

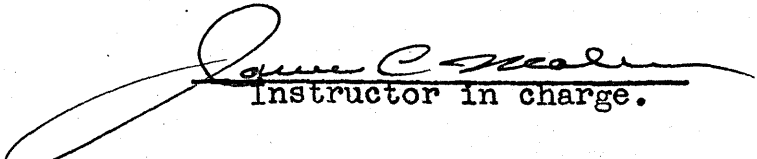
POLITICAL CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION OF GENERAL GRANT
IN 1868.


by

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Chapter I.

INTRODUCTION

There were two political parties during the Civil War. The Union party, which was in the political ascendency, was a combination of Republicans and war Democrats. Opposition to the military conflict between the North and the South was found in the ranks of the Democrats. The Republicans were a mixture of different political and economic groups held together by a common hatred of slavery. Consequently, "When the war ended and peace issues again began to interest men, the stage was set for a political upheaval."¹

The great and difficult task of reconstruction rested upon Congress and the President at the close of the Civil war. Reconstruction played an important role in the formation of political groups and the issue was not definitely settled until in the election of 1868.

Many perplexing questions had to be settled in rebuilding the Union. In what way should the seceded states be treated? Were they in or out of the Union? What should be done with the four million negroes set free? Of the Confederates who should be pardoned⁴³ and who punished?

The people and politicians of the North were divided into two factions in regard to their attitude toward the South. The smaller group or radicals desired to treat the confederates severely especially the leaders of the rebellion. They were also in favor of immediate extension of voting privileges to the negro. The larger group or conservatives were in favor of not acting on the suffrage question at the present time and not dealing with the Southern people in a spirit of vindictiveness. President Lincoln and Seward, Secretary of State, were leaders of the conservatives.

President Lincoln believed in extending the hand of welcome to the defeated Confederates in a spirit of friendliness. His plan of reconstruction was set forth in his proclamation of December 8, 1863. With the exception of a few classes, he promised pardon to all persons who would lay down their arms and take an oath to support the Constitution and abide by the Emancipation Proclamation. As soon as a number of persons in any state equal to one-tenth of those who voted at the election of 1860 should take the required oath and organize a state government without slavery, Lincoln would recognize such a commonwealth as one of the states of the Union. No state was readmitted, however, while the war lasted.

On April 14, 1865, an assassin's bullet removed from the office of the presidency a man who hoped to reconstruct the Southern states on a moderate basis. Historians are of the opinion that even such a leader as President Lincoln would not have been able to have gone through the period of reconstruction without a bitter conflict with Congress. Even before his death opposition was forming against his policy.

Vice-President Johnson, who was duly sworn in as president, adopted Lincoln's view of reconstruction. As Congress was not in session he began to carry out Lincoln's policy.

Throughout the South the blockade was raised, temporary governors appointed, conventions were held which repealed the ordinance of secession and framed new constitutions, war debts were repudiated and the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified by most of the new Legislatures. The amendment was declared to be in effect December 18, 1865.

How was the President's policy of reconstruction being received in the North and South? During the latter part of the year 1865, the people in the North of both political parties were well satisfied. The men of the South were presenting themselves for pardon and were helping in making the new state governments, consequently one would judge that they were not displeased.

One group, the Radicals, in the North opposed the Moderate policy. There was a reaction against the strong power of the executive which had been necessary during the war and which President Johnson had used to reconstruct the South during the summer of 1865. The election of Southern men to office who had been confederates also was repugnant to the radical group.³

When Congress met in December, 1865, under the leadership of Thaddeus Stevens, a radical, a joint congressional committee of fifteen was appointed to determine whether or not the newly reconstructed states should be admitted to Congress. Their decision was not to do so for the present. This was the beginning of congressional domination and the long struggle between the executive and the legislative branches of the national government.

The Southern States helped to arouse bitter opposition in the North by passing laws known as the Black Codes. These laws intended to regulate and control the freedmen, but which seemed to the North to bring them back to a state of slavery. Radical newspapers and congressmen over exaggerated the importance and effect of the laws. It was largely on account of the Black Code laws passed by the southern legislatures that Congress refused to admit southern congressmen until the rights of the freedmen were fully protected.

Congress in 1865 established the Freedman's Bureau, a federal organization, the duty of which was to look after the interests of former slaves; feed, clothe, and shelter the needy; establish schools for them; and in general protect them from injustice and help them to care for themselves. President Johnson vetoed the bill February 19, 1865. This made an open break between the President and the Congress. It would put off indefinitely the admission of the Southern States in Congress. President Johnson also lost the support of the moderate Republicans because the northern people thought the negroes of the south needed protection.

Congress next passed the Civil Rights Bill which guaranteed civil rights to all persons born in the United States, without regard to race or color. It was vetoed by President Johnson March 27, 1865. It was passed over his veto April 9th. But a law enacted by one Congress may be repealed by another, and in order that these rights should never be withdrawn, they were made a part of the Constitution as the Fourteenth Amendment. In addition to granting civil rights to all persons, the Fourteenth Amendment provided for a reduction of the representation in Congress of any state which refused to let the negro vote. Section three disqualified leading men in the South, who had

taken part in the rebellion, from holding office until this privilege should be restored to them by a two-thirds vote of Congress; and section four declared the war debt of the Confederate States illegal and void and that of the United States legal and valid.

With this legislation Congress was ready to enter the Congressional elections of 1866. Voters were under the supposition that the Fourteenth Amendment was the Congressional plan of reconstruction.

According to Beale in his recent book called The Critical Year, Johnson's task was, "to formulate a platform and organize a party."⁴ In short he did neither and it was his lack of definite action on the part of President Johnson that helped the Radicals to win a victory in the elections of 1866.

The Radical's plan of campaign was to keep the issues from being raised or they would lose the West. The reconstruction issue, "unconfused"⁶ would result in a large following for Johnson so the Radicals "had to raise mere shibboleths."⁷ The victory for the Radicals was due to "skilful generalship that succeeded in shunning issues, a clever use of alap-trap, and a masterful campaign management."⁸ The Republicans obtained a two-thirds majority in each house of Congress which they will use to over-ride vetoes of the executive.

With the exception of Tennessee, the southern states refused to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment. Encouraged by the results of the elections in 1866 and incensed by the attitude of the South toward the Fourteenth Amendment, Congress began a plan of extreme reconstruction. On March 2, 1867, it passed the Tenure of Office Act, which said that the President should not without the consent of the Senate, remove any officeholder whose appointment had to be ratified by the Senate. This was done to prevent the President from removing important officials favorable to the Congressional policy of reconstruction. It protected Edwin M. Stanton, the Secretary of War, who was in sympathy with the Radicals. Leaders in Congress wanted to keep him in the cabinet where he could work for the advantage of his favored party.

On the same day that Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act, (March 2, 1867) it passed the Reconstruction Act which divided into five military districts, the ten southern states still out of the Union. An army officer with troops at his command was placed over each district, with dictatorial power to rule and carry out the reconstruction measures of Congress. The state governments recognized by Johnson were set aside and new ones provided for. Negroes were allowed

to take part both in forming the new constitutions and in conducting the government. Radical Republicans wanted to give the blacks the power of voting to enable them to protect themselves from their former masters and they also hoped to form a Republican party in the South. Many of the former masters of the negroes were denied these rights by the third section of the Fourteenth Amendment. In each state delegates were elected to a convention to form a new constitution which should grant freedmen the right to vote. If the constitution proved acceptable and the legislature met the requirements of Congress, the states would then be allowed to send senators and representatives to Congress.

On August 5, 1867, occurred an event which had an important connection with future politics. On that day during the recess of Congress President Johnson asked for the resignation of Stanton, Secretary of war. Stanton refused to resign. On August 12th, Johnson suspended him and appointed General Grant ad interim to the place.

The concluding history of the struggle between Congress and President Johnson and its relation to politics was very intimately connected with the Grant Movement which is the title of the next Chapter.

Chapter II

THE GRANT MOVEMENT SEPTEMBER 1, 1867-MAY 20, 1868.

On July 25, 1866 Ulysses S. Grant was commissioned General of the armies of the United States. He was now the foremost citizen of the Republic. Little was known of his political beliefs and opinions on current questions of the day. He had voted for Buchanan in 1856. He would have voted for Douglas in 1860 if he had established a legal residence in the state of Illinois giving him the right to do so. By nature he was reserved in speech and uncommunicative. Grant was inexperienced in civil administration and he lacked political finesse. Yet the leaders of both political parties sought to secure his adherence.

The Washington correspondent for the New York Tribune early in September of 1867, in an article entitled Grant and the Presidency quoted the general as saying to an officer on his staff concerning the talk of making him President as follows, " 'He would not be President of the United States if the opportunity were offered; that he was no politician; that he hated politics,'"1

In October, the Maryland Synod of the English Luthern church which had been in session in Washington

for some days called in a body upon General Grant at his residence. During the course of the conversation one of the clergymen said to him, " 'When we come to see you again, General, we hope to find you in a larger and whiter residence than this. His reply was, 'I have no desire for any higher position, or any increase of power or duties.'"²

If we can depend upon the veracity of these two statements of General Grant as reported by the New York Tribune; what caused him to change his mind and later accept the nomination for the presidency on the Republican ticket?

The Tribune hinted at a plot in November of 1867, to make Grant run for the presidency;

"We do not advocate the nomination of Gen. Grant for next President, believing that this office can be better filled by one of our eminent civilians, while the General retains the command-in-chief of the military forces.

"But those who contrived and effected our defeat in certain States this Fall, on purpose to give them a chance to say, 'Take Grant or be defeated!' ought not to be gratified by the success of their base machinations.

"There are those who support Gen. Grant for President because he is their first choice. With these, we can have no controversy. They have a perfect right to their preference, as we have to ours. . . . But we have a very different feeling for the guerrillas, who did their utmost to divide and defeat the Republicans last year, and (by resorting to more insidious, underhand strategy) accomplished their end this year, and now point to their achievement, and say 'you see what we can do.' Follow our lead next year, or be beaten.' And we can't help thinking Gen. Grant must regard them much as we do."³

It is evident that the Tribune was aware of a plot that had long been forming in order to force Grant on the Republican party as it's candidate. Yet from the last sentence of the above quotation one receives the implication that probably Gen. Grant as yet had no part in the movement.

In the forepart of January an inkling is obtained from the Tribune as to the general plan of the Grant movement as follows:

"They mean to make him run by getting up in the first place an irrepressible enthusiasm, and in the second place by working on the fears of the party and making the leaders believe that Grant is the only man that can be elected. . . .

"Grant is to be forced into the race as a last resort, and the Republican party is to be brought to such a condition that it must accept him."⁴

The leader of the movement was the Hon. E. B. Washburne according to the New York Tribune. It commented as follows concerning Washburne;

"This is the Jockey who trains the fast horse Ulysses--who teaches him his paces, and what gait he shall take, when he shall trot and when he may canter."⁵

What was the attitude of General Grant amidst this enthusiasm and hurraing? The Tribune observed that, "Gen. Grant takes about as much interest in this race as the racer in his paddock. He is not a candidate for the Presidency by his own desire, nor can his friends make him a candidate unless it is

'necessary to save" the Republican party. His trainers want to ride him whether he will or no."⁶

The popular movement among the people was rapidly gaining momentum by the middle of January. As early as Oct. 11, 1867, the state Convention of Maryland endorsed Grant for the Presidency.⁷ On Oct. 14th, in Columbus, Ohio, an Union club acknowledged Gen. Grant as their choice for the next President.⁸ A similar movement occurred in Philadelphia the latter part of October, 1867. Gen. Grant was nominated for the President by the National Union Club of that city. Meetings were held in every ward indorsing that nomination. Meetings were held also in every ward for the purpose of forming Grant clubs.⁹

A meeting was held in New York City December 4, 1867 at Cooper Institute to formally launch Gen. Grant as a candidate for the presidency on the Republican ticket. The object of the meeting was enthusiasm, however, as the following comment by the Tribune the next day indicates,

"The carefully worded platform whereon Gen. Grant was last evening presented at Cooper Institute for president, plainly ignores his support as a Republican candidate, or as the representative of one distinctively Republica idea."

The function of the Grant committee appointed at the Cooper Institute meeting was to:

"get up similar meetings throughout the country without reference to parties and so advance Gen. Grant before the people that all the Republican and Democratic Conventions can do will be to indorse the nomination."¹¹

State Republican Conventions in New Hampshire, Dec. 19th¹² and Connecticut, Jan. 16,¹³ had indorsed Grant as their choice as the next Republican nominee for the presidency.

Grant clubs sprang up like mushrooms throughout the North East and Middle West. However there was a group of politicians in the South and South West that were anxious to get some positive declarations of views from General Grant, especially in reference to suffrage in the South. And this group supported Chief-Justice Chase for the Presidency.¹⁴

At this stage of the development of the Grant boom, a controversy occurs between President Johnson and his secretary of War, ad interim. Which decidedly colors Grant as the idol of the Radical Republicans.

When Congress convened in December, it refused to concur in the removal of Stanton. The President believed the Tenure of Office Act unconstitutional and he wished to test the question in the courts.

Johnson's plan was for Grant to hold on to the office and force Stanton if reinstated by Congress to go to Court. However if Grant did not feel like

taking the responsibility he was to notify the President who would name some one who would. In short Grant failed to abide with this agreement and allowed Stanton to return to office.

The President under criticism of the press made public the agreement that had been made. General Grant disturbed over the press saying that he had broken faith with Johnson wrote a letter to Pres. Johnson stating the facts as he understood them. From Jan. 28, 1868 to Feb. 10, 1868 a correspondence took place between Grant and Johnson. Prof. F. H. Hodder, of the University of Kansas, was one of the first historians to give a true version of the controversy. In an article in the Mississippi Valley Historical Review called, Propaganda in American History, he concludes that Johnson presented evidence to conclusively show Grant's dishonesty. ¹⁵

It was, "one of the most important factors that induced Grant to run for the presidency, while at the same time it secured for him the support of the radical element."¹⁶

The reason for Grant failing to keep faith with Johnson is a historical mystery. Perhaps Grant was now in league with the politicians who opposed Johnson.

According to the New York Tribune, Democratic newspapers attacked General Grant and the Washington Intelligencer accused him of being in hands of "unscrupulous tricksters."¹⁷

During this long struggle between President Johnson and Congress, the President was threatened with impeachment from time to time but the House of Representatives lacked sufficient grounds for this charge. For violating the Tenure of Office Act principally the House brought the articles of impeachment against the President on Feb. 24, 1868 charging him with high crimes and misdemeanors. There were eleven charges. After a hearing lasting six weeks a vote was taken on the eleventh charge which seemed to be the one most likely to receive the necessary two-thirds vote to convict. Thirty-five senators voted guilty and nineteen not guilty. This was one less than the necessary two-thirds to convict.

The only possible opponent to General Grant was the presiding officer at the trial—chief, Justice Chase of the United States Supreme Court. He was supported by the New York Tribune up to the time of the Republican Convention. He was favored

by some because of his experience in affairs of the nation and his known stand on the suffrage question. However what chances he had of obtaining the Republican nomination were doomed during the trial. It appeared that he tried to be impartial and give justice but according to the Tribune:

"Radical Republicans here are almost unanimous in considering Chief-Justice Chase is a great degree responsible for the defection of Republican Senators, and he is generally regarded as an enemy of Impeachment. . . . What ever may be the truth, the facts are that the Republicans generally denounce Mr. Chase and the Democrats generally defend him."¹⁸

After the defeat on the eleventh charge, a recess of ten days was declared for the purpose of trying to find some bit of evidence of bribery on the part of any one of the nineteen voting for acquittal. Meanwhile the National Union Convention was held in the city of Chicago, May 20, 1868.

Chapter III

REPUBLICAN CONVENTION.

The National Committee of the Republican party whose chairman was Gov. Marcus L. Ward of New Jersey issued a call in February for a convention to nominate candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency. The Committee had selected the City of Chicago as the meeting place and May 20, 1868 as the date. Each state was authorized to be represented by a number of delegates equal to twice the number of representatives and senators which it had in Congress. Another call was issued for an adjourned conference of Union soldiers and sailors of the Republican party on May 19, 1868, in the same city.¹

The Convention opened at noon on May 20th in the Crosby Opera House. The place of meeting was one of the finest buildings in the West. But it could only accomodate about 2,500 spectators besides the delegates. An estimated crowd of 25,000 political visitors had poured into Chicago for this political meeting. Many people were prevented from entering the Opera House while those that did enter were packed in so closely that standing room could not be found.

Before the convention convened The National Intelligencer gave the following summary:

"The excitement is intense, chiefly on the Vice Presidency and impeachment. Some of the Western delegates manifest a strong determination to press a vote denouncing the Republican Senators who voted against the conviction of the President. Last night those who opposed the reading of said Senators out of the party seemed to be in the ascendent."²

The nomination of General Grant for the presidency was a foregone conclusion. Republican State conventions had been either passing resolutions in favor of General Grant as their first choice or instructing their delegates to vote for him.³

The New York Tribune commented in these words regarding the attitude of the convention:

"It was not necessary to hold a convention to designate the Republican candidate for President. The People had already decided that they would vote for U. S. Grant, and nobody else. We tried for a while to persuade them that they could do better but they would not hear to us. The nomination of Gen. Grant by every delegate from every State and Territory comprised within the boundaries of our Union was a simple proclamation of what the masses had already decided."⁴

The convention was called to order by Gov. Ward of New Jersey at the designated day and hour. He addressed the convention briefly stating some of their tasks,

"to nominate its standard-bearer for the ensuing campaign; to declare your unswerving attachment to union and liberty; and to pledge that you will take no step backward in the work of reconstructing the rebel States and re-establishing the Union. . . .

"An emancipated race has been lifted from the debasement of slavery, and, to-day, with the Union men of the South, re-organizes, in the name of liberty, the governments and institutions of the rebellious States. . . . The nation understands that neither armed treason nor political treachery can arrest the triumph of our cause and the success of our candidates.

"If, as indicated by the unanimity of feeling which prevails, you shall designate as our leader the great captain of the age, whose brilliant achievements in the field have been equaled by his wisdom in the Cabinet, the nation will greet it as the precursor of victory to our cause and of peace to the Republic."⁵

Carl Schurz, of Missouri, was nominated by direction of the National Committee as temporary chairman and the nomination unanimously prevailed.

Schurz spoke briefly to the convention. His address was characterized by the North American Review as "compact and in excellent taste."⁶ This magazine summarized speech and commented on it as follows:

"His appeal to the delegates not to be depressed by disappointment, nor hurried by passion beyond the bounds of wisdom, was not unheeded. His demand, in the name of the Republican party, for justice to all,—to the soldier who fought our battles, the Southern Union man who, for the national cause, imperilled his life and his fortune, the colored race to whom we have promised true liberty forever, and the national creditor who staked his fortune upon the good faith of the American people,—struck the key-note of the campaign."⁷

The temporary organization was completed by the chairman of each state and territory naming a delegate to each of the following committees: (1) Credentials, (2) Permanent Organization, (3) Resolutions, and (4) Rules. The Convention adjourned until 5:00 P. M. in order to allow the various committees to make their reports.

The convention re-assembled at the agreed upon time and the reports of the committees were received.

Hamilton Harris of New York, chairman of the Committee on Permanent Organization reported the name of General Joseph R. Hawley of Connecticut for permanent President of the Convention. The report was adopted.

General Hawley had an effective voice, was sensible and good natured. His favorable characteristics helped him over the obstacles that his imperfect knowledge of parliamentary law caused him.⁸

The newly elected President addressed the convention and referring to campaign issues and the possible presidential nominee said,

"The power of a nation of forty millions must be behind the just claim of the poorest workingman, of whatever race, to recover even and just wages. Its majesty must be felt wherever the humblest

loyal man appeals against personal violence and oppression. For every dollar of the national debt, the blood of a soldier is pledged. Every bond, in letter and in spirit, must be as sacred as a soldier's grave. . . . It is the old fight of liberty, equality and fraternity, against oppression, caste and aristocracy. . . .

"It is related--and, whether it be true or not, the incident is well invented--that, on the evening of that awful battle of the Wilderness, when the legions of the Union Army had fought all day, rather by faith than by sight, in the wild woods and tangled brush, that someone asked General Grant to step backward a little and re-organize, and that he replied, 'We have done very well, gentlemen! At half past three in the morning we move forward!' We accept his spirit and his words.

"Perhaps I am not anticipating in saying we shall accept him in person again as our leader."⁹

While the convention waited for the report of the committee on Credentials, a deputation from the Soldiers' and Sailor's Convention which had met on the 19th of May presented their proceedings to the convention.

Governor Fairchild of Wisconsin had been elected president. The states of Rhode Island, New York, Massachusetts, Tennessee, New Hampshire, Delaware, Connecticut, New Jersey, Louisiana, California, Georgia, Vermont, Kentucky, West Virginia, Ohio, Arkansas, Mississippi, Maine, Nebraska, Missouri, Dakota, Alabama, and Illinois, were represented by large delegations.

Governor Fairchild presented the following resolution that had passed unanimously by the convention the day before,

"That we, the soldiers and sailors, steadfast now, as ever, to the Union and the flag, fully recognize the claims of General Ulysses S. Grant to the confidence of the American people, and believing that the victories won under his guidance in war will be illustrated by him in peace, by such measures as will secure the fruits of our exertions, and restore the Union upon the loyal basis, we declare it as our deliberative conviction that he is the choice of the soldiers and sailors of the Union for the office of President of the United States of America."¹⁰

The resolution was accepted by the Republican convention, "entered upon its record, and made a part of its proceedings,"¹¹ upon the motion of Mr. Cochrane of New York.

According to the Official Proceedings of the Republican Convention, Mr. Lee of Louisiana, chairman of the committee on Credentials made the following report,

"Mr. President, your committee report the names of the several delegates from the several States, and especially report in reference to the State of Pennsylvania, that there appeared fifty-nine delegates, where as that State is entitled, under the call, to only fifty-two votes in this convention; that your committee recommend that those fifty-nine delegates named in their report be admitted to seats upon the floor of the Convention, and that they be authorized to cast the fifty-two votes to which the State is entitled, such being the wish of the Pennsylvania delegation.

"Your committee have further reported in favor of allowing to each of the delegations from the several Territories, and, also, the District of Columbia, the right to seats upon the floor, and the privilege of casting, each, two votes. And, further, Mr. President, we report to you the names of delegates from the States of Maryland, and California, which, in our judgment are entitled to seats upon the floor, and to a voice in the Convention."¹² The report was adopted.

The delegates of the unreconstructed States were included by this report and were entitled to seats and votes in the convention.

Mr. Root of Arkansas, Secretary of the Committee on Rules and Order of Business read his committee's report which was adopted without debate. One of the rules provided that the report of the Committee on Resolutions should be disposed of before the nominations were made.¹³

The National Union party changed it's name to National Union Republican party in the following manner as set down in the Official Proceedings of the Republican National Convention 1868.

Mr. Van Zandt of Rhode Island moved, "to strike out the words the 'National Union' party, and substitute in their stead 'National Republican' party."¹⁴

Mr. Logan of Illinois moved to amend the motion by only inserting the word Republican giving

the name National Union Republican to the party.

Mr. Van Zandt replied, "I accept the amendment, Mr. President. I would accept any amendment that the gentleman offers, even if he wanted to change my name. I want the word 'Republican' in here."¹⁵

Since the Committee on Resolutions was not ready to report; the Convention adjourned until ten o'clock on the following day, May 21, 1868.

The first business of any importance the next day was the report of the Committee on Resolutions made by it's chairman, Mr. Thompson, of Indiana. The report of twelve principles were adopted. Mr. Schurz of Missouri moved an amendment in relation to the right of suffrage for the colored race to the second resolution of the original platform and also moved an independent resolution that contained a recognition of the great charter that is called the Declaration of Independence. The two resolutions were adopted by unanimous consent as a part of the Republican Platform.¹⁶

In commenting upon the Republican platform Harper's Weekly wrote, "It is a frank, simple, and satisfactory statement of the great principles of the Republican party,"¹⁷ but it believed instead of a long arraignment of President Johnson, "A simple

expression of condemnation of the course of the President would have been better."¹⁸

The National Intelligencer, a Democratic paper, criticized the platform in these sentences:

"Among the outsiders, especially the extreme Republicans, there is great dissatisfaction at the generalities of the platform. The failure to take any positive action on impeachment is severely condemned by these men, who freely admit that the whole will be abandoned at Washington. The Western men also denounce the equivocation of the financial question, and say that it will inflict severe damage on the party in the campaign. The weak platform was dictated from Washington to insure Grant's acceptance."¹⁹

The Nation comments as follows, "Touches nothing that were better left alone."²⁰ And summarizes platform as follows:

Endorses Congressional plan of reconstruction. Denies notion of taking regulation of suffrage out of hands of the States. Promises removal of political restorations as soon as conditions within state make it possible. Proposes to pay the debt in the spirit as well as in the letter of the law. Disappointing feature is the evasive and misleading mention made of corruption of civil service.²¹

The convention next proceeded to the nomination for the presidency. The delegates from time to time had to be restrained by the chairman in order to prevent them from nominating their favorite--General Grant before the proper place in the order of business.

As soon as the President of the Convention announced that nominations were in order; Mr. Logan of

Illinois nominated Grant in the following words;

"In the name of the loyal citizens, soldiers and sailors of this great Republic of the United States of America; in the name of loyalty, of liberty, of humanity, of justice; in the name of the National Union Republican party; I nominate, as candidate for the Chief Magistracy of this nation, Ulysses S. Grant."²²

The North American Review believed the ceremony of putting such a man as Grant in nomination should have been simple in order to be impressive. The chairman of each delegation should have arisen and simply announced that the delegation cast all its votes for Ulysses S. Grant. But a majority of the chairmen were unable to resist the temptation to accompany this declaration with some additional remarks.²³

In the official Proceedings of the Republican Convention the remarks are recorded. Some examples are: The chairman of the California delegation shouted, "Mr. President, we came--ten of us--here, six thousand miles, to cast our vote for General Ulysses S. Grant."²⁴ Colorado said, "The Rocky Mountains of Colorado say--Ulysses S. Grant, six

votes."²⁵ Georgia through Governor Brown cast her eighteen votes for General Grant, "ardently desiring to speed the restoration of the Union, harmony, peace, and good government. . . ." ²⁶ Louisiana said, "we propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer."²⁷ And so the roll went on. Every state presenting all the votes she had for Grant. At the close of the call the chairman thus announced the result. "Gentlemen of the Convention, you have six hundred and fifty votes. You have given six hundred and fifty votes for U. S. Grant."²⁸

The North American Review described the scene that followed in these words;

"A portrait of Grant was displayed from one of the proscenium-boxes, and the flag at the rear of the stage gave place to a view of the White House, with General Grant seated in a chair in the foreground, and the Goddess of Liberty standing at his side, apparently inviting him to enter her favorite residence. The usual cheers upon cheers, the usual waving of hats and of handkerchiefs and the usual airs from a brass-band upon the stage greeted the nomination, and were followed by a song from three gentlemen, who were evidently unaccustomed to sing to-gether."²⁹

It was now in order to proceed to nominate a candidate for Vice President of the United States.

For the Vice-Presidency the following names were put in nomination: Henry Wilson, Senator from Massachusetts; Schulyer Colfax of Indiana, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Benjamin F. Wade

of Ohio, President of the Senate; Reuben E. Fenton, Governor of New York; James Speed of Kentucky, late Attorney General; J. A. J. Creswell of Maryland, Andrew G. Curtin, ex-governor of Pennsylvania; James Harlan, Senator from Iowa; Hannibal Hamlin of Maine, Vice-President during President Lincoln's first term; William D. Kelley of Pennsylvania; and Senator S. C. Pomeroy of Kansas.³⁰

The real contest was between B. F. Wade of Ohio and S. Colfax of Indiana. Mr. Wade led on the first ballot with a total of 147 votes. It was necessary to have 325 for the nomination. The North American Review listed some of Wade's handicaps in securing the nomination: (1) Failure of Impeachment had not given him the power of appointment which he probably would have used to influence voters in the convention. (2) He had recently declared himself in favor of increasing duties upon imports (3) Admission in a speech before the war that possibly a State had a right to secede from the Union (4) Manifesto against Lincoln in 1864 and (5) "Sneering reference to General Grant's indisposition to talk politics."³¹

Six ballots were taken in quick succession. New York and Ohio adhered to Messers Fenton and Wade. Before the result of the sixth ballot was announced

the delegates from all the other states declared for Mr. Colfax, who was announced by the chairman of the convention as the nominee for Vice-president. The convention then adjourned.

Harper's Weekly believed that; "The selection of Schuyler Colfax for the Vice-Presidency was most fortunate."³² And added that he was a man of high personal character, great political experience, loyal to the party, and possessed extra ordinary tact.³³

The committees of the late Republican and Soldiers' and Sailors' Conventions, headed by General Hawley and Colonel Alleman met General Grant and Mr. Colfax May 29, 1868, at Grant's residence and formally announced to them the choice of the conventions. Grant made a short speech in reply to Gen. Hawley.³⁴

In an extract from his speech taken from the Atlantic Monthly, General Grant said, "I shall have no policy of my own to enforce against the will of the people."³⁵ It was the opinion of the Atlantic Monthly that this statement was,

"a sentiment full of wisdom and patriotism, and at the same time the severest possible rebuke of the President, who strove so hard to force his policy upon an unwilling people."³⁶

General Grant and Mr. Colfax sent letters to General Hawley May 29, and May 30, 1868.

respectively, formally accepting their nominations by the National Union Republican party.

The letter of Gen. Grant was, "brief, dignified and simple,"³⁷ so notes Harper's Weekly. He approved the resolutions of the convention and he stated, if elected, he would try to give peace and protection to the country.³⁸

General Grant had completed his letter of acceptance but after thinking several moments he picked up his pen and added these words, "Let us have peace."³⁹ This sentence became the slogan of the Republican party in the campaign.

How was the public receiving the news of these nominations? According to Harper's Weekly reports of enthusiasm came from all parts of the Union. People received the news of the nominees with rejoicing.⁴⁰

The Nation thought the nominees were an excellent choice for President and Vice President.⁴¹

The National Intelligencer believed:

"General Grant is . . . nothing but a convenient instrument in the hands of Radical wire-pullers. He knows nothing of civil affairs, or of the political history of the country, and cares nothing for either the one or the other. He is a fortunate soldier, and no more, with limited capacity, and an absence of all training for the administration of government."⁴²

In commenting upon the Convention and the nominations the North American Review has this to say;

"There were no great men, and few notable men, upon the floor. . . .

"No great speeches were made, and only one or two good ones,

"But no Republican convention, composed of however capable members, and conducted with however great skill and dignity, could have nominated men stronger with the party than Ulysses S. Grant and Schuyler Colfax. . . . Nor could any convention have framed a more satisfactory declaration of the principles which should govern the administration to be inaugurated on the 4th of March next."43

Chapter IV

DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

On February 22, 1868, the National Democratic Committee issued a call for a convention to be held in New York City on July 4, 1868. The representation was to be on the same basis as the Republican convention. A call was also issued for a Soldiers' and Sailors' Convention to be held at the same place and time to cooperate in selecting a candidate for President.¹

The heat was intense in New York city when the delegates assembled. The place of meeting was Tammany Hall which was formally dedicated to political purposes on July 4, 1868. The Hall cost over \$300,000 and \$20,000 had been spent on decorations. The main assembly room could seat comfortably 5,000 persons.

"Intense heat tended to excite quarrelsomeness among its members,"² noted the North American Review. Another disadvantage of New York was that it was too large. Delegations that had been in the city for several days had made no progress toward getting acquainted.³ The fact that the meeting was held in New York City instead of a Middle Western city

probably prevented the nomination of Mr. George Pendleton for the presidency. Harper's Weekly ably described the condition of the Democratic party in this short sentence, "A lock, stock, and barrel wanted."⁴ The Democrats at this time were undecided on their issues and candidates.

Mr. Belmont, chairman of the Executive Committee, called the convention to order at noon, Saturday, July 4, 1868. He gave an address in which he praised the Democratic party and denounced the Radical Republicans.⁵

Henry D. Palmer of Wisconsin was elected temporary chairman. Committees were named. The rules of the Democratic Convention of 1864 were to govern until otherwise ordered. The convention was suspicious of the Pendleton faction. When a motion was made by a delegate from Ohio to adopt the rules of the House of Representatives it was voted down because the delegates feared it might mean a suspension of the two-thirds rule and allow Pendleton to carry the nomination.⁶ The two-thirds rule was adopted without opposition. In order to be nominated 212 out of the 317 electoral votes must be cast for one candidate.

July 5, 1868, was Sunday so the convention adjourned until Monday, July 6, 1868.

When the convention reassembled, the committee on Organization named for President, Horatio Seymour of New York.

Harper's New Monthly Magazine briefly summarized Seymour's address as follows:

"Delivered an address sharply criticising the platform of the Republican party as put forth by the Chicago convention and the whole course of that party."⁷

Little was accomplished on the second day of the meeting. After taking two or three votes it was clearly shown that there was little harmony between the Eastern and Western delegates.

While the Committee on Resolutions were working in the preparation of the party platform, the proceedings of the Soldiers' and Sailor's Convention were received by the Democratic assembly.

General W. B. Franklin was President of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Convention. Some of the prominent members were: Generals McClermand, Averill, William F. Smith, Peck, T. Kilby Smith, Ewing, and Granger.

Their formal address as taken from Harper's New Monthly Magazine declared that:

"The objects now being perpetuated in the name of republicanism and loyalty are not less alarming than were those committed by the armed forces of the Government during the war.' They believed that there was now 'living half a million of men who have served in the Union army and navy who are in sympathy and judgment opposed to the acts of the party in power; and at least another half million of men would have acted with the Republican party, but who, reviewing with alarm the recent acts of that party, are now anxious for a change of administration, with a platform of principles reviving no dead issues, and looking only to the arrest of existing evils, and with candidates whose fidelity to the Constitution can not be questioned.'"

The interest in the Soldiers' and Sailors' Convention centered chiefly on the presidential nomination. The sentiment was in favor of General Winfield S. Hancock, military commander at New Orleans during President Johnson's administration. The proceedings of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Convention was adopted by the Democratic Convention and entered upon the minutes.

Tuesday, July 7th, the resolutions were presented to the convention and adopted by acclamation. There were eight principles in the platform and to this declaration was added an extended proclamation censuring the Republican party.

Hamlin Garland in his book, U. S. Grant expressed his opinion of the resolutions in this manner;

"The platform was, in fact, a mixture of good and bad, like the Republican platform. Neither party had a monopoly of all the virtues. It had its appeal, this Democratic pronunciamento, and it had its short-sighted and violent prejudices." 9

The financial plank was one that was received with great enthusiasm. Oberholtzer described how this resolution was received in this paragraph;

"The utterances on the money question were received with 'thunders of applause.' After the fifth resolution was read and cheered--'one currency for the government and the people, the laborer and the bondholder,' there were shouts of, 'Read it again.' It was again read and again cheered."¹⁰

The North American Review gave,

"Another point in the resolutions which excited the enthusiasm of the Convention and which was at once recognized as a salient point of positive importance, was the reference to the work of the last two years in reconstructing the political institutions of the South as absolutely null and void. This phrase was introduced into the platform, . . . by Wade Hampton of South Carolina"¹¹

The Nation observed a new Democratic stand on tariff in this sentence;

"In relation to the tariff, the only thing remarkable in the platform is that it calls for 'incidental protection,' which is an open abandonment of the old Democratic position."¹²

Thus far the convention had satisfied the South and the group in the North who had been opposed to the Civil war on the subject of reconstruction, and had satisfied the West on the subject of finances. Therefore the convention was now ready to begin to nominate and ballot for candidates.

The task of nominating a candidate for the presidency was going to be difficult. There were

a number of men seeking the honor and nearly every one of the candidates had some hope of success.

The delegates must decide on a Northern man since the election would be decided by the votes of the Northern States. Consequently the southern gentlemen took little part in choosing the nominees and were willing to follow in the footsteps of the Northern delegates.¹³

The nominations were: James R. English, General W. S. Hancock, Joel Parker, Sanford E. Church, Geo. H. Pendleton, Asa Packer, Andrew Johnson, and James R. Doolittle. Chief-Justice Chase was never nominated but he was one of the favorites to receive the nomination.

"It was from the first a contest of 'the field' against Mr. Pendleton,"¹⁴ stated Stanwood. The North American Review said this about Mr. Pendleton;

"The most prominent name at the outset was that of George H. Pendleton. The enthusiasm for this gentleman among the Democracy in some sections of the West was very great; and had the convention been held in Cincinnati or Chicago, his nomination would have been easily secured. He found favor with one class as the earliest, the boldest, and the ablest champion of repudiation; with another as the acknowledged leader of the peace wing of the Democracy during the war, and the defeated representative of that faction on the ticket of 1864. His excellent personal character, graceful oratory, and attractive presence were minor claims to regard. But the same things which recommended him to his special partisans made him exceptionally offensive to another class of delegates, who yearned above

all things for victory in the campaign, and who looked upon Mr. Pendleton's opposition to the war and his committal to the Greenback theory in reference to the national debt as insuperable obstacles to success under his leadership."¹⁵

President Johnson was warmly supported by the Southern delegations at the outset but he had little chance of being nominated.

The North American Review gave the prospects of General Hancock and Hendricks as follows:

"General W. S. Hancock was the first choice of a few delegates and the second choice of many more, on the ground of his supposed power to attract some of the floating unattached vote which must be secured to control the election."¹⁶

"Mr. Hendricks had no original supporters, but much latent strength in the favor, as their second choice, of the weaker members of Mr. Pendleton's force."¹⁷

The way in which Chief Justice Chase changed from a Radical Republican to a Democrat is described by the North American Review as follows;

"From the beginning (Chief Justice Chase) had been a Republican, and a favorite leader with the extreme radical wing of that party; The storm of abuse with which some organs of Republican opinion assailed the Senators who had differed from the majority in the verdict on impeachment fell with especial violence on the head of Mr. Chase. . . . From that day he began to write short and very carefully studied letters, technically called private, but promptly given to the public, and evidently intended for such a use, indicating in unmistakable terms his willingness to accept and his desire to receive the nomination for the Presidency as the candidate of the Democratic party."¹⁸

One reason why some Democrats were opposed to Chase was because he favored negro suffrage. Another reason for opposition to his nomination was because he had helped form the national debt policy and he believed in its honest payment thereby incurring the enmity of the repudiators.

On the first ballot the four highest were: Pendleton 105; Pres. Johnson 65; Church 34; and Hancock $33\frac{1}{2}$. Five more ballots were taken that day with little change except the vote for President Johnson gradually decreased and his votes were distributed among the other candidates.

Two incidents happened on the first day of balloting, July 7, 1868, that are worth relating. On the fourth roll call Georgia gave its entire vote for Mr. Seymour of New York. The crowd in the galleries greeted this move on the part of Georgia with a great out burst of cheering. The delegates however took the matter very coolly and it is very unlikely he could have been nominated by the convention at that time. When Mr. Seymour heard what had happened he at once came forward and declared he had repeatedly refused to allow his name to be used and he was still determined not to become a candidate.¹⁹

The other incident happened on the fifth ballot. The Indiana delegation was under instructions to vote as a unit for Pendleton. On this ballot they asked permission for a withdrawal for the purpose of consultation. The reason they gave was that Mr. Hendricks, a son of Indiana, had been put forth from another state. This action causing a division in the Pendleton forces aroused the antagonism of the Pendleton supporters against Hendricks which seriously handicapped him of ever securing the nomination.²⁰

On Wednesday, July 8, 1868, a total of twelve ballots were taken. The vote on the seventh ballot was: Pendleton $137\frac{1}{2}$; Hancock $42\frac{1}{2}$; and Hendricks $39\frac{1}{2}$. New York still voted for Church and Pennsylvania for Parker.

On the eighth ballot New York withdrew her support for Church and cast her vote of 33 for Hendricks. The reason for New York changing is not clear. It was entirely possible that it was the first step in a scheme to nominate Chief Justice Chase whom a majority of the New York delegation favored. His nomination could not be made while Mr. Pendleton's strength remained. New York had to choose some man who would draw away votes from Pendleton and at the

same time not vote for a man who would be nominated. Mr. Hendricks, who was from Indiana and had incurred the antagonism of the Pendleton supporters on the fifth ballot answered their purpose.²¹

Pennsylvania voted for Hancock on the fifteenth ballot. On the sixteenth ballot nearly all the Southern states voted for him so he led the field for the first time. "So strong was the impulse in his favor, that his nomination was quite generally taken for granted,"²² wrote the North American Review. But an incident happened that probably prevented him from being the Democratic nominee. A quarrel broke out in the Indiana delegation in regard to interpreting their instructions. The personal feeling within the delegation arose to the place where it seemed advisable to adjourn the entire convention for the day in order to prevent a scandal taking place during a regular session meeting. During the night bargaining would probably take place which would change the entire status of affairs on the following day.

The eighteenth and closing ballot of the day gave Hancock 144½; Hendricks 87; Pendleton 56½; the other votes being scattered among the other candidates. The result was that Hancock or Hendricks probably would be nominated. Mr. Pendleton was definitely out of the running.²³ On the nineteenth

or first ballot in the morning of July 9, 1868, Mr. Pendleton withdrew. On this ballot Ohio voted for Packer of Pennsylvania but no other state followed their lead.

On the next ballot Ohio gave part of her vote to Mr. English but still no response from the other states.

The failure to put forth Chief Justice Chase at this time was fatal to his chances. That morning the New York delegation under the influence of Seymour had determined to nominate and support Chase at the psychological time. New York had to delay however until Hendrick's chances for the nomination were beyond hope since it was by New York's vote in the early balloting that he was being seriously considered.

On the twenty-first ballot Hancock had $135\frac{1}{2}$, and Hendricks 132. Neither one of these men could be nominated. Some new name must be brought forward, which would capture the enthusiasm of the convention.

The Ohio delegation under the leadership of Vallandigham was determined to prevent the nomination of Chase. On the twenty-second ballot Ohio again nominated Seymour of New York. Seymour's refusal was more emphatic than the previous one. The reaction

to his second refusal was told by the North American Review in this manner,

"The delegates and spectators generally accepted this as conclusive. But Ohio was fully prepared for the contingency. Mr. Vallandigham himself arose, and not only declared that his state would not withdraw her vote, but directly called upon the other delegations to indorse it, and to force the nomination of Mr. Seymour."²⁴

Mr. Seymour hesitated. His plan of nominating Chase was lost.

The balloting proceeded and the result was Hendricks 140 $\frac{1}{2}$; Hancock 90 $\frac{1}{2}$; Johnson 4; Doolittle 4; English 1; and Seymour 21. But before the result was announced State after State changed its vote to Seymour until the entire vote was given to him. Horatio Seymour had been nominated for the presidency on the Democratic ticket.

Rhodes believed Seymour was the best man the Democrats could have nominated.²⁵

H. Elson gave a brief summary of Seymour in his History of United States in this paragraph;

"Mr. Seymour was a man of great ability and political sagacity, and was doubtless the most popular man the party could have named. During the war he had vigorously criticized the administration, but he was never violent nor disloyal. Moreover, he was a 'hard money' man, and on this point opposed to his party platform."²⁶

"On the whole, Mr. Seymour was accepted as a candidate who would be likely to command the full legitimate strength of his own party, though he could scarcely be expected to attract any support from without;"²⁷ was the opinion of the North American Review.

The convention reassembled after a brief recess and proceeded to nominate a Vice-President. General McClernand was nominated but declined. Several others were named but the favorite was General Francis P. Blair of Missouri. He was nominated by an unanimous vote on the first ballot. The Southern delegations were especially in favor of his nomination. The main reason for his popularity was the direct result of a published letter that he had written to Colonel Brodhead of the Missouri delegation on June 30, 1868.²⁸

Since this letter was the leading cause for his nomination and since it will play such an important role in the political campaign it merits reproduction in full.

"Washington, June 30, 1868.

Colonel James O. Brodhead.

Dear Colonel: In reply to your inquiries, I beg leave to say, that I leave to you to determine, on consultation with my friends from Missouri, whether my name shall be presented to the Democratic Convention, and to submit the following as what I consider the real and only issue in this contest.

"The reconstruction policy of the Radicals will be complete before the next election; the States so long excluded will have been admitted, negro suffrage established, and the carpet-baggers installed in their seats in both branches of Congress. There

is no possibility of changing the political character of the Senate, even if the Democrats should elect their President and a majority of the popular branch of Congress. We cannot, therefore, undo the Radical plan of reconstruction by congressional action; the Senate will continue a bar to its repeal. Must we submit to it? How can it be overthrown? It can only be overthrown by the authority of the Executive, who is sworn to maintain the Constitution, and who will fail to do his duty if he allows the Constitution to perish under a series of Congressional enactments which are in palpable violation of its fundamental principles.

"If the President elected by the Democracy, enforces or permits others to enforce these reconstruction acts, the Radicals, by the accession of twenty spurious Senators and fifty Representatives will control both branches of Congress, and his administration will be powerless as the present one of Mr. Johnson.

"There is but one way to restore the Government and the Constitution, and that is for the President elect to declare these acts null and void, compel the army to undo its usurpations at the South, disperse the carpet-bag State Governments, allow the white people to reorganize their own governments, and elect Senators and Representatives. The House of Representatives will contain a majority of Democrats from the North, and they will admit the Representatives elected by the white people of the South, and with the co-operation of the President, it will not be difficult to compel the Senate to submit once more to the obligations of the Constitution. It will not be able to withstand the public judgment, if distinctly invoked and clearly expressed on this fundamental issue, and it is the sure way to avoid all future strife to put the issue plainly to the country.

"I repeat, that this is the real and only question which we should allow to control us: Shall we submit to the usurpations by which the government has been overthrown; or shall we exert our selves for its full and complete restoration? It is idle to talk of bonds, greenbacks, gold, the public faith, and the public credit. What can a Democratic President do in regard to any of these; with a Congress in both branches controlled by the carpet-baggers and their allies? He will be powerless to stop the supplies by which idle negroes are organized into

political clubs--by which an army is maintained to protect these vagabonds in their outrages upon the ballot. These, and things like these, eat up the revenues and resources of the Government and destroy its credit--make the difference between gold and greenbacks. We must restore the constitution before we can restore the finances, and to do this we must have a President who will execute the will of the people by trampling into dust the usurpations of Congress known as the reconstruction acts. I wish to stand before the Convention upon this issue, but it is one which embraces everything else that is of value in its large and comprehensive results. It is the one thing that includes all that is worth a contest, and without it there is nothing that gives dignity, honor, or value to the struggle.

Your friend,

Frank P. Blair. "

The conclusions of The Nation and Harper's Weekly were closely akin in the nomination of Blair. Harper's Weekly said, "A weaker and more ridiculous nomination could not have been made."³⁰ And The Nation concluded that he will bring no popular strength to the ticket but will repel many votes.³¹

New York Tribune characterized Seymour's letter of acceptance as;

"pervaded by a spirit of sectionalism, pettiness, and small slander. . . . His letter is mainly devoted to a series of 'flings'--they deserve no higher name--they are neither facts nor arguments --against the Republican party."³²

From the North American Review is taken an excellent contrast of the two conventions;

"The Convention of the Democrats at New York was in almost every respect in marked and direct contrast with that of the Republicans at Chicago. The one, in its nomination for the Presidency, merely ratified the decision of the people, so unmistakably expressed that the action of the representative body upon it consumed barely an hour of time; the other found itself involved in a struggle which lasted for days, and was finally terminated by a result totally unexpected by the country at large and by the delegates themselves. The one engaged in an animated contest over the Vice-Presidential nomination; which it finally gave to the man best suited to strengthen the ticket before the people; the other tossed the second place in its gift almost at haphazard to the first bidder, and by this means obtained a candidate of singular and exceptional weakness with the majority of those whose alliance was necessary to the success of the party."³³

Chapter V.

THE CAMPAIGN.

The political campaign of 1868 can be divided chronologically into three distinct parts. The first period called the early campaign is from May 22, 1868, when the Republican Convention adjourned to sometime in the middle of August. The second period is named the intensive campaign and lasts from the middle of August when the political parties began working diligently for the state elections in September and October until they are over on October 14, 1868. The last period is labeled the closing campaign and deals with the last efforts of both political parties in the final stages of the campaign which ends with the general election, November 3, 1868.

When Congress reconvened after the Republican convention it took up again the impeachment proceedings against President Johnson. A vote on the second and third charges was the same as the vote on the eleventh charge; 35 votes for conviction and 19 for acquittal which lacked

one vote necessary for conviction. The Radical Republicans abandoned their attempt of impeachment.

The failure of impeachment was probably the salvation of the party. The Nation drew this conclusion on November 5, 1868, after the general election was over;

"We have no hesitation now in saying, however, that it (The Republican Party) was saved from utter ruin by the votes of the seven senators. Whether they were corrupt or honest in their decision, it prevented the accession of Mr. Wade to the Presidency and the predominance of men like General Butler in the councils of the executive, and probably the nomination of Mr. Wade at Chicago."²

Between the time of the Republican and the Democratic Conventions political speculation was directed mainly to canvassing the availability of the various candidates for the Democratic convention.³

After the Democratic convention there seemed to be a lull before starting the active campaign. The Nation on July 16, 1868, remarked that, "An outstanding feature of the campaign thus far is the absence of enthusiasm."⁴ This was partially explained by The Nation, in the fact that General Grant avoided, "The whole of the theatrical apparatus commonly used to excite enthusiasm,"⁵ and also in the fact that, "extreme

heat prevents an active campaign but undoubtedly it will soon open up."⁶

This period before the active campaign began was used by the political editors in bringing into print all the unfavorable, spiteful, and venomous material concerning the personal character of the candidates of their opposing political party. Hamlin Garland in his biography of General Grant, writing on this period, said:

"As the contest went on it became exceedingly acrid. Nothing was too mean to be said. . . . All over the nation, scavengers, unclean of mind and purchasable of conscience delved deep among the saloon-keepers and pot-houses of the cities. . . ."

This shows to what extent editors went to gather material in their attacks upon the presidential and vice-presidential nominees.

The Democrats made several charges against Grant. They were: That he had been a terrible drunkard; that he had been involved in corrupt contracts in cotton during the war; that he was inexperienced in statesmanship; and that he planned to become a dictator. He was called the man on horseback.

The Nation has given an example for the story of the dictatorship in this quotation:

"We learn from the World that a 'prominent Union officer,' who knows Grant well, has staked his reputation, 'while driving with a friend a few days since; that 'Grant would proclaim himself a dictator' within twelve months after his inauguration."⁷

Harper's Weekly said that "a series of very stupid falsehoods,"⁸ have been invented concerning Colfax. The chief offense of Colfax seemed to be the accusation that he insulted Union soldiers by denouncing the war as wicked and the soldiers as hirelings. But Harper's Weekly defends him by saying he was an outstanding advocate for the cause and the army.⁹

While the Democrats were thus attacking the Republican nominees; the Republicans were not idle in this pre-campaign mud slinging spree of the politicians.

The New York Tribune summed up what it thought of Seymour in these two sentences;

"He represents the hatred, the bitterness, the disappointed revenge, the disloyalty of the Rebellion. It was his influence and example that gave comfort to every coward Rebel and bounty-jumper during the war, and it is proper that he should now be called upon to lead them to office and plunder."¹⁰

Seymour's war record was an object of scorn and ridicule of the Republicans. They made

political capital throughout the campaign out of some of his war speeches.

The New York Tribune led the attack on his loyalty and listed charges from time to time against him. The first was his speech at the Tweddle Hall Convention on February 1, 1861. He berated the Republicans for not consenting to aid in the extension of slavery according to the New York Tribune in these words;

"What a spectacle do we present to-day! Already six States have withdrawn from this confederacy. Revolution has actually begun. . . . All virtue, patriotism, and intelligence, seem to have fled from our National Capital; it has been well likened to a conflagration of an asylum for madmen--some look on with idiotic imbecility; some in sullen silence; and some scatter the fire-brands which consume the fabric above them, and bring upon all a common destruction. Is there one revolting aspect in this scene which has not its parallel at the capital of your country? Do you not see there the senseless imbecility, the garrulous idiocy, the maddened rage, displayed with regard to petty personal passions and party purposes, while the glory, the honor, and the safety of the country, are all forgotten?"¹¹

July 1, 1863 was one of the darkest days for the Union during the Civil War. Grant did not seem to be making any headway at Vicksburg. The confederate forces under General Lee were advancing into Pennsylvania. The National resources and credit were at low ebb. Gov. Seymour of New York had care-

fully prepared and written a Fourth of July address several days before to be given in New York City. The Tribune summarized his speech in these words;

"an elaborate Fourth of July address which studiously and persistently held up to reprobation Pres. Lincoln and his cabinet as the chief assailants and most formidable enemies of our rights and liberties, taunted them with their reverses and disappointments, and nowhere intimated that the Rebel governments and armies were our chief national peril. . . . These covert threats of mob violence and State secession were the palpable overture to the negro-killing, house-sacking, orphan asylum burning outbreak that soon followed."¹²

Seymour was accused of being friendly to the N. Y. rioters in this charge of the Tribune's:

"We have charged that Gov. Seymour, coming to our City while the bloody Rebel riots were in progress, and at once surrounded by a part of the mob, who suspended their siege of the Tribune's office and faced toward the City Hall steps to listen to him, addressed them as follows: 'I assure you, my fellow citizens, that I am here to show you a test of my friendship. I wish to inform you that I have sent my adjutant-general to Washington to confer with the authorities there, and to have this Draft suspended and stopped.' Here you see that Seymour commends himself as the friend of these ruffians because he was doing his utmost to get the Draft stopped and had sent his adjutant-general to Washington for the purpose. They wanted to help the Rebels, and stopping the Draft was exactly in their line."

General Blair was attacked in this mud slinging duel of being a drunkard. His brief college career of less than a year at Yale was paraded before the public. The Nation printed this story concerning

his college days, "Poor Blair's only distinction in college was his amputation of a classmate's nose with a carving-knife in a tipsy spree."¹⁴

The Questionable loyalty of Seymour and Blair's revolutionary Brodhead letter were utilized to the fullest extent by the Republican party and probably was the cause of many a Northern Union vote to be cast for Grant and Colfax.

The campaign forces by the middle of August were beginning to work diligently, The state elections in Vermont and Maine were to be held early in September.¹⁵ The Nation on August 20, 1868 commented as follows: "Republican enthusiasm seems to be slowly boiling up."¹⁶ Reports were that Seymour now was quite confident of the election but a month ago was despondent. There was too much confidence among the Republicans as the Nation remarked; "Confidence in the result,"¹⁷ was hurting the Republicans. At this stage of the campaign the more important issues were brought into the political battle. The attack upon the personal history of the candidates was relegated into the background. This change of tactics was partially noted by The Nation, August 27, 1868;

"Mr. Pendleton and other Democratic stump orators have been speaking very respectfully of Grant, which makes it seem probable that the abuse of him

has been found a failure, and that a change of tactics has been resolved upon."¹⁸

Before the intensive campaign began both political parties had been active in forming organizations. In the Northern States Grant and Colfax clubs were formed early in the campaign. Some Grant clubs had been formed before he was nominated. Some of the names of other Republican clubs were: Tanners, Scandinavian Grant and Colfax clubs, German Grant and Colfax clubs, Fighting Boys in Blue, Loyal Veteran Grant club, and Printers Grant and Colfax club.

The Ku Klux Klan, a secret society, was a powerful factor in the South for the Democrats. The members wore long white robes and masks. They traveled on horseback. The horses were covered with a white sheet and their feet were muffled. Stories of the feats and violent deeds of the Klan were circulated and expanded among the Negroes. The plan of operation was for the Klan to notify a person to cease his political activity or leave the country. If this notice failed to produce the desired result, the Klan would make the offender a visit at night and punish him. At one time it was estimated that over 500,000 men in the South were Ku. Klux Klan members.

The Republicans had an organization called the Loyal League to assist them in winning elections in the South. They catered to the fancy of the negro voter by promises of land and mules, elaborate initiation ceremonies, and use of rituals and passwords in their secret meetings. The leaders of the Loyal Leagues drilled their members to vote for the Republican party. Organizations of such a nature in the ranks of the white and negro populace of the South were bound to result in riots and disorder in the campaign. This would be to the advantage of the Radical Republicans because then they could say to the Northern voters that their plan of reconstruction was necessary in the South.

The financial issue was the hope of the Democrats. They placed a great importance on carrying the Vermont and Maine state elections on September 1, 1868 and September 14, 1868, respectively, on this issue.²⁰ The New York Tribune even before the Republican convention made this statement; "It is clear that this (Presidential Campaign) will turn mainly upon the financial issues involved in the platform of the two parties."²²

A small portion of Seymour's letter to C. M. Ingersoll of New Haven, Connecticut, has given us the early plan of the Democrats and the intention of the Republicans; "I see the Republicans are trying to dodge the Financial issues, and to sink the election into a mere personal contest. Our papers must not allow this."²³ And before the state elections in September the Democratic newspapers noticeably did play up finances.²⁴

What was the background for this financial controversy? What were the planks of the political parties on this issue?

The financial controversy revolved chiefly on whether or not the depreciated greenbacks could be used in payment of the five-twenty bonds. The national debt amounted to about \$2,600,000,⁰⁰⁰ a large part of this debt (\$1,500,000,000) was in five-twenty bonds. These bonds bore interest at the rate of 6%; and it was expressly provided that this interest should be paid in coin. The law did not specify in what medium of exchange the principal should be paid.

The Democrats took the stand that since the greenbacks bore on their face the pledge that they were to be received for all public and private debts

except customs dues or interest upon the bonds consequently the principal of the bonds like any other debt could be paid in greenbacks. The Democratic platform on the financial question was as follows:

"Payment of the public debt of the United States as rapidly as practicable; all moneys drawn from the people by taxation, except so much as is requisite for the necessities of the government, economically administered, being honestly applied to such payment, and where the obligations of the Government do not expressly state upon their face, or the law under which they were issued does not provide that they shall be paid in coin, they ought, in right and in justice, to be paid in the lawful money of the United States.

"Equal taxation of every species of property according to its real value, including Government bonds and other public securities.

"One currency for the Government and the people, the laborer and the office holder, the pensioner and the soldier, the producer and the bondholder.

"Economy in the administration of the government; the reduction of the standing army and navy; the abolition of the Freedmen's Bureau and all political instrumentalities designed to secure negro supremacy; simplification of the system, and discontinuance of inquisitorial modes of assessing and collecting Internal Revenue, so that the burden of taxation may be equalized and lessened; the credit of the Government and the currency made good, the repeal of all enactments for enrolling the State militia into National forces in time of peace; and a tariff for revenue upon foreign imports, and such equal taxation under the Internal Revenue laws as will afford incidental protection to domestic manufactures, and as will, without impairing the revenues, impose the least burden upon them and best promote and encourage the great industrial interests of the country."²⁵

The Republicans contended that the payment should be made in coin as that interpretation had been made by the Secretaries of the Treasury and the agencies through which the Government had sold the bonds. The people who bought them were under the impression they were to receive gold in payment of the principal. The Republican resolutions were more evasive on the question than the Democratic platform. "Their platform (Republican) was less explicit,"²⁶ noted Harper's New Monthly Magazine. The Republican planks on finances were as follows;

"We denounce all forms of repudiation as a national crime; and national honor requires the payment of the public indebtedness in the utmost good faith to all creditors at home and abroad, not only according to the letter, but the spirit of the laws under which it was contracted.

"It is due to the labor of the nation, that taxation should be equalized and reduced as rapidly as national faith will permit.

"The National Debt, contracted as it has been for the preservation of the Union for all time to come, should be extended over a fair period for redemption, and it is the duty of Congress to reduce the rate of interest thereon whenever it can honestly be done.

"That the best policy to diminish our burden of debt, is to so improve our credit that capitalists will seek to loan us money at lower rates of interest than we now pay, and must continue to pay so long as repudiation, partial or total, open or covert, is threatened or suspected.

"The Government of the United States should be administered with the strictest economy; and the corruptions which have been so shamefully nursed and

fostered by Andrew Johnson call loudly for radical reform"²⁷

The Democratic organ in Washington, D. C., the National Intelligencer wrote the following on the financial platform of the Republican party;

"To the Eastern capitalists and bond-holders the promise is held out that the bonds shall be paid in gold. Their cupidity is whetted to its sharpest edge by this promise, and they are now expecting to see the vaults of the Treasury opened for the payment in gold of the five-twenty bonds that are about to become payable--i.e. the bonds of 1868. . . .

"The Western Radicals understand that the Chicago platform means paper, and not gold. There is no promise of payment in gold in the Chicago declaration. The section was intended to be read in one way by the Eastern bond holders, and in another way by the western plowholder. . . .

"It is well known that the committee appointed by the Chicago Convention to draw up the platform rejected a resolution declaring that the bonds of the United States were payable and should be paid in gold. An equivocal resolution was adopted in its stead."²⁸

Besides advocating the greenback theory, the Democratic party attacked the Republicans on other financial issues. They accused the Republicans of not reducing the national debt as rapidly as it might have been. They censured the Republican administrations for extravagance in public expenditures. They charged the Republicans for corruption in the collection of revenues and taxes. And they advocated the taxing of United States bonds and securities.

The state election was held in Vermont on September 1, 1868. Not so much emphasis was attached seemingly to this state election as the one in Maine on September 14th. The Republicans won, however, by a majority of 27,000. This was a gain of 8,000 Republican votes over the previous state election.²⁹ The effect of this victory would help the Republicans in Maine.

The following paragraphs from the New York Tribune indicates the intensity of the campaign in Maine.

"The Maine election is to be held September 14th. . . . Both parties are canvassing the State very thoroughly. Pendleton is now on the stump, hiding his war record in plausible explanations of his greenback theory. The Hon. John A. Bingham has made several effective speeches in the State and Gen. Sickles will throw himself into the canvass with his accustomed vigor during the coming week."³⁰

"The inertness of last year has given way to a spirit of ceaseless activity, and from York to Aroostook the invincible columns of Republican free-men are working with a will that augers a splendid triumph.

"Nor are the Copperheads supine or idle, far from it. On the day of election they will be out in full strength, and will put their last man in the field. Like the locusts of Egypt, their oratorical missionaries are swarming the State."³¹

"The bitterest political campaign ever fought in the State of Maine ended yesterday."³²

As The Nation characterized the campaign:

"Probably there are not five hundred able-bodied men in Maine who have not attended several political meetings since the Middle of August. . . .

"It was a model American political contest—plenty of frank discussion and intelligent comprehension of the questions involved, at least a sufficiency of enthusiasm, and, at the end, a peaceable submission to the result."³³

The result was that the Republican candidate for Governor was elected by about 20,000 majority—a gain of nearly 8,000 over the majority in 1867. The source material for the period gave as the result of the Maine election that it supposes it will make the State of Pennsylvania safe for Grant and Colfax.³⁴

A study of the campaign as a whole would seem to indicate another important effect. The Democrats made a great effort to carry Maine on the financial issue. They appealed to the shipbuilding interests which were in a poor economic condition. They tried to marshal the poor man against the capitalist on taxation.³⁵ But their efforts were fruitless. Even though the financial issue was still discussed throughout the campaign it was not stressed to the extent it was in the Maine election. Harper's New Monthly Magazine has given a clue to the change in issues in this paragraph;

"Quite contrary to what seemed the course of the canvass a month ago, the question whether the bonds of the Government shall be paid in gold or paper has been quietly ignored. Both parties appear to acquiesce in the view that the obligation of the government is to pay in coin. The real issue as now fairly presented is as to the position of that portion of the country which was lately in insurrection, and known as the Southern Confederacy."36

Perhaps one of the reasons why the financial issue failed in its appeal was because Seymour headed the Democratic ticket. He was known as a hard money man standing on a platform contrary to his beliefs. He accepted the platform of the Democratic party in 1868 but he did not have the confidence of the voters.

By changing the emphasis on the main issue from finances to reconstruction the Democrats played unwittingly into the hands of the Republican party. This was exactly the issue the Republicans wanted the election to be decided upon. The question of finances might divide the Eastern and Western States in the North but on reconstruction as cleverly managed by the Republicans the North would be united. The Southern States were so organized under the reconstruction policy of the Radical Republican Congress that they would probably vote for the Republican candidates on any issue.

On the reconstruction issue the Republicans appealed to the war hatred that still burned in the

hearts of many people in the North by the skilful use of the questionable loyalty of Seymour and a threatened renewal of the Civil War based on Blair's Brodhead letter.

The Republican and Democratic planks on reconstruction were as follows;

The Republican resolution was:

"We congratulate the country on the assured success of the reconstruction policy of Congress, as evinced by the adoption, in a majority of the States lately in rebellion, of constitutions securing equal civil and political rights to all, and regard it as the duty of the Government to sustain those constitutions, and to prevent the people of such State from being remitted to a state of anarchy or military rule."³⁷

The Democratic resolution was:

"Immediate restoration of all the States to their rights in the Union under the Constitution, and of civil government to the American people."³⁸

The Democrats had failed in their attempt to use or make the financial issue paramount.³⁹ The making of reconstruction as the real issue by the Republicans was described by Harper's Weekly in these words;

"The question was asked by the shot at Fort Sumter, shall the Union be maintained? The question was asked by the nomination of Seymour, shall the Union be governed by its friends or its enemies? The Spirit that saved the Union will now secure the control of the Government to its friends. All other issues have disappeared."⁴⁰

A part of the speech of Senator Conkling at Cooper Institute shows how ably the Republicans were

turning the issue from finances to reconstruction:

"The political discussion this year apparently divides itself into two distinct branches, each independent of the other. We hear of the question of Reconstruction and of the question of Finance. The logic of words thus splits the argument in two; the logic of events will fuse it into one. Experience and history will show these matters welded immortably together--the same in origin and cause, the same in continuance, dependent always upon the same events and the same destiny. . . . Thus reconstruction and finance were united in the beginning, and in the end they cannot be divided. The canvass which proceeds throughout the land today is to determine only a solitary question. It is this: Shall the Government be placed in the hands of those who, in peace and in war have striven to preserve it, or be surrendered to those who, in peace and in war, by fraud and by force, have striven to destroy it? This is the question. This is the be-all and end-all of the issue before us."⁴¹

The Republicans used the method of "Waving the bloody shirt" throughout the campaign. Instead of referring to their political opponents as Democrats; they would speak of them as Rebels or Copperheads depending whether they were speaking of Southern or Northern men. The Republican newspapers would carry such headings for their political news as: "The Second Uprising for the Union, Sumter Days are over again, Grant's Columns Chasing the Enemy, and On the Way to Appomattox."⁴²

The Republican party began early this part of the campaign as a paragraph from the Harper's Weekly of June 27, 1868 has shown;

"No war is ended until the last battle is fought. And this Presidential campaign is the last battle in the long and sore struggle of Slavery to rule the country."⁴³

While the financial issue was at its height previous to the State election in Maine; the New York Tribune gave this warning:

"We can lose by allowing Republicans to believe that this campaign is merely or mainly a question of finance, of dollars and cents, and that the tax-payers will be enriched by repudiation. It is the cohorts of the Rebellion, forming again for the capture, not merely of the seat of the Government, but of the Government itself."⁴⁴

The following paragraph was printed in the N. Y. Tribune who reprinted it from the N. Y. World. It showed a Democratic newspaper's thought of the Republicans using the Civil War for campaign purposes;

"The Republicans are making the late war the hinge of the Presidential campaign. They invoke all the bitter animosities and sectional hatred which prevailed when we were drafting soldiers to fight against the South. To accuse the Democratic party of slackness in the war is regarded as their best electioneering weapon. To denounce the Southern people as Rebels is thought the best justification of the Republican policy. The subjugation and humiliation of the South is as much the aim now as it was six years ago. It is not a policy of peace, but of passion, revenge, and domination. The symbol of the canvass on the Republican side is the sword. Its leader is a man who knows no trade but war, selected because the old feeling of hostility would more naturally rally around him than a statesman of a civilian."⁴⁵

Reference after reference could be made concerning the Republican appeal to the war hatred of the masses in the North. The speeches of Seymour made during the war were printed again and again where there was a question as to his loyalty in his utterances. General Blair's Brodhead letter was published time after time suggesting to the people the possible overthrow of the Government if the Democratic nominees should be elected. To save the Union the people must vote for the Republican candidates and its policy of reconstruction in the South. This plea was the substance of the Republican orators and newspapers, before the state elections in October.

The state elections on Oct. 13, 1868, were in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Nebraska. The contest was sharp but all the states went Republican. Pennsylvania by less than 10,000 votes and Ohio by nearly 17,000 majority. The contest was close in Indiana and Nebraska.

The Republicans were anxious to carry these states especially Pennsylvania and Indiana because if they didn't it would be exceedingly difficult to carry New York in November. The doubtful and wavering class of voters would vote the ticket most likely to win.⁴⁶

The New York Tribune has given an insight as to the desperate effort's of the Democrats to carry these states especially Pennsylvania:

"In Pennsylvania, the desperation of their fortunes impelled them to super human efforts. They fabricated bogus Naturalization certificates by the ream; they imported roughs and repeaters in regiments; they poured out their money without stint and organized fraud enough to fill at least twenty of the largest State Prisons. Determined to win at all hazards, they spared no effort and left no trick untried whereby they could hope to falsify the judgment of the Great Central States. That they could cheat us more than Ten Thousand votes in Philadelphia and its neighborhood alone we have no shadow of doubt."⁴⁷

While the returns of the State elections in September and October heartened the Republicans—the greatest effect was upon the Democrats. Their defeats destroyed their morale and divided their forces. The New York World after the October elections wanted and insisted that General Blair withdraw or the November election would be the same as the October ones.⁴⁸ The New York Tribune reprinted from the World the two factors which defeated them; "(1) Popularity of General Grant and (2) perversion of the position of Gen. Blair.' It continues that 'Our principles have not been rejected in these elections; there is no call to change them.'⁴⁹

The Washington National Intelligencer, the Cincinnati Enquirer and other prominent Democratic

newspapers followed the lead of the New York World. There were rumors of Chief Justice Chase and Adams of Massachusetts were to be named to take Seymour and Blair's places. An excellent summary of this Democratic crises in the campaign and the outcome is taken from the American Annual Cyclopaedia:

"The result of the elections for State officers, held in the months of September and October, especially in the States of Maine, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, were so unfavorable to the Democratic party, that it was openly demanded, in one of their important newspapers in New York City, that Mr. Seymour should withdraw and the committee of the convention designate another candidate. This proposition was met by a storm of indignation as to arouse the party to extreme efforts. Addresses of encouragement were made by the National Democratic Committee, and by the New York State Committee. Mr. Seymour came forward to address the people in Buffalo, Detroit, Chicago; Indianapolis, Columbus Ohio and elsewhere."⁵⁰

A study of the magazine and newspaper sources would seem to indicate they wished the withdrawal of Blair because of his radical and revolutionary letter to Col. Brodhead. Seymour made the statement if Blair was made to withdraw he would, too, and be glad of the chance.⁵¹

The Democratic presidential nominee was an able orator. His first speech was in Buffalo, New York, on Oct. 22, 1868. He proceeded West and spoke at Cleveland, Chicago, and Detroit. On his way back to the East he came by the way of Indianapolis,

Columbus, Pittsburg, and Philadelphia. Because of fatigue he declined to canvass New York and New Jersey.

Seymour's addresses were delivered with the plan of appealing to the supposed sectional prejudices between the Western and Eastern States.⁵⁴ Harper's New Monthly Magazine has given briefly the substance of his political speeches in these words;

"His speeches at different points were essentially the same. In form and manner they were courteous and dignified. The leading point in all was one entirely new in the canvass. It was an attack upon the financial policy of the Republican party, so far as it is embodied in the National Banking law. He affirmed, in substance, that this system, wrong in itself, and to which he had interposed his veto as Governor of New York, was also unfairly carried out to the great advantage of the East and the detriment of the West."⁵⁵

Mr. Seymours's efforts were not productive. Wherever he spoke; the Republicans majorities were swelled noted the New York Tribune after the election.⁵⁶

What part did the other nominees play in the campaign?

The Republican candidate was not a show candidate. Grant was not a public orator of any ability. A speech to a group of several hundred citizens in St. Louis on August 5, 1868, as taken from the New York Tribune was typical of Grant's

impromptu campaign speeches;

"Gentlemen and Fellow-citizens; I can scarcely find words to thank you for this very hearty and warm reception. It is peculiarly gratifying to me to meet so many friends of St. Louis, a place which has arisen since I have been a man grown, and where I have interests, and where I intended to become a resident at some future day. Thanking you again, I will bid you good night."⁵⁷

Whenever he addressed a group he talked so awkwardly and briefly that the sympathy of the audience was appealed to rather than their admiration.

Throughout most of the campaign he remained in semi-seclusion at his home in Galena, Illinois. He visited Sherman at St. Louis. These two military heroes went to Fort Leavenworth to see Sheridan. Then the three went to Denver and returned by way of Omaha and Council Bluffs. The public looked upon this trip as a matter of military business for General Grant. The object was to arouse political enthusiasm for the Republican nominee for president.

The impression of not mixing with the politicians or pushing himself into prominence in the campaign was an excellent one for the general public. Perhaps political leaders of the Republican party had deliberately planned that his part in

the campaign should follow exactly such lines. Whether it was intentionally planned or not the result was a favorable impression upon the voting populace.

Colfax was the recognized orator on the Republican ticket. He stumped the West as far out as Denver.⁵⁸

General Blair did a great deal of political speaking during the campaign. He was too radical in his remarks and probably did more harm than good for the Democratic cause.

A factor in the success of Grant and Colfax in the closing campaign was the influence of the business men. There was a strong movement within this group to defeat the Democratic nominees.⁵⁹

According to the Hon. Elliot C. Cowdin in a speech called, "A Business Man's Reasons why Business Men Should Vote for Grant and Colfax," he gave these reasons as transcribed from the New York Tribune:

1. Elect Grant and Colfax and the South would give up. We would have peace. The Southern States would turn her energies into development of her resources. Elect Seymour and

Blair and we would have another war. The South would start to try to overthrow the work of reconstruction.

2. "What our people want--our capitalists and laborers, our business men and producers, of all classes--is natural repose, national stability, national confidence, administrative ability in national affairs."⁶⁰

3. "Pay bonds and greenbacks in the letter and spirit of the contract. The Government should return to specie payment. It was because the South rebelled that we have such a large debt." The financial disasters that would follow the success of the Democracy would effect our credit in all the markets of the World."⁶¹

The national election took place on the Tuesday after the first Monday of November, which was November 3, 1868. Thirty-four states participated in the election. Mississippi, Texas, and Virginia were excluded by a joint resolution of Congress passed in 1868. The question whether or not Georgia had complied with the reconstruction acts was in dispute.

Grant and Colfax carried twenty-six states for a total of 214 electoral votes. Seymour and Blair carried eight states for a total of 80 electors.

The Democrats carried New York, New Jersey, Oregon, Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, Georgia, and Louisiana. The Republicans carried the other states. While the electoral vote was over-whelming in favor of Grant the popular vote was by no means so reassuring to the Republicans. The total number of votes given was 5,716,082 and the majority for General U. S. Grant was 309,684.⁶² Seymour came within less than one thousand of winning in Indiana and was but 514 below Grant in California. The Republican majorities in Ohio and Pennsylvania were small also.

Delaware, Kentucky, and Maryland voted for the Democratic nominees because of the dominance of the old slave interests.⁶³

It was believed by the Republicans that Georgia and Louisiana had been carried for Seymour by organized intimidation.

There were many charges of gross fraud in the election especially in New Jersey and New York. The Tweed Ring was in power in New York at that time. A peculiar fact was that Seymour carried New York by exactly 10,000 (419,883 to 429,883). There were rumors that this was the result of wagers made on the election by prominent Democrats and the result was intentionally fixed so that these men could

win their bets. The Republicans had also discovered some intimidating letters of Samuel T. Tilden that indicated fraud might have been planned.⁶⁴ The Nation gave an intelligent judgment in commenting upon the frauds when it stated that probably most of the fraudulent votes were Democratic but Republicans would have done the same if they had been in power.⁶⁵

What were some of the methods that have not been discussed so far? One used by the Republicans would be termed psychology in present day usage. During the first part of the campaign repeatedly articles in newspapers and magazines could be found urging Republicans to work diligently and warning against over confidence. Such a warning was given in the New York Tribune of July 14, 1868, "Too great confidence in the success of Grant and Colfax we especially deprecate."⁶⁶ Later during the closing campaign articles were printed expressing complete assurance in the success of the Republican party. Such an example is taken from The Nation for October 15, 1867, "The Party has come out of the contest (state elections in Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Nebraska) with a perfect certainty of success in the Presidential contest."⁶⁷ This was to influence the wavering voters. People who do not

have deep convictions wish to be on the winning side. Thus such an appeal was put forth to catch their vote. Who can deny that psychology was not applied in 1868 in politics?

Another powerful factor in the triumph of the Republicans was Thomas Nast, an outstanding cartoonist. His cartoons were found in all the Republican publications through out the campaign. One of his most famous cartoons was, "Matched?" On one side Grant was represented demanding in July 1863 the "unconditional surrender" of Vicksburg. On the other side Governor Seymour was pictured addressing the Irish mob in New York City in July of 1863 as "My Friends." The following quotation was the New York Tribune's opinion of the work of Thomas Nast in the campaign of 1868;

"When the labors of the canvass come to be measured and valued, if that ever is done, a large share of the credit of our victory will have to be given to Mr. Thomas Nast, the celebrated artist.. His political cartoons have been the most effective election documents ever published in America. Their wit has been sharp, their point clear and ingenious and their argument (for there can be strong argument in a picture) generally unanswerable."⁶⁸

Chapter VI.

CONCLUSIONS.

After the Campaign and election the two remaining features were the counting of the electoral vote and the inauguration ceremony. These two subjects and a few brief conclusions will be discussed in this chapter.

Congress had passed, July 20, 1868, a joint resolution to provide for the counting of electoral votes from the Confederate States. The resolution excluded such States as had not completed their restoration, based upon conditions expressly stated by Congress. The three states which definitely did not take part in the election were Texas, Virginia, and Mississippi.

The counting of the electoral vote of Georgia was in dispute. The controversy resulted from the conduct of the legislature of Georgia. It had expelled several negro members. This expulsion had occurred before Congress had admitted her senators. In order to avoid any indirect settlement a concurrent resolution was adopted Feb. 6, 1869. It declared that the Vice-President should say, that, if the vote of Georgia were counted, the whole number of votes cast would be so many; if not counted, so many.

The counting of the electoral votes took place on Feb. 10, 1869. Both branches of Congress witnessed the counting in the House. It proceeded regularly until the votes of Louisiana were called. The objection was fraud. The Senate and House separated to decide the matter. Their decision was to count the vote.

The count continued without further interruption until the votes of Georgia were presented. According to Stanwood, General Butler of Massachusetts objected on four distinct grounds as follows:

"first, that the votes were not given on the day fixed by law,--the electoral college of Georgia had met on the 9th instead of the 2nd of December, 1868; secondly, because at the date of the election Georgia had not been admitted to representation in Congress; thirdly, because Georgia had not complied with the reconstruction acts, and fourthly, because the election had not been fair and free."¹

The question was whether the joint rule or the concurrent resolution was to govern. Presiding officer Wade of the Senate favored the concurrent resolution. When the situation became too complicated the two Houses divided to decide. The Senate determined to count the vote while the House refused. Benjamin Butler insisted the House was being domineered by the Senate. Stanwood described the scene which followed in these words, "A scene of indescribable disorder and confusion followed. . . ."² Wade did not

notice the interruptions. He announced the result according to the concurrent resolution. Grant and Colfax were declared elected.

President Johnson and his cabinet faced a problem in General Grant's inauguration ceremonies. They did not know whether to participate or stay away. On March 1, 1869, Grant had given the Committee on Ceremonies the understanding that he would not speak to the President or ride in the same carriage with him. According to the diary of Gideon Welles it had been discussed in cabinet meetings as early as Jan. 5, 1869. The entry of that date contained the following:

"We had some conversation respecting Grant and others. The President said he had turned over in his mind the subject of attending the inauguration since our talk the other day, and he thought we owed it to ourselves to take the ground that we could not, with proper self-respect, witness the inauguration of a man whom we knew to be untruthful, faithless, and false,—a dissembler, a deliberate deceiver,—who in order to extricate himself from the difficulties in which he was involved by his equivocation and intrigues, had attempted to impugn the veracity of all of us. Whatever may be said by him and whatever prejudices and misconceptions he may, for the time being, spread abroad, we, said the President, know him to be a liar, guilty of duplicity, false to his duty and his trust. Knowing these things, shall we debase ourselves by going near him, and thus assist in giving him false character?"

The cabinet was divided in its opinion. Seward, Evarts, McCulloch and Browning urged the President

to go. Welles' opinion as expressed in his diary was: "To me it was plain he could not go near the capital on that day and preserve conscious self-respect."⁴

The committee on ceremonies planned to have two lines of carriages. President Johnson was to lead one procession while Grant led the other.

According to Styker in his book entitled Andrew Johnson; a decision had not been reached in a cabinet meeting on March 3, 1869. Seward, Schofield, and Evarts insisted that he should take part. To the disgust of Welles, President Johnson appeared to yield. He expressed the desire that they meet at the White House March 4, 1869, at 9 A. M. where the matter would be finally settled. The cabinet assembled at the appointed hour. Most of the members were ready and anxious to go. Evarts refused to take off his overcoat. Seward entered smoking a cigar and asked if all were ready. After one or more questions, the President said that they would stay here and finish up their work.⁵ A few minutes before twelve o'clock after shaking hands with his cabinet Johnson drove to the home of his friend, John F. Coyle, editor of the National Intelligencer.

Washington was filled with people for the inauguration. In the procession were eight grand divisions of troops, visiting campaign clubs, fire companies, and brass bands. The pavements were jammed with throngs of people. The windows and porches were crowded with on lookers.

At 1:00 P. M. Grant rode to his inaugural with bands playing, cannons booming, and the cheering of thousands. The procession proceeded to the East Portico of the White House. Surrounded by justices of the Supreme Court, Governors of states, Members of diplomatic corps, army officers, and other important personages, Chief Justice Chase administered the oath.⁶ General Grant was President of the United States of America.

General Grant read his inaugural address. It was audible to only a few persons who were quite near him. His address was short and valueless. Historians are agreed that it was a failure. Stryker wrote; "His inaugural address was short, flat, and trite."⁷ Oberholtzer gave as his opinion; "The address was no guide for the future and spoke but ill of the author's intellectual powers."⁸ Welles in his diary noted criticism: "A mess of trite, flat, newspaper partyism, in a day and time when

noble utterances ought to be expected."⁹ The Nation commented as follows:

"General Grant's inaugural address has at least the merit of being a plain, sensible, practical document. It does not contain much;"¹⁰

Grant and Colfax won by a large majority in the Electoral College. The closeness of the popular vote made, however, the Republican leaders realize their dominance in politics was threatened. The showing of the Democrats was due to two sources. Many Democrats who had voted with the Union party during the Civil War had returned to their former party. Lastly, some Moderate Republicans, who followed President Johnson's plan of reconstruction voted the Democratic ticket."

An early result of the closeness of the popular vote was the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1869. The Republican party had been severely criticized for their platform resolution on the suffrage question. The plank was for negro suffrage in the reconstructed states but allowed the other states to determine the status of the Negro.

After the general election, new issues were brought into prominence. The Nation, a Republican organ, admitted that issues were changing. That it was useless to hope for the continuance of an animosity in the North towards the South.¹² It

began to place emphasis on financial problems and Civil Service.¹³ This would seem to prove the Republicans used Reconstruction, Appeal to War Hatred, Loyalty of Seymour, Blair's Brodhead letter, and threats of Another Civil War to hide the more pressing problems of the times.

A. B. Morse in his book Parties and Party Leaders ably described the internal conditions of the Republican party in these words;

"The Republican party suffered during this period a moral decline, seen in the frequent efforts to gain party advantage by kindling anew the earlier sectional animosities, a growing arrogance, the increasing weight of the partisan and spoilsman in the party management, and the wide spread corruption that came to light in the scandals of the second administration of President Grant."¹⁴

The Democrats lacked unity. The party was a coalition of discontented elements who were opposed to the Radical Republicans. The Democratic party lacked harmony in their convention. They needed unification in their campaign. They blundered in their choice of a vice-president. Seymour was a hindrance to the Democrats in the use of their financial issue.

The Republicans could not contribute their victory to a single cause. They nominated the military hero of the day. They used the Radical

Reconstruction policy in the South to their political advantage. The clever and skilful use of issues played an important part. But perhaps the greatest contribution to the Republican victory in 1868 was the lack of unity within the Democratic party.

FOOTNOTES

I

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3. Ibid.,
4. Beale, Howard K., The Critical Year (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1930) p. 114.
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7. Ibid.,
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II

1. New York Tribune, XXVII (13 September 1867) p. 8.
2. Ibid., (15 October 1867) p. 1.
3. Ibid., (26 November 1867) p. 4.
4. Ibid., (6 January 1868) p. 1.
5. Ibid.,
6. Ibid.,
7. Ibid., (11 October 1867) p. 5.
8. Ibid., (14 October 1867) p. 4.
9. Ibid., (23 October 1867) p. 4.

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