW BRIGHTON, STATEN ISLAND, N. Y.,  
*November 9, 1880.*

MY DEAR SIR, — I regret exceedingly that previous engagements prevent me from paying my respects in person to Mr. Weed at the Press Club on Monday evening.

But no one of the editorial fraternity can more cordially wish for him continued health and prosperity than I. Certainly no one has shown more conspicuously than he how great an influence may be exerted upon practical politics without official position.

Very respectfully yours,

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

GENESEO, N. Y., *November 13, 1880.*

DEAR SIR, — I am in receipt of your favor of the 4th, inviting me to the celebration, by the New York Press Club, of the eighty-third anniversary of the birthday of Mr. Thurlow Weed.

It would give me great pleasure to accept your invitation, but I shall be unable to do so. There is no man in the journalistic ranks whom I hold in such esteem and veneration as the distinguished gentleman whom you propose to honor.

I have known him forty years, but have known of him for more than half a century. I first met him upon the deck of a canal boat at

Syracuse, at the great Whig meeting of September 16, 1840, and have had frequent evidence of his kindness, for which I shall never cease to be grateful. Very respectfully, S. P. ALLEN.

NEW YORK, *November 15, 1880.*

My DEAR SIR, — I regret very much that I cannot be with you to-night, to join with you in the celebration of the eighty-third anniversary of the birth of Mr. Thurlow Weed, who, to quote from your own language, “has so long been a distinguished and revered member” of the profession to which I have the honor to belong.

Your invitation, however, affords me an opportunity to express the admiration and respect I feel for the venerable gentleman, whose career as journalist and statesman has been marked by the broadest benevolence, generosity, and patriotism. If all newspaper men would only study and imitate the shining example of your illustrious guest, how much more agreeable would be the post of journalist to-day!

Yours very truly, THOMAS B. CONNERY.

NEWBURYPORT, MASS., *November 10, 1880.*

MY DEAR SIR, — I am so immersed in work at present that I am obliged to deny myself the very great pleasure of being with you on Monday evening next.

It was only yesterday that I met a passage in the Diary of John Quincy Adams, which showed that during the presidency of that excellent man, Mr. Thurlow Weed was already an active, influential, and patriotic politician. He has, I believe, influenced or admonished every administration since; and always, I am sure, with the best intentions, often with the happiest effects. He was fortunate in entering journalism when the path upward (always difficult) had not become nearly impossible, and when, in order to direct an influential newspaper, it was not necessary to own a million dollars.

The intellectual element of the press seems now trodden under the feet of millionaires. Ask your venerable guest what the element aforesaid ought to do about it. I am confident he could give valuable hints.

With sincere thanks for the honor of your invitation, I remain,

Very truly yours,

JAMES PARTON.

NEW YORK, *November 13, 1880.*

DEAR SIR, — I am in receipt of your very kind invitation to be present and join with the New York Press Club in celebrating the eighty-third anniversary of the birth of Mr. Thurlow Weed, for which honor please accept my thanks.



I find I must deny myself the pleasure of meeting Mr. Weed, yourself, and the members of your respected association; but I cannot forbear saying that, in my judgment, your honorable and honored guest is worthy of the highest respect and best wishes of every journalist and patriot in the country. His natural gifts and endowments, his great wisdom in dealing with public questions, his able advice in times of peril and bitter political strife, together with his great kindness of heart and unselfish desire to do good to all men, have converted his enemies — if he ever had any — and made him an army of friends, who will be glad to know of his continued health, happiness, and prosperity. Permit me to offer him, through you, my hearty congratulations on this eventful occasion, and if he will accept the advice of an humble member of the craft, to wish that he will continue to hold on to the old quill, that he will not lay aside the harness as a laborer with us, and that he may be able many, many times to meet you on such anniversary occasion to receive the greetings and good wishes of the members of your club.

With great respect, etc.,

HENRY C. BOWEN.

P. S. — If I were present and permitted the opportunity I would offer the following sentiment: —

*Our venerable and highly-respected guest* — a living illustration that journalism can produce in a single man the qualities needed in the presidential chair and the halls of Congress, in a court of justice, or in any home or foreign service, where wisdom, justice, and patriotism are of more value than gold or guns or armies.

PHILADELPHIA, *November 10, 1880.*

DEAR SIR, — “Hoping,” as you kindly express it in your note, that I might so arrange affairs as to be able to accept the New York Press Club’s invitation to join in the birthday reception to Thurlow Weed, on the 15th inst., I have postponed a reply until to-day, only to find imperative business engagements still in the way.

It takes a matter of some urgency, you may be sure, and some self-denial, too, to keep me away from the reception that commemorates the eighty-third anniversary of the dear old gentleman’s birthday, — to enjoy once more the presence and the conversation of the veteran exemplar of the virtue of growing old gracefully, and bearing the infirmities of far-advanced age with unflagging cheerfulness of spirit.

Think of the volume of history covered by his eighty-three years of life, with all of which, during his sixty-two years of manhood, he was in close contact, and part of which he was! I shall not attempt even a glance at it in this short letter, for the beginning goes back beyond the inauguration of De Witt Clinton as Governor, and it seems an age

since the era of that great statesman and friend of Thurlow Weed passed away. What a mass of eventful annals in your State and in the United States, between then and now, are called back to memory by the celebration of Mr. Weed's eighty-third birthday, even when we limit recollection to those only in which he took active part, as counselor, negotiator, manager. These will doubtless be recounted at the reception from nearer memories than mine.

His personal influence and action have left more continuous and enduring impress on the history of your State and of the nation than those of any other one man I can call to mind, — and this without official station or official power in his possession. His has been a grand and inspiring career.

With very great regret that I cannot be present on so interesting an occasion, I am, dear sir,

Very truly yours,

GEORGE W. CHILDS.

## CHAPTER XLI.

1872-1881.

SCATTERED UTTERANCES ON PUBLIC THEMES. — CONTRASTS IN JOURNALISM. — DEVELOPMENT OF EDITORIAL ENTERPRISE. — DEMAGOGUES; THEIR METHODS AND THEIR OPPORTUNITIES. — INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT GARFIELD. — HIS DEATH. — SELECTIONS FROM MR. WEED'S LETTERS.

It grew to be a custom with writers for the press, during the later years of Mr. Weed's life, when anything of importance came up, to seek and make public his opinions. Not infrequently several of these gentlemen met each other in his study, waiting for him to return home, or taking notes of his conversation. Sometimes when there was nothing particular to write about they would go to him and simply ask him to talk upon any subject in which he felt interested. Thus adapted, such was the training of his life that he dealt always and upon topics uppermost at the time in the public mind.

"Have you anything to say about Jay Cooke?" was asked on the 21st of September, 1873.

"He has failed by attempting to carry out a great enterprise fifteen years too soon."

"Where should the obelisk be put?" was asked when Cleopatra's Needle arrived in New York.

"The right place for the obelisk is at the Fifth Avenue entrance to Central Park, where it can be seen. But I am afraid it will be hidden away somewhere inside the inclosure."

"What do you think about the Passion Play?"

"New Yorkers wisely absented themselves from an exhibition of Spanish cruelty, when bull-baiting was recently proposed as an amusement. It is to be hoped that they will distinguish themselves in like manner when invited to a dramatic entertainment which desecrates the Scriptures. There is ample room for play-goers without invading the prerogatives of religion."

“What strikes you, Mr. Weed, as the most salient feature in the contrast between the journalism of to-day and that of your youth?”

“The remarkable development of enterprise, which has been most marked during the last ten or fifteen years, and especially wonderful in the last four or five, stimulated by the new facilities afforded by the telegraph, the cable, etc. There never before was anything like the enterprise and intelligence which characterize the newspaper press to-day.”

“How does the influence of newspapers compare with that which they wielded a generation ago?”

“While the newspapers of to-day do infinitely more than their predecessors in the way of diffusing knowledge, I do not think they exert so large a political influence now as formerly. This is especially true of Washington. In all the early history of the country there were one or two journals in Washington which were a power in the whole land. The press at the national capital in these days exerts comparatively little influence.”

“To what do you attribute this falling off in the influence of purely political journals?”

“For ~~one~~ thing I don't think editors nowadays seek to exert the political influence which their predecessors did twenty-five years ago. Then, too, they don't have time. The growth in the scope of the modern newspaper leaves its conductor small leisure for devotion to details of political management. Besides, people are inclined to think more for themselves than they used to.”

“I should like to ask, Mr. Weed, what you regard as the most serious danger by which the country is threatened?”

“Ignorance — ignorance of the masses, who hold the balance of power in many states. I do not mean that ignorance of itself is so dangerous, or that ignorant people by themselves are dangerous; the great peril lies in the fact that the ignorant become a force in the hands of intelligent, educated, but dishonest men. The paramount object of universal education should be to make such voters independent of the designs of the educated and dishonest, — to make them capable of thinking and judging for themselves and voting upon their own responsibility. Misgovernment comes, not up from the masses, but down from the

educated and dishonest. . . . The true theory of our government is that universal education and universal suffrage should go hand in hand."

"Then you believe it would be better if suffrage were limited by an educational qualification?"

"Well, when the question of the extension of suffrage was debated, that very matter was considered. I feared the dangers of universal suffrage unqualified in any way, and for that reason strenuously opposed the amended State Constitution, but the people passed it with an overwhelming vote. I fought against it, wrote against it, did all I could against it, but the Democratic party were unanimously in favor of its passage, and a large proportion of my own party supported it, and so it was easily carried through. That, if I remember rightly, was in 1821 — sixty years ago — and I have lived all these years under that amended constitution, and have not seen the danger I once feared. The fact of the matter is, regular political parties, managed by talented, educated men, have always used these ignorant classes, and for that reason the danger I first had in mind has been averted."

"What was the danger which you then feared?"

"That at some time the masses of ignorant and poor people might unite together, elect men to office from among themselves, who would then pass laws which, while benefiting their class, would impoverish and ruin those who were large possessors of property. That was about the idea; but I am convinced now that there was really no danger to be feared from such a cause. The ignorant and poor never have united so far as to be able to accomplish anything by themselves; they are always in the hands of intelligent men; demagogues and scoundrels, it may be, but still intelligent. Take the case of the Tweed ring, which preyed upon this city for so many years. While these men were elected by the votes of the ignorant majority, it was intelligence that directed and united this vote. I do not believe that, as a general thing, the ignorant and poor want to do wrong, or what is harmful to the government; the great trouble is that they are misled, and misled through their ignorance. Sixty years ago I believed that an educational qualification should be required to limit suffrage to those sufficiently intelligent to vote upon convictions born from their own reasoning.

Such a limit, too, might incite those with the desire to vote to labor for the attainment of the requisite qualification, thus helping along the educational average of the nation."

"You alluded to the fact that the dangers you feared in 1821 have never come to pass, and therefore you have ceased to fear them; may they not obtrude themselves yet?"

"No, I cannot say that I think so."

"You do not anticipate any danger from a possible coalition of strikers and the formation of a party by them?"

"Oh, no; nothing could be accomplished by such a party. It is true that there are now, as there have been in the past, spasmodic organizations of workingmen, with organs, candidates, and party platforms; but in all the past the result has been almost invariably the same. The representatives of these organizations, or the men elected to office, have, after election, sold out to the highest bidder, — corporation, party, or individual, wherever was to be obtained the highest reward for treachery. . . .

"All movements having the object in view of drawing voters away from existing parties have resulted in failure, with one partial exception. About forty-five years ago an attempt was made to organize a workingmen's party in New York; in fact the party was organized. It had papers published in its interest, plenty of men who devoted all their energies to its success, and really did an extensive work. It elected one of its candidates to the legislature. That party I regarded as dangerous. Had it been able to remain in power, New York would have suffered from it severely. Its continued success would have meant plunder and ruin, but the good sense of the people discovered how things were going in time, and the party was put down after an existence of a single year. That movement, like the recent Kearney movement, was an exception to the general rule that all movements which attempt to draw voters away from existing parties are instigated by men of letters or of superior education.

"In the past century there have been efforts to organize all manner of 'special' parties — as the 'anti-Slavery' party, the 'Temperance' party, the 'Know Nothing' party, and more recently the 'Civil Service Reform' party. None of these parties originated with the ignorant and poor. Every one was brought into being by respectable and educated men, though all appealed

to the ignorant element for success. All such parties have failed in the past, and must fail in the future. Not that slavery and drunkenness were not great evils, needing reformation, but that that was not the way to do it. Slavery was finally abolished and intemperance has been greatly mitigated; but this has not been done by these special parties, nor by the extreme men who have had their own ends in view while endeavoring to effect reformations by prohibitory laws. Various anti-slavery organizations actually strengthened slavery for forty years. It was the attempt of that institution to extend itself into the free territories which caused its extinction. That which was aimed at slavery's destruction helped it; that which aimed at its extension broke it down. Slavery destroyed itself. When it failed to get itself into the Constitution of California and other western states, leaders of the pro-slavery party determined upon secession. Now, I can tell you exactly what precipitated that movement. It was the revelation made by the census of 1860, — a census showing such a preponderance in favor of freedom, that slavery, with its old ally, Democracy, was no longer able to control elections and administrations. That was the whole secret of the beginning of the Rebellion. Up to that time pro-slavery people, by uniting with the Democrats, kept control of this government for three fourths of our national existence. The census of 1860 showed that they could hope to do this no longer.

“You spoke about strikers, here and elsewhere. . . . I have thought a great deal about this question of strikes. There are two sides to the question. Capital goes just as far as it dare go to cheapen labor and grind down the laborer, and I see great danger arising to the country from this. I also see great cause for alarm in the existence of trades-unions and in the organization of strikes,— a danger which is aggravated by the accessions which our laboring men receive to their number from abroad, — accessions of men educated to hate capital and to make war upon it. And yet, despite this condition of affairs, in our legislation we have never yet recognized the importance of assimilating capital and labor. It is a shame that our government has utterly failed in any effort to harmonize the interests of the two. How to accomplish this is worthy of the attention of our statesmen. A great deal which has never been thought of might be done in this direction.

“Much has been said about ‘soulless corporations,’ which, to a great extent, has been true. The object of a corporation is to get money, and through its accumulated capital it often attains great power, which is not always used wisely, and rarely, if ever, generously. Labor, as a rule, is patient, but it has within it elements leading too frequently to violations of peace and order. There are demagogues everywhere who take advantage of these elements, and frequently delude laborers into ruinous strikes, — ruinous equally to employers and the laborers themselves. . . . While strikes are dangerous, it is to be deplored that there are occasional provocations for them. In most cases, the demands of strikers are exorbitant, though sometimes they are undoubtedly just. As an example of the former I may mention the plumbers’ strike, in which four dollars a day was demanded. Coming down to this recent strike, however, the demands of the men who handle freight are not large, nor, so far as I can judge, unreasonable; yet my feelings are so strongly against such combinations that I yesterday refused, somewhat reluctantly, to make a contribution for the support of the families of the freight strikers. . . . I believe it would have been better for both parties if the appeal of the laborers for an advance of three cents an hour had been granted.

“Returning, however, to our original topic, I want to say again that I consider this matter of education a subject of the gravest importance, — one which demands immediate attention. While there is an element of ignorance among our people, there is danger of its use by educated, designing, dishonest men. Not that universal education is an unqualified good. An educated criminal is much more successful than an uneducated one. An educated bad man will do us more harm, perhaps, than hundreds, or even thousands, of ignorant men. Guiteau was a pretty fair example of that, — yet this is exceptional. The true safety of the country lies in the liberal education of the masses. The great danger of the country lies in the rapacity and ambition of educated Shylocks and demagogues who have ignorant classes at hand to become their tools.”

On the 4th of March, 1881, General Garfield was inaugurated President. On the 2d of July he was assassinated. He died on the 19th of September.

The time has not yet come when the history of those months



may be impartially written. It is proper, however, that certain portions of Mr. Weed's later correspondence should be incorporated in this volume.

[MR. WEED TO JUDGE GARDINER.]

NEW YORK, *March 22, 1881.*

MY DEAR ADDISON,—I have thought often, within the last few days, of you, Whittlesey, Backus, Elwood, Livingston, Hunter, General Matthews, and others "waiting and watching at the beautiful gates" for those so soon to follow.

I often recall our Manlius life—the books we used to read and talk about, the whist we used to play, in the back room of Rhodes's store, the hopes we cherished of visiting Europe in the long future—hopes fully realized in my case, and strangely rejected by you when offered a first class mission. . . .

I am in my eighty-fourth year, suffering from vertigo, and with sight seriously impaired. But I have much for which to be thankful. Indeed, few men—very few—have enjoyed for so long a period so many of the bounties and blessings of a merciful God.

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

[THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL TO MR. WEED.]

WASHINGTON, *May 6, 1881.*

DEAR MR. WEED,—Rest assured I shall do my whole duty in the matter of the Star Route swindlers. It is a hard task, but it shall be pushed fearlessly, regardless of whom it may involve. . . . In other matters you mention I shall be fully in accord with our friends. . . .

I never needed your counsel more than now, and if you can, please give me your advice often. I shall show your letter to the President.

Truly yours,

THOMAS L. JAMES.

[MR. WEED TO GENERAL DALY.]

NEW YORK, *July 4, 1881.*

DEAR GENERAL,—My reply to your invitation has been delayed in the hope that I might be able to meet the few surviving veterans of the War of 1812 at their annual dinner. But to impaired health comes the afflicting intelligence of the assassination of our beloved President. These causes unfit me for social enjoyment.

The anniversaries of our national independence have rarely been saddened by inauspicious events. The present, however, is a day of deep and dark gloom and sorrow, relieved only by slight gleams of hope. Please make my affectionate regards to such of our comrades

as are able to join you on this occasion, and present to Messrs. Leland my cordial thanks for their generous hospitalities.

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

[MR. WEED TO PRESIDENT ARTHUR.]

NEW YORK, *October 18, 1881.*

DEAR SIR, — I am getting uneasy about the election. The Democratic factions seem to be united in support of their state ticket. Their platform, as a whole, is well calculated to catch votes. So far, however, it does not seem to me that either party shows much zeal or energy, though in this I may be mistaken, for I am too infirm to take an active part in the canvass and do not see many people.

Your presence would wake up our friends in the city, but I fear that your visit to Yorktown will prevent your coming here next week. The best thing for us, politically, would be the appointment of Governor Morgan as Secretary of the Treasury. His name as a candidate has been received with marked favor. I believe that his appointment would ensure the success of our state tickets. I know nothing of your views in regard to this question, and would not, but for my great anxiety that New York shall be found sustaining its President, refer to it.

Inasmuch as a Republican could not have been elected, I regard the election of Senator Davis as an auspicious event. There are seasons when crime is contagious. With a Democratic president *pro tem* of the Senate, the danger that a third Republican President might be assassinated was appalling. Happily we are now safe from such a bereavement.

Very truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

[MR. WEED TO PRESIDENT ARTHUR.]

NEW YORK, *October 20th, 11 A. M.*

DEAR SIR, — I failed on Monday and Tuesday to find Governor Morgan in his office. Yesterday he called here when I was out, leaving word that he would call again at two o'clock, but he was so much occupied in the afternoon that he could not do so. He called this morning to tell me of your great kindness and the conclusion he had reluctantly reached.

I deeply regret this, because I now fear the defeat of our state ticket. If you were here, all might yet be changed. Indeed, I do not despair of being authorized to-morrow to say that he will accept. If I had seen him when he called yesterday morning, all would have been different.

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

[MR. WEED TO JUDGE GARDINER.]

NEW YORK, *August 24, 1881.*

MY DEAR ADDISON, — I had intended to visit Rochester during the present summer, but the extreme heat, even if the severe illness of my daughter had not kept me at home, would have prevented. Now the chances are against me.

I have already written you of the religious meetings in New York. I believe that I am a better and a happier man for them, and I think the same might be said by thousands of people in the city. They have reformed and converted hundreds whom all other influences failed to touch.

The hymns are especially attractive, and draw great numbers, who never before thought of sacred songs. I send you a bound volume containing all these songs, and have marked those which I particularly enjoy. I send you also a collection of family prayers, from which I derive great comfort.

Truly yours,

THURLOW WEED.

## CHAPTER XLII.

1872-1882.

OLD AGE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS. — AN UNDEVIATING ROUTINE. — HOURS FOR MEALS. — READING THE NEWSPAPERS. — ATTENDING TO BUSINESS. — HOW MR. WEED'S TIME WAS DIVIDED. — THE CLUB. — WHIST. — THEATRES. — RAILWAY MEETINGS. — READING DICKENS. — THE STUDY. — NO ONE TURNED AWAY WITHOUT A HEARING. — AFTERNOONS WITH CHILDREN.

ALTHOUGH absorbed in party questions, even until the end, there was not imparted to the last scenes in Mr. Weed's life an aspect of controversy. He never ceased to have positive political convictions, it is true, nor to express them as positively; but, toward the last, when he took part in the discussion of political issues he could secure a respectful hearing and a certain immunity from attack, such as after a lifetime like his he had a right to claim. Politics was his "ruling passion," and to follow his career has been, necessarily, to a large degree, to trace the history of state and national party contests. And yet so large a portion of his time, when he came to be an old man, was engrossed by other things, that some account of the more strictly personal aspects of his later life is here appropriate. There was great strength and beauty in his old age.

A courageous and inflexible nature, through the long, hard years when his life was like one unending gladiatorial combat, he was, then and ever, to a very great extent, dependent upon a woman. But for Mrs. Weed, as he says, he "must have been shipwrecked during the first fifteen years of trial." Feeling her loss most keenly, he could not have survived her, as he did, a full quarter century, had it not been for the devotion of his eldest daughter, Harriet, who so loyally took her mother's place. "Even in its decline," once wrote Mr. Raymond, "life is not all dark, when, as in Mr. Weed's case, it is sustained by the good wishes of a thousand friends, and brightened by the radiance of the most pious affection that ever animated a woman's heart."

Soon after making New York his permanent residence in 1865, he fell into habits of great uniformity. Though his mental life took a wide range, physically he held with tenacity to a certain established routine. He rose shortly after seven in the morning and had breakfast at eight o'clock. This meal he took alone, in his study. Before breakfast he invariably shaved, for he never wore any whiskers, except under the chin, when no longer able to cut those off with safety. The morning meal consisted of fruit, as in season, peaches, berries, oranges, or melons, followed by oat-meal, with cream and sugar; two soft-boiled eggs, of which the white was not eaten, hot crisp corn-beef hash, a slice or two of dry toast, and a cup of tea. Sometimes a bit of fish was added to this list, which was adhered to with undeviating precision.

After breakfast the morning papers were read by some member of the family, or by Mr. Frederick W. Seward, when he was at the house. The reading over, unless interrupted by some caller, Mr. Weed started out promptly upon whatever matter he regarded as most urgent. "Although I have been an invalid for twelve years," he says in a letter to a friend, "I am still able to attend not so much to my own, but to other people's business." Those who never knew the man might not suspect how exactly that sentence contained the truth. He suffered his own affairs to shift for themselves, day after day, month after month, finding no time to give to them when demands were made for his assistance or protection. And such were his ways that he was able often to aid the afflicted when the assistance of others would have been a burden.

At one o'clock in the afternoon lunch was served, at which he was always present, with the family, in the dining-room. At this meal there were a variety of light dishes, with preserves, cake, tea, and chocolate. It was a brief, cheery repast, at which guests were almost always present, informally. He never took a seat at the table in his own house without sitting at the head; and, although toward the last too feeble and blind to carve or direct the courses, never failed to be a charming host, for his infirmities brought no loss of tact, animation, or appetite.

From two until five or six o'clock in the afternoon he received visitors, dictated letters, or listened while some one read aloud.

The evening papers were usually read before six o'clock, — the hour for dinner. At this meal he ate heartily, though he left the table before the rest, after saying he would have nothing further; but changing his mind when the servant carried dessert to the library. He never took coffee after dinner, but during the meal drank ice-water, in which there was a dash of rum. This liquor he purchased himself while in the West Indies, and the supply seemed as inexhaustible as the quality virtuous and aromatic. He gave away innumerable bottles, but Miss Weed always knew some place in the attic or cellar where there was stored another demijohn.

After dining he often went out to the Manhattan Club, where he chatted with old friends. Whist was the only game in which he felt at all interested. Until his eyes began to fail he went frequently to the theatre. When any board or committee of which he was a member held a meeting he was careful to attend promptly. He was often at the sittings of street railway directors. Accompanying him once a long distance across the city, on a bleak winter evening, I thought he took serious chances in venturing out against such weather. When the meeting was over, as we rode home, he remarked that the corporation had on hand a large surplus, of which it was to make disposition. It had been intimated on one side that there ought to be an extra dividend; on the other that the money might be applied in raising the wages of drivers and conductors. His influence and vote had carried through the latter proposition.

He returned home early in the evening, as a rule, and almost immediately went to his bed-chamber, where, if in season, there was a blazing fire on the hearth. He liked to be seated in his comfortable arm-chair not later than ten o'clock, and then, as a look of mingled contentment and attention spread over his face, reading began again. For an hour and a half, sometimes longer, he would listen eagerly, never interjecting a single word of disapproval or appreciation. His favorite author was Charles Dickens, whose best works, "Dombey and Son," "The Pickwick Papers," "David Copperfield," "Bleak House," and the rest, he knew almost by heart, having read and re-read them with unabated enjoyment an innumerable number of times. When the clock struck half past eleven the book was closed. Then Miss

Weed, if not already present, glided into the room, and, after a few moments, read slowly and softly from a little book of prayer, her father reverentially absorbing each syllable. After she had finished he repeated the Lord's prayer. Under no circumstances, unless sickness forbade, were these exercises omitted.

The house in which Mr. Weed lived was never without visitors besides those who were there for a part of the day only. It was like another home for his two married daughters, Maria and Emily, his sons-in-law, Mr. Alden and Mr. Barnes, and all the grandchildren. One of the rooms was recognized as Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Seward's, without whose presence the family circle never seemed quite complete. Thus, though he could not himself read or write, and though his correspondence and business interests were varied and important, he found in his own house abundant clerical assistance, and in Mr. Barnes and Mr. Seward competent legal advisers. There was always some one to alternate with Miss Weed in reading aloud, or to accompany Mr. Weed about the city, when, on account of impaired vision, it was no longer prudent for him to go out alone. The gradual approach of blindness, certain to become complete, if he remained long enough on earth, was the most grievous burden of these years.

On the walls of the study in which Mr. Weed passed many pleasant hours hung the portraits of thirty or forty old friends. A book-case and writing-table occupied one corner; there was a comfortable lounge, an open fire-place, and a square table in the centre, besides that on which breakfast was served. Nearly every object was valuable on account of its associations. An invitation to dine with Governor De Witt Clinton, framed in gilt, hung near the door. Across, near the sofa, similarly framed, was a warrant authorizing Mr. Weed, as a volunteer in the War of 1812, to locate one hundred and sixty acres of land — a warrant never presented to the government. A life-size portrait represented William H. Seward in the prime of life; another, Archbishop Hughes. Among smaller portraits were engravings or photographs of Lord Thurlow, De Witt Clinton, William L. Marcy, Henry Clay, Horace Greeley, Zachary Taylor, Daniel Webster, Winfield Scott, Hamilton Fish, George W. Patterson, R. M. Blatchford, George Peabody, Robert H. Pruyn, E. D.

Morgan, Anson Burlingame, Preston King, Abraham Lincoln, Sir Henry Holland, Edward Ellice, Ulysses S. Grant, William M. Evarts, Horatio Seymour, James A. Garfield, Winfield Scott Hancock, and Chester A. Arthur.

Near the writing-table hung a picture of the Chateau Chavaniac, in Auvergne, which Mr. Weed prized highly, as it was a gift to him from the granddaughter of Lafayette.

[THE COUNTESS DE RÉMUSAT TO MR. WEED.]

R. DE LUXEMBOURG, PARIS.

Monsieur Weed permettra à la petite-fille du général Lafayette de lui adresser une vue de Chavaniac, lieu de naissance de son grand-père.

Elle saisit ainsi une occasion d'exprimer à Monsieur Weed sa vive reconnaissance pour l'intéressant et bienveillant récit qu'il a écrit sur le voyage en Amérique du général Lafayette, et qui lui a fait, ainsi qu'à toute sa famille, le plus vif plaisir.

Elle prie Monsieur Weed d'agréer ses remerciements et ses hommages.

LASTEYRIE DE RÉMUSAT.

24 *Novembre*, 1873.

Certain usages and peculiarities distinguish every man's home when he has risen though but a little in the social scale. It was a rule at Mr. Weed's that no one should be turned away from the door with incivility. No matter who rang the bell, he or she was entitled, by the unwritten code of the house, to courteous treatment. When Mr. Weed's eyesight failed, this law led not only to vast inconvenience but to many impositions. "Never mind," he said, "turn no one away. And if they want food, they shall have it." Of this edict the neighborhood's poor took full advantage. "A black man held the door ajar," writes W. A. Croffut, describing a visit to the house, "and three poorly-clad women, wrapped in their shawls, with tippets on their heads and laden baskets on their arms, were making their way out." Such visitors formed almost a procession. An incredible quantity of provisions was provided in order that their wants might be supplied.

Each Saturday afternoon in the year the children of the neighborhood partook of Mr. Weed's hospitality. During the week he bought fruit, candies, nuts, and trinkets, which, as his



young friends thronged into the study, he distributed. They began to gather on the sidewalk long before it was time for the colored man to open the door and let them in by platoons. Their ages and home conditions varied widely. Most were about eight or ten years old, and of poor parentage. Often young girls carried babies in their arms.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

1882.

THE FINAL ILLNESS. — THOUGHTS FIXED ON THE WORLD TO COME. — KINDNESS OF FRIENDS. — MR. WEED'S EIGHTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY. — HIS DEATH.

ONE day in August, 1882, Mr. Weed fell asleep on the lounge in his library.

It was a close, sultry afternoon, and the window next the churchyard had been opened, for fresh air. Striking him in his sleep, the draught gave him a chill. Physicians were hastily summoned, and after the usual restoratives had been applied, a reaction was produced.

He recovered sufficiently to visit his daughter in Albany during the first week in September, and was himself in no wise alarmed about his condition, until, on returning to New York, he was prostrated by another chill.

It was a great trial when he was obliged to give up his favorite lounge on the lower floor, and remain on the bed which was arranged for him in the dining-room. He yielded to this confinement only when no longer able to walk, and then decided not to go up to his own bed-chamber, as that room was somewhat inaccessible to visitors.

"So long as any strength remains," he said, "it is a duty to see friends, when they take the trouble to call."

"He has no disease," said the physicians, when we questioned them. "There is no giving out at any particular spot. But on account of his advanced age, any sickness which he has must be regarded as serious."

"I am deeply sensible of the great kindness and sympathy of friends," he wrote one afternoon, when he rallied a little, "kindness and sympathy manifested in various ways. I am oppressed by inability to make adequate acknowledgment. The members of my family have endeavored to do this in many cases, but there is very much that can be acknowledged only by grateful

remembrance, such as calls of anxious inquiry and the sending of delicious fruits and delicacies from every direction, even from the hot-house of Alexander Mitchell, of Milwaukee. George Bancroft is only one of hundreds who have called and whom I was unable to see. I wish I could express my appreciation of the kindly interest which so many seem to feel.

“While I am not without hope of improved health, I am far from sharing the confidence felt by those about me in my ultimate recovery. My thoughts necessarily dwell a good deal more upon the future than upon the present. A man who has lived more than fourscore years has little reason to hope for length of days, and in that aspect of the case my thoughts are now much more fixed on the world to come than the world where for so many years I have enjoyed so much good and mercy and blessing. I am very thankful alike to my God, my Saviour, and my fellow-creatures for a world of kindness extending through a long life.”

His eighty-fifth birthday fell on the 15th of November, and he was well enough to take note of that event. Knowing of his illness, friends were particularly thoughtful. Many flowers and other gifts were received. When brought to his bedside with the messages of the givers, he passed his hand over them — for he could no longer distinguish even light from darkness — and sent back some cheering response. It had been decided by the doctors that no visitors should be permitted to see Mr. Weed, and Mr. Charles O’Conor, when he called, did not anticipate that privilege. But Mr. Weed insisted that this should be an exception. “Tell Mr. O’Conor,” he said, “that I am too blind to see him, but I want to take him by the hand.” Then the distinguished jurist, with whom the invalid had never once agreed in politics, went to the bedside, and spoke a few kindly words. At Mr. Weed’s request, several other old friends were admitted to the sick room, and the excitement seemed to do him good. He was calm and suffered no pain.

On Sunday night, the 19th of November, he sank into a condition of insensibility which was at first thought to be natural sleep. The next morning, about the usual time for him to awake, it was discovered that he lay in a sort of stupor. His eyes were closed, and on his face there was a look of perfect composure. He breathed regularly and naturally; but it was

only too plain that the interval between each respiration gradually increased.

When no effort to restore consciousness availed, it was thought that he could live only a few hours. Such was his great vitality, however, that, while each breath grew fainter and fainter, two whole days were survived.

About midnight on the 20th of November, while his mind was wandering, he seemed to be carrying on a conversation with President Lincoln and General Scott, in regard to the late war. At the conclusion, he ordered a carriage, and then, after a moment's pause, said : —

“ I want to go home ! ”

Those were his last words.

On the morning of Wednesday, the 22d of November, at five minutes past nine o'clock, he died.

## MR. WEED'S WILL.

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I, THURLOW WEED, of the city of New York, revoking all former wills, make and declare my last will and testament to be as follows : —

First. To my daughter, Harriet A. Weed, whose life has been regulated by duty and affection, and who since the death of my wife has kept my home in order, seeking constantly to promote my health and happiness, I give, devise, and bequeath my dwelling-house and lot, No. 12 West Twelfth Street, New York, in fee simple absolute, together with my furniture, silver, paintings, books, papers, and wines.

Second. I give and bequeath to Agnes, widow of my deceased brother Osburn Weed, and to Thurlow, Harriet, and Valentine, children of my late brother aforesaid, the sum of \$1,000 to each respectively.

Third. I give and bequeath \$100 each to the following named persons, viz. : James Weed Davis, James Weed Naphew, Thurlow Weed Hillson, Thurlow Weed Garrison, all of Albany, N. Y. ; Thurlow Weed Folts, of Oswego County, N. Y. ; Thurlow Weed Seward, formerly of Florida, N. Y. ; Thurlow Weed Meeks, of Brooklyn, N. Y. ; Thurlow Weed Abell, of Genesee, N. Y. ; Thurlow Weed Cunningham, of Staten Island ; Thurlow Weed Barry, Thurlow Weed Lounsberry, Thurlow Weed Hastings, Thurlow Weed Smith, and Louisa Weed Shook, all of the city of New York ; Catherine Weed Riddle and Mary Weed Riddle, daughters of H. R. Riddle, of Baltimore, Md. ; Thurlow Weed Bergen, and Thurlow Weed Campbell, and Thurlow Weed Whittlesey.

Fourth. To Emma Brown, of Atkinson, Wis., the sister of the late Thurlow Weed Brown, of the State of Wisconsin, \$200.

Fifth. To Charles Van Benthuisen, printer, of Albany, N. Y., whose warm and life-long friendship has been a pleasure and a solace to me, I give and bequeath my pearl pin, a present to me from our mutual friend, the late Gilbert C. Davidson.

Sixth. To Addison Gardiner, of Rochester, Benjamin D. Silliman, of Brooklyn, and James Bowen, of New York, old and cherished

friends, each a copy of my printed volume of "Letters from Europe and the West Indies."

Seventh. To my esteemed friend, Hamilton Fish, for whose personal character and public services I entertain a high regard, I give and bequeath the massive link of the iron chain his father aided in stretching across the Hudson River near West Point during the War of the Revolution.

Eighth. In affectionate remembrance of a warm friendship which commenced over half a century ago with the late William H. Seward, lasting uninterruptedly to his death, I give and bequeath to his son, Frederick W. Seward, to whom I am as affectionately attached, the cane presented to me by our mutual and valued friend, the late Trumbull Cary.

Ninth. To the Home of the Friendless, an institution in Albany for the support of aged, indigent, and respectable females, I give and bequeath \$500; to the kindred institution for the support of old and indigent men, situated on the Troy road, \$500.

Tenth. I give and bequeath the sum of \$200 to Jeremiah McCauley, who, with his devoted and estimable wife, is doing good work in their Water Street Mission House.

Eleventh. I give and bequeath the sum of \$200 to the support and relief of the Newsboys' Lodging-House in the city of New York.

Twelfth. I give and bequeath \$250 to the Home for the Friendless, in East Twenty-ninth Street, with which my kinswoman, Mrs. Bennett, has been associated for over forty years.

Thirteenth. I give and bequeath \$250 to the institution in New York for the support and relief of the ruptured and crippled poor.

Fourteenth. I give and bequeath \$1,000 in trust to Samuel Willetts, Morris K. Jesup, and James Talcott, of New York, to be by them bestowed and dispensed among such charitable institutions or enterprises as in their judgment shall appear meritorious.

Fifteenth. All the rest and residue of my property and estate, real, personal, and mixed, wherever situated, I hereby give, devise, and bequeath to my daughters, Harriet A. Weed, Maria W. Alden, and Emily W. Barnes, and to my grandchildren, Catherine W. Barnes, Thurlow W. Barnes, Emily W. Barnes, Harriet I. Barnes, William Barnes, Jr., and Maria W. Alden, their heirs and assigns forever, in fee simple absolute, to be apportioned and divided among them respectively by my executors in nine equal parts, share and share alike.

Sixteenth. It is my desire and request that my said descendants and devisees annually during her lifetime pay to Mrs. Elizabeth Goewey, of Albany, \$100, in lieu of the \$96 of my pension money which she now receives.

Seventeenth. In case of the death of any of the aforesaid nine residuary devisees before the death of the testator, his or her share is to be divided equally among the survivors, share and share alike.

Eighteenth. I constitute and appoint my daughter, Harriet A. Weed, executrix, and James Bowen, of New York, and William Barnes, of Albany, executors of this will, requesting them to construe and execute it benignly, according to its spirit and intent.

THURLOW WEED.

Dated *April 9, 1881.*





# INDEX.

- ABBOTSFORD**, visited, ii. 108.  
**Abolition societies**, formed, i. 426.  
**Abolitionists**, fatuity of, ii. 126; influence of, in 1860, ii. 303; their course opposed by Mr. Weed, ii. 304.  
**Above the horizon of party**, ii. 307.  
**Abuses practiced upon emigrants**, ii. 140.  
**Acton, Thomas C.**, letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 488; mentioned, ii. 458.  
**Adams, Ananias**, a printer's apprentice, i. 23.  
**Adams, Charles Francis**, mentioned for Secretary of Treasury, i. 622; minister to England, i. 539; ii. 350; interviews with Mr. Weed, ii. 350; letter from Mr. Seward, ii. 351; Mr. Weed's candidate for President in 1872, ii. 487.  
**Adams, Elisha**, arrest of, for implication in Morgan affair, i. 259; trial of, i. 262, 285; explains his testimony to Mr. Weed, i. 266.  
**Adams, John**, editor of Portland "Advertiser," ii. 54.  
**Adams, John Quincy**, aspirant for the presidency, i. 103; supported by Thurlow Weed for President, i. 105; nominated for President by the "Telegraph," i. 105; nominating for President, i. 107; his supporters in legislature of 1824, i. 107; political friends of, i. 117; his prospects as presidential candidate, i. 118, 119; political supporters of, i. 122; supporters of, in the Assembly of 1825, i. 165; elected President by vote of Congress, i. 172; letter of A. H. Tracy on election of, as President, i. 173; to what he was indebted for his election, i. 178; concerning his appointments, i. 178; his morning baths, i. 179; concerning his administration, i. 189; mentioned, i. 197, 351, 626; not a Mason, i. 302; remark of John Randolph concerning, i. 381; condemns masonry, i. 423; petition concerning slavery, i. 427; prosperity of administration, i. 450; Mr. Seward visits him in 1831, ii. 41; visited by Mr. Weed in 1839, ii. 79; death of, ii. 166, 167; dinners given him, ii. 484.  
**Adams, William H.**, on prosecution of Morgan affair, i. 233; member of Assembly of 1825, i. 165.  
**Adgate, Matthew**, a veteran legislator, i. 200.  
**Adriance, John F.**, Mr. Weed's drive with, i. 387.  
**Adulterated drinks**, ii. 155.  
**Agricultural districts of England and America**, ii. 201.  
**Agricultural societies**, formation of, i. 78, 79.  
**"Agriculturist," the**, started by Thurlow Weed, i. 76, 77; ii. 8.  
**Aid to Lancashire laborers**, ii. 423.  
**Aiken, S. C.**, Thurlow Weed at, i. 45; ii. 461.  
**Aire, Jonathan**, a Mason, challenged as juror, i. 274.  
**Albany**, a political centre in 1830, i. 8; the cholera at, i. 417; its distinguished citizens, i. 447; Mr. Weed declines to be mayor of, ii. 182.  
**"Albany Argus," newspaper**, i. 43; ii. 36.  
**"Albany heauty," the**, i. 147.  
**Albany "Daily Advertiser,"** antagonistic to the "Evening Journal," i. 412; sold, i. 412.  
**Albany "Evening Journal,"** first issued, 1830, i. 8; ii. 39; its supporters, i. 361; success of the, i. 411; establishment of, by Mr. Weed, i. 360, 362; anti-Masons contribute towards, i. 361; original proprietors of, i. 362; General Taylor suggested for the presidency by, i. 572; editorial foreshadowing of the civil war, i. 603; again edited by Mr. Weed for one day, ii. 546.  
**"Albany Gazette,"** a newspaper, i. 31.  
**"Albany Regency,"** of whom it consisted, i. 8; supported Mr. Crawford for President, i. 118; members of the, i. 103; influence and power of its members, i. 103; mentioned, i. 342, 376, 383, 431; and anti-Masonic party, i. 366; defeat of the, i. 408; action on small bill question, i. 444; denounced, i. 445; so named by Mr. Weed, ii. 36; names of the members, ii. 548.  
**"Albany Register,"** Republican newspaper, i. 43; in favor of a certain canal, i. 73; Mr. Weed associates editor of, ii. 6.  
**Albert, Prince Consort**, memorandum on the affair of the Trent, ii. 377.  
**Aldrich, Joshua**, ii. 16.  
**Alexander, Dr.**, principal of an Academy, i. 21.  
**Alexander, Joseph**, mentioned, i. 112; at opening of first railroad, i. 386.  
**Alexander II.**, Emperor of Russia, gives

- sealed orders to the fleet regarding the blockade, ii. 347.
- Allen, Avery, statement concerning Richard Howard, i. 248.
- Allen, Mr., at the sending of the Michigan over Niagara Falls, i. 356.
- Allen, Nathaniel, his choice for governor, i. 83; reëlected to Congress, i. 83.
- Allen, Peter, elected as Speaker in legislature in 1815, i. 46-48.
- Allen, S. P., letter to Press Club dinner, ii. 556.
- Allen, Stephen, social life of, i. 400; legislator in 1826, i. 400; and wife, death of, i. 401.
- Allen, William F., Comptroller of New York, i. 348; ii. 488.
- Alley, Samuel, in legislature 1828, i. 402.
- Allyn, Captain, of ship Cadmus, i. 184.
- Alsop, Mrs., death of, i. 87.
- Amended Constitution, takes effect with legislature of 1823, i. 397.
- "American," a newspaper, i. 33; supported Mr. Adams for president, i. 118.
- American Anti-Slavery Society formed, i. 430.
- American people, their normal proclivities democratic, ii. 309.
- Amory, Jonathan, member of Governor Seward's staff, i. 457.
- Anderson, Robert (Major), at Fort Sumter, ii. 316.
- André, Major, mentioned, i. 186; his remains in Westminster Abbey, ii. 17.
- Andrew, Henry, legislator of 1837, i. 407.
- Andrew, John A., on Mr. Seward, ii. 266; speech at Chicago convention, ii. 267.
- Andrews, George, concerning the bank at Rochester, i. 104.
- Andrews, Samuel G., mayor of Rochester, i. 100; an Adams man, i. 158; change in politics, i. 203; recommendation of Thurlow Weed for postmaster, i. 203; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; sustained the Stillwell bill, i. 379.
- An old story retold, ii. 101.
- Another mission in prospect, ii. 427.
- Anecdote of Herman Knickerbocker, i. 48; of Judge Jacob Weaver, i. 150; of Alderman Phil. Brasher, i. 401; of Samuel B. Ruggles in legislature of 1838, i. 408; concerning Aaron Clarke, i. 397; of Elem F. Norton in Assembly of 1823, i. 399; of Chancellor Kent, i. 463.
- Anthony, General, meeting with Lafayette, i. 185.
- Anti-Masonic convention at Le Roy, i. 256; candidates elected to legislature, i. 302; state convention at Utica, i. 304, 305; party strengthened, i. 309; its prominent men, i. 336; successes in elections, i. 339; versus the Democratic party, i. 350; and National Republican parties, a union desired between, i. 351; merged into Whig organization, i. 363; state convention at Utica, delegates at, i. 366; convention at Baltimore, delegates to, i. 389; members of legislature of 1832, i. 391; meeting at Utica, its candidates, i. 413; party dissolved, i. 425; leaders, defection of, i. 421; national convention, ii. 39.
- "Anti-Masonic Enquirer," newspaper edited by Mr. Weed, i. 306; growth of, i. 309.
- "Anti-Masonic Review," paper edited by Henry Dana Ward, i. 310.
- Anti-Masonry inaugurated, i. 242; consultation of prominent men concerning political action against, i. 299; mentioned, ii. 47.
- Anti-Masons, convention of for nomination of members of Assembly, i. 301; support Adams' administration, i. 301, 302; number of elected to legislature, i. 309; Mr. Clay as a candidate, i. 350; contribute towards establishing the "Evening Journal," i. 361.
- A peep into the bag, ii. 377.
- Appointments made through Mr. Weed's influence, ii. 474.
- A precipitate advance, ii. 337.
- Arbitrary opposition to silver, ii. 531.
- "Argus," the, newspaper, i. 8, 85; and "Daily Advertiser" versus the "Evening Journal," i. 362; and "Evening Journal," rivalry for the earliest news, i. 369; paper, hoodwinked concerning the steamboat Columbia, i. 477; editorial, explaining the mystery of the steamboat Columbia, i. 479.
- Armstrong, General, Secretary of War, mentioned, i. 40.
- Armstrong, John, Jr., member of Assembly of 1825, i. 164; at Lafayette reception, i. 189.
- Arnold, Mrs., wife of Benedict Arnold, i. 188.
- Arnold, Nathan T., legislator of 1829, i. 402.
- Arthur, Chester A., collector of New York, nominated for Vice-President, ii. 464; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 566.
- Arthur, Rev. William, i. 633.
- Ashburton, Lord, i. 512.
- Ashes, the value of, i. 11.
- Ashmun, George, ii. 168, 189.
- Ashworth, Mr., mayor of Manchester, i. 538.
- "A slimy intrigue," ii. 446.
- Aspinwall, William H., i. 625.
- Assembly of 1825 organized, i. 163; delegation of 1814, i. 393; of 1816, organization of, i. 384.
- Astor, John Jacob, i. 626; ii. 389.
- Astor, Mrs. William B., mentioned, i. 164.
- Atherton, Mr., resolution in Congress concerning right of petition, i. 427.
- Atwater, Judge, of Canandaigua, incident of, i. 140; mentioned, i. 232.
- Auburn, N. Y., prominent citizens of, i. 44; leading men of, i. 143.
- "Auburn Gazette," a Federal paper, i. 22.
- Autobiography, how and why written, ii. 128.
- Avignon, ii. 206.

- A word with capitalists, ii. 535.  
 Aymar & Co., i. 502.
- Backus (Rev.) Azel, president of Clinton College, i. 35.  
 Backus, Dr. F. F., political views of, i. 98; of Rochester, established school for idiots, i. 98; mentioned, i. 158, 215, 339; member of base-ball club, i. 203; appointed to investigate the "Morgan affair," i. 230; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257; concerning political anti-Masonry, i. 299; concerning the election of treasurer at Rochester, i. 299; on Morgan inquest committee, i. 316; member anti-Masonic party, i. 336; of Rochester, wife of mentioned, i. 346.
- Backus, Miss Wealthy, married Gerrit Smith, i. 35.  
 Backus, Mrs., daughter of Colonel Fitzhugh, i. 98.  
 Bacoo, Ezekiel, delegate to convention, i. 89.  
 Badger, Deacon, a shoemaker at Cincinnati, i. 18.  
 Badger, George E., Secretary of Navy, i. 506.  
 Badger, Luther, at convention, i. 452.  
 Bagley, Joseph, mentioned, i. 394.  
 Bailey, Calvin P., elected to Assembly, i. 309.  
 Bailey, Theodorus, postmaster of New York, i. 183.  
 Baird, William, concerning removal of Governor Clinton, i. 113.  
 Baker, Captain, a tavern-keeper, i. 2.  
 Baker, Ellis, hotel-keeper at Albany, i. 43.  
 Baker, George E., letter from Horace Greeley, ii. 232, 255; ii. 238.  
 Baker, Oran E., editor of "The Pilot," i. 41.  
 Baldwin, Ebenezer, mentioned, i. 112; private secretary of Governor Clinton, i. 165.  
 Baldwin, Grant B., leader in Clay party of 1824, i. 407; on committee of county meeting, i. 158.  
 Baldwin, Samuel S., mentioned, i. 147.  
 "Bally," a livery stable man, i. 370.  
 Baltimore, Whig convention of 1844, ii. 119; convention (Whig) in 1852, ii. 215; convention nominates Lincoln and Andrew Johnson, ii. 446.  
 Bank Coffee-House, the, in New York, i. 53.  
 Bank of Rochester, a charter given to the, i. 104, 106.  
 Bank of United States, branch of established at Buffalo, i. 340; a re-charter for the, i. 371; Mr. Webster's speech on, i. 372; politically dead, i. 372; supporters of the, i. 372; Mr. Weed reveals a secret concerning, i. 374.  
 Banks, N. P., ii. 245.  
 Banks, applications to legislature for, i. 106.  
 Baollman, Dr., concerning General Lafayette's imprisonment at Olmutz, i. 192.  
 Barber, E. D., libel suit of J. Fenimore Cooper against, i. 520; editor of "Otsego Republican," i. 520.  
 Barhour, M., member of Congress from Virginia, i. 256; quoted, i. 382.  
 Baring Brothers & Co., Mr. Weed visits, ii. 351.  
 Barker, George P., legislator of 1835, i. 407.  
 Barker, Jacob, mentioned, i. 54; bank of, i. 55.  
 Barker, Mr., custom-house parody by, i. 499.  
 Barker, Pierre E., presidential elector of 1824, i. 138; collector of port of Buffalo, i. 138.  
 Barker, Samuel, a veteran legislator, i. 200.  
 Barstow, Dr., member of Clinton party, i. 109.  
 Barnard, Daniel D., counsel in Morgan trial, i. 274; concerning a mission abroad, i. 594; appointed to Prussia, i. 595.  
 Barnard, Rev. David, renounced Freemasonry, i. 241; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 256.  
 Barnard, Elder, renounces masonry, i. 310.  
 Barnes, William, Mr. Weed's son-in-law, ii. 571, 579.  
 Barney, Hiram, mentioned for collector, i. 612; appointed Collector of New York, ii. 322.  
 Barstow, Dr., of Tioga, Senator, i. 47.  
 Barstow, G. H., leader of Adams party in 1824, i. 107; at Baltimore convention, i. 389; nominated for lieutenant-governor, i. 443.  
 Barton, Lawyer, advice of to a client, i. 609.  
 Barton, Major Samuel, action of, in the abduction of Morgan, i. 229; witness in libel suit, i. 332; death of, i. 325.  
 Base Ball Club, formation of, at Rochester, i. 203.  
 "Batavia Advocate," a newspaper, i. 22.  
 Bates, Edward, mentioned for Mr. Lincoln's cabinet, i. 608; appointed Attorney-General, ii. 325.  
 Bay, Dr. William, eminent physician, i. 63.  
 Beach, Ebenezer S., of Auburn, i. 41; at Rochester, mentioned, i. 98; mentioned, i. 158; an anti-Mason, i. 336.  
 Beach, John H., of Auburn, i. 41; Senator, i. 47; at convention, i. 452.  
 Beach, Mr., meeting with Mr. Weed, i. 567.  
 Beardsley, Hon. Samuel, quoted, i. 426.  
 Beck, Dr. T. Romeyn, statements concerning action of the Grand Chapter, i. 247; principal of Albany Academy, i. 384.  
 Belknap, Captain Isaac, at Lafayette reception, i. 188; mentioned, i. 199.  
 Bell, Isaac, mentioned, i. 626; ii. 145; on Board of Charity, i. 628.  
 Bell, John, leading Whig, i. 442; at gathering of Whig members of Congress, i. 508; Secretary of War, i. 506; a candidate for President, ii. 297.  
 Bellinger, Christopher P., in Fortieth Regiment Militia, i. 38; incident of, i. 149;

- mentioned, i. 150; in Assembly 1824, i. 400.
- Bellows, Ira**, lawyer of Pittsford, i. 34.
- Belmont, August**, letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 310; mentioned, ii. 408; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 420; on the mode of prosecuting the war, ii. 421.
- Bemis, James D.**, of the Ontario "Depository," i. 22.
- Benedict, General James**, a legislator of 1824, i. 399; a legislator of 1825, i. 400.
- Benedict, Lewis**, concerning bank charter, i. 106; concerning money borrowed of, i. 137; at opening of first railroad, i. 386; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; as a merchant, i. 447; a zealous Whig, i. 448; mentioned, ii. 187, 547.
- Benjamin, Judah P.**, suggests that the South will return to its allegiance to Great Britain, ii. 314.
- Bennett, Henry**, admitted as lawyer, i. 392.
- Bennett, James G.**, correspondent of "New York Courier," i. 352; letter challenging Mr. Weed concerning certain political movements, i. 352; declines a mission to France, i. 619; Mr. Weed's interview with, concerning his war sentiments, i. 616-618; mentioned, ii. 228.
- Benton, Colonel Thomas H.**, quoted, i. 180; a hard money advocate, i. 443; ii. 42.
- Betts, Samuel R.**, member of Congress, mentioned, i. 152; at Lafayette reception, i. 188.
- Biddle, Mr.**, concerning Mr. Tracy for bank president, i. 341; interview with Mr. McLane concerning charter for United States Bank, i. 373.
- Bierell, Louis**, rescues the body of Colonel Baker at Ball's Bluff, ii. 346.
- Bigelow, John**, letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 366; an interview with, ii. 399; mentioned, 349, 391.
- Binghams, the**, mentioned, i. 159.
- Birdsall, James**, buys a printing establishment, i. 76; member of Congress, i. 77; friendly relations with Thurlow Weed, i. 77; concerning a political intrigue, i. 124; letter introducing Mr. Weed, ii. 12.
- Birdsall, Judge John**, lawyer, at Lockport, biographical sketch, i. 81; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; resignation of, i. 337; appointed Judge at request of Mr. Weed, i. 338; declines anti-Masonic nomination to Congress, i. 338; elected to Assembly, i. 339; accepts national Republican nomination, i. 339.
- Birdsall, Major Ben**, shot by a soldier, i. 63.
- Birdseye, Victory**, delegate to convention, i. 89; lawyer, mentioned, i. 147; appointed to investigate Morgan affair, i. 274; converted to anti-masonry, i. 234; legislator of 1823, i. 399; at convention, i. 452; ii. 4, 501.
- Birney, James G.**, married daughter of Colonel Fitzhugh, i. 98; nominated for the presidency in 1840, by the anti-slavery men, ii. 80.
- Birth-day anniversary in 1880, ii. 552.
- Bishop, Kitchell**, a veteran legislator, i. 200.
- Bissell, Josiah, Jr.**, organized a six-day line from Rochester to Albany, i. 99.
- Black cockades** worn by the Republicans, i. 4.
- "Black salts," the making of, i. 11.
- Blaine, James G.**, letter from Mr. Weed to, ii. 522.
- Blair, Montgomery**, mentioned for Mr. Lincoln's cabinet, i. 607, 608; appointed Postmaster General, ii. 325; attacks the loyalty of Seward and Stauton, ii. 330.
- Blatchford, Richard M.**, merchant of New York, i. 55; mentioned, i. 375, 457, 625; supported United States Bank, i. 372; on election committee, i. 476; letter to Mr. Weed, i. 480; concerning illegal voters, i. 493; friendship for Mr. Webster, i. 576; member of the Taylor committee, i. 577; concerning Mr. Weed's mission to Europe, i. 638; ii. 88, 461.
- Blatchford, Samuel**, appointed private secretary, i. 457.
- Bliss, Colonel**, son-in-law of President Taylor, i. 592.
- Bloodgood, Francis A.**, lawyer, i. 31.
- Bloodgood, Mr.**, editor of "Albany Advertiser," i. 412.
- "Blossoms," dinners at, i. 140.
- Blunt, Joseph**, concerning Mr. Webster's speech, i. 372.
- Board of Charities and Correction**, ii. 145.
- Bogardus (Captain), Jacobus**, of sloop Jefferson, i. 3; mentioned, i. 8.
- Bogart, James**, publisher of "Geneva Gazette," i. 22.
- Bogart, William H.**, veteran senate reporter, etc., i. 142.
- Bonaparte, Napoleon**, mentioned, i. 40; demanded release from prison of General Lafayette, i. 193.
- Bond, Colonel**, in Congress, i. 490.
- Booth, Rev. Dr.**, reminiscences of Mr. Weed, ii. 180, 163.
- Bostwick, Mr.**, political call upon Chief Justice Spencer, i. 167.
- Botts, John M.**, leading Whig, i. 442; concerning the Bank bill, i. 507; of Maryland, i. 606.
- Bottsford's hotel** at Catskill, i. 6.
- Bouck, William C.**, Governor of New York, mentioned, i. 48; Democratic candidate for governor, i. 491; succeeds Governor Seward, 1842, ii. 98.
- Boughton, George H.**, of Canandaigua, i. 140; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257; concerning political anti-masonry, i. 299; elected to Assembly, i. 309; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; at Baltimore convention, i. 389; concerning a senator for the Eighth District, i. 337; delegate to senatorial convention, i. 339.
- Boutwell, George S.**, urges division of rebel estates, ii. 457.
- Bowen, Henry C.**, letter to Press Club dinner, ii. 557.
- Bowen, General James**, mentioned, i. 450,

- 626; ii. 145; member of Governor Seward's staff, i. 457, 458; on election committee, i. 476; concerning illegal voters, i. 493; letter to Mr. Weed, i. 504; concerning the Dorr rebellion, i. 530; on Board of Charity, i. 623; ii. 143, 145; one of Mr. Weed's executors, ii. 579.
- Bowery**, the, in New York, i. 52.
- Bowles**, Samuel, letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 260.
- Bowman**, John, elected canal commissioner, i. 108; concerning the removal of Governor Clinton as canal commissioner, i. 109.
- Boyd**, John J., at opening of first railroad, i. 386.
- Bradford**, Mrs John M., anchoress, i. 364.
- Bradish**, Alvah, anecdote of Mr. Weed, ii. 182.
- Bradish**, Luther, of New York, i. 55; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; mentioned, i. 402; ii. 474; in legislature of 1835, i. 407; nominated for lieutenant-governor, i. 453; ii. 58-60; election as lieutenant-governor, i. 456.
- Brandywine**, frigate, at Lafayette's service, i. 194.
- Braser**, Abraham, a veteran legislator, i. 200.
- Braser**, Philip (the turtle-eating alderman), mentioned, i. 200, 394, 401.
- Braytons**, the, of Rome, i. 31.
- Bread**, in Austria, ii. 212.
- Breckenridge**, John C., nominated for President, ii. 298.
- Brennan**, Owen W., on Board of Charity, i. 623; ii. 145, 458.
- Brig Somers**, the, mutiny on board of, i. 516.
- Bright**, David G., mentioned, i. 76; biographical sketch of, i. 79.
- Bright**, Jesse D., Senator to Congress, i. 79.
- Bright**, John, of England, i. 633; a pun on his name, ii. 407.
- Brinkerhoff**, General, of Ohio, in Congress, i. 472.
- British Consul**, letter from Judah P. Benjamin, ii. 313.
- British troops**, ordered to Canada in 1861, ii. 368.
- Broad Street**, in New York, i. 2.
- Broadway**, New York, in 1815, i. 52.
- Bronson**, Alvin, United States Senator, i. 108; member of Senate 1825, i. 197; a legislator, i. 410.
- Bronson**, Greene C., Attorney-General, i. 31; mentioned, i. 418; ii. 219.
- Brooklyn**, in 1815, i. 52; mentioned, ii. 3.
- Brooks**, Mr., concerning Mr. Webster's speech, i. 372.
- Brown**, George, ii. 57.
- Brown**, General Jacob, commanding general in war of 1812, i. 29; incident of, i. 30; at Sackett's Harbor, i. 39.
- Brown**, Jeremiah, action in abduction of William Morgan, i. 228; trial of for participation in Morgan affair, i. 284.
- Brown**, Jesse, ii. 16.
- Brown**, John, at Harper's Ferry, ii. 258.
- Brown**, Dr. Matthew, citizen of Rochester, mentioned, i. 98; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 256.
- Brown**, Mrs., wife of Samuel R. Brown, i. 41.
- Brown**, Robert M., coroner, inquest of, i. 313, 315.
- Brown**, Samuel R., editor at Auburn, i. 40; his home life, i. 40.
- "**Brown's sunnggling roads**," incident of, i. 39.
- Brownville**, regiment quartered at, i. 29.
- Bruce**, Eli, sheriff, action of in the abduction of Morgan, i. 229; arrest of, i. 231; trial of, concerning Morgan, i. 259, 262, 265; sentenced to prison, i. 270; testimony of, in Morgan trial, i. 271, 272, 288.
- Brush**, General, at Lafayette reception, i. 189.
- Bryant**, William C., opposed to a second term for Lincoln, ii. 296.
- Buchanan**, James, elected President in 1856, ii. 248; mentioned, ii. 245, 248, 250, 251, 257, 306, 331, 332, 414.
- Bucklin**, Mr., concerning the Morgan rewards, i. 254.
- "**Bucktail**" organization, the, i. 76; ii. 22.
- Bucktail party**, success of, i. 90.
- Buckwheat cakes**, a favorite lunch, i. 54.
- Buel**, Jesse, manager of Albany "Argus," i. 43; industry of, i. 46; editor of "Argus," i. 67; legislator of 1823, i. 399; becomes a Whig, i. 430; nominated by Whigs for Governor, i. 443.
- Ball's Bluff**, defeat at, ii. 345.
- Bull Run**, battle of, ii. 344.
- Burgess**, Tristram, opposition to a certain appropriation, i. 382.
- Burke**, Jo, actor, i. 385.
- Burlingame**, Anson, minister to China, ii. 326, 572.
- Burnham**, Ebenezer, of Aurora, i. 142.
- Burr**, Colonel Aaron, duel of, with Alexander Hamilton, i. 5; in New York, i. 55; legislative service of, i. 200; president of constitutional convention, i. 200; meeting with Governor Lewis on board steamboat, i. 370; correspondence of, i. 415, 416; duel with Hamilton, i. 415.
- Burroughs**, L. A., leader of Adams party in 1824, i. 107; supports Mr. Adams for President, i. 122; mentioned, i. 138.
- Burrows**, Captain, of packet ship George Washington, i. 541.
- Burt**, David, elected to Assembly, i. 309.
- Burt**, James, senator, i. 47; supported Adams party in 1824, i. 107; supports Mr. Adams for President, i. 122; at Lafayette reception, i. 189; at Baltimore convention, i. 389; a Whig elector, i. 491.
- Burtis**, Mr., in legislature 1828, i. 402.
- Bush**, John F., mentioned, i. 159; concerning the purchase of the "Evening Journal," i. 597.
- Bushe**, Dr., treatment of Mr. Weed, i. 419.
- Butler**, Benjamin, and C., on prosecution of Morgan affair, i. 233.

- Butler, Benjamin F., of Albany, mentioned, i. 402; counselor in a libel suit, i. 527.
- Butler, Benjamin F., of Massachusetts, the most influential and the worst man in Congress, ii. 501; mentioned, ii. 341, 383.
- Butler, Governor of Vermont, i. 259.
- Butler, Dr. Samnel S., concerning the "Morgan affair," i. 219; quoted, i. 247.
- Butterfield, John, concerning the "Morgan affair," i. 219; indicted on Morgan affair, i. 248.
- Cady, Daniel, eminent lawyer, i. 42; lawyer of Johnstown, i. 154.
- Cady, Miss Elizabeth, marriage of, i. 159.
- Cairo, Greene County, N. Y., birthplace of Thurlow Weed, i. 1; ii. 2.
- Calhoun, John C., aspirant for the presidency, i. 103; concerning state rights, i. 358; champion of nullification, i. 422.
- California, concerning admission of, into the Union, i. 592, 596; asks admission (1850), ii. 176; admission of, ii. 183.
- Call for 75,000 volunteers, ii. 327.
- Cameron, General Simon, mentioned for place in President Lincoln's cabinet, i. 607-611; ii. 256; appointed Secretary of War, ii. 325; dispensed with as Secretary of War, ii. 330; appointed Minister to Russia, ii. 330; mentioned, ii. 256, 261, 263, 264.
- Camp, Major J. C., of Buffalo, i. 141.
- Campaign of 1840, preparations for, ii. 53.
- Campbell, Archibald, i. 561.
- Campbell, Rev. John W., called to settle at Albany, i. 365.
- Canada, British troops sent to, in 1861, ii. 368; visited in 1870, ii. 477.
- Canandaigua, village of, i. 140.
- Cannon, Le Grand, member of Governor Seward's staff, i. 457.
- Cantine, John, legislative service of, i. 200.
- Canvas-back ducks, ii. 202.
- Canvass of 1840, spirit of, ii. 81; progress of, ii. 83.
- Canvassers state, of 1840, a dead-lock in board of, i. 494.
- "Captain Tyler" (John) goes over to the Locos, ii. 95.
- Carew, Isaac, i. 502.
- Cargill, Abraham, a legislator of 1827, i. 401; in legislature, 1828, i. 402.
- Carley, Captain, farmer at Cincinnati, i. 15; at regimental review, i. 18.
- Carman, Stephen, legislative service of, i. 200.
- Carow, Isaac, mentioned, i. 54.
- Carpet-bag dishonesty and oppression, ii. 513.
- Carr, Thomas N., legislator of 1835, i. 407.
- Carrigan, Andrew, ii. 141.
- Carroll, Charles, of Carrollton, mentioned, ii. 28.
- Carroll, Charles H., the wife of, i. 30; mentioned, i. 390; wife of mentioned, i. 346; political offices held by, i. 346.
- Carroll Hall, meeting at, concerning the free school law, i. 500.
- Carroll, Major, early settler of Rochester, i. 202; tribute to, i. 346.
- Cary, Miss, reminiscences of Norwich, ii. 15.
- Cary, Mrs., kept hotel at Vernon, i. 148.
- Cary, Trumbull, concerning Morgan's abduction, i. 213; concerning political anti-Masonry, i. 299; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; supports "Evening Journal," i. 361; mentioned, i. 402; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; mentioned, ii. 40, 549; in Mr. Weed's will, ii. 578.
- Cass, Governor, minister to France, i. 512.
- Cassidy, John, mentioned, i. 42.
- Castle Garden, union meeting, ii. 187.
- Catskill, town of New York, i. 1; in 1807, i. 5; prominent inhabitants of, i. 6.
- "Catskill Recorder," a newspaper, i. 10.
- Caucus system of presidential nominations, ii. 24.
- Causes of Republican disaster, 1875, ii. 507.
- Cayuga Bridge, the, view from, i. 141.
- "Cease rude Boreas," a nautical song, i. 3.
- Central Park Commission, ii. 144.
- Chamberlain, Nathan, mentioned, i. 76.
- Chamberlain, Royal T., editor of the "Tocain," i. 24.
- Champion, Aristarchus, of Rochester, i. 99.
- Chandler, Adoniram, member of Typographical Society, i. 70; legislator of 1838, i. 408.
- "Chandler's," a house at Catskill, i. 5.
- Chandler, Zachariah, i. 305.
- Changes in Lincoln's Cabinet, ii. 330.
- Chapman, Benjamin, friendship with Mr. Weed, i. 434.
- Chapman, Mary, adoption of, by Mr. Weed, i. 564; death of, i. 567.
- Charleston, convention in 1860, ii. 259; foreign feeling as to the blockade of, ii. 392; debate on the blockade in parliament, ii. 407.
- Chase, Salmon P., appointed Secretary of the Treasury, ii. 325, 326; letter to a friend, ii. 329; intrigues in Lincoln's Cabinet, ii. 330; presidential aspirations of, ii. 445.
- Chauncey (Commodore), mentioned, i. 69.
- Cheap living in Florence, ii. 208.
- Chemical Bank, the, concerning a charter, i. 106.
- Chesebro, Nicholas G., concerning the "Morgan Affair," i. 219; indictment found against, i. 231; sentenced to prison, i. 236.
- Chicago, ii. 148.
- Chicago convention, of 1860, ii. 260, 262; the first ballot, ii. 263; inside history of, ii. 273; providentially guided, ii. 296; incongruous elements, ii. 321.
- Childs, David W., lawyer, i. 31.
- Childs, George W., letter to Press Club dinner, ii. 558.
- Childs, Timothy, signs a petition, i. 204; the anti-Masonic candidate to legislature, i. 301; elected to Congress, i. 302; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; supports "Evening Journal," i. 361; at Balti-

- more convention, i. 389; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425.
- Chipman, Justice, of Canandaigua, i. 220.
- Cholera, the, at Albany, i. 417; at Rochester, i. 419.
- Church, Sanford E., Comptroller of New York, i. 348; elected Lieutenant-Governor, ii. 189; mentioned, ii. 550.
- Churches in New York City, in 1817, i. 60.
- Cincinnati convention, 1876, letter from Mr. Weed to Mr. Blaine, ii. 522.
- Cincinnati, town in New York, i. 10; experience of a young farmer at, i. 13; Thurlow Weed's recollections of, i. 15-19.
- City Hotel, New York, in 1815, i. 53; ii. 3.
- Civil rights bill, ii. 515.
- Civil service reform, ii. 462.
- Clapp, James, lawyer, i. 81.
- Clark, Aaron, an annoying joke concerning, i. 397.
- Clark, Charles E., at convention, i. 452.
- Clark, Gustavus, nominated to the Assembly, i. 160; sketch of, i. 162; member of Assembly, 1825, i. 196; mentioned, i. 319.
- Clark, Israel W., editor, of Cooperstown, i. 36; editor of the "Watch Tower," i. 62; mentioned, ii. 9.
- Clark, Governor James, letter to Mr. Weed concerning Mr. Clay, i. 351.
- Clark, Jeremiah, legislative service of, i. 200.
- Clark, Jesse, leader in Clay party of 1824, i. 107; supports Mr. Clay, i. 122.
- Clark, John C., lawyer and member of Congress, i. 80.
- Clark, Joseph T., i. 561.
- Clark, Lot, ii. 15.
- Clark, Myron H., elected Governor of New York, ii. 228; mentioned, ii. 144, 247.
- Clark, Sarah E., i. 561.
- Clarke, Matthew St. Clair, a dinner with, i. 537; ii. 484.
- Clay, Cassius M., ii. 123, 464.
- Clay, Henry, aspirant for the presidency, i. 103; as candidate for President in 1824, i. 107; leading friends of, in campaign of 1824, i. 107; prospects of, weakened, i. 108, 109; Secretary of State, i. 178; political supporters of, i. 122; mentioned, i. 197, 402; ii. 31; and the anti-Masons, i. 350; as a presidential candidate in 1830, i. 350; repudiates political anti-masonry, i. 353; his two chances of being President, i. 354; supported the United States Bank, i. 372, 374; nominated for President, i. 391, 413; ii. 40, 119; compromise of the tariff, i. 422; concerning election to presidency, i. 480; a dinner with, i. 536; Alabama letter of, i. 572; presidency, urged for the, i. 575; Mr. Weed, relations with, i. 576; movement in his favor, i. 576; his claims, i. 576; delegates to the Whig convention instructed to vote for him, i. 577; candidate for the presidential nomination at Whig national convention, i. 578; Mr. Weed urged to support him for the presidency, i. 578; letters to Mr. Weed, ii. 42, 98, 119; deceived as to his prospects, ii. 120.
- Clayton, John M., mentioned for vice-president, i. 482; Whig national convention; candidate for the presidential nomination, i. 578; Secretary of State, i. 590; concerning a mission for Mr. Barnard, i. 595; ii. 167.
- Clinch, Charles P., legislator of 1835, poetic humor of, i. 407; deputy of customs of New York, parody by, i. 498; mentioned, ii. 465, 550.
- Clingman, Senator from Georgia, concerning admission of California, i. 617; mentioned, ii. 176, 364.
- Clinton (Governor), De Witt, mentioned, i. 31, 53; concerning political letter to the "Columbian," i. 67; heads one faction of Republican party, i. 67; at Rome concerning Erie canal, i. 70; commissioner of Erie canal, i. 72; measures concerning Erie and Champlain canal, i. 73, 74; his canal policy, ii. 10, 13; recommends agricultural societies, i. 78; candidate for President against Mr. Madison, i. 82; elected Governor of New York, i. 82; votes received for Governor, i. 84; declines renomination, i. 102; concerning presidential candidate, i. 107; removed from office of canal commissioner, i. 109; indignation concerning his removal, i. 112, 113; concerning nomination for governor, i. 118; nominated and elected governor, i. 120, 121; supports Chief Justice Spencer for senator, i. 167; appointed minister to England and declines, i. 177, 178; the breach between Lieutenant-Governor Tallmadge and, i. 178; charge concerning the President of United States, i. 205; letter concerning the abduction of Morgan, i. 226; offers rewards for discovery of Morgan, i. 231; letter to Samuel A. Talcott, concerning Morgan, i. 232; letter to the Batavia committee, concerning Morgan, i. 238; letter to governors of Canada, concerning the Morgan affair, i. 240; letter to Theodore F. Talbot, concerning Morgan affair, i. 249; information of, concerning the Morgan affair, i. 251; at a meeting of the Grand Chapter, i. 251; death of, i. 257; referred to in letter by Silas Wright, i. 376; his administration, ii. 23; obituary of, by Mr. Weed, ii. 29.
- Clowes, Thomas, at convention, i. 366; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; mentioned, ii. 91, 234, 549.
- Cobbett, William, member of Parliament, i. 51; ii. 193.
- Cobden, Richard, England, i. 633; ii. 405.
- Coddington, Jonathan I., legislator of 1827, i. 401.
- Coe, Chauncey H., indicted on Morgan affair, i. 248.
- Coenties Slip, in New York, i. 2; ii. 417.

- Coffin, Alexander, vice-president of a convention, i. 120; at Lafayette reception, i. 189.
- Coit, Mr., of Buffalo, i. 141.
- Colden, Cadwallader D., concerning removal of Governor Clinton, i. 113; renounces masonry, i. 310; a legislator of 1818, i. 395; mentioned, ii. 14.
- Cole, Benjamin, legislative service of, i. 200.
- Cole, John O., a printer, i. 44; ii. 40.
- Colfax, Schuyler, nominated for vice-president, 1868, ii. 459.
- Colonization society, plan of, i. 429.
- Collamer, Jacob, Postmaster-General, i. 590; ii. 176.
- Collier, John A., political career of, i. 342, 343; Comptroller of New York, i. 348; nominates Millard Fillmore, for vice-president, i. 578; mentioned, ii. 44, 172.
- Collision, expected at Charleston, ii. 327.
- Colt, Roswell L., supported United States Bank, i. 372; merchant of New York, i. 502, 625; mentioned, ii. 483.
- Columbia College, i. 393.
- "Columbian Gazette," a Republican newspaper, i. 26.
- Colvin, Dr., bet with Mr. Weed on Harrison election, i. 492.
- Commerce in New York, in 1817, ii. 194.
- "Commercial Advertiser," a newspaper, i. 33; edited by Colonel W. L. Stone, i. 366; mentioned, ii. 4; Mr. Weed editor of, ii. 454, 462.
- Commissioners, appointment of, ii. 143.
- Commissioners Mason and Slidell, released, ii. 379.
- Competitive examinations for the civil service, ii. 466.
- Complicated canvass, ii. 227.
- Compromise, of 1820, ii. 13; of 1850, ii. 183.
- Comptroller of New York, list of the men who have filled this office, i. 348; faithfulness of the men appointed to this office, i. 348; mentioned, ii. 63, 187, 474, 488, 549.
- Comstock, Adam, legislative service of, i. 200.
- Comstock, Joseph J., ii. 339.
- Conflicting relations with old friends, ii. 229.
- Congress, elected J. Q. Adams, President, i. 172; petitions to concerning slavery, i. 427; ii. 54.
- Conine, Mr., keeper of a tavern, incident of, i. 32; at a Whig convention, i. 32.
- Conkling, Hon. Alfred, resolutions concerning removal of Governor Clinton, i. 112; member of Congress, mentioned, i. 152.
- Connery, Thomas B., letter to Press Club dinner, ii. 556.
- Connor, Ezra S., legislator of 1835, i. 407.
- Constitution of New York as amended, i. 89; ii. 135, 561.
- Constitutional conventions of New York, i. 200; ii. 496.
- Convention, to amend New York state constitution, i. 88; at Utica in August, 1824, concerning the, i. 117; at Utica to nominate a governor, etc., i. 120; National Republican state convention at Utica, i. 304; anti-Masonic state convention at Utica, i. 305, 366, 413; of seceding Masons at Le Roy, i. 310; workingman's convention at Syracuse, i. 367; Democratic convention at Herkimer, i. 367, 453; anti-Masonic at Baltimore, i. 389; national Republican state convention, i. 413; New York state, at Utica, i. 452; Whig state convention (New York) of 1854, ii. 226; Democratic convention at Chicago, ii. 260; Republican convention at Chicago, ii. 262, 263, 273, 296, 321.
- Cook, Bates, his investigation into the abduction of William Morgan, i. 228; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257; concerning political anti-masonry, i. 299; an anti-Mason, i. 336; Comptroller of New York, i. 348; supports "Evening Journal," i. 361; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; appointed comptroller, i. 459; ii. 64, 67.
- Cook, James M., Comptroller of New York, i. 348; ii. 187, 251.
- Cook, Richard, concerning bank charter, i. 108.
- Cook, Thomas B., at dinner with Lafayette, i. 190.
- Cookes, the, family of Catskill, New York, i. 6.
- Cooper, Mr., actor, i. 59.
- Cooper, Francis, elected in 1815, i. 393; in legislature, i. 401.
- Cooper, J. Fenimore, appearance of his novel, i. 99; the libel suits of, i. 520.
- Cooper, John Tayler, sent as messenger to Washington, i. 137; in Lafayette party, i. 186.
- Cooper, Paul, Mr. Weed's acquaintance with, i. 527.
- Cooper, Peter, ii. 470.
- Cooperstown, Thurlow Weed's residence in, i. 36.
- Copperhead, element in the Democratic party, ii. 447.
- Corcoran, Colonel Michael, ii. 340, 341.
- Cork, misery and wretchedness in, ii. 104.
- Corning, Erastus, as a merchant, i. 447; libel suit of, against Mr. Weed, i. 528; mentioned, ii. 189, 198, 550.
- Cortlandt Street, New York, in 1815, i. 53.
- Corwin, Thomas, ii. 148, 167.
- Cossett's tavern, at Syracuse, i. 144.
- Cotton, the danger to, ii. 404.
- Couch, Mr., kept stage-house, i. 152.
- Council of appointment, the, of 1815, i. 47.
- County meeting held in Monroe County, i. 158.
- "Courier" newspaper, i. 56.
- "Courier and Enquirer," edited by Colonel J. W. Webb, i. 369; ii. 48.
- Court of Common Pleas, i. 255.
- Court of Oyer and Terminer, held in Genesee County, i. 255.
- Courtnacherry, Ireland, ii. 103.



- Coutant, Gilbert, a legislator of 1826, i. 400; a legislator of 1827, i. 401.
- Cowdry, Peter A., legislator of 1835, i. 407.
- Crafts, Governor of Vermont, i. 268.
- Craig, Hector, at Lafayette reception, i. 188.
- Cramer, John, delegate to convention, i. 89; leader in Clay party of 1824, i. 107; supports Mr. Clay, i. 122; mentioned, i. 152; member of Senate, 1825; ii. 197.
- Crary, John, in legislature, i. 110; nominated for lieutenant-governor, i. 305.
- Crawford or Van Buren section, the, in legislature, i. 107.
- Crawford, William H., aspirant for the presidency, i. 103; as presidential candidate, i. 107, 108; presidential prospect spoiled, i. 109; concerning presidential prospects, i. 117; the Democratic nominee for President, i. 118; an intrigue concerning the election of, as President, i. 123-5; nominee for President, i. 197; Secretary of War, i. 590; ii. 24.
- Cassell, John, a staunch friend of the Union, ii. 380.
- Critical position of national affairs, ii. 420.
- Crittenden Compromise, ii. 312.
- Crittenden, General, at gathering of Whig members of Congress, i. 508.
- Crittenden, John J., Attorney-General, i. 506.
- Crolius, Clarkson, elected speaker of Assembly, i. 163; legislative service of, i. 200; a legislator of 1817, i. 395, 396; a legislator of 1825, i. 400.
- Crocker, George A. S., elected to legislature, i. 337; concerning his nomination for senator, i. 337.
- Croswell, Dr., citizen of Catskill, i. 9.
- Croswell, Edwin, editor of the "Argus," i. 8; editor of the "Argus," relations with Thurlow Weed, i. 104; editor of the "Argus" in 1823, ii. 36; member of the Albany Regency, i. 103; mentioned, ii. 4, 44; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 37; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 38.
- Croswell, Mackay, editor of Catskill "Recorder," i. 8; ii. 4, 191.
- Croton Water-Works celebration, i. 185.
- Crowns for martyrs in politics, ii. 523.
- Cruget, Daniel, elected speaker of legislature, i. 48.
- Cruttenden, Mr., a genial host, anecdote of, i. 401; ii. 484.
- Cummings, Rev. F. H., of Rochester, mentioned, i. 99; indicted for participation in Morgan affair, i. 270; sentiment concerning enemies to masonry, i. 296; author of an article against Mr. Weed, i. 311.
- Cunningham, Henry, extract from speech concerning removal of Governor Clinton as canal commissioner, i. 110; supports Mr. Adams, i. 123.
- Cunningham, General Walter, concerning money borrowed of, i. 137; "Nature's nobleman," i. 189.
- Curtis, Edward, mentioned, i. 404, 438; 625; Mr. Webster, friendship for, i. 576; Taylor committee, member of the, i. 577; ii. 481.
- Curtis, George William, ii. 473, 481; letter to, i. 534; letter to the Press Club dinner, ii. 558.
- Cushing, Caleb, i. 619.
- Cutting, Francis B., legislator 1835, i. 107.
- "Daily Advertiser," a newspaper, i. 33; an anti-Regency paper, i. 123.
- "Daily News," newspaper in England, i. 644.
- Dalhousie, Earl of, concerning the Morgan affair, i. 241.
- Daly, George W., sketched, i. 449.
- Daly, General, letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 565.
- Dana, Charles A., at Albany in the interest of Greeley, ii. 323; quoted, ii. 159.
- Danas, the, citizens of Utica, i. 30.
- Danes, the, mentioned, i. 159.
- Danforth, Judge Asa, first white settler in Onondaga County, i. 145.
- Danforth, George F., judge, ii. 524.
- Daniels, William P., testimony of, i. 282.
- Darley, Mr. and Mrs., actors, i. 59.
- Darrow, Jared, trial of, on Morgan affair, i. 259, 262, 265.
- Dartmoor prison, England, i. 4; concerning Americans at, i. 113.
- Dauby, Augustus G., friendship with Mr. Weed, i. 434.
- Davies, Henry E., at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257.
- Davis, Captain, of ship Emily, i. 562.
- Davis, David, Judge, mentioned, i. 334; concerning Mr. Lincoln's nomination, i. 602; concerning Mr. Lincoln's cabinet, i. 611; an early supporter of Lincoln, ii. 291; letters to Mr. Weed, ii. 299, 300, 323, 444.
- Davis, Eliza, i. 561.
- Davis, George R., legislator of 1831, i. 405.
- Davis, Henry Winter, of Maryland, i. 606.
- Davis, Jefferson, letter from General Taylor, ii. 179; letter from Franklin Pierce, ii. 334.
- Davis, John, i. 626.
- Davis, L., i. 561.
- Davis, Matthew L., at county conventions, i. 413; devoted friend of Aaron Burr, i. 414; life of Aaron Burr by, i. 416.
- Davis, William A., a legislator of 1821, i. 397.
- Dawson, George, his recollections of Mr. Weed, ii. 29; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 134.
- Days, the, family of Catskill, New York, i. 6.
- Dayton, Aaron O., legislator of 1829, i. 403.
- Dayton, Hon. William L., minister to France, i. 629; dinner at the legation, ii. 399.
- Dead body discovered at Oak Orchard Creek, supposed to be William Morgan [see Morgan, William], i. 313.
- Dean, Amos, admitted to practice law, i. 392.
- Dean, William E., successful printer, i. 56.

- Debtor's prison, the, at Catskill, i. 6.  
 Defeat of Seward at Chicago, ii. 271.  
 De Graff, John L., at opening of first rail-  
 road, i. 386.  
 De Kay, Dr., concerning the cholera, i. 417.  
 Delano, Columbus, his incapacity, ii. 521.  
 Delaware and Hudson canal, construction  
 of the, i. 171.  
 Delevan, E. C., ii. 153, 306.  
 Delmonico, the, of New York in 1815, i. 54.  
 De Mott, James, member of Assembly,  
 1825, i. 196.  
 Democratic and Whig party, antagonism  
 of, i. 443.  
 Democratic party, the, in 1830, i. 8; ii. 36;  
 vote concerning small bill question, i.  
 444; called the Jackson party, i. 301;  
 overwhelmed in 1838, i. 408; ii. 61-64.  
 Democrats, alarm of, concerning the anti-  
 Masonic action, i. 258; clamor for peace  
 in 1864, ii. 440.  
 Denison, John E., Speaker of the House  
 of Commons, prediction of Daniel Web-  
 ster, ii. 388.  
 Denniston, Robert, at Lafayette reception,  
 i. 189; Comptroller of New York, i. 348;  
 ii. 474.  
 Denny, Fanny, actress, i. 31.  
 Deposits, the removal of, in 1833, ii. 48.  
 De Smet, Father, missionary adventure of,  
 i. 547; accompanies Mr. Weed to Europe,  
 ii. 102.  
 Devereux, John C., merchant of Utica,  
 i. 30.  
 Devereux, Nicholas, merchant of Utica,  
 i. 30; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; re-  
 veals facts concerning the bank contro-  
 versy, i. 374; at Baltimore convention,  
 i. 389; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i.  
 425.  
 Devin, Thomas C., ii. 341.  
 De Witt, Mrs. W. H., at Vienna, i. 598.  
 De Witt, Simeon, commissioner of Erie  
 canal, i. 72; in Lafayette party, i. 186.  
 Dexter, Chauncey, i. 449.  
 Dickens, Charles, mentioned, i. 40, 380; ii.  
 570.  
 Dickinson, Andrew B., a legislator of 1830,  
 incidents of, i. 440; appointed minister  
 to Nicaragua, i. 442; his meeting with  
 Greeley at Chicago, ii. 273.  
 Dickinson, Daniel S., Democratic candi-  
 date for lieutenant-governor, i. 491; a  
 presidential candidate, ii. 198.  
 Discouraging aspect in 1863, ii. 437.  
 Disloyal surroundings of General McClel-  
 lan, ii. 446.  
 District of Columbia, petition to abolish  
 slavery in, i. 427.  
 District School Library, the, i. 11; ii. 551.  
 Disunion is treason, ii. 178, 180; and trea-  
 son in 1849, ii. 180.  
 Dix, John A., member of "Albany Re-  
 gency," i. 8; ii. 548; pleasant relations  
 with Thurlow Weed, i. 9; ii. 486; ad-  
 mitted to practice law, i. 392; ii. 172;  
 appointed Secretary of the Treasury, ii.  
 319; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 423; men-  
 tioned, i. 397; his famous order, ii. 487;  
 nominated for Governor of New York,  
 ii. 485; letters to Mr. Weed, ii. 505, 507;  
 letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 506.  
 Dodd, Edward, i. 336, 425, 435; ii. 550.  
 Doddridge, Mr., opinion concerning sla-  
 very, i. 427.  
 Dodge, J. C., i. 561.  
 Donelson Fort, capture of, ii. 407.  
 Donnelly, Colonel, mentioned, i. 6.  
 Donnybrook Green, meeting on, ii. 104.  
 Dorr, Elisha, presidential elector of 1824,  
 i. 137; concerning sending Mr. Weed as  
 messenger to Washington, i. 137.  
 Dorr rebellion, the, in Rhode Island, i.  
 530, 533.  
 Dorr, Thomas W., rebellion of, concerning  
 the charter, i. 530.  
 "Dough-faces," i. 427; ii. 125.  
 Douglas, Stephen A., ii. 297.  
 Douglass, Frederic, nominated by Mr.  
 Weed at Utica, as elector at large, ii.  
 486, 487.  
 Dow, Neal, school of temperance reformers,  
 ii. 153.  
 Downs, Captain, mentioned, i. 39.  
 Drake, Jacob, elected in 1815, i. 394.  
 Draper, Simeon, on election committee,  
 i. 476; concerning illegal voters, i. 493;  
 mentioned, i. 502, 625; ii. 145; for Gov-  
 ernor, ii. 251; Mr. Webster, friendship  
 for, i. 576; Taylor committee, member of  
 the, i. 577; his dinner parties, ii. 483.  
 Dred Scott case, Judge Taney's deci-  
 sion, ii. 251.  
 Duane, William J., Secretary of Treasury,  
 removed from office, i. 424.  
 Dublin, visit to, ii. 104.  
 Dudley, Charles E., member of "Albany  
 Regency," i. 8, 103; concerning a po-  
 litical attack on Governor Clinton, i. 67;  
 elected United States senator, i. 108.  
 Dudley, Governor of North Carolina, ii.  
 77.  
 Duer, John, delegate to convention, i. 89;  
 at Lafayette reception, i. 189.  
 Duer, William A., mentioned, i. 45; Fed-  
 eralist member of legislature, i. 47; at  
 the electors' dinner, i. 138; in Assembly  
 in 1818, i. 396; as a supporter of Fill-  
 more, ii. 186.  
 Duke of Argyle, i. 633; receives Mr.  
 Weed, i. 639.  
 Duke of Wellington, how Mr. Weed missed  
 dining with, i. 538; his appearance at  
 a review, ii. 105.  
 Duncombe, E. G., in Lafayette party, i.  
 186.  
 "Dutchman's Fireside," novel, by Mr.  
 Paulding, i. 383.  
 Dwight, Henry, banker, mentioned, i. 141.  
 Dyckman, Isaac, in legislature 1828, i. 402.  
 Dyer, Russell, communication of, to Mr.  
 Weed, concerning Morgan, i. 212; tes-  
 timony concerning Morgan, i. 313.  
 Earl of Shaftesbury, i. 633.  
 Earles, the, an old family of Onondaga  
 County, i. 90.  
 Earll, Jonas, i. 108, 397.

- Easter in Rome, ii. 209.
- Eaton, Mrs., cause of a rupture in General Jackson's Cabinet, i. 365.
- Eckford, Henry, a ship-builder, i. 1, 124, 395.
- Eddy, Thomas, commissioner of Erie canal, i. 72.
- Eden, Misses, the, i. 415.
- Edinboro' libraries, ii. 108
- Editorial, introductory of the "Republican," i. 87; on Fourth of July celebrations, i. 93; ii. 28; by Mr. Weed concerning nomination of Mr. Southwick for Governor, i. 306; on taking Albany "Journal" in 1880, ii. 546.
- Election of Clinton and Tallmadge in New York, 120; of 1839 in New York, i. 476; of 1839, preparations for, i. 477; ii. 71; in Maine, the first gun for Whig victory, 1840, i. 490; ii. 85; in Paris in 1851, ii. 203; of Abraham Lincoln, ii. 301; of 1872, results of the, ii. 497.
- Electoral question, the, in legislature, i. 105; vote of the "seventeen" senators, i. 108; law, concerning the, in legislature, i. 116; vote of 1824, result of the, i. 137; ticket of Whig convention, i. 491; ticket in 1840, ii. 84.
- Ellice, Edward, Englishman, landholder in New York, i. 151; notice of, ii. 380; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 380.
- Ellicott, Joseph, at Rome, New York, i. 71; of Batavia, i. 141.
- Ellmaker, Amos, nomination of, for Vice-President, i. 391, 413.
- Ells, Mary, mother of Thurlow Weed, i. 1; ii. 2, 6.
- Elwood, Dr. J. B., of Rochester, mentioned, i. 99; signs a petition, i. 204; elected treasurer of Rochester, i. 300; ii. 58.
- Ely, Harvey, of Rochester, mentioned, i. 98, 215, 230, 257, 299, 336, 339.
- Emancipation project, of Timothy Pitkin, i. 428; must follow Union success, ii. 363; proclamation issued January 1, 1863, ii. 430.
- Emigrant aid societies formed, ii. 139.
- Emigrants, swindling of, ii. 138.
- Emigration commissioners, ii. 139, 142.
- Emmet, Thomas Addis, eminent lawyer, i. 42; member of a committee, i. 113; mentioned, i. 59, 402; ii. 14.
- Emmett, James, in Lafayette party, i. 186, 189.
- Emmett, Robert, legislator of 1828, i. 402.
- Emperor of Austria, reception of the Emperor of Russia, i. 598.
- Emperor of Russia in Austria, i. 598; his position in 1861, ii. 346.
- England, war declared against, i. 23; ii. 352; attitude concerning the Trent affair, i. 642; ii. 348; offer of allegiance to, by Benjamin, ii. 314; war with, averted, ii. 133; changed for the better in eight years, ii. 200; revisited in 1851, ii. 201.
- English comment on the Trent affair, ii. 361.
- Epidemic, the, at Rochester, i. 203.
- Erie canal, ground broken at Rome for, i. 70; legislative action concerning, i. 71; commissioners of, i. 71; suggested by Joshua Forman, i. 71; estimates of, i. 72; cost of, i. 72; section of, completed, i. 90; enlargement, i. 458; opened, ii. 13.
- Erie and Champlain canal, laws concerning, i. 72, 73; completion of, celebrated, i. 204.
- Europe, causes of the lack of sympathy in, ii. 414.
- European travel, features of, ii. 211.
- Eustis, Dr., Secretary of Navy, letter written by, i. 144.
- Evans, David E., prominent anti-Mason, i. 141, 213, 299, 336.
- Evarts, William M., counsel in a libel suit, i. 529, 626; on Mr. Seward, ii. 266; his conduct of the Lemmon case, ii. 323; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 410.
- Evarts-Greeley canvass, ii. 323.
- "Evening Post," edited by Mr. Leggett, i. 383; comments on "Seward, Weed & Greeley," ii. 282.
- Everingham, Gilbert, mentioned, i. 159, 204.
- Everingham, Joseph, of Canandaigua, i. 140.
- Everett, Edward, condemns masonry, i. 423; concerning his mission to England, i. 509; nomination to England confirmed, i. 510; mentioned, i. 626; ii. 146; a candidate for vice-president, ii. 297.
- Ewing, Thomas, Secretary of Treasury, i. 506; Secretary of Interior, i. 590.
- Executive mansion of the Governor of New York, ii. 62.
- Fairlee, Major, meeting with Lafayette, i. 185.
- Fanshaw, Daniel, printer, i. 56.
- Farewell to journalism, ii. 431.
- Farragut, David, Admiral, ii. 346; notice of, ii. 476.
- Farwell, Isaac, testimony of, in Morgan trial, i. 288.
- Farwell, Samuel, friendship with Mr. Weed, i. 434.
- Faxton, Theodore S., a stage-driver, i. 32; old friend of Mr. Weed, i. 434; ii. 467.
- Fay, Thomas Chittenden, editor of the "Lynx," i. 22; concerning "Six Million Bank," i. 23.
- Federal party, collapse of the, i. 76.
- Federalist struggle for Speaker in New York legislature, 1815, i. 46.
- Federalists, the, concerning Mr. Clinton for Governor, i. 84.
- Fellows, Henry, concerning the Speakership in legislature of 1815, i. 46; nominated and elected to the Assembly, i. 160, 162.
- Fellows, Joseph, mentioned, i. 141.
- Fenton, Reuben E., nominated for Governor of New York, ii. 444; for Vice-President, ii. 459.
- Fessenden, William Pitt, resignation of the Treasury, i. 620.
- Field, Cyrus W., ii. 389, 410.

- Field, David Dudley, mentioned, i. 472, 528; ii. 321.
- Fifty years' retrospect, ii. 549.
- Fillmore, Millard, at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257; elected to Assembly, i. 309; ii. 170; an anti-Mason, i. 336; ii. 233; comptroller of New York, i. 348, 585; ii. 63, 64; elected Comptroller, 1847, ii. 145; anti-bank man, i. 372; sustained the "Stilwell Bill," i. 379; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; concerning right of petition, i. 200, 428; at convention, i. 452; elected to Congress, i. 585; political career of, i. 585-588; Mr. Weed's first meeting with, i. 585; signing the Fugitive Slave Law, i. 588; ii. 184; suggested as Lieutenant-Governor, ii. 59; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 61, 74, 75, 83, 85; suggested for the vice-presidency, ii. 96, 111; nominated for Governor, ii. 122; nominated for Vice-President, ii. 169; in active coöperation with Mr. Weed, ii. 170; dreams of the White House, ii. 174; hostile to Mr. Weed, ii. 184; his cogitations, ii. 235; letter to Collector Maxwell, ii. 233; nominated by the Know Nothings, 1856, ii. 245; reconciliation with Mr. Weed, ii. 462, 470.
- Financial crisis of 1837, i. 450; ii. 48.
- Fish, Hamilton, mentioned, i. 55; appointed Secretary of Treasury by President Taylor, i. 591; elected Governor, ii. 172; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 190, 196; in Mr. Weed's will, ii. 578.
- Fish, Colonel Nicholas, officer of the Revolution, i. 55; in Lafayette party, i. 186.
- Fitch, Timothy, action of, in the "Morgan affair," i. 223, 257, 314.
- Fitzhugh, Henry, mentioned, i. 346, 452.
- Fitzhugh (Colonel), William, of Geneseo, mentioned, i. 35; Revolutionary officer, i. 98; early settler of Rochester, i. 202; tribute to, i. 346.
- Fitzhugh Street, Rochester, ii. 22.
- Fitzpatrick, General, concerning imprisonment of Lafayette, i. 193.
- Five Points in the city of New York, ii. 162.
- Flagg, Azariah C., member of "Albany Regency," i. 8, 103; ii. 550; friendship of Thurlow Weed for, i. 9; member of Van Buren party in 1824, i. 107; resolution concerning electoral law, i. 116; on committee of county meeting, i. 158; surviving member of legislature, 1823, i. 199; Comptroller of New York, i. 348; editor of the "Republican," i. 399; ii. 4; legislature of 1823, i. 399; in Assembly, 1824, i. 400; starts paper at Plattsburgh, ii. 4, 470.
- Flamet, M., invention of, for varicose veins, i. 532.
- Flemming, George W., elected to Assembly, i. 309.
- Fleming, Colonel Robert, at anti-Masonic convention, i. 256; delegate to senatorial convention, i. 339.
- Florence, cheap living at, ii. 207.
- Folger, Mr. and Mrs., converts to the prophet Matthias, i. 358.
- Follett, Frederick, letter to Thurlow Weed, i. 320.
- Follett, Oran, surviving member of legislature, 1824, i. 199; in Assembly, 1824, i. 400.
- Foote, Elial P., surviving member of legislature, 1820, i. 198.
- Foote, Samuel A., at Baltimore convention, i. 389; counsel in case of Miss Knowlson, i. 488.
- Forbes, John G., at convention, i. 452.
- Force, Peter, president of Typographical Society, i. 58.
- Ford, Ebenezer, legislator of 1830, i. 404.
- Ford, Lauren, lawyer of Herkimer, i. 35.
- Foreign sympathy sought by the Southern Confederacy, ii. 405.
- Forman, Joshua, concerning casting cannon balls, i. 25; founder of city of Syracuse, i. 90; ii. 4; suggests Erie canal, i. 71; mentioned, i. 145; ii. 4.
- Forney, John W., on Chase's aspirations, ii. 330.
- Forrest, Edwin, popularity of, i. 385.
- Forster, Kinnaird, Torrens, Stansfeld, Bazley, Baxter, Potter, White, Smith, Messrs., Englishmen, friends to the North during the Rebellion, i. 633; ii. 407.
- "Forty million debt," i. 458; ii. 121.
- Fourier, his doctrines on association, ii. 92.
- "Fourierism," Mr. Greeley's espousal of, i. 468.
- Fourth of July celebrations, editorial concerning, i. 93; how observed by Mr. Weed, ii. 28.
- Fourth ward of Albany, scene of political struggle with the Regency, i. 448; a Whig gain in the, i. 449; a political barometer, i. 449; ii. 45.
- Fowler, Gilbert O., at Lafayette reception, i. 189.
- Fox, Corydon, action of, in abduction of Morgan, i. 229; testimony of, at Morgan trial, i. 235; testimony of, i. 262.
- Fox, Jabez, lawyer at Herkimer, i. 34.
- Fox, Mr., concerning imprisonment of Lafayette, i. 193.
- Fox, Mr., consul at Falmouth, i. 641.
- France, her attitude towards us during the Rebellion, i. 642; ii. 349; makes two overtures to England, to join with Confederate States against the North, i. 646; reasons of, for favoring the Confederate States, i. 649; ii. 392.
- Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria, i. 599.
- Francis, Sir Philip, author of "Letters of Junius," i. 207; ii. 387.
- Frankfort-on-the-Main, its beauty and prosperity, ii. 212.
- Franklin, Benjamin, mentioned, i. 210; ii. 105, 195, 470.
- Franklin's golden rule, as to offices, ii. 129.
- Frazier, James, mentioned, i. 159.
- Freedom worth all it ever costs, ii. 320.
- Free soil party of 1848, ii. 223.

- Free states not united against disunion, ii. 303.
- Frelinghuysen, Theodore, ii. 119, 120.
- Freeman, J. E., caricature by him, ii. 69.
- Freemasonry, Governor Clinton's ideas of, i. 239; denounced, i. 241; versus justice, i. 247; crusade against, i. 249; opinion of Richard Rush concerning, i. 378.
- Freemasons, how they regarded the Morgan abduction, i. 227; meeting of the Grand Chapter at Albany, i. 227; money raised by, for protection of, i. 228; the division of, i. 245; their action to suppress Morgan's book, i. 296.
- Freimont, J. C., nominated in 1856, ii. 245.
- Fruits, the, unknown in New York in 1815, i. 53.
- Fugitive slave bill, President Fillmore's signing of, i. 588.
- Fugitive slave law, i. 426; ii. 183; Preston King, opposition to, i. 472; E. D. Morgan, opposed to, ii. 252.
- Fuller, Philo C., elected to Assembly, i. 309; at convention, i. 366; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; letter concerning Mr. Wadsworth's nomination, i. 344; elected to legislature and Congress, i. 347; elected to other offices, i. 347; Comptroller of New York, i. 348; friendship of, with Mr. Weed, i. 348; legislator of 1830, i. 405; dissolved anti-Masonic party, i. 425; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 174.
- Fulton Bank, concerning a charter for, i. 106.
- Fulton, Robert, appearance of his steamboat on the Hudson, i. 4; commissioner of Erie canal, i. 72.
- Fulton's first steamboat, in 1807, ii. 380.
- Furman, Gabriel, mentioned, i. 393.
- Furman, William, supports Mr. Adams, i. 122.
- "Gadsby" House, the, at Washington, i. 537.
- Gag resolve in 1837, denounced by Mr. Weed, ii. 54.
- Gales, Joseph, editor of "National Intelligencer," i. 536; a dinner with, i. 536; ii. 484.
- Gales & Seaton, Messrs., publishers of "National Intelligencer," i. 180.
- "Galphin Claim," the payment of, i. 589.
- Gambling in gold and grain, ii. 499.
- Gansevoort, Midshipman, concerning mutiny on board brig Somers, i. 516.
- Ganson, (Major) James, a knight templar, concerning the "Morgan affair," i. 215, 217, 220, 230, 248, 255.
- Gardenier, Barent, incident of, i. 56; in Congress, i. 56; publisher and federal lawyer, i. 56.
- Gardiner, Addison, friendship for Thurlow Weed, i. 91; member of base ball club, i. 203; proposed for circuit judge, i. 339; elected judge, i. 340; settler in Rochester, ii. 19; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 565, 567, 577.
- Gardiner, David, supports Mr. Adams for President, i. 122; mentioned, i. 397.
- Gardiner, Samuel S., i. 397.
- Garfield, James A., President, ii. 472.
- Garrison, William Lloyd, editor of anti-slavery paper, i. 430, 617; his position concerning disunion, i. 305.
- Garrow, Nathaniel, a dinner with, i. 537.
- Geddes, James, engineer of Erie canal, i. 71, 90; at convention, i. 366, 389; ii. 4.
- "Geneva Gazette," a newspaper, i. 22.
- Gentry, Meredith P., leading Whig, i. 442.
- German, Obadiah, mentioned, i. 76; Speaker of the Assembly, i. 77; United States Senator, i. 77; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 366.
- Gibson, Milner, i. 633.
- Giddings, Edward, testimony of, concerning Morgan affair, i. 262, 263, 292, 617.
- Giddings, Joshua R., letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 133; at convention, ii. 263.
- Gilbert, Abijah, legislative service of, i. 200.
- Gillis, Enos and James, interested in abduction of Morgan, i. 231.
- Gilmer, John A., of North Carolina, i. 606; ii. 329; mentioned for Mr. Lincoln's cabinet, i. 611; ii. 294.
- Gladstone, Lord, successor to Lord Palmerston, i. 645.
- Glentworth excitement, the, during Harrison campaign, i. 493.
- Gloomy period of the war, ii. 443.
- Gold and grain, gambling in, ii. 499.
- Gold, Thomas R., lawyer, i. 31.
- Goodhue, Jonathan, i. 502.
- Goodman, Titus, elected to Assembly, i. 309.
- Goodwell, Johnson, arrest of Morgan by, i. 217.
- Goodwin, H. C., letter of Mr. Weed to, i. 15.
- Gortschakoff, Prince, shows the Emperor's orders to the Russian fleet in case of war with England, ii. 347.
- Gospel methods of converting drunkards, ii. 155.
- Gospot, capture of, ii. 338.
- Gossip of politics, ii. 217.
- Gould, General Jacob, mentioned, i. 159, 160, 332.
- Gould, Thomas R., mentioned, i. 418.
- Gouverneur, Samuel L., member of Assembly of 1825, i. 164, 196, 400; death of, i. 400.
- Gove, George B. R., supports Mr. Adams, i. 122.
- Grandin, E. B., printed the Mormon Bible, i. 359.
- Granger, Amos P., as a stage-coach companion, i. 155; mentioned, i. 27; ii. 4;
- Granger, Francis, the wife of, i. 30; at the electors' dinner, i. 137; citizen of Canandaigua, i. 140; chairman of committee to investigate Morgan affair, i. 254, 255; concerning masonry in politics, i. 299; identified with the anti-Masons, i. 302; nominated for Lieutenant-Governor at national Republican convention, i. 304; nominated for Governor by anti-Masonic state convention, i. 305; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; wife of, mentioned, i. 346;

- supports "Evening Journal," i. 361; nominated for Governor, i. 366; ii. 39; letters to Mr. Weed concerning election, i. 367, 368; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 40, 46, 57, 317; anti-bank man, i. 372; his political career, i. 391, 401; in legislature, i. 401, 402, 405; nominated for Governor, i. 413; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; concerning right of petition, i. 428; a candidate for vice-presidency, i. 443; Postmaster-General, i. 506; letters from Mr. Weed, ii. 45, 50, 86-88; an ally of Mr. Fillmore, 1850, ii. 186; and Mr. Weed, separate, ii. 229; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 230.
- Granger, Gideon, Postmaster-General, mentioned, i. 140; political offices held by, i. 392.
- Granger, H. L., sheriff at Manlius, i. 90; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 17.
- Graham, David, Jr., at convention, i. 366.
- Grant, Captain, of sloop Ranger, i. 2; mentioned, i. 8.
- Grant, General Ulysses, incapacity of his Cabinet, ii. 521; a third term opposed by Mr. Weed, ii. 540-546; his second term a failure, ii. 522; nominated for President, 1868, ii. 469.
- Gray, Henry D., brother of Mary, the adopted daughter of Mr. Weed, i. 568, 569.
- Great abuses and follies, ii. 509.
- Greeley, Horace, edited the "New Yorker," i. 466; edits the "Tribune," i. 467; edits the "Jeffersonian" and "Log-Cabin," i. 467; first meeting with Mr. Weed, i. 466; letters to Mr. Weed, i. 468, 469; libel suit of J. Fenimore Cooper against, i. 521, 525; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 53, 71, 84, 91, 94, 95, 97, 131, 197, 216, 220; his "isms," ii. 96; declines to be "controlled," ii. 96; at River and Harbor convention, ii. 148; letters to George E. Baker, ii. 232, 255; his relations with Mr. Weed in 1860, ii. 268; his course reviewed, ii. 273; letter to W. H. Seward dissolving the firm, ii. 277; Mr. Weed's reply to, ii. 282; his passion for office, ii. 286; his character, ii. 286; a dupe of political adventurers, ii. 288; defeated in the election for United States Senator, ii. 325; assumes command of the army, ii. 336; an avowed secessionist in 1860, ii. 489; his war record reviewed, ii. 490, 496; his death in 1872, ii. 497.
- Green Street Theatre, the, at Albany, i. 45.
- Gregory, Mr., M. P. for Galway, introduces resolutions against the Charleston blockade, ii. 407.
- Greig, John, of Canandaigua, i. 140; a dinner with, i. 536; ii. 484.
- Gridley, Judge, charge in case of Cooper libel suits, i. 523.
- Grier, George M., at convention, i. 452.
- Griffin, Ebenezer, mentioned, i. 274, 319.
- Grinnell, Moses H., mentioned, i. 142; supported United States Bank, i. 372; on election committee, i. 476; nominated to Congress, i. 493; Mr. Webster, friendship for, i. 576; member of the Taylor committee, i. 577; tribute to character of, i. 625; political principles, i. 626; declines nomination for Governor, i. 626; in Congress, i. 626; concerning appointment of Washington Irving, i. 626; charity of, i. 628; ii. 145, 484.
- Griswold, George and Nathaniel, i. 502.
- Grosvenor, Thomas P., a leading Federalist, i. 5; citizen of Catskill, New York, i. 6.
- Guernsey, John, elected to Assembly, i. 309.
- Hackley, Aaron, elected to Congress, i. 33; death of, i. 45; a legislator of 1818, i. 395.
- Haight, Jacob, State Treasurer, i. 5; citizen of Catskill, N. Y., i. 6, 9; leader of Adams party in 1824, i. 107; supports Mr. Adams for President, i. 122; at the electors' dinner, i. 138; at dinner with Lafayette, i. 190; appointed Treasurer, i. 459; mentioned, ii. 67.
- Haines, Charles G., political supporter of Governor Clinton, i. 118.
- Hale, John P., of New Hampshire, i. 588; ii. 305.
- Hale, Major, funeral of, i. 7.
- Half-century in retrospect, ii. 547.
- Hall, Charles Henry, legislator of 1835, i. 407.
- Hall, J. Prescott, member of the Taylor Committee, i. 577, 625; ii. 482.
- Hall, Mr., keeper of the jail, concerning the "Morgan affair," i. 223.
- Hall, Mrs., testimony of, concerning the "Morgan affair," i. 233.
- Hall, Rev. Newman, i. 633.
- Hall, Willis, legislator of 1838, i. 408; appointed Attorney-General, i. 459; mentioned, ii. 67.
- Halpine, Charles J. (Miles O'Reilly), ii. 341.
- Halsey, Captain, in Lafayette party, i. 186.
- Hamilton, Alexander, duel with Colonel Burr, i. 5; quoted, ii. 507; surviving member of legislature 1819, i. 198, 397; duel with Aaron Burr, the, i. 415.
- Hamilton and Burr, the duelling ground of, i. 53.
- Hamilton, Mrs., widow of Alexander Hamilton, mentioned, i. 186.
- Hamilton, Private, a soldier executed for shooting Major Birdsall, i. 64.
- Hamilton, Senator, of South Carolina, mentioned, i. 388; champion of nullification, i. 422.
- Hamlin, Hannibal, mentioned for Secretary of Treasury, i. 622; mentioned, ii. 176.
- Hammond, Jabez D., author of "Political History," i. 15; mentioned, i. 112.
- Hammond, Jane, i. 561.
- Hammond, Judah, legislator of 1832, i. 405.
- Hammond, William, i. 561.
- Hancock, General, an honest and enlightened Democrat, ii. 372.
- Hard money policy, the, i. 443.

- Harper, James, firm of Harper & Brothers, i. 57; mayor of New York city, i. 57; ii. 7, 34, 223; established an office, i. 57; Mr. Weed's reminiscences of, ii. 6.
- Harper, Messrs., letter to Thurlow Weed, i. 489; donation of books to public library, i. 489.
- Harper's Ferry, John Brown's raid, ii. 258; attack on, ii. 338.
- Harris, Ira, elected United States senator, ii. 325; mentioned, ii. 141.
- Harrison, General William Henry, mentioned, i. 401; a candidate for presidency, i. 443; nominated for President, i. 481, 482; ii. 56, 76, 77; President, campaign of, i. 490-495; elected President, i. 494; ii. 88; cabinet of, i. 506; ii. 89; death of, i. 506; ii. 93; a dinner with, i. 536; mentioned, i. 572; ii. 50; his inaugural, ii. 90.
- Hart, Eli, i. 502.
- Hart, Ephraim, the family, i. 31.
- Harter, Mr., trading with Judge Weaver, i. 150.
- Harvey, Peter, mentioned, i. 438.
- Hasbrouck, Lewis, nominated for senator, and elected, i. 414.
- Hasted, James W., letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 502.
- Hastings, Hugh, anecdote of Mr. Weed, ii. 232.
- Hatfield, Richard, merchant, i. 59; imitative powers of, i. 393.
- Havemeyer, Mr., mayor of New York, i. 366.
- Havens family, the, legislative service of, i. 201.
- Hawley, Gideon, mentioned, i. 112.
- Hawley, Seth C., ii. 147, 244.
- Hayes, Rutherford B., civil service reform in his administration, ii. 464; declared elected President, March 2, 1877, ii. 524.
- Hayne, Senator, champion of nullification, i. 422.
- Hayward Holloway, concerning the "Morgan affair," i. 219, 248.
- Haywoods, the, mentioned, i. 159.
- Hazeltine, Abner, at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257; elected to Assembly, i. 309; mentioned, ii. 64.
- Heacock, R. B., of Buffalo, i. 141.
- Heeny, Cornelius, an anecdote of, i. 395; a legislator of 1817, death of, i. 395.
- Heintzelman, Major, in command at Governor's Island, ii. 340.
- Heister, William, at Baltimore convention, i. 339.
- Henry, John V., lawyer, mentioned, i. 48; as a jurist, i. 447.
- Henry, Professor Joseph, sketch of, i. 384; ii. 470.
- "Herald," New York, sentiments concerning the rebellion, i. 615.
- Herkimer, village of, i. 149.
- Hickory canes and flag-poles, the emblems chosen by the Jackson men, ii. 60.
- Hillhouse, Thomas, Comptroller of New York, i. 348.
- Hillson, Thomas, i. 449.
- "History of the War," published by Samuel R. Brown, i. 40.
- Hoboken, duelling-ground of Hamilton and Burr, i. 53.
- Hoffman, Michael, biographical sketch of, i. 34; concerning Erie canal, i. 443.
- Hoffman, Josiah Ogden, at Lafayette reception, i. 189; delegate to constitutional convention, i. 200; colleague to Charles King, i. 393; in legislature 1828, i. 402, 625.
- Holland, Sir Henry, mentioned, i. 28, 512; visit to America, i. 513; quoted, i. 514; letter to Mr. Weed, i. 631; sympathies with the North during the Rebellion, i. 633; concerning the Trent affair, i. 645; death of, i. 631; ii. 381; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 382.
- Holley, John M., at convention, i. 452.
- Holley, Myron, Federal member of legislature, i. 47; at Rome, N. Y., i. 71; of Canandaigua, i. 140; as a stage-coach companion, i. 155; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; at Baltimore convention, i. 389; legislative "giant," i. 397.
- Holley, Orville L., appointed Surveyor-General, i. 459; ii. 67.
- Homestead law, repeal of urged by Mr. Weed, ii. 442.
- Hone Club, its original members, ii. 480.
- Hone, Philip, of New York, mentioned, i. 53; merchant, i. 59; in Lafayette party, i. 186; supported United States Bank, i. 372; legislature of 1833, i. 406; merchant of New York, i. 502, 625; ii. 48, 477.
- Hopelessness of Whig success in 1852, ii. 213.
- Hopkins, Nelson K., Comptroller of New York, i. 348.
- Hopkins, Samuel Miles, concerning agricultural societies, i. 78; mentioned, i. 112; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; letter to Mr. Weed, i. 363; professor at Auburn Theological Seminary, i. 364; marriage of his daughters, i. 364; member of legislature, i. 364; at Baltimore convention, i. 389.
- Hopper, Jasper, postmaster at Onondaga Hollow, i. 23; ii. 3.
- Hosmer, George, leader in Clay party of 1824, i. 107.
- Houdin, Captain, ludicrous conclusion of an oration on Washington, i. 48.
- House of Commons, resolution concerning imprisonment of Lafayette, i. 193; debate on Charleston blockade, ii. 407-409.
- Houston, Samuel, ii. 42, 316.
- How Lincoln was nominated, ii. 265.
- How to maintain Republican ascendancy, ii. 521.
- Howard, Richard, implicated in Morgan affair, i. 243.
- Howell, Hon. A. W., Judge, of Ontario County, i. 232.
- Howell, Nathaniel W., of Canandaigua, i. 140.
- Howland, Humphrey, of Aurora, i. 142.
- Hoyt, Jesse, in Assembly of 1823, i. 398.

- Hoyts, the, of Utica, i. 30.
- Hubbard, Hiram, indicted on Morgan affair, i. 248; mentioned, l. 271.
- Hubbard, John F., printer, i. 76; establishes a new paper, i. 76; surviving member of legislature 1824, i. 199; in Assembly 1824, i. 400; editor of Norwich "Journal," ii. 9, 15.
- Hubbell, Walter, elected to Assembly, i. 309.
- Huger, Colonel, narrative of, concerning imprisonment of General Lafayette at Olmutz, i. 192.
- Hughes, Archbishop, mission to Europe, i. 388, 634; ii. 349; concerning the school question, i. 484, 500; reception in Europe, i. 639, 643; a fellow passenger to Europe, ii. 102; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 134; his portrait, ii. 233.
- Hulbert, John W., member of Assembly of 1825, i. 163.
- Humphrey, Friend, mayor of Albany, i. 30; at convention, i. 452; elected state Senator, i. 479; ii. 547.
- Hunt, Alvah, prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; at convention, i. 452; state Treasurer, ii. 145; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 185.
- Hunt, Governor, conversation with Mr. Weed concerning a mission abroad, i. 596.
- Hunt, Ward, mentioned, i. 472.
- Hunt, Washington, Comptroller of New York, i. 348; ii. 173; concerning right of petition, i. 428; letters to Mr. Weed, ii. 112, 130, 173, 253; rupture with Mr. Weed, ii. 252; his position defined, ii. 253.
- Hunt, Wilson G., i. 502.
- Hunter, James, relations with Mr. Weed, i. 413.
- Hunter, Mr., and the consulship at Falmouth, i. 601.
- Hunter, Mrs., at Vienna, i. 598.
- Hunter, Robert B., of Rochester, i. 99; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; in legislature, 1818, i. 395.
- Huntington, George, legislative service of, i. 201.
- Huntington, Henry, delegate to constitutional convention, i. 200.
- Huntingtons, the, of Rome, New York, i. 31.
- Hurlburt sentenced, i. 255.
- Hyde, Captain, concerning King's flight, i. 256.
- Idleness and demagoguery, ii. 513.
- Ill-timed pressure for peace, ii. 493-495.
- Important interests neglected, ii. 533.
- Imprisonment for debt, the bill abolishing, i. 379.
- Inauguration of Lincoln, ii. 337, 449.
- Incapacity of Europeans to understand the magnitude of the United States, ii. 409.
- Incongruous republican elements, ii. 321.
- Indians, American, ii. 6.
- Indians, Oneida, tribe of, i. 148.
- "Infected district," i. 309; ii. 81.
- Intemperance, Mr. Weed's opinions on, ii. 154.
- Intervention, efforts to secure, ii. 403.
- Interview with the Duc de Morny, ii. 395.
- Impatient editors in 1861, ii. 336.
- Irish nationality, sympathy in America, ii. 114.
- Irish repeal, Mr. Weed on, ii. 114.
- Irving, John F., a legislator of 1817, i. 395, 397.
- Irving, Washington, i. 625; ii. 199.
- Jackson (General), Andrew, i. 8; mentioned, i. 62; one vote for President, i. 137; movement to nominate for President, i. 165; letter of A. H. Tracy on his chances of the presidency, i. 173; an adhering Mason, i. 302; popularity of, i. 350; concerning United States Bank, i. 371; cause of a rupture in Cabinet of, i. 365; appoints Mr. Van Buren minister to England, i. 375; concerning reelection of, i. 413; reelection of, i. 414; proclamation concerning nullification, i. 422; concerning deposits in United States Bank, i. 423; mentioned, i. 572; began second term in 1833, ii. 48.
- Jackson, John, testimony of, concerning Morgan affair, i. 264, 265, 278-282, 288.
- Jaffray, Robert, i. 502.
- James Kent, a steamboat, i. 184.
- James, William, political friend of Governor Clinton, i. 67; mentioned, i. 112; as a merchant, i. 447.
- Jarvis, Nathaniel, legislator of 1830, i. 405.
- Jaspers, the, mentioned, i. 159.
- Jay (Governor), John, mentioned, i. 394.
- Jay, Peter A., Federal member of legislature, i. 47; mentioned, i. 59; delegate to convention, i. 89; elected in 1816, i. 394.
- Jefferson, President Thomas, mentioned, i. 180.
- Jenckes' civil service bill, ii. 462; not favored by Mr. Weed, ii. 463.
- Jennings, Captain, his company of light infantry, i. 28.
- Jewett (Colonel), Simeon B., concerning the "Morgan affair," i. 211; action in the abduction of Morgan, i. 228; indicted on Morgan affair, i. 248; witness in libel suit, i. 332; death of, i. 335; recommends Mr. Gardiner for circuit judge, i. 339.
- Johannes, Mr., legislative service of, i. 200.
- Johns, Daniel, concerning Morgan's arrest, i. 217, 220.
- Johnson, Andrew, acting President, i. 473; his policy and administration, i. 629; return to the Senate, i. 631; nominated for Vice-President, ii. 446; President: his first message, ii. 450; his convictions and policy, ii. 451; opposition of radical leaders to, ii. 451; Mr. Weed's article on, ii. 454; in the beginning, he was right, ii. 454; vetoes the civil rights bill, 1866, ii. 451; rupture with Congress, ii. 451, 470.



- Johnson, B. P., mentioned, i. 402.
- Johnson, Jerome, member of Assembly, 1822, i. 397.
- Johnson, Richard M., ii. 50.
- Johnson, Reverdy, at Whig convention, i. 482; reception of Mr. Weed, i. 587; mentioned, ii. 77.
- Johnson, Sir William, and Guy, the residences of, i. 154.
- Johnston, Governor of Louisiana, in Lafayette party, i. 186.
- Jones, C. F., early efforts to support his family, ii. 23.
- Jones (Captain), Jacob, mentioned, i. 39.
- Jones, Samuel, Jr., Chief Justice, mentioned, i. 393.
- Jordan, Ambrose L., lawyer at Coopers-town, i. 36; counsel for Thurlow Weed, i. 42; member of Assembly of 1825, i. 164, 196; at dinner with Lafayette, i. 190; counselor in a libel suit, i. 527.
- Jordan, Mathew, letter from Mr. Weed on Irish repeal, ii. 115.
- Jordan, Mrs., English actress, i. 87.
- Journeymen printers, intemperate habits of, i. 44, 58; marked difference between, i. 53; letter to, ii. 191.
- Judson, David C., survivor of legislature of 1818, i. 198, 395, 410.
- Kane, Archibald, mentioned, i. 153.
- Kane, Charles, the store of, i. 153.
- Kane, James, appointed agent to the Indians, i. 464.
- Kane, Oliver, duel with James Wadsworth, i. 153.
- Kansas, civil war in, ii. 250.
- Kansas-Nebraska Bill, ii. 220; contest, ii. 239.
- Kean, Charles, the talent of, i. 206.
- Kean, Mr. and Mrs. Charles, ii. 213.
- Kellogg, Mr., editor of the "Manlius Times," i. 22; death of, i. 87.
- Kellogg, Mr., changes from Adams to Crawford ticket, i. 125.
- Kempshall, Thomas, of Rochester, mentioned, i. 98; member of base ball club, i. 203; member of anti-Masonic party, i. 336.
- Kendall, Amos, postmaster, i. 428.
- Kennedy, John A., mentioned, i. 212; ii. 142, 144, 458.
- Kennedy, Thomas, pressman, i. 57; ii. 5.
- Kent, Chancellor, supported United States Bank, i. 372; as a jurist, i. 447; anecdote of, i. 463, 625.
- Kent, Governor of Maine, i. 626.
- Kent, James, delegate to convention, i. 88; delegate to convention 1821, i. 199.
- Kent, William, son of Chancellor Kent, i. 183; nominated for Judge by Governor Seward, i. 485; an excursion with Mr. Weed, i. 485-487; humorous stories of, i. 487; mentioned, i. 626; letters to Mr. Weed, ii. 20, 72, 196.
- Kent Club, list of original members, ii. 479.
- Kernochnan, Joseph, i. 561.
- Kernochnan, James, ii. 188.
- Ketcham, Hiram, nominated for Judge by Governor Seward, i. 485; friendship for Mr. Webster, i. 576; ii. 187.
- Ketcham, Mr., one of the Morgan conspirators, i. 221.
- Keyes, Perley, member of Van Buren party, in 1824, i. 107; at political dinner with Governor Clinton, i. 165; prominent Democrat, i. 165.
- Kidd, Captain, the buried treasure of, i. 7.
- Kidnapping, act of legislature concerning, i. 255.
- King, Charles, leading Federalist, i. 84; supported United States Bank, i. 372; mentioned, i. 457, 626; member of Taylor committee, i. 577; concerning treatment of Americans at Dartmoor prison, i. 118; in Assembly in 1814, i. 393.
- King, Colonel, interested in the abduction of Morgan, i. 229; appointment from the War Department, i. 245; escape from arrest, and return, i. 255; action in Morgan's fate, i. 332.
- King, Elisha W., mentioned, i. 393; in legislature, i. 401.
- King, Governor of Rhode Island, concerning the Dorr rebellion, i. 530.
- King, James, author of a political attack on Governor Clinton, i. 68.
- King, John A., member of Thompson committee, i. 304; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; supported United States Bank, i. 372; in legislature of 1832, i. 391; a legislator of 1819, i. 397; nominated for Governor, i. 472; first Republican Governor of New York, i. 626; elected Governor in 1856, ii. 247.
- King, Preston, legislator of 1835, i. 407; political career of, i. 471; opposition to Fugitive Slave Law, i. 472; elected United States Senator, i. 473; appointed Collector of New York, i. 475; suicide of, i. 475; advice to Mr. Weed, ii. 309.
- King, Rufus, delegate to convention, i. 89; and the senatorship, i. 168; appointed Minister to England, i. 178; his four sons, i. 199; delegate to convention 1821, i. 199; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; American Minister to Rome, i. 393; as a merchant, i. 447; appointed Adjutant-General, i. 456; associate editor with Mr. Weed, i. 457; political offices of, i. 457; ii. 66; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 111; attended to Mr. Weed's worldly affairs, ii. 547.
- Kinnaird, Hon. Arthur, i. 644; letter to Mr. Weed, i. 645.
- Kinnaird, Lord, reception at his house, ii. 362.
- Kirkland, Charles P., of New York, i. 42; mentioned, i. 199.
- Kirkland (General), Joseph, lawyer, i. 31; District-Attorney, i. 42; member of Assembly of 1825, i. 165; mentioned, i. 199, 418.
- Kirkland, Rev. Mr., devotion to the Oneida Indians, i. 148.
- Kissam, David, legislative service of, i. 201.

- "Kit" Morgan, mentioned, i. 143.  
 Knapp, Samuel L., at a meeting of the Grand Chapter of Masons, i. 251.  
 Knickerbocker, Herman, member of Congress, i. 48; known as Prince of Schaghticoke, i. 48, 342; anecdote of, concerning oration, i. 48.  
 Knight-Templar, a, confession of, concerning fate of Morgan, i. 297.  
 Knock down for the Locos in Maine, ii. 85.  
 Knower, Benjamin, member of "Albany Regency," i. 8, 103; concerning political attack on Governor Clinton, i. 67.  
 Knowlson, Miss, concerning a pistol shot, i. 487.  
 Know Nothings, ii. 224.  
 Knox, General, mentioned, i. 188.
- Labor, the divine law of, ii. 7; the gospel of, ii. 467.  
 Lackawanna canal, bill for construction of the, i. 171.  
 Lafayette, Marquis de, visit to the United States, i. 184; his welcome in New York city, i. 185; reception at Newburg, i. 188; opening a ball with the widow of General Montgomery, i. 190; incident of the Newburg girls, i. 190; incident of Colonel Harry Livingston, i. 192; narrative concerning his imprisonment at Olmutz, i. 192; offered the governorship of Louisiana, i. 193; release demanded by Napoleon, i. 193; concerning the appropriation for payment to, i. 194; incidents of his trip up the Hudson, i. 186, 194; ii. 107.  
 Lake Michigan, ii. 149.  
 Lake Ontario, i. 24.  
 Lakey, Dr. James, indicted in Morgan affair, i. 248.  
 Lamb, Colonel Anthony, officer of the Revolution, i. 55; in Lafayette party, i. 186.  
 Lamb, Charles, mentioned, i. 50.  
 Lampson, Sir Curtis, an American baronet, ii. 389.  
 Lane, Charles, death of, i. 87.  
 Lane, Colonel, mentioned for Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet, i. 610.  
 Lang, George, book-publisher, i. 56.  
 Laosing, Christopher, secretary to Governor Yates, i. 114.  
 Lansing (Chancellor), John, mystery connected with his death known to Mr. Weed, ii. 34, 35.  
 "Latch-string" of the Harrison campaign, i. 493.  
 Lawrence, Hon. Abbott, minister to England, i. 537; vice-presidency suggested for the, i. 577; opposition to his nomination for the vice-presidency, i. 578; suggested by Mr. Weed for vice-president, i. 585.  
 Lawrence, James R., concerning small bill question, i. 444; at convention, i. 452; member of Assembly 1825, i. 164, 196; in legislature 1817, i. 395.  
 Lawrence, Judge, ii. 4, 246.
- Lawson Loton, action of in the "Morgan affair," i. 223.  
 Lay, George W., at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257.  
 Leake & Cantine, state printers, i. 85.  
 Leavenworth, Elias W., friendship with Mr. Weed, i. 435; mentioned, i. 90; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336.  
 Leavenworth, General, ii. 4, 425.  
 Leavenworth, Henry, senator, i. 47.  
 Lecompton constitution rejected, ii. 250.  
 Ledyard, Henry, chargé d'affaires at Paris, i. 512.  
 Lee, Gideon, in Assembly of 1823, i. 396; a Whig elector, i. 491; ii. 60.  
 Lee, Henry B., death of, i. 47; speech in New York legislature of 1815, i. 47.  
 Lee, Martin, at convention, i. 452.  
 Lee, Robert E., abandons the Union cause, ii. 342; Mr. Weed's letter on the death of, ii. 476.  
 Leggett, Mr., editor of "Evening Post," i. 383.  
 Legislation in 1825, i. 197.  
 Legislative degeneracy, i. 409.  
 Legislative parties in Albany, ii. 191.  
 Legislature, the, at Albany in 1815, i. 45; of New York, memorable struggle for Speaker, i. 46; of 1824, proclamation of Governor Yates convening, i. 115; of 1824, concerning the electoral law, i. 116; convened to choose electors, i. 122; of 1825, members of, sketched, i. 163-165; surviving members of the, i. 196; of 1824, how divided politically, i. 197; surviving members of, i. 198, 199; memorable for two actions, i. 199; length of service of its members, i. 200; of 1828, anti-Masons elected to, i. 309; of 1832, of what composed, i. 391; a retrospect of from 1814 to 1838, i. 393-400; of 1826, Democratic majority in, i. 400.  
 Leigh Watkins, of Virginia, ii. 77.  
 Lemmon case, ii. 323.  
 Le Roy, village of, distinguished in Masonic annals, i. 215; mentioned, ii. 389.  
 Letters, to George W. Curtis, i. 534; George Ashmun to Mr. Weed, ii. 189; August Belmont to Mr. Weed, ii. 310, 420; James G. Bennett challenging Mr. Weed, concerning certain political movements, i. 352; John Bigelow to Mr. Weed, ii. 366; R. M. Blatchford to Mr. Weed, i. 480; James Bowen to Mr. Weed, i. 504; Samuel Bowles to Mr. Weed, ii. 260; David G. Bright to Thurlow Weed, i. 80; S. P. Chase to a friend, ii. 329; Governor James Clark to Mr. Weed, concerning Mr. Clay, i. 351; Henry Clay to Mr. Weed, ii. 42, 98, 119; Governor Clinton to the Batavia committee, concerning the Morgan affair, i. 238; to governors of Canada, concerning the Morgan affair, i. 240; to Theodore F. Talbot, concerning Morgan, i. 249; committee of Typographical Society to Thurlow Weed, i. 69; Edwin Crosswell to Mr. Weed, ii. 38; David Davis to Mr. Weed, ii. 299, 300, 302, 323, 444; George Daw-

son to Mr. Weed, ii. 134; General Dix to Mr. Weed, ii. 423, 501, 505; Edward Ellice to Mr. Weed, ii. 380; Mr. McElrath to Mr. Weed, ii. 436; W. M. Everts to Mr. Weed, ii. 410; Millard Fillmore to Collector Maxwell, ii. 233; Millard Fillmore to Mr. Weed, ii. 61, 63, 64, 74, 75, 83, 85; Governor Fish to Mr. Weed, ii. 190, 196; Frederick Follett to Mr. Weed, concerning Morgan affair, i. 320; Philo Fuller, concerning Mr. Wadsworth, i. 344; Francis Granger to Mr. Weed, ii. 317; H. L. Granger to Mr. Weed, i. 367; ii. 17, 46, 57; Horace Greeley to George E. Baker, ii. 199, 232, 255; to Mr. Weed, i. 468, 469; ii. 53, 71, 84, 91, 94, 95, 97, 131, 216, 220; Sir Henry Holland to Weed, ii. 382, 631; Robert L. Hone to Mr. Weed, ii. 478; Messrs. Harper to Mr. Weed, i. 489; Samuel M. Hopkins to Mr. Weed, i. 363; Bishop Hughes to Mr. Weed, i. 637; ii. 134; Washington Hunt to Mr. Weed, ii. 112, 130, 134, 173, 185, 253; Thomas L. James to Mr. Weed, ii. 562; William Kent to Mr. Weed, ii. 20, 72, 146, 196; Hon. A. Kinnaird to Mr. Weed, i. 645; A. Lincoln to Mr. Weed, ii. 310, 324, 433; S. P. Leyman to Mr. Weed, i. 438; W. L. Marcy to Mr. Weed, ii. 228; Father Mathew from Mr. Weed, ii. 150, 151; Bishop McIlvaine to Mr. Weed, ii. 419; General McClellan to Mr. Weed, ii. 429; John McLean declining nomination for President, i. 389; Robert B. Minturn to Mr. Weed, i. 503; Rev. Dr. Mitchell, i. 60; E. D. Morgan to Mr. Weed, ii. 252, 430, 445, 461; Butler G. Noble to Mr. Weed, ii. 317; George W. Patterson to Mr. Weed, ii. 47, 83, 85, 434, 445; George Peabody to Mr. Weed, ii. 365; Everard Peck to Mr. Weed, ii. 22; Major-General Pleasanton to Mr. Weed, ii. 180; Henry J. Raymond to Mr. Weed, ii. 451; Erastus Root to Mr. Weed, i. 553; General Scott to General Taylor, i. 575; General Scott to Mr. Weed, i. 657; W. H. Seward to Mr. Weed, concerning the Trent affair, i. 640; W. H. Seward to Mr. Weed, ii. 41, 99, 128, 244, 256, 261, 270, 307, 319, 323, 332, 351, 353, 378, 408, 409, 426, 428, 460; Gerrit Smith to Mr. Weed, ii. 453; Vivus W. Smith to Mr. Weed, ii. 433; John C. Spencer to Mr. Weed, ii. 43, 116, 118; A. T. Stewart to Mr. Weed, ii. 318, 411; Leonard Jewett to Mr. Weed, ii. 297, 301; Colonel J. T. Taylor to Mr. Weed, General Taylor in Mexico and as a candidate for the presidency, i. 573; Albert H. Tracy to Mr. Weed, i. 173; ii. 31, 32, 49; concerning Governor Clinton, i. 177; James Wadsworth refusing nomination, i. 344; on common schools, i. 344; James Watson Webb to Mr. Weed, ii. 526; Daniel Webster to R. M. Blatchford, ii. 183; Mr. Webster to Mr. Weed, ii. 95, 135; Thurlow Weed to editor of Catskill "Recorder," concerning his early life, i. 5; to H. C. Goodwin

author of "History of Cortland County," i. 15; to John Whitney, concerning Morgan's fate, i. 334; to Mr. Bennett's challenge, i. 353; to the "Evening Journal," from the West Indies, i. 556; to the "Evening Journal," from Europe, i. 540-552; to his son James, i. 552; to a friend, ii. 19, 38; to Edwin Crosswell, ii. 37; to Francis Granger, ii. 40, 45, 50, 86-88; to his daughter Harriet, ii. 107; to Joshua R. Giddings, ii. 133; to Father Mathew, ii. 150; James Birdsall introducing Mr. Weed, ii. 12; Washington Irving to Charles R. Leslie, ii. 199; Daniel Webster to Lord Carlisle, ii. 199; to A. Lincoln, ii. 300, 438, 440; to Preston King, ii. 309; to Robert B. Minturn, ii. 423; to Governor Seymour, ii. 427; to H. J. Raymond, ii. 436; to Senator Morgan, ii. 441; to Joseph Parkes, ii. 443; to Thomas C. Acton, ii. 488; to James W. Husted, ii. 502; to Governor Dix, ii. 506; to Vivus W. Smith, ii. 507; to James G. Blaine, ii. 522; to Charles E. Smith, ii. 524; to Benjamin K. Phelps, ii. 525; to General Webb, ii. 527; to Judge Gardiner, ii. 565, 567; to General Daly, ii. 565; to President Arthur, ii. 566; Frederick Whittlesey to Mr. Weed, i. 368; ii. 33; Silas Wright to Mr. Van Buren, presenting his political views, i. 376.

Levasseur, M., secretary of General Lafayette, i. 186.

Lewis (Governor), Morgan, at the village of Madison, i. 4; reviewing militia, i. 18; in Lafayette's party, i. 186; meeting with Aaron Burr, i. 370; officer of the Revolution, i. 55.

Lewis, Mrs., granddaughter of General Washington, mentioned, i. 186.

Libel suits, the, of J. Fenimore Cooper, i. 520-529.

Liberty party, Mr. Weed's views of, ii. 230.

Liberty party of 1840, ii. 223.

"Life of the Prince Consort," quoted, i. 647; ii. 368.

Lincoln, A., coopers with Mr. Weed on appointments in his first Cabinet, i. 605; ii. 293; mentioned, i. 334, 457; assassination of, i. 473; humorous stories of, i. 607, 608, 612; nomination for president, i. 602; how he was nominated, ii. 265; his high estimate of Mr. Weed, ii. 288; his earliest supporters, ii. 291; his renomination opposed by Bryant and Greeley, ii. 296; his assassination plotted in Canada, ii. 296; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 297; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 300; elected, ii. 301; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 310; his position as president elect, ii. 311; a close observer of popular feeling, ii. 311; appears in Washington February 23, 1861, ii. 319; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 324; his inaugural address, ii. 325; his Cabinet, ii. 325; call for volunteers, ii. 327; changes in his Cabinet, ii. 330; his Cabinet his own selection, ii. 330; the inaug-

- uration, ii. 337; his election the cause of the war, ii. 370; his object neither to save nor destroy slavery, ii. 418; his paramount object to save the Union, ii. 418; issued the Emancipation Proclamation, ii. 430; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 433; and Weed, ii. 437; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 438; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 440; desires a second term, ii. 444; radical opposition to, ii. 445; his second canvass, ii. 446; his second inaugural address, ii. 449; assassinated April 14, 1865, ii. 450; mentioned, ii. 470.
- Lisle, town of, i. 11.
- Little, Weare C., an early anti-Mason, i. 448; supports the "Evening Journal," i. 362; ii. 547; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336.
- Little Falls, village of, i. 151; mentioned, ii. 485.
- Livingston, Chancellor, entertains General Lafayette, i. 189.
- Livingston, Charles L., candidate for office of Speaker; i. 391; sustained the Stilwell Bill, i. 397; legislator of 1839, incident of, i. 403; Speaker of Assembly of 1832, 405, 406; couplet written for, i. 407.
- Livingston, Edward P., member of Van Buren party in 1824, i. 107; in Lafayette party, i. 186; nominated Lieutenant-Governor, i. 367.
- Livingston, Henry A., at Lafayette reception, i. 189.
- Livingston, J. K., at convention, i. 366; mentioned, i. 158; of Newark, New Jersey, i. 100; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257; member of base ball club, i. 203; signs a petition, i. 204; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; supports "Evening Journal," i. 361.
- Livingston Manor House, mentioned, i. 7.
- Livingston, Peter R., concerning a political attack on Governor Clinton, i. 67; delegate to convention, i. 89; Speaker of Assembly of 1823, i. 399; at Whig convention, i. 430; Edward P. and "Oak Hill John," mentioned, i. 190.
- Livingston, Robert R., commissioner of Erie canal, i. 72.
- Livingstons, the, legislative service of, i. 201.
- Loco-Foco, first use of this name to designate the Democrats, ii. 52.
- Lockwood, Captain of brig Eliza, i. 562. "Log Cabin," edited by Horace Greeley, i. 467; and hard cider the watchword of the Whigs in 1840, ii. 80; enthusiasm, ii. 81; campaign paper in 1841, ii. 91.
- London, visit to, ii. 105, 213.
- London "Times," Mr. Weed's letter to, ii. 355.
- Longevity of eminent men, i. 198.
- Loubet, Alphonse, Mr. Weed visits him, ii. 390; proposes to arrange an interview with the Duc de Morny, ii. 391.
- Love, Thomas C., supports "Evening Journal," i. 361; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257; concerning political anti-masonry, i. 299; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; at convention, i. 366.
- Low, Seth, Mayor of Brooklyn, ii. 472.
- Lowville, town of, i. 40.
- Luckey, Rev. Dr., concerning the school question, i. 484.
- Lyman, Samuel P., his friendship for, and gifts to Mr. Weed, i. 436; letter to Mr. Weed, concerning the administration, i. 438.
- Lynde, Tilly, supports Mr. Adams for President, i. 122.
- "Lynx," the, a newspaper, i. 22.
- Lyoos, Lord, Benjamin's letter forwarded to, ii. 315; despatches to, ii. 376.
- McAuley, Jerry, his Water Street Mission, ii. 163.
- McCarty, Dennis, in Legislature of 1830, the incident of the temperance meeting, i. 404.
- Maclay, William B., lawyer, support of school bill, i. 502.
- McClellan, George B., letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 429; nominated for President, ii. 446.
- McClure, A. K., letter to the Press Club dinner, ii. 555.
- McCulloch, Hugh, mentioned for Secretary of Treasury, i. 622, 623.
- McDowell, Irwin, Major-General, ii. 343.
- McDuffie, George, of South Carolina, mentioned, i. 388; champion of nullification, i. 422.
- McElrath, Thomas, letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 430.
- McHarg, Mistress, incident of, i. 84.
- McIlvaine, Rev. Charles, made Bishop, i. 388; mission to Europe, i. 388; offered a mission to Europe, i. 634; goes to Europe with Mr. Weed and Archbishop Hughes, ii. 349; in Paris, 1861, ii. 349; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 419.
- McIntyre, Archibald, concerning Governor Tompkins' accounts, i. 82; supports Mr. Adams for President, i. 122; a Clinton man, i. 197; legislative service of, i. 201; Comptroller of New York, i. 348; a Whig elector, i. 491; mentioned, ii. 14.
- Mackenzie, Captain, of brig Somers, concerning mutiny, i. 516, 519.
- McKeon, John, admitted to practice law, i. 392; legislator of 1832, i. 406; mentioned, ii. 141, 551.
- McKown, James, mentioned, i. 112; in Assembly of 1820, i. 397.
- McLane, Hon. Louis, interview with Mr. Biddle concerning a charter for United States Bank, i. 373.
- McLean, John, marriage of his daughter, i. 182; letter declining nomination for President, i. 389; mentioned, i. 571.
- McLean, Judge, ii. 245.
- "Mad Anthony Wayne," mentioned, i. 186.
- Madison, Mrs., mentioned, i. 342.
- Madison (President), James, mentioned, i. 180, 379; i. 519.
- Maher (Captain), James, concerning elections in "Fourth Ward," i. 448.

- Mail, the, arrival of, at Onondaga, i. 22.  
 Maine Law, the, i. 98; ii. 216.  
 Mangum, Senator, concerning nullification, i. 422; concerning Everett's mission to England, i. 509.  
 Manlius, N. Y., i. 146; ii. 18.  
 Mann, Abijah, Jr., mentioned, i. 402.  
 Mann, Horace, mentioned, i. 345.  
 Marcy (Governor), William L., member of "Albany Regency," i. 8; funeral of, i. 9; replies to political letter of Governor Clinton, i. 67; member of the Albany Regency, i. 103; supports Mr. Crawford for President, i. 107; conducts trial of Ezekiel Jewett, i. 274, 283; concerning the obligations of masonry, i. 275; Comptroller of New York, i. 348; mentioned, i. 392, 407; bill concerning the hard money policy, i. 443; reelected, i. 443; signing of bank charter bill, i. 450; pantaloons, story of, i. 453; renominated, i. 453; reelected Governor in 1834, ii. 48; nominated for Governor, ii. 60; pasquinade on the Whig victory in 1838, ii. 64; a presidential candidate, ii. 198; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 228.  
 Marcy's maxim, ii. 465.  
 Marseilles, ii. 206.  
 Marshall, Chief Justice, at Baltimore Convention, i. 390.  
 Martin, Robert, partner of Mr. Weed on the "Telegraph," i. 210, 251, 252, 412.  
 Marvin, Dudley, of Canandaigua, i. 140.  
 Marvin, Dr. George, of Rochester, mentioned, i. 99, 159; member of base ball club, i. 203.  
 Marvin, Richard P., concerning bank charter, i. 106; legislator of 1835, i. 407.  
 Mason, Rev. Dr., of New York, i. 60.  
 Mason and Slidell, the capture of, i. 639; ii. 348.  
 Massachusetts Sixth, attacked at Baltimore, ii. 338.  
 Mastiff, the, mode of diplomacy, ii. 357.  
 Mather and Donington, ink makers, ii. 194.  
 Mathew, Theobald, Father, ii. 103.  
 Mathews (General), Vincent, of Rochester, mentioned, i. 98, 158; elected to the Assembly, i. 209; counsel for Bruce in Morgan trial, i. 266; counsel for defense in trial of Ezekiel Jewett, i. 274; recommends Mr. Gardiner for Judge, i. 339.  
 Mathews or Matthias, the impostor prophet, i. 357.  
 Maury (Lieutenant), Matthew F., reply of Mr. Weed to, ii. 369.  
 Maxwell, Hugh, at convention, i. 452; Taylor committee, chairman of the, i. 577; meeting with Mr. Weed at Aiken, i. 597; ii. 461; mentioned, i. 626; ii. 35; collector of New York, ii. 175; letter from Mr. Fillmore, ii. 233.  
 Maynard, John, prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; at convention, i. 452.  
 Maynard, William H., elected to Assembly, i. 309; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; at convention, i. 366; anti-bank man, i. 372; sustained the Stilwell bill, i. 379; obituary in "Evening Journal," on, i. 418.  
 Memory, how Mr. Weed attempted to improve, ii. 26.  
 Mercien, William A., printer, i. 57; ii. 194.  
 Meredith, Mr., Secretary of Treasury, i. 590; ii. 175.  
 Metallic and paper dollars, ii. 537.  
 Metropolitan Police Commission, ii. 144.  
 Mexican war, capture of Monterey, i. 573; battle of Buena Vista, i. 575; ii. 132, 133, 136.  
 Miller, David C., printed Morgan's *exposé* of masonry, i. 216.  
 Miller, Judge, of Auburn, i. 41, 143; leading Federalist, i. 84; concerning stage-coach accident, i. 139.  
 Miller, Morris S., lawyer, i. 31.  
 Miller, Sylvanus, merchant, New York, i. 59; concerning Mr. Clinton for Governor, i. 82.  
 Milnes, Monckton (Lord Houghton), i. 633; ii. 362.  
 Minorities, the action of, ii. 124.  
 Minturn, Robert B., letter to Mr. Weed, i. 503; a tribute to, i. 504; on committee concerning state election, i. 476; mentioned, i. 625; charity of, i. 627; concerning Mr. Weed's mission to Europe, i. 638; interest in reform, ii. 139; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 423.  
 Misrule and misery, ii. 125.  
 Missouri, applies for admission as a State, ii. 12.  
 Missouri Compromise, the design of, i. 426; ii. 13; repeal of, ii. 221.  
 Mitchell, Charles F., biographical sketch of, i. 159.  
 Mitchell, Dr. S. L., mentioned, i. 54; pastor of church, i. 60, 394; identified with the anti-Masons, i. 302.  
 Mnemonic system, suggested by Mrs. Weed, ii. 27.  
 Monroe (President), James, reception in New York, i. 62; mentioned, i. 180, 379; ii. 507, 511, 519; prosperity of administration, i. 450.  
 Montgomery, General, funeral procession of, i. 63.  
 Montgomery, Mrs., widow of General Montgomery, mentioned, i. 190.  
 Montreal, concerning a descent upon, i. 39.  
 Moody and Sankey, in New York, i. 70; ii. 160.  
 Moore, Thomas, poet, quotation from, i. 14. "Morgan affair," Mr. Weed's knowledge of the, i. 211; committee appointed to investigate the, i. 230; trials of parties concerned in the, i. 233; letter of Governor Clinton to the Batavia committee, concerning the, i. 238; Canadian citizens involved in the, i. 241; parties indicted for being concerned in the, i. 248; legislative action concerning, i. 254; Lieutenant-Governor Pitcher's message concerning, i. 258; trials continued, i. 259-295.

- Morgan, Christopher, ii. 187; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; friendship with Mr. Weed, i. 435; at gathering of Whig members of Congress, i. 508.
- Morgan, Governor E. D., mentioned for Secretary of the Treasury, i. 620; ii. 566; elected Governor 1858, ii. 252; renominated Governor of New York, ii. 297; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 412, 430; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 441; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 455, 461; renominated for Governor in 1876, ii. 524.
- Morley, Frederic, in the "political firm," ii. 289.
- Mormon Bible, the printing of, offered to Mr. Weed, i. 359.
- Morny, Duc de, Mr. Weed's interview with the, ii. 390-399.
- Morse, Professor, mentioned, i. 384; first experiment with the telegraph, i. 386.
- Morton, Major-General, escorted President Monroe, i. 62; in Lafayette party, i. 186; appointed to investigate the Morgan affair, i. 258.
- Mott, Dr., i. 419.
- Mullett, James, Jr., leader in Clay party of 1824, i. 107; supports Mr. Adams, i. 122.
- Munroe, Timothy, drowned in Niagara River, i. 317.
- Names of prominent men during fifty years, ii. 549.
- Naples, ii. 298.
- Napoleon, Prince, interview with, ii. 399.
- Napoleon III., reasons of for favoring the Confederate States, i. 649; the coup d'état, ii. 205; invites Russia to join with England in breaking the blockade, ii. 347; interview with Archbishop Hughes, ii. 350; address on American affairs modified, ii. 399; embarrassment in London caused by his address, ii. 403.
- National outlook in 1867, ii. 457; politics in 1872, ii. 487; politics reviewed, ii. 519; navy-yards North and South, ii. 374.
- Native American party, ii. 134; movement of 1844 revived, ii. 223.
- Need of a governmental policy, ii. 513; negroes, free, kidnapping of, ii. 6.
- Nelligan, David, i. 449; ii. 143.
- Nelson, William, leader of Adams party in 1824, ii. 107; member of senate 1825, i. 197.
- Newcastle, the Duke of, conversation with Mr. Seward, ii. 355.
- New York, concerning commerce of, in 1816, i. 56; convention to amend state constitution, i. 88; concerning the school question in, i. 483; distinguished merchants of, i. 502; in 1797, i. 3; in 1815, i. 52-55; republican victory in, in 1815, i. 893; Mr. Weed's early recollections of, ii. 3; manner of living of prosperous citizens in 1821, ii. 18; harbor obstructions prepared, ii. 412; freedom of the city presented to Mr. Weed, ii. 413; social life, ii. 487.
- New York Common Council, letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 413.
- New York Gold Exchange Board, ii. 509.
- New York riots in 1863, ii. 435.
- New York Sixty-ninth Regiment, U. S. V., ii. 340, 341.
- New York State, constitution of, as amended, i. 89; constitution formed in 1801, i. 200; convention at Utica, i. 452; the State election of 1839, i. 476.
- Niagara Falls, sending the brig Michigan over the, i. 355; Sam Patch's leap over, i. 357.
- Nicholas, R. C., identified with the anti-Masons, i. 302, 309, 336; at convention, i. 366, 452.
- Nichols, Asher P., Comptroller of New York, i. 348.
- Nicholson, James B., on Board of Charity, i. 628; ii. 145.
- Nicolet, John, telegram to Mr. Weed, ii. 434.
- "Niles Register," edited by Hezekiah Niles, i. 467.
- Noah, Benjamin, supports Mr. Crawford for President, i. 107.
- Noah, M. M., merchant, New York, i. 59; editor of "New York National Advocate," i. 73; editor of "New York Courier," i. 352.
- Noble, Butler G., letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 317.
- North Carolina "swindled into secession," ii. 333.
- Northern and Southern extremists, ii. 305.
- Norton, Ebenezer F., elected to Congress, i. 338, 339.
- Norton, Heman, elected to Assembly, i. 309.
- Norwich, N. Y., ii. 15.
- Nott, Rev. Dr., sermon and lectures of, i. 154; mentioned, i. 365; concerning the school question, i. 484.
- Nullification, i. 422; ii. 49, 50.
- Nye, James W., Senator in Congress, i. 79; concerning agricultural societies, i. 79, 199; ii. 263.
- Oakley, Thomas J., eminent lawyer, i. 42; Federalist member of legislature, i. 47; at Lafayette reception, i. 186, 189; in Assembly, 1818, i. 396; Attorney-General of New York, ii. 11, 484.
- O'Connell, Daniel, ii. 103, 104.
- O'Connor, Charles, ii. 141, 188, 479, 575.
- Officers competent to lead the army, ii. 342.
- Official delinquencies, ii. 521.
- Ogden, David B., mentioned, i. 59; at the electors' dinner, i. 138; supported United States Bank, i. 372; mentioned, i. 393; legislator of 1838, i. 408; appointed Surrogate, ii. 73.
- Ogden, Isaac, leader of Adams party in 1824, i. 107; supports Mr. Adams for President, i. 122.
- Ogle, General Charles, in Congress concerning presidential election, i. 490; of Pennsylvania, ii. 84.

- Olcott, T. W., member of Albany Regency, i. 8, 103; ii. 550; friendship with Thurlow Weed, i. 9; an old resident of Albany, i. 447; an enlightened hard money man, ii. 535.
- Old age and its surroundings, ii. 568.
- "Old Elm Tree" establishment, i. 367; ii. 124.
- "Old Hayes," i. 59.
- Old line Whig, letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 243.
- Olyphant Richard, editor at Oswego, i. 41.
- "On to Richmond," ii. 336.
- One term for the presidency, ii. 115.
- Onondaga Hollow, the Weed family at, i. 20; ii. 3.
- "Onondaga Republican" established, 1821, ii. 17.
- "Ontario Freeman," a newspaper controversy with Mr. Weed, ii. 24.
- "Ontario Messenger," a Republican newspaper, i. 22.
- "Ontario Repository," a newspaper, i. 22.
- Opdyke, George, elected Mayor of New York, ii. 322.
- Ordinance of 1787, ii. 146.
- Ostrander, John I., Federal member of legislature, i. 47.
- Ostrandrs, the, of Cooperstown, i. 36; ii. 8.
- Oswego canal, Thurlow Weed's resolution concerning the, i. 170.
- Packard, Benjamin D., proprietor of "Evening Journal," i. 362.
- Packard & Van Benthuyssen, printers, i. 86.
- Paget, Lord Clarence, i. 643.
- Paine, General, mentioned, i. 141.
- Palmer, Sir Roundell, i. 633; ii. 362.
- Palmerston, Lady, has a peep into the bag, ii. 377.
- Palmerston Lord, death of, i. 645; mentioned, ii. 367.
- Paris, impressions of, ii. 106, 109; in 1851, ii. 203.
- Park Theatre in New York, i. 59.
- Parker, Amasa J., i. 626; ii. 252.
- Parke, Joseph, Barrister at London, Mr. Weed's dinner with, i. 537; notice of, ii. 387; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 443.
- Parkhurst, Orson, action in the abduction of Morgan, i. 228; arrest of, for participation in Morgan affair, i. 269; disappearance of, i. 270; statement concerning the Morgan affair, i. 327.
- Parliament, act of, abolishing slavery, i. 429; ii. 307.
- "Partnership" of Seward, Weed and Greeley, ii. 283.
- Parton, James, letter to Press Club dinner, ii. 556.
- Party obligations, ii. 175.
- Patch, Sam, jumps over Niagara Falls, i. 357.
- Patterson, George W., prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; legislator of 1832, i. 406; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; mentioned, i. 435; speaker of Assembly, i. 456, 483; a loyal friend, ii. 47; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 47, 83, 85, 434, 445; elected Lieutenant-Governor, ii. 172; mentioned, ii. 470, 496.
- "Patriot War," the, on Canadian frontier, i. 471.
- Paulding, Mr., author, interview with Mr. Weed, i. 383.
- Pawnee legislature frands, ii. 240.
- Peabody, George, banker, i. 537; Mr. Weed visits, ii. 351; a Union man, ii. 365; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 365; mentioned, ii. 470.
- Peace conference, ii. 440; convention at Washington, ii. 316; Greeley's ill-timed pressure for, ii. 493-495.
- Peck, Everard, publisher of the "Telegraph," i. 95; a pleasant settlement with, i. 101; letter to Thurlow Weed, concerning his election to the Assembly, i. 161; signs a petition, i. 204; retires from editorship of the "Telegraph," i. 207; of anti-Masonic party, i. 336; proprietor of Rochester "Telegraph," ii. 20, 22; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 22; mentioned, ii. 195.
- Pellet, E. P., success as a printer, i. 81.
- Pelts, concerning the making of, for printers, i. 22; ii. 193.
- Pendar, Mr., in London, i. 538.
- Pendleton, George H., nominated for Vice-President, ii. 446.
- Penn, William, mentioned, i. 29.
- "People's Party," organization of the, i. 157.
- Pepys, Samuel, mentioned, i. 419.
- "Perish commerce," etc., i. 425.
- Perry, Commodore, i. 626.
- Petrie (General), George, of Washington, D. C., i. 36; quartermaster in Fortieth Regiment Militia, i. 38; member of Congress, i. 149; friend of Mr. Weed, i. 434; Peyton, Bailey, of Tennessee, i. 606; ii. 512.
- Phelps, Benjamin K., letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 525.
- Philadelphia, Union convention called in 1865, ii. 452.
- Phillips, Colonel, Elijah, keeper of the stage-house, i. 146.
- Phillips, Rev. Dr., of New York, i. 59.
- Phillips, Wendell, "All hail disunion," ii. 305; favors confiscation, ii. 457.
- Phinney, H. & E., printers at Cooperstown, i. 36.
- Pictures in Rome, ii. 211.
- Pierce, Franklin, elected President in 1853, ii. 219; his rise and fall, ii. 219; the supple tool of slavery, ii. 220; letter to Jefferson Davis, ii. 334.
- Pierrepont, Edwards, counsel in a libel suit, i. 529; mentioned, ii. 462.
- Pierson, Henry L., i. 561.
- Pierson, Isaac, leader of Adams party in 1824, i. 107; Democratic supporter of Mr. Adams, i. 119; legislator, i. 394; a legislator of 1818, i. 395.
- "Pioneer," the, a six-day line from Rochester to Albany, i. 99; ii. 18.

- Pitcher, Lieutenant-Governor Nathaniel, message of, concerning Morgan, i. 258.
- Pitkin, Timothy, emancipation project of, i. 428.
- Pius IX., ii. 207.
- Platt (Major), Charles L., meeting with Lafayette, i. 185, 186.
- Platt, Ezra, a Mason, action in the abduction of Morgan, i. 228; testimony of, on Morgan affair, i. 262.
- Platt, James, delegate to convention, i. 89.
- Platt, Joñas, lawyer, i. 30.
- Platt (Major L.), officer of the Revolution, i. 55.
- Pleasanton (Major-General), Alfred, letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 180.
- Political firm of Seward, Weed & Greeley dissolved, ii. 277.
- Politics, the gossip of, in 1852, ii. 217.
- Polk, James K., mentioned, i. 62; nominated for President, ii. 119; mentioned, ii. 124, 133, 136, 304.
- Pompey, town of, i. 147.
- Pontius Pilate, defense of, by Thurlow Weed, i. 70.
- Popham, Major, meeting with Lafayette, i. 185, 186.
- Porter, James, member of "Albany Regency," i. 8, 103.
- Porter, Miss, authoress, i. 560.
- Porter, John K., mentioned, ii. 496.
- Porter (General), Peter B., mentioned, i. 37; in the assault upon Fort Erie, i. 64; commissioner of Erie canal, i. 72; votes cast for, as Governor, i. 82; supports Mr. Clay for President, i. 107, 122; at the electors' dinner, i. 137; of Black Rock, i. 141; mentioned, i. 181; letter to Mr. Clay for political purposes, i. 350.
- Porter, Timothy H., elected Senator, i. 337; elected to Assembly, i. 309.
- Porter-houses, in New York, in 1815; i. 54.
- Potter, Paraclete, at Lafayette reception, i. 189.
- Power, Tyrone, actor, i. 59.
- Powers, James, a leading federalist, i. 59; federal member of legislature, i. 47; at dinner with Lafayette, i. 199; a legislator, i. 410.
- Prague, ii. 212.
- Prairie schooners, ii. 149.
- Preble (Commodore), mentioned, i. 35.
- Prentice, Ezra P., old citizen of Albany, i. 447.
- Presidential campaign of 1848, Mr. Weed's position, i. 576; ii. 172; of 1840, i. 490; ii. 77-87; of 1823-24, movements in legislature concerning, i. 105, 107.
- Presidential chances, in 1876, ii. 518.
- Presidential contest, the, of 1823-24, i. 122-138; of 1832, preparing for, i. 349.
- Presidential electors, concerning the choosing of, i. 105; concerning a bill for, i. 108; message of Governor Yates, concerning, i. 116; legislature convened to choose, i. 122.
- Presidential question, in 1844, ii. 118, 125; in 1852, ii. 198, 215, 219; in 1856, ii. 245; in 1860, ii. 259-302; in 1864, ii. 444-448; in 1868, ii. 457-459; in 1872, ii. 485-497; in 1876, ii. 518-524; in 1880, ii. 542-552.
- Press Club, dinner to Mr. Weed, ii. 552.
- Prince Albert, illness of, i. 645; and the Trent despatch, i. 647; ii. 376, 377.
- Prince Napoleon, reception of Mr. Weed, i. 639; a friend to our government, ii. 391, 399.
- "Prince of Schaghticoke," *soubriquet* for Herman Knickerbocker, i. 48.
- Prince of Wales, reception, mentioned, i. 185; ii. 356, 358.
- Printing in New York, in 1816, ii. 194.
- Proclamation of Governor Yates, convening the legislature, i. 115, 116.
- Protective tariff, ii. 201, 202, 511.
- Prout, Roger, ink maker, ii. 194.
- Provence, ii. 206.
- Pruyn, John V. L., admitted to practice law, i. 392; mentioned, ii. 551.
- Pruyn, Robert H., member of Governor Seward's staff, i. 457; minister to Japan, i. 458; a friend of Mr. Weed's, ii. 550, 571.
- Putnam, Captain Minnesota Volunteers, his commission procured by Mr. Weed, ii. 345, 436.
- Public domain, squandering of the, ii. 441, 510.
- Quackenboss, Herman J., of Assembly 1825, i. 196; service of, in legislature, i. 400; legislator of 1835, i. 407.
- Queen of England, efforts for peace concerning the Trent affair, i. 645; mentioned, ii. 105, 200, 201, 356, 360, 361, 376-378.
- Queenstown, battle of, i. 24.
- Questions for civil service examinations, ii. 466.
- Quincy, Josiah, ii. 80.
- Rachel, tragic actress, mentioned, i. 206.
- Radcliffe, Peter W., senator and mayor in New York, i. 393.
- Radical, opposition to Mr. Lincoln, ii. 445, 450; intolerance, ii. 455.
- Railroad, opening of the first in America, i. 386.
- Randall, Nicholas P., lawyer, i. 87; ii. 18.
- Randall, Samuel S., Superintendent of Public Instruction, i. 81.
- Randolph, John, quoted, i. 381, 382; ii. 538; appointed to Russia, i. 381.
- Rathburn (General), Ransom, forgeries of, at Buffalo, i. 11; the store of, i. 17.
- Raymond, Henry J., mentioned, ii. 190; his friendship with Mr. Weed, ii. 191; inside history of the Chicago convention, ii. 273; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 401; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 436.
- Rebellion, efforts to confine it to the cotton states, ii. 329.
- Rebellion incidents, ii. 341, 343, 435.
- Reconciliation of President Fillmore and Mr. Weed, ii. 462.
- Reconstruction problems, ii. 453, 523.
- Recusancy of the North in the matter of slavery, ii. 125.



- Redfield, Herman J., United States Senator, i. 108; Collector of port of New York, i. 108; member of Senate, 1825, i. 197; a legislator, i. 410.
- Redfield, Lewis H., ii. 4, 525.
- Reform efforts, ii. 139; civil service reform, ii. 462-474.
- Reid, Whitelaw, speech at birthday dinner in 1880, ii. 554; in conference with Mr. Weed, ii. 542.
- "Republican Agriculturist" founded, ii. 8.
- Republican convention at Syracuse, 1856, ii. 245; of 1865, ii. 451; at Utica in 1872, ii. 485.
- Republican disaster, causes of, 1874, ii. 507.
- Republican party, organized 1856, ii. 241; the outlook analyzed, 1856, ii. 245; conflicting opinions prevail, ii. 329; divided as to the renomination of Mr. Lincoln, ii. 444; stronger than its administration, ii. 521; its present and future prospects, ii. 551.
- Republican presidential candidate, A. Lincoln, ii. 297.
- "Republican," the, published by Thurlow Weed, i. 87; introductory editorial, i. 87.
- Republican ticket victorious in 1817, i. 395.
- Republican victory in New York city in 1815, i. 393.
- Republicans and Federalists, concerning the, i. 4; in Chenango County, i. 76.
- Republicans, concerning Governor Tompkins' accounts, i. 82; concerning De Witt Clinton, i. 82.
- Resolute, the, ii. 406.
- Resumption of specie payment, ii. 498, 503.
- Revenge of an office-seeker, ii. 275.
- Reynolds, Marcus T., lawyer of Amsterdam village, i. 154; as a jurist, i. 447; counsel for Mr. Weed in libel suit, i. 521.
- Rhineland, Dr., concerning the cholera, i. 417.
- Richardson, William A., his incapacity, ii. 520.
- Richmond, Dean, bet concerning Harrison election, i. 492; mentioned, ii. 193, 453.
- Riggs, Isaac, in legislature, i. 110; supports Mr. Adams, i. 123.
- Ring, Zebedee, Surveyor of New York, ii. 175.
- Ringgold, Benjamin, legislator of 1833 and 1835, i. 406.
- River and Harbor convention at Chicago, ii. 147.
- Rives, Mr., American minister to France, i. 628.
- Roberts, Marshall O., i. 626; ii. 188.
- Roberts, Moses, concerning the "Morgan affair," i. 219.
- Robertson, William H., his gubernatorial candidacy, ii. 485, 528; mentioned, ii. 550.
- Robinson, Chief Justice, survivor of Congress, 1815, i. 193.
- Robinson, Hugh, at opening of first railroad, i. 386.
- Robinson, Jonathan E., a legislator of 1825, i. 400.
- Robinson, "Richelieu," ii. 132.
- Rochester, John H., son of Colonel Rochester, i. 346.
- Rochester, Colonel Nathaniel, city of Rochester named for, i. 98; founder of city of Rochester, i. 202.
- Rochester, Judge William B., appointed minister to Japan, i. 178; in Assembly, 1818, i. 396; president of bank, i. 341.
- Rochester, early years of, i. 98; first bank at, i. 104; nominates J. Q. Adams for President, i. 105; growth of, i. 202; the theatre of, i. 206; as a centre of anti-masonry, i. 300; the cholera at, i. 419.
- Rochester "Daily Advertiser," paper, i. 319.
- Rochester "Republican," paper, edited by Mr. Whittlesey, i. 310.
- Rochester "Telegraph," ii. 20; Mr. Weed's surroundings at, ii. 22.
- Rogers, Sherman S., nominated for Lieutenant-Governor in 1876, ii. 524.
- Romaine, S. B., Speaker of Assembly, 1822, i. 397.
- Rome, village of New York, in 1813, i. 31; ground broken at, for Erie canal, i. 70.
- Rome, Italy, ii. 209.
- Room No. 11, in the Astor House, ii. 237.
- Roosevelt, Clinton, legislator of 1837, i. 408.
- Roosevelt, James I., legislator of 1835, i. 407.
- Root, Erastus, state Senator, i. 45; opposed to a certain canal, i. 72; delegate to convention, i. 89; votes cast for, as Lieutenant-Governor, i. 121; legislative service of, i. 201; concerning the Morgan rewards, i. 254; visit of Mr. Weed to, i. 341; his political life, etc., i. 342; in Assembly, 1818, i. 396; legislative "giant," i. 397; reelected to legislature, i. 401; Speaker of legislature, 1828, i. 402; elected state Senator, i. 479.
- Roe, Leonard B., president of anti-Masonic convention, i. 256.
- Ross, William, vote concerning certain canal, i. 72; at Lafayette festivities, i. 188.
- Rotation in office, ii. 465.
- Rough, Captain, at Niagara Falls, i. 355.
- Routine of Mr. Weed's daily life, ii. 568.
- Royal Arch degree in masonry, an attempt to expose the, i. 251.
- Royal Arch Masons, the charity of, i. 228.
- Ruggles, Samuel B., legislator of 1838, anecdote of, i. 408; on Ways and Means committee, i. 458; mentioned, i. 626; ii. 550.
- Rush, Richard, mentioned, i. 351; concerning letters of, i. 378; condemns masonry, i. 423.
- Russell, Charles H., i. 502, 625; action in the Dorr rebellion, i. 531.
- Russell, David, at Baltimore convention, i. 389; presidential elector, i. 137.
- Russell, Earl, an interview with Thurlow Weed, i. 639; ii. 352; letter from Mr. Seward, ii. 353.

- Russell, Lady, i. 644; ii. 353.
- Russian fleet at New York in the early months of the war, ii. 346.
- Rutherford, John, at Baltimore convention, i. 389.
- Ryckman, Gerrit W., proprietor of Albany "Advertiser," i. 48; editor and Freemason, i. 412.
- Sackett, William A., ii. 189.
- Sackett's Harbor, attack of the British on, i. 26; Fortieth Regiment, militia, quartered at, i. 38.
- Safety Fund Banking System, mentioned, i. 25; system of banking, the, of Mr. Van Buren, i. 382.
- Sanford, Henry S., Mr. Weed's acquaintance with, i. 628; diplomatic service abroad, i. 629; minister to Belgium, ii. 326.
- Sanford, Mitchell, elected state Senator, i. 479.
- Sanford, Nathan, state Senator, i. 45; delegate to convention, i. 89; United States Senator, i. 393.
- Santa Anna, General, Mexican war, i. 573.
- Santa Cruz, island of, visit of Thurlow Weed to, i. 1; residence in, ii. 127.
- Sardinia, an asylum for political refugees, ii. 206.
- Savage, John, Comptroller of New York, i. 348.
- Saratoga convention of 1876, the last attended by Mr. Weed, ii. 522.
- Sargent, John, for Vice-President, i. 391, 413; ii. 113.
- Sawyer, Colonel Edward, a Mason, concerning the Morgan affair, i. 218; indictment found against, i. 231; sentenced to prison, i. 236.
- Scattered utterances on public themes, ii. 559.
- Schell, Augustus, ii. 38.
- Schell, Richard, concerning an interview between Mr. Weed and Mr. Bennett, i. 616.
- Schoolcraft, John L., ii. 102, 187.
- Schools, interest of James Wadsworth in, i. 343; ii. 551; the question concerning, in New York, i. 483; ii. 102; meeting concerning the free school law, i. 500.
- Schoonmaker, C. C., legislative service of, i. 201.
- Schurz, Carl, speech at Chicago convention, ii. 267; mentioned, ii. 261.
- Schnyler, George, sent abroad to buy arms, i. 629.
- Scotland, visited, ii. 106.
- Scott, Thomas A., Assistant Secretary of War, ii. 346.
- Scott, Sir Walter, mentioned, ii. 99, 106, 381.
- Scott (General), Winfield, mentioned, i. 28; a stage-coach incident, i. 151; mentioned, i. 416; in Mexican war, i. 573, 574; capture of Mexico, i. 575; letter to General Taylor, i. 575; relations with Mr. Weed, i. 576; candidate for the presidency, i. 576, 578; mentioned, i. 626; ii. 237; his relation of the Chipewa breakfast, i. 650; passage to Europe with Mr. Weed, i. 650; concerning a letter of, to the French and English journals on the Trent affair, i. 654; ii. 350; his military career, i. 656; letter to Mr. Weed, i. 657; movement in favor of, ii. 167; his confidence of success, ii. 219; nominated in 1852, ii. 215; his plan of operations commends itself to Mr. Weed, ii. 336; opinion of officers in the army, ii. 342; returns home, 1861, ii. 366, 367.
- "Scott's Family Bible" printed, i. 57.
- Sealed orders of the Russian fleet in 1861, ii. 347.
- Seaman, David, legislator of 1824, i. 399.
- Secession, progress of, ii. 313.
- Secessionists and radical Republicans act in concert, ii. 305, 308.
- Secret political organizations, ii. 225.
- Selden Dndley, sustained the Stilwell bill, i. 379; legislator of 1831, i. 405.
- Selden, Henry R., Lieutenant-Governor of New York, i. 100; ii. 474.
- Selden, Samuel L., Judge, at Rochester, i. 100.
- Semi-centennial of the "Evening Journal," March 22, 1880, ii. 546.
- Senior, Nassan William, account of dinner at William L. Dayton's, ii. 399.
- "Seventeen" electors, concerning the, i. 108.
- Seward (Governor), William Henry, concerning the Rathbun forgeries, i. 11; mentioned, i. 41; first meeting with Thurlow Weed, i. 139; at Auburn, i. 143; opposition to his renomination, i. 491; action concerning the Dorr rebellion, i. 530; concerning masonry in politics, i. 299; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; mentioned, i. 345; supports "Evening Journal," i. 361; elected state Senator, i. 366; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 366; an anti-bank man, i. 372; sustained the Stilwell bill, i. 379; at Baltimore convention, i. 389; friendship with Mr. Weed, i. 423; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; nominated for Governor, i. 430; letters of, quoted, i. 431; nominated for Governor, i. 452; election as Governor, i. 456; staff members, i. 457; administration of, i. 458; inauguration and message, i. 458; attempted assassination of, i. 473; quoted concerning public schools, i. 484; re-elected Governor, i. 494; a dead-lock in board of canvassers concerning election of, i. 494; argument in case of libel suit against Horace Greeley, i. 525; Secretary of State in Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet, i. 610, 617, 626; ii. 172; concerning Mr. Weed's mission to Europe, i. 636; letter to Mr. Weed concerning the Trent affair, i. 640; visits New England in 1831, ii. 41; nominated for the state Senate, ii. 41; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 41; on the New York election in 1838, ii. 62; elected Governor in 1838,

- ii. 64; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 99, 127; anecdote of, ii. 99, 100; elected United States Senator, 1849, ii. 173; his "higher law" speech, ii. 183; reëlected to Congress in 1855, ii. 231; the "great man" at Washington, ii. 244; letters to Mr. Weed, ii. 244, 256, 261, 307, 319, 323, 332, 378, 408, 409, 427, 428, 457; and Greeley in 1860, ii. 269; Secretary of State, ii. 325; letter to Charles Francis Adams, ii. 351; letter to Earl Russell, ii. 353; conversation with the Duke of Newcastle, ii. 355; absurd charges against him, ii. 408; his confidence of success, ii. 410.
- Seward, Weed, & Greeley, the "firm" of, ii. 554.
- Seward, Frederick W., his relations with Mr. Weed, ii. 128; mentioned, ii. 578.
- Seward, Hector, death of, i. 188.
- Seward (Captain), Nathan, soldier of the Revolution, i. 26.
- Seward, Judge Samuel S., i. 423.
- Seward & Williams, concerning the printing office of, i. 25; ii. 12.
- Seymour, Harris, concerning the "Morgan affair," i. 219; indicted on Morgan affair, i. 248.
- Seymour, Henry, father of ex-Governor Horatio Seymour, i. 147; mentioned, i. 199.
- Seymour, Horatio, ex-Governor, mentioned, i. 199; admitted to practice law, i. 392; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 427; loses an opportunity, ii. 428; inaugurated Governor, ii. 429.
- Seymour, Jonathan, book printer, i. 57.
- Sharpe, Peter, legislative career, i. 394.
- Sheldon, Alexander, delegate to convention, i. 89; residence of, i. 154; legislative service of, i. 201; in legislature, i. 401.
- Sheldon, Milton, member of legislature, i. 154.
- Sheldon, Smith, of publishing house of Sheldon & Co., i. 154.
- Sheldon, John, indictment found against, i. 231.
- Sherman, Roger, ii. 470.
- Shore, Isabella, information concerning, i. 566.
- "Siamese Twin Party," the, i. 413.
- Sibley, Derick, published the "Republican," i. 95, 97; legislator of 1835, i. 407; mentioned, ii. 91.
- Sibley, Mark H., of Canandaigua, i. 140; on Morgan affair, i. 233.
- Signal lights are burning, ii. 539.
- Signs of the times full of joy, in 1840, ii. 77; in 1864, ii. 448.
- Silliman, Benjamin D., ii. 550.
- Silliman, Benjamin F., i. 626.
- Silver, arbitrary opposition to, ii. 513; as money in the Bible, ii. 540.
- Simonton, James W., speech at the birthday dinner, in 1880, ii. 553.
- "Six Million Bank," the, i. 23, 43.
- Skinner, Roger, member of "Albany Regency," i. 8; concerning political attack on Governor Clinton, i. 67; supports Mr. Crawford for President, i. 107.
- Slavery, act of Parliament abolishing, i. 429; ii. 307; extension, reopening of the question, ii. 220; petitions to Congress, concerning, i. 427; petitions for its abolition in the District of Columbia, in 1837, ii. 54; question, the, i. 426; views of radical Republicans, in 1862, ii. 418; Sumner's speech at Worcester on, ii. 418; Weed's views of, ii. 185; Whig party opposed to, ii. 306.
- Small bill question, the, i. 444.
- Smith, Azariah, merchant, biographical sketch of, i. 146; ii. 4.
- Smith, Burrage, leaves Rochester, i. 245.
- Smith, Caleb B., mentioned for Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet, i. 610; appointed Secretary of the Interior, ii. 325.
- Smith, Charles E., letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 524.
- Smith, Ezra, supports Mr. Adams, i. 123.
- Smith, Gerrit, marriage of, i. 35; married daughter of Colonel Fitzhugh, i. 98; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; wife of, mentioned, i. 346; ii. 305; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 453.
- Smith, Joseph, the Mormon prophet, i. 359.
- Smith, Truman, ii. 183.
- Smith, Vivus W., friendship with Mr. Weed, i. 435; ii. 4; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 433; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 507.
- Smith family, the, legislative service of, i. 201.
- Social life in old New York, ii. 481.
- South Carolina, ready to form a Southern Confederacy, ii. 303; the demands of, December, 1860, ii. 315.
- Southwick, Solomon, editor of "Albany Register," i. 43; speculation in lotteries, i. 46; candidate for Governor, i. 86; nominated for Governor, i. 306; ii. 5.
- Specie payment, suspension of, i. 450; resumption of, ii. 498.
- Spencer, Judge Ambrose, concerning the "Six Million Bank," i. 43; and the senatorship, i. 166, 167; becomes an anti-Mason, i. 273; as a jurist, i. 447; ii. 39.
- Spencer, John C., of Canandaigua, i. 140; on defense of Morgan affair, i. 233; bill of, concerning Morgan, i. 258; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; recommends Mr. Gardiner for judge, i. 339; sustained the Stilwell bill, i. 379; at Baltimore convention, i. 389; legislative "giant," i. 397; legislator of 1831, i. 405; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; Secretary of State, i. 459; concerning the returns of the Seward reëlection, i. 493, 494, appointed Secretary of War by President Tyler, i. 517; ii. 4; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 43, 66, 116; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 118.
- Spencer, Joshua A., lawyer, i. 27.
- Spencer, Julius, i. 148; mentioned, i. 28.
- Spencer, Philip, executed for mutiny on board brig Somers, i. 515.
- Spencer, Dr. Thomas, physician, i. 28.

- Spencer, William, attempted chastisement of Gorham A. Worth, i. 49.
- Spinner, Francis E., Treasurer of United States, i. 34.
- Spofford & Tileston, merchants of New York, i. 502; ii. 339.
- Squandering of the public domain, ii. 510.
- St. Paul's Church, London, ii. 105.
- St. Peter's, illumination of, ii. 210.
- Stage-coach traveling in 1824, i. 140.
- Stamford, town of Connecticut, i. 1; ii. 1.
- Stanton, Leland, ii. 471.
- Stanley, Lord, i. 512.
- Stanly, Edward, concerning nullification, i. 422; leading Whig, i. 442; Secretary of War in President Taylor's Cabinet, i. 590.
- Stanton, Edwin M., *coup d'état* thwarted by, ii. 331.
- Stanton, Henry B., political career, i. 159.
- Stanton and Seward, union of, ii. 332.
- Statesmen of pure character needed, ii. 501.
- Steamboat Columbia, incident of the, i. 477.
- Steamboats adapted to the use of coal, i. 387.
- Stephens, Alexander H., ii. 176, 259.
- Stephens, John L., author of "Travels in Egypt," etc., death of, i. 435.
- Stevens (General), Ebenezer, officer of the Revolution, i. 55, 185.
- Stevens, Samuel, secretary of a convention, i. 120; member of Assembly of 1825, i. 165; nominated Lieutenant-Governor, i. 367; success as a lawyer, i. 400.
- Stevens, Thaddeus, at convention at Baltimore, i. 389; at Chicago, ii. 262.
- Stetson, Charles A., i. 625; ii. 250.
- Stewart, A. T., letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 318, 411; mentioned, ii. 382.
- Stewart, Alvan, lawyer of Utica, i. 35.
- Stillwell, John & Kibbe, incident of, concerning Mr. Crawford for President, i. 124.
- Stillwell, Silas M., bill of, abolishing imprisonment for debt, i. 379; nominated for Lieutenant-Governor, i. 430.
- Stocking, Samuel, of Utica, i. 30.
- Stone, William L., marriage of, i. 37; editor of several papers, i. 33; in Lafayette party, i. 186; quoted, concerning the divisions of Freemasons, i. 245; account of trial of Elisha Adams, i. 286-295; mentioned, i. 358, 366; ii. 4, 20, 195.
- Storrs, Henry R., lawyer, i. 31; mentioned, i. 418; a dinner with, i. 537.
- Stower, John G., a dinner with, i. 537.
- Strachan, John, i. 561.
- Stranahan (Colonel), Farrand, of Otsego, i. 24; lawyer at Cooperstown, i. 162.
- Strikes and unions, ii. 512.
- Strong, Judge Elisha, mentioned, i. 158.
- Strong, I. C., ii. 33.
- Strong, Oliver R., meeting Mr. Weed, i. 163.
- Strong, Samuel, political worker, i. 449.
- Stryker, John, legislator of 1835, i. 407.
- Sturgis, Jonathan, i. 502.
- Sudam, John, leading Federalist, i. 84.
- Suffrage, concerning, i. 89; ii. 561.
- Summerfield, Rev. John, i. 61.
- Sumner, Charles, i. 617; assault upon, ii. 250; lecture in New York, ii. 308; on slavery and the war, ii. 418.
- Sunstroke in 1868, ii. 475.
- Supreme question, the, immediately before the war, ii. 315.
- Swartwout, Samuel, bet of Thurlow Weed with, i. 137.
- Swartwout, Mr., a legislator of 1821, i. 397.
- Swett, Leonard, mentioned, i. 334; concerning Mr. Lincoln's nomination, i. 602; an early supporter of Lincoln, ii. 291; his reminiscences of the Chicago convention, ii. 293; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 297; concerning Mr. Lincoln's cabinet, i. 611; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 301.
- Swindling emigrants at New York, ii. 138.
- Syracuse, village of, in 1824, i. 144.
- Syracuse convention, 1850, ii. 186.
- Talcott, S. A., member of "Albany Registry," i. 8.
- Taliaferro, John, leading Whig, i. 442.
- Tallmadge, Governor of Wisconsin, ii. 121.
- Tallmadge, James, delegate to convention, i. 89; leader of Adams party in 1824, i. 107; votes cast for him for Senator, i. 168.
- Tallmadge, General, concerning his nomination for Governor, i. 109; concerning removal of Governor Clinton, i. 113; concerning the electoral law, i. 116; Mr. Weed's political tour for, i. 118; elected Lieutenant-Governor, i. 119-121; at the electors' dinner, i. 138; the breach between Governor Clinton and, i. 178; disappointment at not receiving his mission, i. 183.
- Tallmadge, Nathaniel P., in Lafayette party, i. 186; at Lafayette reception, i. 189; mentioned, i. 402; nominated for Senator and defeated, i. 460; presents petition of Missouri, ii. 12.
- Tammany Hall, measure concerning a certain canal, i. 73.
- Taney, Roger B., appointed Secretary of Treasury, i. 424; decision in the Dred Scott case, ii. 251.
- Tappan, Arthur & Lewis, formation of Anti-Slavery Society, i. 430.
- Tariff of 1842 working wonders, ii. 131.
- Tariff, free trade and protection, ii. 202; and the public domain, ii. 511.
- Taylor, Henry W., speech on small bill question, i. 445; on prosecution of Morgan affair, i. 233; speech concerning the small bill question, i. 444; at convention, i. 452.
- Taylor (Governor), John, meeting organized by i. 112; presidential elector, i. 137; incident of a dinner with Mr. Thompson, i. 396; mentioned, ii. 470.
- Taylor, John, notice of, ii. 138.
- Taylor, J. P., support of General Taylor, i. 577; married daughter of Mr. John McLean, i. 182.

- Taylor (Colonel), Joseph P., recommends McClellan, Sherman, and Tyler as the most promising officers, ii. 342.
- Taylor (Colonel), J. T., meeting with Mr. Weed, i. 571.
- Taylor, Moses, i. 502.
- Taylor (General), Zachary, mentioned, i. 182; relations with Mr. Weed, i. 570; suggested for the presidency, i. 571; chances for securing the presidency, i. 572; close of the Mexican campaign, i. 573; close of military career, i. 575; goes to his plantation near Baton Rouge, i. 575; Whig administration, guaranties for a, i. 576; presidential campaign, his prospects, i. 577; nominated in the Whig national convention, i. 578; elected President, i. 586; concerning the administration of, i. 589; the Cabinet of, i. 590; death of, i. 591; character of, i. 593; suggested as Whig candidate, ii. 165-167; elected President, ii. 171; his views of party obligations, ii. 175; interview with Mr. Weed, ii. 177; his patriotism, ii. 177; disunion is treason, ii. 178; letter to Jefferson Davis, ii. 179.
- Telegram, Seward to Weed, ii. 339; Cameron to Weed, ii. 339.
- "Telegraph," the newspaper, i. 158.
- Telegraph, first experiment with the, i. 386.
- Telegraphs before the electric, ii. 20.
- Tennant, Sir J. Emerson, i. 633; ii. 411.
- Texas, a controlling topic in elections of 1844, ii. 112; question, ii. 123; admitted 1845, ii. 132.
- The public domain, ii. 441.
- The second Lincoln canvass, ii. 446.
- Theatre, the, of Rochester, i. 206; Mr. Weed at in New York, ii. 570.
- Third term opposed, ii. 508.
- Third year of the war, ii. 431.
- Thompson, Judge, nominated for Governor by national Republicans, i. 304.
- Thorne, Stephen, supports Mr. Adams for President, i. 122, 449.
- Thorpe, Charles, ii. 14.
- Throop, Judge, pronounces sentence on the abductors of Morgan, i. 236; mentioned, i. 41, 143, 198, 232, 340; nominated for Governor, i. 367; elected Governor of New York, ii. 40.
- Throop, George B., of Auburn, i. 143.
- Throop, Simon G., Judge in Pennsylvania, i. 81.
- Tibbitts, George, member of Thompson committee, i. 304.
- Tilden, Samuel J., elected Governor, ii. 505.
- Tillotson, Midshipman, concerning mutiny on board brig Somers, i. 516.
- "Times" (London), Mr. Weed's letter to, on the Trent affair, ii. 355; comments on Mr. Weed's letter about the Trent affair, ii. 359; comments on Emperor's speech, ii. 399.
- Toasts given at reception of General Lafayette at West Point, i. 187; at a Webster dinner, ii. 478.
- Tomatoes, first grown in Rochester, i. 205.
- Tompkins, Daniel D., elected Governor of New York, i. 5; mentioned, i. 23, 29, 43, 56, 89, 106; elected Vice-President, i. 82; reception at Albany, i. 84; an incident of the Tompkins-Clinton canvass, ii. 16.
- Tompkins, Jonathan G., delegate to convention 1801, i. 200.
- Tompkins, Minthorne, legislator of 1833, i. 406.
- Toombs, Robert, concerning admission of California, i. 617; ii. 176, 490.
- Topeka, constitution of Kansas, ii. 240.
- Torrens, McCullagh, of London, i. 643, ii. 352.
- Tory, name applied to the Jackson party, ii. 48.
- Total abstinence question, ii. 151, 153.
- Town, Charles, legislator of 1824, i. 399.
- Townsend, Isiah, mentioned, i. 68, 112, 447.
- Townsend, John, concerning bank charter, i. 106; at opening of first railroad, i. 386; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; as a merchant, i. 447.
- Townsend, Peter, of Canandaigua, i. 140.
- Tracy, Albert H., ii. 20; letters to Mr. Weed, ii. 31, 32, 49; votes cast for him for Senator, i. 168; letters to Thurlow Weed concerning United States Senator, i. 169, 470; efforts to pass the Niagara bill, i. 173; letter to Thurlow Weed on election of President Adams, i. 173; on General Jackson's chances of the presidency, i. 173; letter to Mr. Weed concerning Governor Clinton's appointment to Court of St. James, i. 177; concerning political anti-masonry, i. 299; prominent anti-Mason, i. 336; elected to Senate, i. 339; attempts to be president of bank, i. 340; at convention, i. 366; mentioned, i. 390; president of convention, i. 413; separation from his party, i. 421; member of Congress, i. 256; reelected, i. 443; renominated, i. 453.
- Tracy, Uri, Senator in Congress, i. 77.
- Tract societies, organization of, in New York, i. 56; ii. 307.
- Traitors weeded out of Buchanan's Cabinet, ii. 392.
- Treason, charge of, against Seward, ii. 330.
- Treaty of Utrecht, ii. 397.
- Tree, Ellen, actress, i. 59.
- Trent affair, the, agitation in England, i. 639; Mr. Weed's interview with Earl Russell concerning, i. 643; the Queen's action concerning the, i. 646; Prince Albert's action concerning, i. 647; memorandum of the Queen and Prince Albert, ii. 377; capture of the Trent by Commodore Wilkes, ii. 348; comments of the London "Times," ii. 359; settled and commissioners released, ii. 378.
- Trent case decided in a week, ii. 409.
- True reform agencies, ii. 472.
- Tucker, Gideon, legislator of 1830, i. 404.
- Tucker, James W., legislator of 1837, i. 407.

- Turner, Orsamus, trial of, on Morgan affair, i. 259, 262, 265; testimony of, i. 276, 278.
- "Tyburn Hill Dictator," meaning Judge Spencer, i. 43.
- Tyler, Asher, i. 21, 452.
- Tyler, John, President, nominated for Vice-President, i. 482; elected, i. 494; acting President, i. 506; goes over to Democratic party, i. 507; nominated for Vice-President, ii. 77; succeeds President Harrison, ii. 93; resignation of his Cabinet, ii. 94.
- Ulshoeffter, Michael, mentioned, i. 59, 73; a legislator of 1818, i. 395; a legislator of 1821, i. 397.
- Union convention at Philadelphia in 1865, ii. 452.
- Union ticket, the, made from the Adams and Crawford tickets, i. 123.
- United States, incapacity of Europeans to comprehend the magnitude of, ii. 409.
- Universalist Church in New York, i. 60.
- Utica, convention at, in August, 1824, i. 117; in the war of 1812, i. 26; prominent citizens of, i. 30; Republican convention in 1872, ii. 485.
- Utrecht, treaty of 1713, ii. 397.
- Valedictory to the Albany "Evening Journal," ii. 431.
- Van Benthuyssen, Charles, mentioned in Mr. Weed's will, 577.
- Van Benthuyssen, Obadiah, in New York for a copy of President's message, i. 369.
- Van Buren, John, son of Martin Van Buren, i. 69; legislature of 1829, i. 403.
- Van Buren, Martin, member of "Albany Regency," i. 8; mentioned, i. 25; state Senator, i. 45, 47; concerning a political attack on Governor Clinton, i. 67, 68; heads a faction of Republican party, i. 67; measure concerning Erie and Champlain canal, i. 73; originated the term "non-committal," i. 74; chief of the "Albany Regency," i. 103; as candidate for President in 1824, i. 107; delegate to constitutional convention, i. 200; his power, i. 118; when a law student, i. 162; Democratic candidate for President, i. 442; elected Governor of New York, i. 307; concerning Mr. Tracy for judge, i. 340; appointed minister to England, i. 375; letter from Silas Wright, concerning his political views, i. 376; his banking system, i. 382; ii. 11; "my sufferings is intolerable," ii. 173; renominated in 1840 as the Democratic candidate, ii. 80.
- Van Cortlandt, Philip, in Lafayette party, i. 186.
- Van Cortlandt, Pierre, a Whig elector, i. 491.
- Vanderbilt, Cornelius, mentioned, i. 52; anecdote of, ii. 381.
- Vanderpoel, Aaron, in legislature, 1826, i. 401.
- Van Dervoort, James, death of, i. 4.
- Van Ness, William W., delegate to convention, i. 89; at dinner with Lafayette, i. 190; judge in the case of Miss Knowlson, i. 489.
- Van Rensselaer, Henry, at convention, i. 452.
- Van Rensselaer, Jacob Rutsen; Federal member of legislature, i. 47; at dinner with Lafayette, i. 190.
- Van Rensselaer, Stephen, at Rome, N. Y., i. 70; commissioner of Erie canal, i. 71; delegate to convention, i. 88; votes for Mr. Adams for President, i. 172; delegate to convention, 1821, i. 199; delegate to convention, 1801, i. 200; in Assembly in 1818, i. 396; incident at house of, i. 435; death of, i. 461; nominated for Congress, ii. 17.
- Van Sanvoord, Abram, friend of Thurlow Weed, i. 30.
- Van Schaick, Myndert, legislator of 1832, i. 406.
- Van Vechten, Abraham, delegate to convention, i. 88, 199.
- Van Vechten Abram, as a jurist, i. 447.
- Van Vechten, Tennis, mentioned, i. 112.
- Van Vechten, Stephen, delegate to convention, 1801, i. 200.
- Van Wyck, Pierre C., mentioned, i. 54; ii. 458, 487.
- Varian, Isaac L., legislator of 1831, i. 405; specimen of his spelling, i. 405; mayor of New York, ii. 7.
- Variet (Colonel), Richard, officer of the Revolution, i. 55; meeting with Lafayette, i. 185, 186.
- Vassar, Matthew, at Lafayette reception, i. 189.
- Vernon, town of, i. 148.
- Verplanck, Gulian C., merchant, New York, i. 59; editor of the "American," i. 118; election to Assembly of 1821, i. 397, 399; becomes a Whig, i. 430; mentioned, i. 626; ii. 398, 399.
- Vesey, William H., consul at Havre, ii. 326.
- Vexations of European travel, ii. 211.
- Victoria, Queen, qualities of, ii. 200; memorandum on the affair of the Trent, ii. 377, 416.
- Vjenna, ii. 212.
- Virginia justice, ii. 258.
- Virginia, the secession of, ii. 370.
- Visits to Europe, ii. 102, 200, 349, 460.
- Wade, Benjamin, ii. 305.
- Wadsworth, James, duel of with Oliver Kane, i. 153; early settler of Rochester, i. 202; concerning political anti-masonry, i. 299; his work in the cause of education, i. 343; letter of, refusing nomination, i. 344; tribute to, ii. 551.
- Wadsworth, James S., nominated for Governor, ii. 425; progress of the canvass, ii. 425, 426.
- Wadsworth, James W., mentioned, ii. 551.
- Wadsworth, General William, president of Masonic convention, i. 256; mentioned, i. 343.
- Walker, Robert J., in London, i. 538; ii. 201.

- Walker, Thomas, publisher of "Columbian Gazette," i. 27; of Utica, i. 30; ii. 195.
- Walpole, Horace, mentioned, i. 151; ii. 387.
- Walworth, Chancellor, ii. 153.
- War begun, ii. 327; for the Union, ii. 335; forced, not on the South, but on the North, ii. 375; the third year of, ii. 431.
- War of 1812, concerning some regiments for, i. 24; ii. 371.
- Ward (Captain), Aaron, representative in Congress, i. 43; married daughter of Elkanah Watson, i. 79.
- Ward, Henry Dana, edited the "Anti-Masonic Review," i. 310; at Baltimore convention, i. 389.
- Ward, John, merchant of New York, i. 502, 625.
- Warren, Stephen, leader of Adams party in 1824, i. 107.
- Washington, George, oration on, by Captain Houdin, i. 48; letter concerning certain canals, i. 71; mentioned, i. 188; letter concerning imprisonment of Lafayette, i. 193; mentioned, i. 210; life of, reviewed by Mr. Weed, ii. 28; "in his Continental robes," ii. 233.
- Washington, peace convention in, February, 1861, ii. 316.
- Waterman, Jeremiah, mentioned, i. 112.
- Watertown, town of, i. 40.
- Watkins, Dr. Tobias, defalcation of, i. 179.
- Watson, Dr. Alexander H., physician to Mr. Weed, i. 531.
- Watson, Elkanah, an agricultural philanthropist, i. 79.
- Wattles, Miss Theodosia, of Cincinnati, i. 19.
- Weaver, Judge Jacob, incident of, i. 149.
- Webb, Henry Y., political worker, i. 449.
- Webb (Colonel), J. Watson, editor "Courier and Enquirer," i. 369; supported United States Bank, i. 372; libel suit of J. Fenimore Cooper against, i. 521; Taylor committee, member of the, i. 577; first applies the name of Whig, ii. 48; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 526; letter from Mr. Weed, ii. 527.
- Weber (Major), Jacob P., Commandant, Fortieth Regiment militia, i. 38; trepidation of, at Sackett's Harbor, i. 150, 151.
- Webster, Daniel, speech supporting the United States Bank, i. 372, 374; mentioned, i. 438; a candidate for presidency, i. 443; Secretary of State, i. 506; speech to Whig members of Congress, i. 508; urged for the presidency, i. 575; Mr. Weed, relations with, i. 576; Whig national convention, candidate for the presidential nomination, i. 578; at the head of President Fillmore's Cabinet, i. 596; concerning Washington Irving's appointment to Spain, i. 627; predicts political division between unionists and disunionists, ii. 49; his political prospects, ii. 49; Mr. Weed's remarks on his election to the United States Senate, ii. 27; as presidential candidate, ii. 76; declines to be a candidate for the vice-presidency under Harrison, ii. 77; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 95, 135; declines the vice-presidency with Taylor, ii. 168; to R. M. Blatchford, ii. 183; his 7th of March speech, ii. 183, 482; an unfulfilled prediction, ii. 382; prediction as to John E. Denison, ii. 388.
- Webster dinner in New York in 1831, ii. 477.
- Webster, Ephraim, white boy, among Onondaga Indians, biographical sketch of, i. 145.
- Webster, Fletcher, ii. 169.
- Weed, Daniel, action concerning the Indians, ii. 1.
- Weed, George L., son of Joseph Weed, i. 5.
- Weed, Harriet A., passenger on board ship Cornelia, i. 561; at reception of Emperor of Austria, i. 598; taken into her father's confidence, ii. 27; accompanies her father to West Indies, ii. 127; executrix of Mr. Weed's will, ii. 579.
- Weed, James, died, 1851, ii. 152.
- Weed, Joel, father of Thurlow Weed, i. 1, 5, 6; and Mary Ells, his wife, ii. 2.
- Weed, John, ii. 482.
- Weed, Jonas, emigrated from England, ii. 1.
- Weed, Joseph, uncle of Thurlow Weed, i. 5.
- Weed, Mrs. Thurlow, death of, i. 74.
- Weed, Nathan, soldier of the Revolution, i. 1; mentioned, ii. 1; enlisted in Continental army, ii. 2.
- Weed, Osborn, brother of Thurlow Weed, i. 1.
- Weed, Thurlow, his ancestors, ii. 1; born in Cairo, Greene County, New York, 1797, i. 1; ii. 2; death of sisters of, i. 1; autobiography, begun at Island of Santa Cruz, ii. 127; as cabin boy on sloop Ranger, i. 2; ii. 2; his first employment, i. 2; ii. 2; at work in a tavern, i. 2; ii. 2; his first shilling, i. 2; cabin boy on sloop Jefferson, i. 3; as journeyman printer, i. 3; ii. 25; becoming a politician, i. 4; ii. 9; going to see the steamboat of Robert Fulton, i. 4; going to see Governor Morgan Lewis, i. 4; leaves Catskill, i. 9; moves to town of Cincinnati, i. 10; borrowing books to read, i. 11; employed at sugar making, i. 11; his early life at Cincinnati, i. 15; earning a pair of shoes, i. 18; removal from Cincinnati, i. 20; his first fur hat, i. 20; removal to Onondaga, i. 20; ii. 3; at work at Mickle's Furnace, i. 20; at work for Jasper Hopper, i. 21; apprenticed to a printer, in office of "The Lynx," i. 21; ii. 3; at work on the "Too-sin," i. 25; desire to go to war, i. 23; ii. 5; imbibing a hatred toward England, i. 23; employed in printing office of Messrs. Seward & Williams, i. 25; enlists as soldier of war of 1812, i. 26; ii. 5; camp life at Brownville, i. 29; returns to printing office of Mr. Walker, i. 30; attends

a theatre for first time, i. 31; in the office of Webster & Skinner, i. 31; walking to Utica from Albany, i. 32; ii. 5; at a Whig state convention, i. 32; incident at Conine's tavern, i. 32; concerning the printing of Republican tickets, i. 33; employed on newspaper at Herkimer, i. 33; a zealous Republican, i. 33; arrest and trial at Cooperstown, i. 36; an incident which occurred at Cooperstown, i. 36; at Cooperstown, i. 36; becomes attached to daughter of Mrs. Ostrander, i. 36; enlists as a "year volunteer," i. 37; returns to Herkimer, i. 37; with Mr. Stone at Herkimer, i. 37; quartermaster in Fortieth Regiment, etc., i. 38; ii. 5; in printing office at Auburn, i. 40; trial, concerning the incident at Cooperstown, i. 41, 42; goes to Albany, i. 43; ii. 5; employed on the "Albany Register," i. 43; ii. 6; temperate habits of, i. 44, 59; his passion for the drama, i. 45, 59; at Aiken, S. C., i. 45; ii. 461; employed on Albany "Argus," i. 46; visit to New York, i. 51; in the office of Van Winkle & Wiley, New York, i. 51; reminiscences of New York, by, i. 52; employed by Daniel Fanshawe, i. 55; ii. 193; at office of Samuel Wood & Sons, i. 56; in office of George Lang, i. 56; at work on the "Courier," i. 56; leaves Mr. Seymour, i. 57; in office of William A. Mercien, i. 57; ii. 194; in office of Jonathan Seymour, i. 57; elected member of Typographical Society, i. 58; plan of visiting the churches, i. 59; attendance at the Universalist church, i. 60; acquaintance with the Presidents of the United States, i. 62; tries his hand at editorials, i. 62; ii. 6; seeing President Monroe, i. 62; writes an unfortunate paragraph, and arraigned before magistrate, i. 62; offered position of foreman on "Albany Register," i. 62; sets type without manuscript, i. 70; defense of Pontius Pilate, i. 70; supports Governor Clinton and his policy, i. 73; ii. 9; married to Miss Ostrander, i. 74; married life of, i. 74; starts the "Agriculturist," i. 76; ii. 8; warfare with John F. Hubbard, i. 76; ii. 9; goes to Norwich, Chenango County, i. 76; ii. 8; friendship of James Birdsall, for, i. 77; appointment from Governor Clinton, i. 78; friendship of, for David G. Bright, i. 79; supports the Clinton administration, i. 83; discharged as a "Clintonian," i. 85; return to Albany, and at work on the "Argus," i. 85; a political trip, i. 86; edits the "Republican," at Manlius, i. 87; ii. 17; incident of the silver coin, i. 88; arrival of his family at Manlius, i. 88; an exhausted treasury, ii. 19; concerning universal suffrage, i. 89; ii. 561; success of the "Republican," i. 90; his life at Manlius, i. 91; ii. 17; his friend Addison Gardiner, i. 91; ii. 20; editorial on Fourth of July celebrations, i. 93; ii. 28; moves to Roches-

ter, i. 95, 157; ii. 22; employed by Mr. Peck, i. 95; interview with Mr. Peck described, i. 96; assumes management of the "Telegraph," i. 97; ii. 22; political and personal relations with Frederick Whittlesey, i. 100; pleasant settlement with Mr. Peck, i. 101; personal relations with members of "Albany Regency," i. 103; ii. 550; friendly relations with Mr. Crosswell, i. 104; ii. 37; sent to Albany for bank charter, i. 104; supporter of J. Q. Adams for President, i. 105, 107, 166; attends the legislature of 1824, i. 105; obtains a charter for the bank of Rochester, i. 106; return to Rochester with the bank charter, i. 107; concerning a bill for presidential electors, i. 108; represents the Adams cause, i. 108; concerning removal of Governor Clinton, as canal commissioner, i. 109; political tour of, i. 114; invited to dinner with Governor Yates, i. 114; a second political tour, in favor of Mr. Tallmadge for Governor, i. 117; given the printing of the union ballot, i. 123; breaks up an intrigue, concerning Mr. Crawford for President, i. 123-125; traveling from Rochester to New York, i. 124; bet with Samuel Swartwout, i. 137; money borrowed for political purposes, i. 137; repugnance to office, i. 137; ii. 110; first meeting with William H. Seward, i. 139; memories of a stage-ride fifty years ago, i. 139; catching salmon in Onondaga Creek, i. 145; ii. 4; nominated for member of Assembly, i. 160; elected to the Assembly, i. 161; incident concerning his election to the Assembly, i. 163; at political dinner with Governor Clinton, i. 165; concerning Judge Spencer, for Senator, i. 168; father of the Oswego canal, i. 170; action concerning the Lackawanna canal, i. 171; not gifted as a speech-maker, i. 171; ii. 191; sent on a mission to President Adams by General Tallmadge, i. 178, 179; interview with President Adams concerning General Tallmadge's mission, i. 181; call upon Mr. Clay, i. 181; reception of, by Mr. John McLean, i. 182; in Lafayette party, i. 186; return to Rochester, i. 202; proposed as postmaster of Rochester, i. 204; concerning the *incognito* of Walter Scott, i. 206; succeeds Mr. Peck as editor of the "Telegraph," i. 207; article on assuming editorship of the "Telegraph," i. 208; an anti-Mason, i. 212; ruin of his paper, on account of anti-Mason principles, i. 214; publishes an anti-Masonic paper, i. 215; appointed to investigate the Morgan affair, i. 230; editorial article concerning the Morgan affair, i. 246; member of anti-Masonic organization, i. 257; arrest of Elisha Adams by, i. 259; visit to Vermont to arrest Parkhurst, i. 268; Elisha Adams explains his testimony to, i. 266; in consultation concerning political anti-masonry, i. 299; concerning the election to legislature of



Timothy Childs, i. 301; efforts to nominate Mr. Granger for Governor, i. 303; at anti-Masonic state convention at Utica, i. 304; mission to Judge Thompson, concerning his nomination for Governor, i. 305; editorial by, concerning the nomination of Southwick for Governor, i. 306; a malicious accusation against, i. 311; at inquest on body supposed to be William Morgan, i. 313; member of committee on Morgan inquest, i. 316; accusations against, concerning the Morgan body, i. 319; Frederick Follett to, concerning Morgan affair, i. 320; suit for libel against, by Jacob Gould, i. 332; explanation of John Whitney to, concerning Morgan's fate, i. 332; suggests to Judge Birdsall his nomination for Congress, i. 337; recommends Mr. Porter for Senator, i. 337; Judge Birdsall appointed at request of, i. 338; goes to Buffalo on senatorial business, i. 338; proposes Addison Gardiner for Circuit Judge, i. 339; effects the nomination of Mr. Norton for Congress, i. 339; organizing anti-Masonic party in Delaware County, i. 341; visit to Erastus Root, i. 341; trip to Delaware and Chenango counties, i. 342, 343; friendship with James Wadsworth, i. 343; helps in establishing libraries, i. 343; friendship with Philo C. Fuller, i. 348; concerning the selection of certain comptrollers of New York by, i. 349; at Niagara Falls, i. 355; meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Folger, i. 358; offered the printing of the Mormon bible, i. 359; elected to legislature, i. 360; establishes the "Evening Journal" at Albany, i. 360; ii. 39; his reception in Rochester after thirty years' absence, i. 361; charged with the defeat of General Wadsworth, i. 361; his duties and salary on "Evening Journal," i. 362; ii. 233; acquaintance with Mrs. Eaton, i. 366; visits Hon. Silas Wood on political errand, i. 366; trip to New York for a copy of President's message, i. 369; passenger on steamboat with Governor Lewis and Aaron Burr, i. 370; concerning Bank of United States, i. 371; requested to publish Mr. Webster's speech, i. 372; reveals a secret of United States Bank, i. 373; information of Mr. Devereux to, concerning bank controversy, i. 374; editorial concerning Mr. Van Buren's appointment to England, i. 375; concerning imprisonment for debt, i. 380; seeing John Randolph in Congress, i. 381; interview with Mr. Paulding, author, i. 383; witness of Professor Morse's demonstration of his telegraph, i. 386; at opening of the first railroad, i. 386; a passenger on first canal boat, ii. 10; acquaintance with Edwin Forrest, i. 386; meets with an accident, i. 387; mission to Europe, i. 388; ii. 349; action in nomination of Mr. Wirt, i. 390; friendly relations with Francis Granger, i. 392; ii. 58; with George W. Patterson, ii. 47; evenings at Mr. Crut-

tenden's, i. 401; duties of, as editor, i. 411; opposition to masonry, i. 412; friendly relations renewed with Mr. Ryckman, i. 413; at county conventions, i. 413; relations with James Hunter, i. 413; visits to Aaron Burr, i. 415; editorial obituary on Mr. Maynard, i. 418; an attack of rheumatism, i. 419; friendship with William H. Seward, i. 423; ii. 262; concerning United States Bank, i. 424; opposed to the Regency, i. 425; sentiments concerning slavery, i. 428; ii. 242; conversation concerning emancipation, i. 428; action at Whig convention, i. 430; editorial concerning Whig election, i. 431; editorial life of, i. 433; life insurance, concerning, i. 433; old friends of, i. 434; ii. 546-551; concerning a review of "Travel in Egypt," etc., i. 435; friendship and gifts of Mr. Levman to, i. 436; action concerning small bill question, i. 444; concerning the elections in the "Fourth Ward," i. 448; residence at Albany, i. 448; ii. 36; opinion concerning certain gubernatorial candidates, i. 451; concerning the "pantaloons" story, i. 453; Governor Marcy's retort to, i. 455; mission to Rufus King, i. 457; carries commission to Mr. Kane, i. 465; first acquaintance with Horace Greeley, i. 466; acquaintance with Preston King, i. 471; visit to Washington, at time of Lincoln's assassination, i. 473; conference with friend on Preston King for United States Senator, i. 473; relations with Preston King, i. 473-475; interview with President Johnson, i. 474; ii. 452; in conference with friends concerning state elections, i. 476; at Whig convention at Harrisburg, i. 481; a summer excursion with Messrs. Kent, Silliman, Wood, and Ruggles, i. 485-487; a steamboat passage with Captain Marryatt and William Kent, i. 487; electioneering tour during Harrison campaign, i. 491; bet with Dr. Colvin on Harrison election, i. 492; breaking the dead-lock, concerning returns for Seward election, i. 495-497; presentation of silver to, by merchants of New York, i. 504; at gathering of Whig members of Congress, i. 508; interview with Senator Mangum concerning Everett's mission to England, i. 509; interview with Edward Everett in England, i. 511; trip to Europe, i. 511; ii. 102; entertained at American legation at Paris, i. 512; ii. 399; dines with Sir Henry Holland at Edward Everett's, i. 513; concerning the mutiny on board brig Somers, i. 516, 517; libel suit of J. Fenimore Cooper against, i. 520, 521, 522; acquaintance with Paul Cooper, i. 527; plaintiff in a libel suit, i. 527; Erastus Corning's libel suit against, i. 528; libel suit of George Opyke against, i. 528; trip to Rhode Island, concerning the Dorr rebellion, i. 531; injured by marching, during the Dorr rebellion, i. 531; goes to England, i.

532; ii. 200; dinner with Mr. Clay at Washington, i. 535; dinner with Mr. Southard at Washington, i. 536; dinner with Hon. D. D. Barnard at Washington, i. 536; dinner at Hyatt's house, i. 537; "why he did not dine with the Duke of Wellington," i. 537; invites Mr. Ashworth and Mr. Pendar to dine, i. 539; a trip to the West Indies, i. 556; ii. 127; the adoption of Mary Chapman by, i. 564; visits Brunswick, Ga., i. 567; relations with General Taylor, i. 570; dines with John McLean, i. 571; meets Colonel J. T. Taylor, i. 571; suggests General Taylor for President, i. 571; supports General Taylor for the presidency, i. 572; interview at the Astor House with Colonel J. T. Taylor, i. 572; Colonel J. T. Taylor, letter from, i. 574; Whig press, efforts in behalf of General Taylor, i. 575; General Scott, relations with, i. 576; Mr. Webster, relations with, i. 576; Mr. Clay, relations with, i. 576; urged to consent to Mr. Clay's nomination for President, i. 578; his influence in politics, i. 584; at national convention at Philadelphia, i. 585; suggests General Taylor for President and Abbott Lawrence for Vice-President, i. 585; first meeting with Millard Fillmore, i. 585; action in the presidential campaign of 1848, i. 586-588; consultation with President Taylor concerning the latter's Cabinet, i. 590; at Washington concerning a mission for Daniel D. Barnard, i. 594; offered a mission abroad, reasons for it, i. 595-597; a winter at Aiken, S. C., i. 597; ii. 460; in Europe, i. 598; ii. 461; at an imperial reception, i. 599; at a review of the Emperor of Austria, i. 600; action concerning the consulship at Falmouth, i. 600; visit to Abraham Lincoln, i. 603; ii. 293; consulted by President Lincoln concerning his Cabinet, i. 605; ii. 294; concerning office-seeking, i. 613; carries Mr. Gilmer's appointment to him, i. 614; interview with Mr. Bennett concerning the war sentiments of the "Herald," i. 616-618; consulted by President Lincoln, concerning a Secretary of the Treasury, i. 620-624; visit to Mr. Lincoln at Springfield, i. 623; sentiments concerning the prosecution of the war, i. 636; ii. 328; a breakfast at the Astor House, i. 637; reception in Europe, i. 637; ii. 367; tendered an interview with Earl Russell, i. 639; ii. 352; meeting with General Scott on board steamer, i. 640; character and personal appearance of, ii. 6; at Cooperstown in 1818, ii. 8; remarks on the year 1819, ii. 11; retires from "Republican Agriculturist," ii. 13; his house at Norwich, ii. 14; revisits Chenango County in 1872, ii. 15; "an interesting sinner," ii. 21; begins to cultivate his memory, ii. 26; his forgiving disposition, ii. 29; his wonderful power over men, ii. 29; anecdotes of his even temper, ii. 30; his sympathetic

nature, ii. 34; denounces the gag resolves, ii. 55; visits New York in reference to the presidential nomination in 1840, ii. 58; declares in favor of Seward for Governor, ii. 59; prophesies success to the Whigs in 1840, ii. 78; favors a single presidential term, ii. 79; visits J. Q. Adams at Quincy, ii. 79; sings a Harrison song at Syracuse, ii. 80; declines to be candidate for any political office, ii. 113; writes reminiscences of his life, ii. 127; returns home in 1845, ii. 131; visits Boston, ii. 131; his influence in the apartment of commissions, ii. 143; his personal habits as to drinking, ii. 153; the religious element in his nature, ii. 156; his generosity, ii. 158; his creed, ii. 158; a zealous church goer in youth, ii. 159; interested in Moody and Sankey, ii. 160; his favorite hymns, ii. 160; an attendant at McAuley's meetings, ii. 160; on the Lord's Prayer, ii. 164; declines to be Mayor of Albany, ii. 182; "Generalissimo of the abolition forces," ii. 184; on the Fugitive Slave Law, ii. 185; Fillmore administration propose to crush him, ii. 184; forty years a printer, ii. 191; reminiscences of his apprenticeship, ii. 192; goes to Europe in 1851, ii. 200; opposed to the native American party, ii. 224; sets type for the last time, ii. 227; his legislative dinners, ii. 232; alienation from Mr. Granger, ii. 229; the evening of life, ii. 236; desires to withdraw from journalism, ii. 236; his room in New York, ii. 237; his accessibility to all, ii. 237; joins the new Republican party, ii. 242; ready to retire from journalism, ii. 249; rupture of relations with Washington Hunt, ii. 252; sorrow for Seward's defeat in 1860, ii. 271; visits Lincoln at Springfield, ii. 271; his reply to the Greeley letter of 1854, ii. 283; the greatest politician of the country, ii. 288; President Lincoln's estimate of him, ii. 288; his disappointment at Seward's failure in the Chicago convention, ii. 292; conference with Lincoln on cabinet appointments, ii. 293; his high appreciation of Lincoln, ii. 295; never deserted a principle or a friend, ii. 296; visits Mr. Lincoln at Springfield, ii. 296; goes to Paris, January 15, 1862, ii. 390; interview with the Duc de Morny, ii. 394; his reply to Lieutenant Maury, ii. 369; card on General Scott's return to America, ii. 367; attention paid him in London, ii. 368; interviews with Earl Russell on the Trent question, ii. 352; interview with Lady Russell at Pembroke Lodge, ii. 353; in London, 1861, ii. 350; confers with Charles Francis Adams, ii. 350; sent to Europe with Archbishop Hughes and Bishop McIlvaine, ii. 349; in frequent conference with Lincoln and his Cabinet before Bull Run, ii. 343; reminiscences of the opening days of the Rebellion, ii. 338; his patriotic course in 1860, ii. 335; his foresight concerning

the war, ii. 335; his policy as to the border states, ii. 333; urged to be a candidate for United States Senator, ii. 323; his policy in 1861 opposed as "political suicide," ii. 316; a new epoch in his life, ii. 306; at the opening of the war ceases to be a partisan, ii. 306; urges concession, ii. 306; his feelings towards abolitionists, ii. 305; returns to London, ii. 403; "an ill weed," ii. 406; returns to New York, June, 1862, ii. 413; a public dinner and freedom of the city tendered him, ii. 413; letter to the Common Council, ii. 413; in 1862 vigorously engaged in forwarding troops, ii. 419; proposed visit to Europe, ii. 426; the visit abandoned, ii. 428; declines to be a candidate for United States Senator, ii. 430; retires from journalism, ii. 431; removes to New York, 1863, ii. 433; summoned to Washington, ii. 434; raised money for the government, ii. 435; submits plan for carrying on the war to the President, ii. 437; urges repeal of the homestead law, ii. 440; active in organizing the Peace convention at Philadelphia in 1865, ii. 453; returns to journalism, ii. 454; introductory article on taking charge of the "New York Commercial Advertiser," ii. 454; his political affiliations at different periods, ii. 457; his health begins to fail, ii. 459; his last cigar, ii. 459; visits Europe again, 1867, ii. 460; returns home, ii. 461; goes to Aiken, S. C., ii. 461; withdraws finally from journalism, ii. 461; reconciliation with Millard Fillmore, ii. 462; not in favor of Jenckes' civil service system, ii. 463; principles of appointment to office, ii. 473; as a reformer, ii. 473; approach of old age, ii. 475; sunstroke, ii. 475; actively interested in conventions up to 1872, ii. 487; in favor of Charles Francis Adams in 1872, ii. 487; opposed Horace Greeley as Comptroller, ii. 488; his reasons for so doing, ii. 488; visits Europe for the last time in 1871, ii. 477; makes a trip through Canada in 1870, ii. 477; from the outbreak of the Rebellion knew no party, ii. 485; delegate to Utica convention in 1872, ii. 485; New York Assembly tenders the freedom of the floor to, ii. 502; resigns seat in Republican central committee, ii. 525; opposes a third term for General Grant, ii. 540-546; reception in honor of his birthday in 1880, ii. 552; routine of his life in old age, ii. 569; his family, ii. 571; his house and surroundings, ii. 571; usages and peculiarities, ii. 572; picture of the Château Chavaniac, a present from Madame de Rémusat, ii. 572; no one turned from his door, ii. 572; interviewed on public matters, ii. 559; on the obelisk, ii. 559; on the Passion Play, ii. 559; on newspapers, ii. 560; on the ignorance of the masses, ii. 561; on the educational qualification for suffrage, ii. 561; on special parties, ii. 562; on strikers, ii. 563;

on the political outlook in 1882, ii. 564; visits Albany in September, 1882, ii. 574; his eighty-fifth birthday, ii. 575; visitors to his sick bed, ii. 575; dies November 22, 1882, ii. 576; his last will, ii. 577; letters from Thomas C. Acton, ii. 488; George Ashmun, ii. 189; August Belmont, ii. 310, 420; John Bigelow, ii. 366; R. M. Blatchford, ii. 480; ii. 461; James Bowen, i. 504; Samuel Bowles, ii. 260; David G. Bright, i. 80; Governor James Clark concerning Mr. Clay, i. 351; Henry Clay, ii. 42, 98, 119; Mr. Crosswell, ii. 38; David Davis, ii. 299, 300, 323, 444; George Dawson, ii. 134; Governor Dix, ii. 423, 501, 505; Edward Ellice, ii. 380; Mr. Evarts, ii. 410; Father Mathew, ii. 150, 151; Millard Fillmore, ii. 61, 63, 64, 74, 75, 83, 85; Governor Fish, ii. 190, 196; Francis Granger, ii. 46, 57; Mr. Granger to, concerning election, i. 357, 358; H. L. Granger, ii. 17; Horace Greeley, ii. 53, 71, 84, 91, 94, 95, 97, 131, 197, 216, 220; i. 468, 469; Messrs. Harper, i. 489; Robert L. Hone, ii. 478; Henry Holland, i. 631; ii. 382; Samuel M. Hopkins, i. 363; Bishop Hughes, ii. 134, i. 637; A. Hunt, ii. 185; Washington Hunt, ii. 112, 130, 173, 253; William Kent, ii. 20, 72, 146, 196; Hon. A. Kinnaid, i. 645; Abraham Lincoln, ii. 297, 310, 324, 433, 440; S. P. Lyman, concerning the administration, i. 438; Mr. McElrath, ii. 430; Bishop McIlvaine, ii. 419; General McLellan, ii. 429; W. L. Marcy, ii. 228; Robert B. Minturn, ii. 423; i. 503; E. D. Morgan, ii. 252, 411, 445, 461; Butler G. Noble, ii. 317; an old line Whig, ii. 243; Everard Peck, ii. 22; George W. Patterson, ii. 47, 83, 85, 434, 445; George Peabody, ii. 365; General Pleasanton, ii. 180; Madame de Rémusat, ii. 570; H. J. Raymond, ii. 451; Erastus Root, i. 553; Gerrit W. Ryckman, i. 49; General Scott, i. 657; Mr. Seward, ii. 99, 128, 244, 256, 261, 270; ii. 307, 308, 319, 323, 332, 378, 407, 408, 426, 428, 460; concerning the Trent affair, i. 640; Vivus W. Smith, ii. 433; Gerrit Smith, ii. 453; John C. Spencer, ii. 43, 116; A. T. Stewart, ii. 44, 318; Leonard Swett, ii. 298, 301; Albert H. Tracy, i. 169, 170; ii. 31, 32, 49; on election of J. Q. Adams, i. 173; concerning Governor Clinton, i. 177; typographical society, i. 69; James Watson Webb, ii. 526; Daniel Webster, ii. 95, 135; Frederick Whittlesey, ii. 33; on election of 1830, i. 368; to a friend, ii. 19, 38; to his daughter Harriet, ii. 107; to his wife, ii. 109; his son James, i. 552; his grandson, ii. 475; on death of General Robert E. Lee, ii. 476; to President Arthur, ii. 563; reply to James G. Bennett's challenge concerning political movements, i. 352; to James G. Blaine, ii. 522; editor of Catskill "Recorder," concerning his early life, i. 5; Edwin Crosswell, ii. 37; General Daly, ii. 562;

- H. C. Goodwin, concerning history of Cortland County, i. 15; Governor Dix, ii. 506; from the West Indies, i. 556; to Addison Gardiner, ii. 565, 567; Mr. Giddings, ii. 133; Francis Granger, ii. 40, 45, 50, 86-88, 230; James W. Hasted, ii. 502; Preston King, ii. 309; A. Lincoln, ii. 300, 438; Senator Morgan, ii. 441; New York Typographical Society, ii. 191; Joseph Parkes, ii. 443; Benjamin K. Phelps, ii. 525; Henry J. Raymond, ii. 436; W. H. Seward, ii. 41; Governor Seymour, ii. 427; Charles E. Smith, ii. 524; Vivus W. Smith, ii. 507; John C. Spencer, ii. 118; the "Times" on the Trent affair, ii. 355; General Webb, ii. 527; John Whitney, i. 334.
- Weldon, James, i. 449.
- Wells, Gideon, mentioned for place in President Lincoln's Cabinet, i. 606; appointed Secretary of the Navy, ii. 325.
- Wellington, the Duke of, ii. 105.
- Wells, Henry, founded Merchant's Union Express Company, i. 142.
- Wendell, General John H., a revolutionary veteran, mentioned, i. 112.
- Wendover, Peter H., delegate to constitutional convention, i. 200.
- Western States, Mr. Weed's early recollections of, ii. 3.
- Wetmore, Prosper M., legislator of 1835, i. 407.
- Wetmore, Robert C., concerning illegal voters, i. 493.
- Wheaton, Henry, delegate to convention, i. 89; leader of Adams party in 1824, i. 107; Democratic supporter of Mr. Adams, i. 119; at the electors' dinner, i. 138; appointed to Sweden, i. 183; legislator of 1824, i. 399.
- Wheeler, Andrew C., legislator of 1835, i. 406.
- Wheeler, Ira B., a legislator of 1825, i. 400.
- Wheeler, Jediah, recollection of Mr. Weed in Norwich, ii. 14.
- Wheeler, Melancthon, supports Mr. Clay, i. 122.
- Wheeler, William A., ii. 187.
- Whig, first use of the word, ii. 48; extinction in 1848, ii. 166.
- Whig leaders, stigmatized as "pipe layers," i. 493.
- Whig convention, candidates of the, i. 430; at Harrisburg, i. 481; indications in favor of Mr. Clay, i. 575; Mr. Clay's friends, i. 577; delegates instructed to vote for Mr. Clay, i. 577; candidates, the, i. 578; delegates withdraw from the convention, i. 578; General Taylor nominated for President, i. 578; Millard Fillmore, nominated for Vice-President, i. 578; of 1839, ii. 75, 77; at Albany, 1856, ii. 246.
- Whig party, development of, i. 425; principles of, i. 427; popularity of, i. 430; leading men of the, i. 442; unfortunate advocacy of United States Bank, i. 445; success of, in 1837, i. 451; victory of the, in election 1839, i. 479; carries New York, in 1838, ii. 64.
- Whig Press, Mr. Weed's newspaper work in behalf of General Taylor, i. 575.
- Whig state government, a, i. 458.
- Whig victory, of 1840, i. 494.
- Whigs make gains in elections of 1837, ii. 50.
- Whigs of the South, ii. 515.
- White, Hugh L., a candidate for the presidency, i. 443.
- White feathers, at the North, ii. 447.
- White fish, the, in Lake Ontario, i. 206.
- White leagues, of Louisiana, ii. 514.
- White, John, leading Whig, i. 442; of Kentucky (Speaker), ii. 118.
- White, William, an early anti-Mason, i. 448.
- Whiting, Bowen, leader in Clay party in 1824, i. 107; a Clay Democrat, i. 110; member of Assembly of 1825, i. 165; on prosecution of Morgan affair, i. 233; prosecuting attorney, at trial of Elisha Adams, i. 262.
- Whitney, John, testimony of, at the Morgan trial, i. 234; leaves Rochester, i. 245; indicted on Morgan affair, i. 248; trial on Morgan affair, i. 271; sentenced, i. 273; testimony of, i. 287; explanation concerning the fate of Morgan, i. 332; witness in libel suit, i. 332; death of, i. 334; letter of Thurlow Weed to, i. 334.
- Whitney, Stephen, i. 402.
- Whittlesey, Frederick, political and personal relations with Thurlow Weed, i. 100; of Rochester, editor of the "Republican," i. 100; member of base ball club, i. 203; appointed to investigate the "Morgan affair," i. 230; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257; concerning political anti-masonry, i. 299; concerning an article written against Mr. Weed, i. 310; decides the question of political anti-masonry, i. 310; editor of Rochester "Republican," i. 310; elected to Congress, i. 312; member of committee on Morgan inquest, i. 316; of anti-Masonic party, i. 336; recommends Mr. Gardiner for Judge, i. 389; quoted concerning "Evening Journal," i. 361; letter to Mr. Weed on election of 1830, i. 368; anti-bank man, i. 372; dissolves anti-Masonic party, i. 425; letter to Mr. Weed, ii. 33.
- Widrig, Major-General, mentioned, i. 149.
- Wilberforce, Mr., concerning imprisonment of Lafayette, i. 193.
- Wilcox, Roswell, concerning imprisonment of Colonel Miller, i. 230; sentenced, i. 255.
- Will of Thurlow Weed, ii. 585.
- Willett, Colonel Marinus, officer of the Revolution, i. 55; meeting with Lafayette, i. 185.
- Williams, A. B., mentioned, i. 335.
- Williams, David, death of, i. 388.
- Williams, Elisha, eminent lawyer, i. 42; mentioned, i. 45; delegate to convention, i. 89; at dinner with Lafayette, i. 190; legislative service of, i. 201; legislative "giant," i. 397; in legislature, 1828, i. 402.

- Williams, Ezekiel, workingman's candidate for Governor, i. 367.
- Williams, John, merchant, i. 30.
- Williams, Lewis, leading Whig, i. 442.
- Williams, Nathan, lawyer, i. 31; of Rochester, i. 419.
- Williams, Samuel, a printer, i. 44; mentioned, i. 43.
- Williams, William, friend of Thurlow Weed, i. 26; of Utica, i. 30.
- Wilkes, Commodore, ii. 248, 358.
- Wilkin, Samuel J., leader of Adams party in 1824, i. 107; member of Assembly of 1825, i. 164; at Lafayette reception, i. 189; death of, i. 400.
- Wilkinson (General), at Sackett's Harbor, i. 39.
- Willmot proviso carried, ii. 146.
- Wilson, Henry, supports Mr. Clay, i. 577; ii. 178; "dictatorial and insolent" to President Johnson, ii. 451, 470; appeals to President Grant to strengthen his Cabinet, ii. 520.
- Wilson, James, ii. 168.
- Wilson, Jared, of Canandaigua, i. 140.
- Wilson, John, arrest of Morgan by, i. 217.
- Winder, General, at Sackett's Harbor, i. 39.
- Winne, Billy, at opening of first railroad, i. 386.
- Winthrop, Colonel, of New Orleans, i. 650.
- Winthrop, Hon. Robert C., i. 513.
- Wirt, William, mentioned, i. 351; at Baltimore convention, i. 390; nominated for President, i. 390, 413.
- Wiswall, Commodore S., attentions of, to General Lafayette, i. 184.
- "With malice to none," ii. 449.
- Witt, Stillman, a political worker at Albany, i. 449.
- Wood, Fernando, sentiments concerning the Rebellion, i. 615; ii. 139.
- Wood, Jethro, of Aurora, i. 142.
- Wood, Julius, recollections of 1860, ii. 268, 269.
- Wood, Mr., an uncomfortable stage-coach passenger, i. 144.
- Wood, Samuel & Sons, printers, i. 56.
- Wood, Hon. Silas, declines nomination, i. 366.
- Wood, W. J., removed from office, ii. 33.
- Wool (General), John E., mentioned, i. 24; Mexican war, i. 574.
- Woolsey, Captain of United States brig Oneida, i. 144.
- Woolsey, Lieutenant, concerning some cannon-balls, i. 25.
- Workingman's convention at Syracuse, i. 367.
- Workingman's party, delegates of, to legislature, 1830, i. 404, 406.
- Workingmen's parties, ii. 562.
- Works, Sam, *soubriquet* of Leather-Stocking applied to, i. 99; a pioneer of Rochester, i. 99; concerning the bank at Rochester, i. 104; mentioned, i. 158; signs a petition, i. 204; mentioned, i. 215; appointed to investigate the Morgan affair, i. 230; at anti-Masonic convention, i. 257; concerning political anti-masonry, i. 299; on Morgan inquest committee, i. 316; member of anti-Masonic party, i. 336; recommends Mr. Gardiner for Judge, i. 339.
- Worth, Gorham A., chastisement of by William Spencer, i. 49; "sketches" of, i. 50; teller of Mechanics' Bank, Albany, i. 50; president of New York City Bank, i. 50.
- Worth, James L., son of Gorham A. Worth, i. 50.
- Wright, Benjamin, engineer of Erie canal, i. 71.
- Wright, Miss Francis, authoress, mentioned, i. 186.
- Wright, Mr. member of Congress from Ohio, i. 256.
- Wright, Silas, member of "Albany Regency," i. 8, 103; death of, i. 9; elected United States Senator, i. 108; Comptroller of New York, i. 348; letter to Mr. Van Buren, presenting political views, i. 376.
- Wright, Silas, Jr., member of the Van Buren party in 1824, i. 107; at political dinner at Governor Clinton's, i. 165.
- Wright, S. J., prominent Democrat, i. 165.
- Wright, Solomon C., trial of for participation in Morgan affair, i. 284.
- Wyman, John W., concerning Mr. Clinton for Governor, i. 82.
- Wyncoop, Augustus, mentioned, i. 394.
- Yates (Governor), Joseph C., mentioned, i. 40; Democratic Governor, i. 142; at opening of first railroad, i. 386; and his proclamation, i. 114-116; message to legislature concerning presidential electors, i. 116; quoted, i. 155.
- Yates (Judge), Peter W., mentioned, i. 147.
- Yates, Juliana, wife of Samuel S. Baldwin, i. 147.
- Yates, John Van Ness, Secretary of State, i. 114.
- Young, John, chosen Governor, 1846, ii. 135.
- Young (Colonel), Samuel, concerning Erie canal, i. 443; in Assembly of 1820, i. 397; a brush with A. B. Dickinson in legislature, i. 441; leaves his Clay friends and accepts Democratic nomination for Governor, i. 108; member of legislature, i. 45; supports Mr. Clay for President, i. 107; at Rome, New York, i. 71; delegate to convention, i. 89.
- Zabriskie, George, a legislator of 1825, i. 400; a legislator of 1837, i. 407.















