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A History of the Whig Party in Louisiana.

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A HISTORY OF THE WHIG PARTY
IN LOUISIANA/

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF THE
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY
AND
AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Leslie M. Norton, M. A.

May, 1940.
MANUSCRIPT THESSES

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A HISTORY

OF

THE WHIG PARTY IN LOUISIANA
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The writer wishes to express his deepest gratitude to those who have so kindly helped him during the years of his graduate study. All members of the History faculty of the Louisiana State University have extended a full measure of their courtesy, time, and instruction. Especial expressions of appreciation are extended to Doctor Wendell H. Stephenson, for as director and major professor, he has bestowed unusual courtesies and given unusual aid. The writer has been inspired to emulate the profound scholarship and noble character of his chief mentor.

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Leslie Murray Norton
Monroe, La., April 27, 1944
The National issues, which were the bases of Louisiana party politics between 1824 and 1854, had their origin almost coincidental with the establishment of the central government. The Federalist party, founded by Alexander Hamilton, advocated subordination of local to federal authority, a federal banking system, a protective tariff, excise revenues, and federal expenditures for internal improvements. The Jeffersonian Republicans, led by Thomas Jefferson, were contenders for a strict construction of the Constitution and for a limitation of federal prerogative.

Westward expansion and the political emergence of Andrew Jackson projected into American politics a new and startling concept of democracy. Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams, in defense of their own regime, organized the National Republican party, which had for fundamental policies an adaptation of the Hamiltonian program. The National Republican organization found adherents in all those parts of the United States where there was a necessity for federal paternalism.

The State of Louisiana had peculiar interests that accounted for a large proportion of its inhabitants being followers of Adams and Clay. New Orleans, as the third port of the world and the commercial center of the Southwest, had need of a stable currency and the other instruments of exchange. These were supplied by the United States Bank. Sugar planters in the southern part of the state needed a protective tariff. Vested interests in general throughout the state felt more secure in political association with other vested interests. Louisiana, as a part of the West, desired to profit by the sale of public lands and to make progressive internal improvements. Henry Johnson (1824-28), Peter Derbigny (1828-30),
and Andre B. Roman (1830-34), governors of Louisiana, were all National Republicans. During their administrations, the general assembly of the state was dominated by friends of Adams and Clay.

Shortly after the Compromise of 1833, Clay organized a party of opposition to the Jackson administration. The membership of this new organization was of a most heterogeneous character. All the disaffected political elements of the country were banded together, not by a universally accepted program, but by a common hatred of Andrew Jackson. They were called the Whigs. In Louisiana, the transfer of the National Republicans to the Whig party was accomplished without inconsistency, for Clay's nationalistic program was retained and extended to all who would accept it.

The Bank controversy brought about a business paralysis that was exceedingly disconcerting in Louisiana, and especially so to New Orleans. Hundreds of voters in protest to Jackson's policies joined the newly organized Whig party of Louisiana. Remarkable enthusiasm marked the general state elections of 1834. The Whigs elected their gubernatorial candidate, Edward D. White, and gained a commanding majority in the state's general assembly. They also elected all three of their congressional candidates. Andre B. Roman, Whig candidate for governor in 1838, was successful, and accordingly succeeded White.

Business throughout Louisiana stagnated as a result of the evils attendant upon the "pet bank" system. Hundreds of Louisiana voters rallied to the Whig standards. Harrison and Tyler swept the state. Louisiana Whigs were high in their hopes after the election of Harrison. Upon the untimely death of that President, they awaited with breathless expectancy upon the
avowal of a course by the Tyler administration. Clay, in 1841, introduced those measures dear to the hearts and material interests of every Louisiana Whig. These were the re-charter of the United States Bank, a new protective tariff to succeed the expiring one of 1833, the sale of public lands, and the distribution of the proceeds from the sales of public lands to be applied to the making of internal improvements in the several states. Tyler, consistent with his state rights convictions, annihilated the Whig program, and the rage of Louisiana Whigs was as intemperate as that of the Whigs of other states who were in need of federal assistance.

During the governorship of Roman, the legislature, against the advice of the Executive, chartered a number of state banks. These banks pursued unsound policies, and deepened the general depression. The Louisiana Democrats, ever alert, turned the tables on their Whig rivals by accusing them of being the authors of the distress. The gubernatorial and other elections were fought out largely along that line. Henry Johnson, Whig candidate for governor, was defeated by Alexander Mouton, Democrat. In the legislative and congressional elections, the Whigs also sustained reverses.

The Whigs of Louisiana were especially bitter after the presidential election of 1844, as it witnessed the defeat of Clay, a leader locally beloved. They attributed their reverse to the "Plaquemine Frauds."

Whig power in Louisiana was enervated by the liberalization of the state's constitution. There was a considerable extension of the franchise, and the new voters under normal conditions were affiliates of the Democracy. After the adoption of the Constitution of 1845, the Whigs never succeeded in electing a governor, though at times they controlled the state's general
assembly and congressional delegations. The presidential election of 1848 momentarily revitalized the party. Zachary Taylor, hero of the war with Mexico, was brought out for the presidency, and being a citizen of Louisiana, his candidacy provoked great local, as well as national enthusiasm. For the second and last time, Whig electors were chosen.

The Whig membership in Louisiana embraced the bulk of the slave-holding aristocracy. The Wilmot Proviso acted as a wedge to alienate the northern and southern branches of Clay's conservative party. Even so, the Louisiana Whigs rallied to the support of the Compromise of 1850, and praised such Democrats who were advocates of Union.

After 1848, the Whig party in Louisiana began to lose its nationality, and assumed more and more the attributes of a local faction. The older leadership receded, and younger men gained control of the state organization. The newer leadership, political opportunists, appealed to the public for a yet more liberal fundamental law which would provide for the election of all public officials, including the judiciary. They were able to convene a constitutional assembly in 1852, which they dominated. Consequently, such radical departures as had been advocated were effected. The Constitution of 1852 acted as a boomerang, for the results of the first election under that instrument all but annihilated the state Whig organization.

After the introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, it became impossible to coordinate the sectional wings of the national Whig party. In Louisiana, the party, even as a local organization, quickly disintegrated. The bulk of its membership found haven in the ranks of the Native Americans. A few became Democrats. As Native Americans, the old-line Whigs continued to be ardent lovers of the Union. Twelve delegates went to the last national
Whig convention in 1856. Thousands of old-line Whigs voted for Bell and Everett in 1860.

Many statesmen of national and international repute were members of the Whig party in Louisiana. Among these may be listed Philemon Thomas, Edward Douglas White, Andre Bienvenue Roman, Alexander Porter, Henry Johnson, Seargent S. Prentiss, Zachary Taylor, Charles M. Conrad, and Judah P. Benjamin.
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ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND

OF

THE WHIG PARTY IN LOUISIANA
Only a few years after the United States had acquired Louisiana, the state had assumed all of the features which were to so interestingly characterize it throughout the middle period. It was a fabulous land, peopled with fabulous personalities; it was the common meeting ground for the uncouth boisterousness of the turbulent frontier and the sophisticated charm of Old-World chivalry.

Louisiana was also a land of economic and political differences. There was a striking contrast to be observed in basic industry of the state. Cotton was the natural staple, and sugar the artificial one. The cotton planters, as became southerners, were political particularists, while that other "group of Louisiana gentlemen with political proclivities," the sugar growers, fervently fostered the principle of Federal paternalism. Sugar could not be produced in Louisiana without the active protection of the central government, and the realization that this was an inexorable fact made the sugar growers almost without exception National Republicans, and later Whigs.

The production of sugar was an important local industry, even at the time when Louisiana was admitted to the Union. The duty was established at two and one-half cents per pound upon imported brown sugar. It was increased one-half cent in 1816. This new tariff rate stimulated planters, and hundreds invested heavily in the hazardous undertaking, confident, according to their own expressed convictions, that they would be protected by the government. From an uncertain experiment, the industry had grown

2 Louisiana House Journal, 9 Leg., 1 Sess., 10.
into a great and, at least locally, a vastly important enterprise. In
1831, it was estimated that 725 sugar plantations were in operation and
production was steadily increasing. It was further estimated in 1832,
that 34,000 slaves were employed, and each year the demand for more slaves
was greater; that 22,000 horses were used, and this number would have to
be supplemented annually.

One hundred steam engines were reported to be in operation; new
processes were devised to augment production. Vast expense had been
incurred in the improvement of land. A pretentious sugar plantation
represented an investment of about one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.
The sugar industry of Louisiana easily represented a capital of $45,000,000.
The strong possibility of a downward revision of the tariff was always an
alarming threat to the planter class, and all that depended upon sugar,
either directly or indirectly, as a source of prosperity.

In so far as the principle of protection was concerned, the Tariff
of 1828 was very acceptable to the ruling class of Louisiana. Resolutions
passed by the legislatures of Mississippi and Vermont were presented to the
general assembly of Louisiana, and the Louisiana legislators replied with
a resolution which set forth their own views on the subject:

Resolved by the senate and house of representatives of the state
of Louisiana, in general assembly convened, That the general assembly
of this state do not concur in the views and sentiments expressed by
the resolutions of the legislature of the state of Mississippi, relative
to the tariff of 1828; and that the legislature of this state does not
perceive any unconstitutionality in adopting such measures.

3 New Orleans Bee, February 4, 1831.
4 Josiah S. Johnston in reply to Thomas H. Benton, Register of Debates
   in Congress, 20 Cong., 1 Sess., 391.
Resolved, That we highly approve the resolutions of the legislature of the state of Vermont, by which they have declared the law of 1828, on the tariff, to be constitutional, expedient, and harmless to the southern states, or any other of our sister states.

Resolved, That our senators in congress be instructed, and our representatives requested, to accede to and support such measures as those that are contemplated by the law of 1828, on the tariff.

These resolutions were passed by a unanimous vote in the Senate, and with only seven dissents in the House.

Henry H. Gurley, member of the United States House of Representatives from the second congressional district, sent out a circular letter, dated July 25, 1829, inquiring for specific information relative to sugar culture. He stated that the tariff would be an important consideration at the ensuing Congress, and that information derived from his circular would be used to prove the justification of protection, and to correct the errors of his confreres. The most important reply was compiled by way of statistical data by a committee of the Agricultural Society of Baton Rouge, which concluded that any reduction of the duty would prostrate the industry.

Jackson, in his annual message of December 8, 1829, observed that the existing tariff required some modifications in its provisions, and recommended a judicious reduction. The United States House of Representatives passed a resolution on January 25, 1830, instructing the Secretary of the Treasury to prepare a well digested manual, containing the best practical information relative to the culture of sugar cane. In compliance with this request, Samuel D. Ingham addressed a circular to prominent Louisianians,

5 *Niles’ Weekly Register*, XXXVIII, 157.
7 Baton Rouge Gazette, December 18, 1829; *Niles’ Weekly Register*, XXXIX, 288-71.
8 *Debates in Congress*, 1830, 21 Cong., 1 Sess., 554-5.
in which he made specific inquiries. The Secretary was supplied with definitive information. Josiah S. Johnston, National Republican of Louisiana, gave the whole subject exhaustive treatment on the floor of the United States Senate. A committee of the Louisiana legislature was appointed to draft a memorial of remonstrance, protesting any reduction of the sugar duty. This memorial, on motion of the Louisiana lower house, was forwarded to Congress.

Governor Roman, who was decidedly National Republican in sentiments and affiliations, surveyed the situation in his message of November 26, 1831, to the legislature. He informed the legislature that Congress was contemplating a reduction of the duties on foreign sugars. This he knew would occasion lively disquietude on the part of Louisiana sugar growers. He advised that facts be marshalled to refute those arguments of the enemies of the existing schedule, for there was not only a malicious opposition, but also a badly misinformed one.

Sugar planters maintained that the manufacture of sugar was an important, co-ordinate branch of domestic industry. The charge that it was a local concern, interesting only to a small group, was repelled with evidence which was calculated to prove that every interest of agriculture, manufacture, commerce, and navigation was intimately connected with the Louisiana sugar industry. Local advocates of the American System pointed out that sugar plantations employed 35,000 slaves, which were purchased from other Southern states. As the new establishments were put into operation each year, the slave market was certain to expand in proportion. Furthermore,

9 Baton Rouge Gazette, October 16, 1830.
10 Louisiana House Journal, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 141.
11 Ibid., 5.
provisions such as pork and corn were readily acceptable in New Orleans in exchange for sugar, and Louisiana used annually 65,000 barrels of pork, and 500,000 barrels of corn. The mechanical equipment of a plantation represented an expenditure of $5,000. This equipment was supplied by the North and West. Northern manufacturers of clothing had always found in Louisiana a lucrative market. American ships were employed for the transportation of sugar. Thus, it was concludes, the tariff was just, in that it gave preference to American products, and encouraged internal trade.

Protectionists were sensitive to loose statements, false induction and artful suggestions, which threatened to diminish the conviction on the part of the Federal government, that the tariff was strictly essential. When the charge was made that the Louisiana sugar planters were monopolists, who derived huge returns from their investments, this charge was answered by a review of the vicissitudes which were encountered by them. Exceptional years had beguiled the unthoughtful into the belief that fabulous fortunes were constantly being made. The planters again reminded their traducers that a sugar plantation was a great business concern, which represented a tremendous outlay of capital, consisting of land, slaves, livestock, machinery and facilities for transportation. It required a large yield and a fair price to realize any profit upon the capital invested. As each year did not produce a satisfactory crop, large deficits frequently annulled the

12 Baton Rouge Gazette, April 7, 1832.
13 New Orleans Bee, February 4, 1831. Computations made by a committee of St. Martin parish planters revealed that an annual average profit of $6,427 was derived from a capital of $87,704 invested in a sugar plantation; or about seven and one-half per cent. This report, dated October 8, 1830, was presented to Secretary of Treasury Ingham. Niles' Weekly Register, XXXIX, 271-2.
profits of preceding years. Sugar culture depended upon the uncertain and uncontrollable elements of nature; and floods, storms, sudden freezes, prolonged droughts, and the treacherous caprice of natural phenomena. The selling price of sugar was five and one-half cents (1830) per pound, and the actual cost of production was three and one-half cents. This afforded a two cent profit, meager enough, in view of the great capital involved. Any reduction of the tariff would tend to flood American markets, thereby reducing the price of Louisiana sugar. The ultimate effect would be the destruction of local production and the creation of foreign monopoly.

Planters vigorously affirmed the point that if a wholesome protection was maintained the production of sugar would increase and eventually supply the domestic market. When the supply equaled the demand, protection would no longer be necessary, and the price of sugar would be advantageously regulated for the consumer as a result of the operation of simple economic law. The extension of the cultivation into other southern states was feasible. It was asserted that the South, below the 32 degree was suitable to sugar growing. The ultimate development of this vast region was estimated to be worth millions of dollars to the United States.

The prosperity of the South was dependent upon two great staples, cotton and tobacco. The protectionist realized that a very strong argument was necessary to command southern support of the tariff, consequently, a subtle intimidation was circulated: If Louisiana ceased to cultivate sugar, all the land, labor, and equipment would immediately be directed toward

14 New Orleans Bee, December 20, 1830; Louisiana House Journal, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 10.
15 Baton Rouge Gazette, April 14, May 5, 1832; Niles' Weekly Register, XXXIX, 272.
16 Niles' Weekly Register, XXV, 35; Baton Rouge Gazette, January 2, 1830; New Orleans Bee, February 4, 1831.
cotton farming. As the cotton market was already in a precarious condition, it would be impossible to maintain a profitable price level when the market was flooded with the great additional Louisiana cotton crop. Such a condition would not only impoverish the South but likewise paralyze Northern and Western industry.

Another plausible argument, designed to be just as disconcertive, was that a reduction of duty on sugar would operate to effect not only a corresponding reduction on all capital invested in Louisiana in sugar estates, but also upon the value of slaves everywhere in the southern states. It was accepted as a fact that the value of slaves was partially predicated upon the value of sugar, and any factor that reduced the price of sugar, would diminish the price of negroes. To prove that this was true, Senator Johnson, in answering the inquiry of Secretary Ingham, presented, in substance, this analysis: The price of a slave in Virginia, founded on the price of sugar, was two hundred dollars as an average. There were about 2,153,000 slaves in the United States, which were worth approximately $430,674,000. Whatever reduced their value one-half, will sink the capital they represent by one-half. There were about 595,214 slaves in Virginia, and they were valued at $119,042,800. Whatever reduced their value one-half, would in that state destroy a capital of $59,521,400. A like reduction on the whole slave property of the country would destroy an amount of $215,337,000 of actual wealth, individual as well as national. It must be realized also that the value of many other things in the South depended upon the value of slaves, and would consequently undergo a corresponding depreciation. Also, it was to be noted that the average value of slaves in Virginia was two

17 Baton Rouge Gazette, March 26, 1831.
18 Ibid., March 26, April 7, 1831.
hundred dollars, whereas in Louisiana, the average value was much higher. The current price for slaves in Louisiana was fixed by the price of sugar. The current quotation for sugar was five and one-half cents a pound, and from this quotation the cost of production, which was three and one-half cents per pound, must be subtracted to determine profit. It was upon this two cents per pound profit that the value of Louisiana slaves was reckoned. Whatever diminished this profit would diminish the value of slaves in direct ratio. Thus, to reduce sugar profits to one cent per pound, would correspondingly reduce the value of slaves one-half. If profit was continuously reduced, slave labor of necessity would be directed into other channels. Outside the sugar belt, there were already enough slaves engaged in the cultivation of cotton and tobacco to supply the markets of the world. The natural increase of the slave population which was employed in cotton and tobacco culture would be sufficient to effect an increase of production of the staples to supply any increase in demand. There would be no necessity, therefore, for a sudden augmentation of labor on cotton and tobacco plantations. Tobacco and cotton at the time were being quoted at dangerously low figures. The small profits realized from them had made the price of slaves engaged in their cultivation very unstable. If the sugar slaves were diverted into the production of cotton and tobacco, which were the chief staples of the South and the principal exports of the United States, the quantity would be greatly increased, and the price greatly reduced. The value of slaves would be disasterously diminished throughout the South. It should, therefore, be easy for each of the southern states to calculate the value in slave and other property they had at stake.

In short, the National Republicans of Louisiana considered a continuation of a protective tariff as the imperative duty of the federal government. It was closely linked with other American enterprises, and was a legitimate part of a genera

19 New Orleans Bee, February 4, 1831.
system. Enormous investments depended upon the tariff, and West Indian monopoly was prevented by it. A reduction of the tariff would diminish the value of all American products, flood the market with cotton and tobacco, reduce the value of slaves, and annihilate the sugar industry.

The President, in his message of 1832, viewed tariff adjustment as imperative. He vigorously declared that it was the duty of Congress to modify the act of 1828. In the prolonged congressional debates that ensued, Henry A. Bullard, representative of the third congressional district, in a dramatic speech of January 15, 1832, re-affirmed the Louisiana viewpoint. He stated that Louisiana had borne its share of the national debt, even though the state bore no responsibility in its contractions. He declared that Louisiana had come into the fold of the United States with the full expectation that she would be subject to charitable generosity. He continued:

I do not utter this in the tone of complaint, but I ask whether Louisiana is not, under all these circumstances, entitled, not merely to niggardly, calculating justice, but to liberal protection, in her most important, and, at this time, suffering interest.

The great pressure which was exerted in favor of withdrawing the government support of the manufacturing interest made it evident to the protectionist that they must accept what they could secure, and that they could not obtain their full desires. The bill of 1832 reduced the duty upon brown sugar by one-half cent. This, no doubt, was distasteful to the Louisiana contingent, but, fearful of further loss, they supported the measure without a dissenting vote.

20 Louisiana Senate Journal, 9 Leg., 1 Sess., 5. Acting-Governor Arnaud Beauvais, in his message to the General Assembly, reviewed, by summary, the impending situation.
21 Debates in Congress, 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 3590-9.
23 Debates in Congress, 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 1212, 3630-1.
During the course of the controversy regarding further adjustment, Senator Arnold, of Tennessee, aided his Louisiana colleagues by stoutly championing the sugar industry. As the Verplanck bill did not further reduce duties effecting the sugar interest, it was endorsed by the Louisianians in both houses.

Perhaps the spirit of Louisiana National Republicans during the tumultuous Nullification period, is best expressed by Henry Bullard who, speaking from the floor of the House, during the first session of the twenty-second Congress, proclaimed that:

This cry (secession) will find no response among the loyal people whom I have the honor to represent. They are determined to adhere to the Union, whatever may be the result of your deliberations. They will acquiesce in the will of the majority. Though you may suddenly and improvidently change your policy; though that change may be fatal to their prosperity, yet will they cling to the Union as the last hope of permanent liberty and independence. I feel myself authorized to make this solemn declaration, in the name of the whole people of Louisiana—I trust that this great question will be settled; that we may be able to modify our system in such a way as to save all the great interests of the country from any essential sacrifices; and that the sober council of moderation and conciliation will prevail.26

The problem of the disposition of the public lands occupied a middle ground, so to speak, among the major issues identified with the National Republican party. It was intimately connected with the tariff and with internal improvements, and had a peculiar relationship to both. After 1824,

24 Ibid., 2 Sess., 1322-3.
25 Ibid., 610, 1810.
26 Ibid., 1 Sess., 3598. Philemon Thomas expressed substantially the same sentiments in an open letter addressed to his constituents. He had voted for the compromise and he explained his reason for doing so; "It appeared that a modification of the tariff was the only means of preventing a dissolution of the Union. Various plans, each partaking, as far as possible, of a conciliatory disposition toward the conflicting interest of our extensive territory, were proposed, and finally that one which was thought least objectional was adopted. Baton Rouge Gazette, March 6, 1833."
it became a sectional issue. In general terms, the Northern states were opposed to a liberal distribution of the public domain at low prices; the older Southern states were somewhat indifferent as to selling price; and the Western states were constant in their demand for cheap, easily accessible public lands. A brief analysis of the cause of these general attitudes will serve to explain the unique position occupied by Louisiana.

The manufacturing interest of the North needed a plentiful, cheap supply of labor and a protective tariff. Westward emigration made its greatest appeal to the laboring class. Their departure created scarcity of labor, hence high wages. Extensive sales of land would liquidate the national debt, and thereby relieve the necessity of tariff for revenue, which naturally, would destroy tariff for protection. Northern states, therefore, urged that all proceeds from land sales should be distributed among the states in proportion to population.

The Southern states were not hostile to the Western states over this issue, but they were decidedly unfriendly and disagreeable toward the

27 Table showing the quantity of United States land in the state of Louisiana, and the manner of its appropriation, from Niles' Weekly Register, XXXVI, 261:

The whole number of acres within the state of Louisiana, the Indian title being extinguished to the whole, 31,463,040 acres, disposed as follows:

To satisfy private claims under the French, English, and Spanish governments, estimated not to exceed 5,000,000 acres
Given to the state of Louisiana for a seminary of learning, by an act of Congress------------------ 5,000,000 acres
Given to the state of Louisiana by act of Congress for schools, 1/36 of whole land------------------ 46,000 "
Sales made to June 30, 1838------------------------ 873,982 "
Balance of land remaining unsold to June 30, 1828------------------------------- 178,781 "
Sales made to June 30, 1838------------------------ 25,564,197 "
31,463,040
Northern viewpoint. The tariff was the chief source of grief to the Southern states. They demanded reduction of the tariff, and they rejected plans which would apply land revenues to internal improvements.

The West wanted cheap, easily accessible lands because it would encourage emigration. They wanted the control of these lands so as to facilitate their disposition. They were not adverse to the application of land revenues toward internal improvements.

The grief of Louisiana was plainly stated by Governor Thomas B. Robinson in the message he sent to the Louisiana legislature in 1824. He stated that there was no complaint in Louisiana regarding the course of the general government in protecting the country's commerce, but there was a grievance that had been long and patiently borne. Private land claims had not been adjusted, and public lands in Louisiana had not been put up for sale. Louisiana had more square miles of territory than almost any state in the Union, the proportion of her arable lands was correspondingly large, the value of her products was great, but her potential strength and resources were being stultified by the federal land policy. The Governor remarked that when he had taken his seat in the United States House of Representatives as the only member from Louisiana, Ohio also had but one, and Illinois, Missouri, Mississippi, and Alabama had none, yet since that time

Millions of acres of land within their respective limits have been offered for sale, emigration has thus been permitted, and a change in their situation, commensurate with this great impulse, has taken place. Contemplate for a moment their growing prosperity, their

imposing representation, their numerous and formidable militia, then
look at home and behold a scattered population, unsettled and intermin-
able forest, unadjusted titles, extensive domains in endless dispute
between the United States and its own citizens, indeed the state, after
years of connection with the Union, a mere debatable land. When we
read the honorable exertions of our sister states, their canals, and
roads, and bridges, often surpassing in excellence works of a similar
nature in the old world—we feel, as Americans, proud of their enter-
prise, as Louisianians, unavailing regret that we cannot imitate
their example and rival their success—we cannot because of their
own unjust conduct toward us—In the nicest point, in the honor of
our state, in denying to us an essential attribute of sovereignty,
they have done us wrong. Ireland may complain that her wealthy
satraps abscond from a country where they hold their possessions—
our sister states of the West may experience inconvenience from their
class of non-residents; but in both these instances, the property,
perhaps of more value than its owners, is left behind, subject to the
ordinary or extraordinary demands of the public. Here our great land-
holder is not only an absentee, a non-resident, but turning his key,
as well as his back on his possessions, exempts them from all taxation,
declares them tabooed, sacred as the ark of the covenant, and denounces
heavy pains and penalties on all by whom their sanctity is not sufficiently
respected—whilst they stand a nuisance in our way, poisoning the
sources of our prosperity, and impeding our every step toward that
greatness to which we are invited by our otherwise enviable and unequal
advantages. The day on which the disputed land claims shall be adjusted,
and the domain of the United States finally disposed of, will be hailed
by me, if I live to see it, as the commencement of the real independence
of the state, for I repeat, that our present situation, shocks all the
ideas, I entertained of that sovereignty, which we are entitled to
enjoy. 29

Nearly every subsequent annual message of the several governors to the
legislatures recommended that the public lands be a matter of serious con-

sideration.

Governor Johnson, in 1827, advised an appeal to Congress. He informed
the legislature of the efforts of Benton and Johnston, who were bestowing to
the subject much attention. The legislature appointed a joint committee

29 Louisiana House Journal, 6 Leg., 1 Sess., 7.
30 Ibid., 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 11; 6 Leg., 2 Sess., 8; 8 Leg., 1 Sess., 5;
9 Leg., 1 Sess., 6.
31 Thomas H. Benton, Democrat, Missouri, proposed to graduate the price
of vacant lands, with recognition of the right of preemption to actual
settlers. Josiah S. Johnston, National Republican, Louisiana, advocated
the application of revenues derived from the sale of public lands toward
to draft a memorial to Congress. This memorial was accordingly drafted and adopted by the legislature, and forwarded to Congress by the Governor. It covered every angle of the situation. There is a marked consonance between this memorial and the report of Henry Clay, on April 16, 1832.

The memorial set forth the complaint that Louisiana upon entering the Union had surrendered her public lands to the central government, but the terms of surrender implied that sovereignty over these lands had not been vested in the federal government for a longer time than was necessary to effect the sale of such part of them as could be sold. Fifteen years had elapsed since the transfer, and more than half of the public domain had not even been surveyed. Owing to the peculiar situation of Louisiana, the delay in bringing into market the lands that might have been disposed of, had subjected its inhabitants to great losses and inconveniences. In order to protect their own plantations from inundations, they had been forced to raise and keep in repair levees in front of the public lands that were on the margins of water courses. To procure the necessary intercourse between the different parts of the state, and to communicate with their home markets, they had been obliged to build bridges and open public roads on these lands. For ten years past, all white males of Louisiana who were between sixteen and forty-five years of age, had been required by law to work at least five days per year in maintaining the roads and bridges located on public lands. Immigration would have lessened such an onerous burden, but immigration had been checked by the obstructing policy of the general government. Those whom necessity had compelled to settle upon public lands did not consider themselves permanent residents because of the insecurity.

of their tenure, and consequently, they lent no willing hand in the erection of public works. Many of the settlers on public lands in Louisiana had come from Arkansas, where their claims of preemption had been spurned. They had endured losses and hardships, and it was but just that these bona-fide settlers be given the right of preemption to public lands situated in Louisiana at low prices and convenient terms. A large portion of the territory of Louisiana was covered by inchoate Spanish titles, being grants originally made to the Barons Bastrop and Maison Rouge. These and similar titles should be adjusted. In other states where public lands had been sold, Congress had given them one section in every township for the advancement of public education. In addition, other states had received generous grants for the establishment of literary institutions. Public lands also had been sold in Louisiana, but the state had yet to participate in the liberality which had been enjoyed by her sisters. The value of much of the public lands in Louisiana would not warrant the expense of a complete survey, but by using the base lines that had already been run in every part of the state, and the partial surveys that had been made, the lines of demarcation might easily be drawn between land that was and was not salable. So much of those lands as were found to be unfit for use should unhesitatingly be returned to Louisiana.

The memorial continued:

Our increasing prosperity, the distance between our different settlements caused by the uncultivated land that separates them, and the difficulties experienced in the navigation of all our rivers, except the Mississippi, requires many works of internal improvement to be made; the state of Louisiana, will not be the last in place to raise those monuments of public utility, but to be enabled to do so, we must be the masters of the soil, through which our roads and canals are to pass.
The promises considered, your moralists would recommend, that rights of pre-emption may be given to actual settlers.

That the present price of public lands may be reduced or a delay given for the payment of it.

That the Spanish grants, above referred to, may finally be adjusted or referred to courts of justice.

That out of the public lands that have or may hereafter be sold within our limits, the proceeds for one section for every township may be given to the state of Louisiana for the promotion of public education, and that grants similar to those made in other states may be made to literary institutions.

That commissioners may be appointed, who with the United States surveyors shall be instructed to ascertain the lines of demarcation between the lands that are salable and those that are not within our limits.

That when this is ascertained, the lands adjudged to be unsalable may be given to the state of Louisiana on its paying to the United States the actual expenses incurred in ascertaining and running those lines.

That the remaining lands might be brought into market as soon as practicable, and if not sold when offered, that they may be entered at the different land offices, on payment of such reduced prices as will ensure a speedy disposal of them.

Henry Clay, while visiting New Orleans in 1830-31, applied close attention to the land situation in Louisiana. The western sentiment regarding the disposition of public lands was no doubt a problem to him, as this sentiment hardly harmonized with the northern National Republican attitude. Clay was impressed with the strong spirit of nationalism of Louisianians in the face of their grievance.

The resolution of Samuel A. Foot in the Senate of the United States, 1829, was political and not calculated to be remedial. Jackson's attitude upon the sale of public lands and the distribution of the proceeds had veered by 1831 to that maintained by the state rights element. He recommended a
reduction of the tariff so that the people would be relieved. Sale of public lands did not accord with his avowed view regarding political consolidation.

Clay, by the machination of his enemies, was forced to take a stand upon the land question. It was a difficult and perilous position for the national Republican leader. The manner in which he proposed to handle the matter was clearly an effort to please both Northern and Western supporters. He recommended that, as the revenue from customs was sufficient for ordinary purposes, the revenue from the public lands, after deducting fifteen per cent as a dividend for the states in which the lands were situated, be divided for five years among the states "according to their federal representative population, to be applied to education, internal improvements, or colonization, or to the redemption of any existing debt contracted for internal improvements, as each state, judging for itself, shall deem most conformable with its own interest and policy." 33

Clay's bill of 1832 was supported by the Louisiana delegation. Jackson killed the bill by a pocket veto. Clay re-introduced it in 1833 and again in 1835 but it was never passed. Calhoun contributed to the final solution, and the distribution of the surplus revenue as a whole was embodied in the Deposit Act of June 23, 1836.

No doubt Acting-Governor Arnaud Beauvais was approximating the sentiment of Louisiana when, addressing the legislature, he advised a memorial to the federal government asking for the proceeds to be applied to internal improvements; or Governor Johnson, who was convinced that the proceeds

35 *Louisiana Senate Journal*, 8 Leg., 1 Sess., 7.
should be applied to build institutions, facilitate transportation and 36
communication, and provide a source of revenue.

It would seem, from a close study of evidence, that the sale of the
public lands, per se, was an issue juggled by both parties. An overflowing
treasury was anathema to the Democrats because it necessitated some dis-
position of the surplus. They were adverse to the distribution of this
surplus to the several states because of constitutional objections, and
the natural tendency of this procedure toward consolidation. An over­
flowing treasury was equally as repugnant to the National Republicans,
because such a situation threatened to destroy protective tariff. It was
a strange case of substantial agreement and violent opposition, a typical
political paradox.

Consequently, to Louisiana, it was not an issue to provoke party
re-alignment. Interest, in this particular instance, centered chiefly
upon the problem and not the party. Louisiana wanted land grants, cheap
land, and quick sales, and in addition, a protective tariff; and seemingly
trusted Henry Clay rather than the Administration, to solve this puzzling
37
problem.

As was natural with a state that had a tempting public domain,
Louisiana, during its period of National Republican governors, maintained
a sustained and virile interest in internal improvements.

36 Louisiana House Journal, 8 Leg., 1 Sess., 8.
37 Debates in Congress, 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 1162, 1174, 3435. "No
state is, really, so much interested in the principles of the 'American
System' as Louisiana, as we have oftentimes said, and endeavored to
show--and we rejoice that speculative prejudice has yielded to the
voice of reason and truth." Niles' Weekly Register, XXXVIII, 157.
Governor Johnson, addressing the legislature in 1824, congratulated the state upon the fact that the national government was extending its favors to Louisiana. He remarked that an annual appropriation made by the state for this purpose could be employed to singular advantage.

In 1826, he informed the members of the general assembly that at the moment federal engineers were in the state completing surveys for a contemplated national road from New Orleans to Washington. The same officers were also engaged in selecting a route for a canal which would join the Mississippi and Lake Pontchartrain. It was Johnson's opinion that these grand designs would be accomplished by the federal government. It was the Governor's unalterable conviction that the Constitution of the United States would in no way be violated if Congress, with the assent of states concerned, made appropriations for internal improvements. The newer states, having been compelled to surrender their unoccupied lands, could not sell them as did the older states. New York, for instance, had largely financed the Erie canal by funds derived from the sale of her public lands. Louisiana having been deprived of such a resource, had a right to expect direct aid from the general government. The western extremities of Louisiana called loudly for measures which would improve navigation leading to the Mississippi.

The committee on internal improvements, to which this portion of the Governor's message was referred, submitted a lengthy report to the legislature. This report evinces keen interest on the subject, and made a specific suggestion as to where expenditures would be most practical. The committee

38 Louisiana House Journal, 6 Leg., 1 Sess., 35.
39 Ibid., 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 7.
advised a state-guaranteed loan of $300,000 to effect these improvements, and suggested chartering companies for the purpose of undertaking work of this nature. A recommendation was also made that all projects for internal improvements should be under the immediate supervision of the state.

That the Governor was somewhat guided by the last recommendation of the committee, is indicated by this excerpt from his message of 1828:

I communicate, herewith, certain resolutions adopted by the state of Maine in reference to the expenditure of the surplus funds of the nation in internal improvements. Though inclined to concur in the opinion of the committee, a copy of whose report accompanies the resolutions, still I do not believe the General Government ever seriously contemplated making roads or canals, not of a national character, in any of our states without the consent of their legislatures. Besides the numerous objections to the exercise of the power, such a measure would conflict with state sovereignty, and might lead to collisions fatal to the harmony, if not to the existence of the Union. Whenever Congress shall really be in possession of surplus funds, after our national debts have been discharged, there will be no difficulty whatever in distributing them among the states in fair proportion.

It is apparent that the Governor, even if he was cautious, had not surrendered the views which he at the preceding session had entertained.

An act was passed by the legislature which created a Board of Internal Improvements. This board was very active in field surveys and made annual reports to the legislature. These reports were given publicity in the press, and were noteworthy from the standpoint of an intelligent grasp of the needs of the state.

Peter Derbigny, in his inaugural address, gave his hearty approval to Johnson's policy. He stated that he would give study to the various projects of internal improvements, and he advised that thorough planning should precede

40 Ibid., 7 Leg., 2 Sess., 71-4.
41 Louisiana Senate Journal, 7 Leg., 2 Sess., 6.
42 Baton Rouge Gazette, August 29, 1829.
expenditures. Jacques Dupre, in 1831, dwelt upon the necessity of improvement but failed to advise the manner of financing it.

Governor Roman addressing the legislature a few days later, took a frank and definite stand. He declared that:

I am aware of the large sums which would be indispensable to complete all the public works necessary to Louisiana, and that the situation of our finances, although far from being disordered, does not, however, permit us to indulge in very large expenses. Many of the improvements most wanted in our states are of such a nature, that the whole union must feel an interest in their execution, and however unfounded such an expectation may now appear, still we hope that Congress will, sooner or later, turn their attention to them.

Roman pointed out that these improvements would not be exclusively of local benefit; but they would serve as the best means for increasing the wealth and industry of the entire United States. If the national administration wilfully and unjustly withheld aid, then Louisiana must on her own resources forge ahead.

Practically every bayou of any importance in the state was subject to more or less definite plans for improvement. Large sums were annually appropriated by the legislature to dredge, widen, and clear the navigable water ways. Systems of canals were proposed. By 1832, there were 1,078 miles of post roads in the state. There were roads, locally maintained, which connected important centers. Steamboats plied the rivers and bayous.

43 Ibid., December 27, 1828.
44 Ibid., December 15, 1831.
45 Louisiana Senate Journal; 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 31-2.
46 Louisiana House Journal, 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 13. Resolved, "that the Senators and Representatives of Louisiana in Congress, be and are invited to make their endeavors so that the plan laid before Congress for the opening of a canal of Navigation from Lake Pontchartrain to the Mississippi be adopted; this being a measure of the highest importance to the trade of this state, and to the neighboring states." Also, ibid., 6 Leg., 2 Sess., 19; Baton Rouge Gazette, August 29, 1829.
47 New Orleans Bee, December 28, 1832.
48 Baton Rouge Gazette, August 18, 1832.
The Pontchartrain Railroad began successful operation in April, 1831.

This initial experiment was shortly followed by a fever for railway construction, and extravagant plans for great interstate systems which would connect all parts of the country. Louisianians feared the rivalry of other commercial centers and this fear, logically analyzed, was productive of a quite general acceptance of the National Republican principle of internal improvement.

The extraordinary James Caldwell introduced gas lights in New Orleans in 1834; during the same year projects were under consideration for paving the streets of the city. Public education, as one phase of this movement, was re-organized for efficient and extensive utility. Roman's entire administration was characterized by a spirit of progress, and it will presently be reviewed.

Louisiana, as a part of the West, had Western views regarding internal improvements. They were necessary, hence desirable. The general government had the means of their accomplishment: public lands. The expressed sentiments of Louisiana leaders denotes some hesitancy in demanding the outright intrusion of the federal government in developing the state; nevertheless, there was unanimity in the opinion that the cession of the public lands was the logical means whereby the extensive program of state

49 New Orleans Bee, April 23, 1831; Niles' Weekly Register, XL, 181, 196, 281, 282.
50 New Orleans Bee, October 26, 1832, February 13, 17, April 23, 1834.
52 New Orleans Bee, April 9, June 10, 1834.
improvements could be accomplished. This, after all, was compatible with the National Republican policy.

All the progressive movements of Louisiana were more or less influenced by the operation of the United States Bank. The first Bank of the United States came into existence by an act of Congress in 1791. It was chartered for a period of twenty years, and for a capital of $10,000,000. The career of the first bank was unusually interesting. It had been severely censured by the early Republican opposition, yet, when the opposition became the party in power, the Bank question was accepted as res adjudicata, and it prospered under Republican supervision. The capable Albert Gallatin found it to be a most necessary adjunct to efficient government, and public confidence was seemingly established in the institution. These fair conditions were favorable to re-charter, but, in 1811, Congress labored under earlier apprehensions and refused to sanction its further existence. The collapse of national finance during the war of 1812 convinced all but a few extremists that the Bank should be resuscitated, and therefore, a second United States Bank, in 1816, was chartered for a period of twenty years. From 1816 to 1834, the Bank of the United States expanded and conducted a huge volume of business, which extended even to the frontiers.

At the beginning of the administration of Andrew Jackson, in 1829, the capital of the Bank was thirty-five million dollars; private deposits, 55 Johnston, speaking on the floor of the Senate: "What can be more cheering and animating to the statesman and patriot, than the regular application of such a sum, for a single century to the improvement and embellishment of his country? The rivers it will open, the harbors it will deepen, the canals it will form, the roads and railways it will construct, and avenues of trade it will create—the monuments it will erect to the glory of the country." Debates in Congress, 20 Cong., 1 Sess., 392.
54 Horace White, Money and Banking Illustrated by American History (New York, 1814), 259-60.
55 Ibid., 275.
56 Ibid.
six millions; circulation, twelve millions; and the discounts amounted
to more than forty millions a year. The great parent Bank was located at
Philadelphia; twenty-five branches conducted business in the important
emporiums of the Union. These enormous transactions required a corps of
five hundred highly trained and influential men. The notes of the United
States Bank were as valuable as gold throughout the Western world. The
president of this great and powerful establishment might justly be vain
in the enjoyment of his complimentary sobriquet: "Emperor" Biddle.

The charter of the Bank was scheduled to expire in 1836. The friends
of the institution, seizing upon the time as propitious, presented the
Senate a memorial for re-charter on the 9th of January, 1832. The memorial
became a prominent subject of debate. The administration forces, directed
by Thomas H. Benton, conducted a vicious campaign to discredit the Bank;
but the Bank men, who were largely National Republicans of the Henry Clay
school, had a majority in both Houses, and they passed the bill for re-
charter. Jackson vetoed the bill on the 10th of July. The President was
able to sustain his veto, and determined to abrogate all relations between
the government and the Bank by withdrawing all the funds of the United States.
The Bank curtailed its loans; financial panic ensued; and the business was
temporarily paralyzed.

The depression acutely affected Louisiana. The general prosperity
of the state was dependent upon the accessibility of an active capital.
New Orleans was the great emporium of the West. The large majority of all

57 Ibid., 272-4.
58 Debates in Congress, 22 Cong., 1 Sess., 53-4.
59 Ibid., 1073, 2852.
60 Ralph C. H. Catterall, The Second Bank of the United States (Chicago,
1903), chaps. XIII, XIV, passim.
the commerce carried on in this section of necessity passed through the city. Ship lines connected New Orleans with every port of importance in the world. In the United States, only New York handled a larger volume of business. In order to facilitate financial settlements, a number of public and private banks had been established. From the standpoint of capital involved the branch of the United States Bank was by no means indispensable; but from the standpoint of a stable and sober influence, its value to the community was incalculable.

The re-charter of the United States Bank was suggested in Louisiana as early as 1830. At that time it was mildly partisan, and provoked only speculative interest. By 1834, the Bank issue, coinciding with the general state elections, was a violent subject of agitation and rigidly partisan in its character. Very little is added to the issue to lend it the relief of local color. The conflict of opinion was almost identical with that which was general in any other part of the country.

Louisiana Democrats condemned the Bank because it was repugnant to the Constitution. It was a monopoly, creating class distinctions. The Bank, if allowed to continue its despotic career, would surely seek to

61 According to the Louisiana House Journal, 11 Leg., 2 Sess., 7, the incorporated banking capital was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bank Name</th>
<th>Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Branch Bank of the United States</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana State Bank</td>
<td>1,248,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Louisiana</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidated Association of Planters of Louisiana</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank of Orleans</td>
<td>424,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Bank</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Bank of Louisiana</td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Orleans Canal and Banking Company</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Capital</strong></td>
<td><strong>$22,173,450</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

63 New Orleans Daily News, June 2, 1834.
64 New Orleans Bee, January 22, 1834.
subvert the government, annihilate liberty, and destroy the political pattern for which the patriots of '76 pledged "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honors." The Bank, continued the Democrats, did not serve the community with generous impartiality, but reserved its favors for its partisans, thereby reducing the deserving and meritorious to penury. It threatened its enemies with fire and sword, desolation, misery, and ruin. It was a monster, encouraging, and even initiating political corruption. It had subsidized the press and called to its support every unscrupulous editor whose iniquitous ranting could be relied upon to spread misleading propaganda throughout the country. Another strong objection which the Democrats used was that a substantial amount of the Bank's stock was owned by foreigners, who were exempt from taxation, and therefore enjoyed a privilege which was denied American citizens. These foreigners, who continued to invest in the United States Bank, would eventually prove a dangerous menace in time of war, and, in any event, their influence would ultimately work to the detriment of the United States. As the depression of 1834 was more keenly felt, Louisiana Democrats were quick to join in the cry that the prevailing distress was but another example of the maliciousness of the Bank. It was cited that in March, 1833, the Branch of New Orleans held discounts to the amount of $6,700,000. In March, 1834, the discounts had been reduced to $3,500,000, a curtailment of $3,200,000. Such a curtailment was far greater than the interest of the Bank required and proved that the people were subject to an atrocious tyranny. Furthermore, the Democrats maintained that the United States

65 Ibid., August 18, 1834.
66 Ibid., March 3, 1834.
68 New Orleans Bee, November 23, 1832.
69 Ibid., July 13, 1834.
70 Ibid., March 13, 1834.
Bank had never brought a hard dollar into the state of Louisiana, but had taken millions upon millions away in a continuous stream. It was predicted that a re-charter of the Bank for fifteen years would cost the West forty-seven million dollars, which would be payable to the foreign stockholders. The Bank was charged with paralyzing the business of the state when there were idle millions lying in its vaults, which might be used to the profit and relief of trade. The transfer from the New Orleans Branch had not involved more than about four hundred thousand dollars, and to attribute the depression to the removal of this inconsiderable sum was preposterous and absurd. State banks were fully competent to conduct the business of the community and were much more democratic in that stock was owned locally and their benefits would be enjoyed by the people of Louisiana, and so on, ad infinitum.

National Republicans ignored most of the Democratic argument as cant and demagoguery. To answer the derogatory indictments which were dignified by plausibility, however erroneous, the friends of the United States Bank used Gallatin's classic arguments, much to the embarrassment of the old line Republicans. They contended that the Bank was well within the law, as the Constitution was a flexible instrument, which allowed a latitude of interpretation. This had been the conviction of Hamilton, Monroe, and other national leaders, whose celebrated purity and patriotism was beyond question. The Bank afforded the community a tremendous advantage in a rapid and safe transfer of funds, and facilitated exchange to the benefit of business. The Bank circulated a uniform currency, and its media were acceptable in

71 Ibid., October 29, 1832.
72 Ibid., February 18, 1834.
73 Ibid., December 31, 1830, January 4, 1831.
every state in the Union. Its paper was as good as its gold, and its policy was never favorable to speculation; it had ever been worthy of public confidence, and had not at any time suspended specie payment. Indeed, the Bank had prevented panic and depression by its salutary, effectual, and gentle control over state banks. The Bank partisans predicted that the "pet" banks would be unable to alleviate the pressure which had shocked business in 1834. It was suggested that the directors of the Commercial Bank of New Orleans should rescind the contract which had been made to receive deposits of United States funds. It was further suggested that the stockholders should meet to demand such a course of action.

The coffee houses and presses of New Orleans kept the public at fever heat. Public agitation culminated in a call, on February 18, 1834, for a public meeting, which was especially addressed to the merchants and traders, requesting them to assemble in the dining room of the Planter's Hotel, Canal street on Wednesday evening (February 19th), to consider the money pressure and the propriety of forwarding to Congress a memorial for the re-charter of the United States Bank. The meeting convened agreeable to notice; a memorial and resolutions were adopted; and a committee appointed to transmit them to the President of the United States and Congress. The meeting was reported in the Louisiana Advertiser:

The enemies of the Bank are much annoyed by the tradesmen of this city. They pretend that no Jackson men were at the overwhelming meeting, and fully one-half of all present were of that party. They also pretend that the memorial to Congress is signed repeatedly by the same individuals, by foreigners, and by strangers. This may in

74 The Union Bank and the Commercial Bank were chosen as the New Orleans depositories for United States funds. Baton Rouge Gazette, November 30, 1833.
75 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, March 3, 1834.
76 Ibid., February 18, 1834.
part be true, but it is also signed by nine-tenths of the merchants and tradesmen of New Orleans, and had the memorial remained two days longer, the number of signatures would have been nearly doubled.77

The memorial stated that confidence had been impaired, progress had been halted, staples had decreased in value, exchange had been rendered exceedingly difficult, and finally that conditions had been growing steadily worse, and unless relief was afforded, an unprecedented commercial catastrophe would extend its malignant effects throughout the entire United States. The memorialists expressed their decided and settled conviction that a National Bank was absolutely necessary to secure to the country a sound and uniform currency.

The memorial was presented in the United States Senate by Senators George A. Waggaman and Alexander Porter. White, Congressman from the first district, presented the memorial in the House of Representatives.

Waggaman stated to the Senate that the memorial was proposed and adopted at one of the largest public meetings ever held at New Orleans, a meeting in which men of every shade of political affiliation freely participated. The memorial was a sincere and non-partisan expression of the existing pecuniary distress, the ruinous consequences of which were proving disastrous to business. He informed the Senate that $4,000,000 had been lost upon the cotton sold in New Orleans; $4,000,000 had been lost because of the depreciation of bank stock; $1,500,000 had been lost by sugar planters as a result of the lowering of prices. This aggregate of $9,500,000 was borne largely by Louisiana. Waggaman estimated that the Chief Executive's deplorable policy would cost the Great West $13,000,000.

77 Ibid., February 21, 1834.
78 Ibid., February 27, 1834.
79 Miles' Weekly Register, XLVI, 53; Register of Debates, 23 Cong., 1 Sess., 1007, 1013.
80 Miles' Weekly Register, XLVI, 152; Register of Debates, 23 Cong., 1 Sess., 3841.
He vividly described the ruin and misery that such a policy was creating, and demanded counter action to prevent disaster. He read letters from representative merchants of New Orleans to substantiate his statements.

Porter prefaced his speech by remarking that the continuous presentation of memorials to the Senate would, perhaps, have a tendency to dull the sensibilities of that body as to the true significance of the many cries of distress. He emphatically denied that the Louisiana memorial was the result of political machinations, and emphasized the declaration that Jackson men had been numerous and active in the New Orleans meeting.

Party lines, continued Porter, were well defined and rigid in New Orleans, and only a great shock could destroy the barriers. They had been destroyed. This fact proved that the memorial was the expression of the calm, deliberate convictions of sagacious men, prompted by the strongest motives, to look closely and deeply into the cause which had occasioned so great a change in their prosperity. In conclusion, Porter informed the Senate that New Orleans was not simply the capital of Louisiana but the mart of the West. If New Orleans suffered business collapse, the entire Mississippi valley would likewise suffer.

White, upon presenting the memorial to the House of Representatives, reiterated the affirmations of the Louisiana Senators. He was definite in assigning a cause to explain the depressed situation: the infelicitous circumstances had been produced by belligerency toward the Bank. He said that the memorialists were earnestly solicitous for preliminaries of peace, and adjured Congress to return the money to the usual depository.

81 Debates in Congress, 23 Cong., 1 Sess., 1007, 1010, 1011, 1014. 82 Ibid., 1014, 1015, 1018.
During this discourse, White was called to order by the Speaker. By a two-thirds vote, he was allowed the privilege of deviation.

He continued by explaining that the public distress was the result of the attack upon the citadel of public confidence; that governmental efficiency was just as dependent upon a Bank as it was upon any other fundamental constitutional provision. He concluded by assuring the House that his constituents were motivated by the purest principles. 83

The Bank controversy was undoubtedly one of the most acrimonious political battles in early American politics. The Senate was the scene of the bitterest portion of this struggle. The coalition of National Republicans and the several anti-Jacksonian elements gave Clay that majority necessary to harass the Administration, and block the strategy of the Democrats. It was from the fusion of these heterogeneous elements into a combined opposition that Clay shaped a new party, the Whigs, who, however opposed on other issues, united with extravagant fury in a common hatred of Andrew Jackson and his executive policy. The alliance of Clay, Calhoun, and Webster was admittedly incongruous, but it possessed sufficient adhesion to be highly formidable. The powerful influence of Nicholas Biddle, as a background figure, was no small factor in creating this entente cordiale of strange contradiction.

The administration forces were led by Senator Thomas H. Benton, of Missouri. Every ramification of the Bank issue was violently contested, until that tumultuous night of January 16, 1836, when Benton witnessed with a sense of complete satisfaction, the dramatic expunging episode. 85

83 Ibid., 3842, 3843, 3846.
84 Calhoun, though never openly affiliated, from 1834 to 1837, "camped on the edge of the Whig party."
Jackson boldly announced his intention to remove the deposits of the government from the Bank. This subject was a substantial part of his annual message of December 3, 1833. The corrupting influence of the Bank was assigned as the principal cause of this action.

Clay precipitated the contest by introducing a resolution, on December 10, requesting that the President send to the Senate a copy of the paper which purported to have been read to the Cabinet on September 18, relative to the removal of the deposits of the public money from the Bank of the United States and its offices. This resolution was passed the following day, but the Louisiana Senators were not present to record their vote. The President, in a message to the Senate of December 12, refused to comply with the request and denied the right of the Senate to make such a request.

Clay retaliated with two new resolutions. The first censured the President, and the second challenged the reasons assigned by Secretary Roger B. Taney to justify the removal of the deposits. These resolutions were both passed on March 28, 1834. Porter and Waggaman supported Clay on each resolution by recording affirmative votes.

Jackson addressed a long message to the Senate. He protested against the censure upon constitutional grounds and defended his procedure upon the score of unselfish patriotism.

Clay continued the attack by introducing another resolution which directed the restoration of the deposits to the United States Bank. Porter

86 Debates in Congress, 23 Cong., 1 Sess., 27.
87 Ibid., 37.
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid., 88-9.
90 Ibid., 1187.
91 Ibid., 1317-36.
Clay offered four additional resolutions:

Resolved, That the protest communicated to the senate on the 17th instant, by the president of the United States, asserts powers as belonging to the president, which are inconsistent with the just authority of the two houses of Congress, and inconsistent with the Constitution of the United States.

Resolved, That while the senate is, and ever will be, ready to receive from the president all such messages and communications as the constitution and laws, and the usual course of business and authorize him to transmit to it, yet it cannot recognize any right in him to make a formal protest against votes and proceedings of the senate declaring such votes and proceedings to be illegal and unconstitutional, and requesting the senate to enter such protest upon its journals.

Resolved, That the aforesaid protest is a breach of the privilege of the senate, and that it be not entered on the journal.

Resolved, That the president of the United States has no right to send a protest to the senate against any of its proceedings.

Waggaman and Porter consistently supported Clay and voted in favor of all four resolutions.

In the House of Representatives, administration men constituted the majority. This was a serious handicap to the Bank forces. Biddle was fully cognizant as to the advantage of a House majority. In correspondence with Porter, he suggested that Louisiana might expect substantial relief from the Bank, provided, of course, the Bank could be made safe by the endorsement of the House. He continued:

If the House by however small majority, were to order the restoration of the deposits, no matter whether it were vetoed or signed by the President, it would not only relieve the Senate of the reproach of siding against the President and the people—but it would establish such a relation between the Congress and the
Bank, and to induce the latter to make great efforts to restore confidence and prosperity. With such a vote of Congress twenty-four hours would be sufficient to establish peace and to insure the return of better times to the country. On that subject my convictions are strong—and were it not for the misrepresentation to which it would be liable, I would go down from Philadelphia to Washington to talk with you all about it—In truth I know of no way in which all the interest on the western waters could be more immediately and substantially advanced than by such a vote, which it would be in the power of Eleven men, who are sent to Congress to promote these interests, to give in a few days. Could not that resolution (to return the deposits) be brought up? I should think that there were men enough in the House to do that good service to their section of the country, even if it did cost them a frown at the Palace. If you suppose it all feasible and that I can promote it, have the goodness to let me know.94

The political complexion of the House was not so simply changed. In March, 1833, at the beginning of hostilities, it seemed that the Representatives were adverse to the removal. It was resolved that the government deposits might, in the opinion of the House, be safely continued in the Bank of the United States. The two Louisiana Representatives who were present, voted affirmatively. Jackson was not deterred by this warning and acted with his usual independence. In the session of 1833-34, the House sustained the President. Four resolutions were passed on April 4, 1834, favoring the Executive policy:

Resolved, That the public deposits ought not to be restored to the bank of the United States.

Resolved, That the state banks ought to be continued as the places of deposit of the public money, and that it is expedient for Congress to make further provisions by law, prescribing the mode of selection, the securities to be taken, and the manner and terms on which they are to be employed.

94 Nicholas Biddle to Alexander Porter, Philadelphia, June 14, 1834; in R. C. McGrane, ed., Correspondence of Nicholas Biddle, 235-36; quoted from William O. Lynch, Fifty Years of Party Warfare (Indianapolis, 1931), 468-9.

95 Debates in Congress, 22 Cong., 2 Sess., 1935.
Resolved, That for the purpose of ascertaining, as far as practicable, the cause of the commercial embarrassment and distress complained of by numerous citizens of the United States, in sundry memorials which have been inquiring whether the charter of the bank of the United States has been violated, and also what corruptions and abuses have existed in its management; whether it has used its corporate power, or money to control the press, to interfere in politics, or influence elections, and whether it has had any agency through its management or money, in producing the existing pressure, a select committee be appointed to inspect the books and examine into the proceedings of the said bank, and that the said committee be authorized to send for persons and papers, and to summons and examine witnesses on oath, and to examine into the affairs of the bank and its branches; and they are further authorized to visit the principal bank, or any of its branches for the purpose of inspecting its books, correspondence, accounts and other papers connected with its management or business; and that the said committee be required to report the result of such investigation, together with the evidence they may take, at as early a day as practicable.

Edward D. White, of the first congressional district, and Philemon Thomas, of the second, voted against the first three resolutions. Rice Garland, from the third district, had not arrived, consequently he had no opportunity to express himself. On the last resolution, White did not vote, but Thomas registered in the affirmative. From this evidence it might be safely inferred that Louisiana's entire delegation in Congress was opposed to the administration. Porter, in correspondence with a friend in New Orleans, wrote from Washington:

There is little prospect of much good being done here this winter. The administration seems seized with a dogged obstinacy which deprives us of all hope. They have brought the country into a most deplorable condition, and will neither propose any plan themselves, nor accept of any that could be offered to them to relieve its distresses. You have seen in the newspapers what appears in each

96 Garland replaced Bullard, resigned. The above resolutions passed the House on April 4. Garland was not seated until April 28. Porter affirmed that "the member just elected to take the place of Bullard, resigned, was decidedly opposed to the removal, which is additional proof of the opinions of Louisianians in relation to the late Executive measures." Washington Daily National Intelligencer, May 3, 1834.
97 Debates in Congress, 23 Cong., 1 Sess., 3474-7.
day in the Senate and House of Representatives. There are no undercurrents so far as I have been informed, which would authorize a different opinion from that which would be made up on the public transactions. It was lately intended to offer a bill to renew the charter of the Bank for two or three years; such a thing may possibly yet be done, but I for one see no probable good from it. The President is determined to resist all attempts of the kind and to rely on the State Bank(s) for a sound currency. How utterly fallacious such an idea will prove in practice every man belonging to the government knows but himself, and the disorder and derangement which will inevitably come is foreseen by every one who has the best pretentions to common sense. But the party says he must be sustained. I do not believe there ever was an instance in the history of a country where the people are made to suffer so much by one act of gratuitous folly in their ruler. How are you carrying on the war in New Orleans? Does the gubernatorial election begin to excite much interest? People here commence turning their eyes on it as a conflict which is to fix the politics of the State for some years. I fervently hope it will terminate as I think the interest of the State imperiously require it should....Under such circumstances I need not say to you, how important it is deemed, that Louisiana should join with her Southern Sisters (in opposition to General Jackson). My letters speak very encouragingly of White's success. There is no doubt a majority of the voters of the State are in his favor, and if we have not the energy and skill to call them out, we should be beaten.98

This general state election of 1834 resulted in a Whig landslide. The popular vote proves two facts: the old line National Republicans transferred to the new Whig organization without serious disorder or loss of strength; and many Democrats joined the new party in protest against Jackson's Bank policy.

It would be impossible to describe the true nature of Louisiana ante bellum politics without giving some description of the unique character of the state's population. When France and Spain withdrew from Louisiana, a large residue of their nationals were left as permanent settlers. They were not at all pleased with the prospect

98 Alexander Porter to J. B. Harrison, Washington, February 18, 1834; in the Burton Harrison Collection, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
of becoming American citizens. They had in too many instances gained their impression of Americans from the wild "Kaintucks," who came down to New Orleans on flatboats loaded with frontier produce. Having lived comfortably under a system of benevolent despotism, they were inclined to be hostile and distrustful of the democratic process. Moreover, the Latins of Louisiana were not a heterogeneous group. They were natives of France and Spain, natives of the "Islands," and Louisiana born French and Spaniards. In addition, there were Acadian French and Mexican Spaniards. The Latin aristocracy of Louisiana resisted the social pretentions of all save their own kind. This necessitated the union of Hidalgo and Chevalier families, and the production of an interesting strain, the Creole, who were a dark, handsome people, sensitive and intelligent, and who bore themselves with the proud demeanor of noble heritage.

A German population from the time of John Law had occupied the region which is now St. Charles parish. Their settlements along the banks of the Mississippi were collectively called "The German Coast." Their truck farms supplied New Orleans with a wide variety of garden produce. These Germans, as a rule, were not slaveholders.

Sixty miles above New Orleans was the "Acadian Coast," where many years before 1803 the exiles from Nova Scotia had settled. Many French families of quality lived about Pointe Coupee, and had grown wealthy. They lived luxuriously and dispensed a lavish hospitality. Acadian and other French migrants had numerous and populous settlements in the region of the Teche. Among the thriving towns and villages of this region were Opelousas, Lafayette, St. Martinville, Abbeville, New Iberia, and Franklin.
There was a preponderant population of French and Spaniards in the "Attakapas country" which was west of, and merged with the region of the Teche. General agriculture and the raising of cattle were the chief industries of this area.

In 1803, there were numerous tribes of Indians to be found throughout Louisiana. Their occupancy of the country is attested by the many place names that yet survive, such as Houma, Attakapas, Opelousas, and Ouachita. The Indians of Louisiana exercised not the remotest influence in the politics of the state.

Negro slavery was a deeply intrenched institution in Louisiana prior to its transfer to the United States. For the control of slaves, Bienville, early in the Eighteenth century, had formulated rules to govern their conduct and to secure their protection. This body of law was known as the Code Noir, and its basic elements remained effective until the Civil War.

After the Louisiana purchase, the original population was augmented by a veritable flood of immigration. The passing of a few decades wrought marvelous changes. Around the middle of the Nineteenth century there were approximately a half million people in the state. Towns and villages, most of them destined to be durable, had sprung into existence in every quarter. Thousands of Americans came from the older southern states. They were easily the dominant social element in the Florida parishes, and in the country north of the Red river. For the most part, they were small farmers, highly individualistic English or Scotch-Irish, and ardent Jacksonian Democrats. Needless to say, they were Protestants in religion.
As a group, they sharply contrasted with the Latin, Roman Catholic
population in the southern part of the state. The contrast is yet apparent.

American economic opportunists blustered in and out of the state,
keeping always their shrewd eyes opened for any commercial advantage.
Their tireless energy, their brilliant capacity, and their active pro-
gressiveness changed the old order and gave the economic development of
the state a tremendous impetus. Thousands of these business men came
down from the North to New Orleans during the fall and winter months,
and retreated with the approach of the tropical summer, for the hot months
not only curtailed commerce, but also brought epidemics of deadly diseases.

Thousands of Irish left their sorely troubled native land and came
to Louisiana. They settled, as a general rule, where they might be employed
as manual laborers. The Irish worked indiscriminately with the negroes,
but politically, they were technically eligible to become voters. It will
be subsequently noted that hundreds of them were illegally qualified to
exercise the franchise, and always they were a source of much political
confusion. There was of course a higher type of Irish immigrant, who would
not correspond in actions or in social position to the more primitive sons
of Erin, but such men as Alexander Porter were in the very scant minority.

In the ante-bellum period over one-half of the population of Louisiana
consisted of negroes. Slavery had existed as an institution since 1720.

As industry increased, the number of native-born slaves was insufficient to
meet the demand; and negroes from Virginia and the Carolinas were brought
in to meet this deficiency. Some of these were incorrigibles, bad fellows,
but mostly bright. The importation of negro slaves became such a serious
social threat that prohibitory legislation became necessary in 1824. Free negroes came in large numbers from the West Indian Islands, but further immigration was also prohibited by law in 1828. These were negroes of mixed blood, roughly classified as mulattoes and quadroons. Practically all the negroes in the lower parishes spoke French. Virginian negroes in this section learned to chatter the new language with wonderful facility. In the more populous centers, especially New Orleans, the Louisiana negro had not that phlegmatic docility of the Carolina slave. He was usually more independent, lived in a more agreeable environment, and found much conducive to his happiness. On Sunday he dressed with the elegance of a man who could easily buy his time, and thereby earn a virtual freedom. The plantation slave was subject to the code noir, a more rigorous discipline, living under regulations much the same as those prescribed in the other Southern states. Runaways were frequent; emancipation was discouraged; and the evil grew apace, despite the fact that its serious consequences were predicted as early as 1830.

Slavery, considered in its very best lights, even at that period, was not condoned in Louisiana as an institution or commendable as a system of labor. There are authorities who claim that Louisiana treated her slaves with revolting cruelty and barbarity. This was not universally the case. The treatment of slaves in Louisiana was comparable to the treatment they received elsewhere. After building an economic system based on slave labor, Louisiana planters, as a matter of self-defense, defended the institution with the same defiant attitude as characterized its defense in other Southern states.

Along with the stable element there was a migration of picturesque American characters who contrast strangely with the conservative planters
and business men. Pioneers and trail blazers who came with the first
tide grew restless and moved on. Gamblers and fugitive bad men hesitated
upon the scene for an instant and then wandered into the great solitude
of the further West, there to express their more noble traits in deeds
of expiatory valor at San Jacinto and the Alamo.

This diversified aggregation of mankind was never a blended and
balanced society in the decades before the Civil War. It was a hetero-
geneous and none too harmonious population. After admission to the Union,
the American population easily dominated the state's administrative
machinery, but the Latins were not reluctant to contest that authority.
As was natural, a few became political isolationists, but most of them
accepted the American way, and became warm partisans of either Jackson
or Clay. It is interesting to note that in the great game of American
politics, language proved no barrier. Stephen Mazureau, for instance,
on one occasion spoke for six hours: two hours in English, two in French,
and two in Spanish. The Germans became just as enthusiastic Democrats and
Whigs as did the Latins. Meetings were frequently conducted wherein nothing
but German was spoken. During the lively campaigns, it was customary for
the various national groups to hold separate local meetings, and there to
discuss the Tariff or Bank in the language of their heritage.

Every Louisianian of importance came periodically to New Orleans as
a matter of course. Up until 1850 it was the seat of government. The city
was one of the most charming and brilliant metropolises of the New World.
Its population was constantly augmented by a flood of immigrants. In 1830,
the population was 45,664, and in 1860, it approximated 200,000. It was
the largest city of the South and was probably the fastest growing one in
the Union. So gay and inspiring was it that the country people were never
satisfied for it to remain the capital city. To appease the rural wrath,
"the flourishing town of Donaldsonville" was in 1830 made the seat of
government. After a few days of martyrdom, the legislators could stand
no more, so they passed an act which legally entitled them to go back to
the evil environment of Louisiana's Sodom. The rage of the country editors
was unbounded, but New Orleans remained the capital until 1850. After that,
another flourishing town, Baton Rouge, became the home of the state's
administration.

The country people were more or less right about New Orleans. It was
far too bizarre, and the unsophisticated Anglo-Saxon legislators from the
"interior" could be expected to forget all responsibility to his backwoods
constituency. Life centered around the Place d'Armes. This square was
the common meeting place for fashionable Creoles, polished Frenchmen,
swarthy and romantic Spaniards, blustering Americans, boisterous men from
Kentucky, beautiful, bright-eyed quadroon women, sailors from a score of
ports, feather-bedecked Indians, free men of color, slaves and human offal
from the cesspools of the world.

Swarms of people gathered at the open markets to make their daily
purchases of foodstuff. Here one might see the French, Spanish, Americans,
Irish, Germans, negroes, and people from practically every nation in Europe.
A little beyond was the Mississippi, where the masts of hundreds of ships
The feverish industry of a myriad of workmen was required to handle the commerce of the nation's second port.

Throughout the period under consideration, the chief means of long distance travel was by steamboat. Every navigable river and bayou of the state was plied by stern-wheelers of varying pretentiousness.

Over thirty different New Orleans newspapers, all published between 1824 and 1854, are cited in the present study. There was not a sizable town of the state that did not boast its weekly news sheet. Almost without exception these journals were rigidly partisan and their first emphasis was upon the political edification of their readers.

No doubt the general political intelligence of the state was responsible for an early dissatisfaction on the part of the commonalty with the Constitution of 1812. Louisiana's first constitution provided for representative but not democratic government. A bicameral legislature, or general assembly, was established. Members of the general assembly were required to hold property assessed at five hundred dollars. Executive authority was vested in a governor, who held office for four years. To be eligible for the governorship, the candidate was required to own property which at a minimum, would be valued at five thousand dollars. No provision was made for a lieutenant governor. In case the governor became incapacitated, he would be succeeded by the president of the senate. The president of the senate was elected annually by and from the senate. Judicial authority was reposed in parish, district, and appellate judges, who were appointed by the governor, with the consent of the senate. Judges held their offices for terms of good behavior. They could be removed by the governor provided such action was sanctioned by
three-fourths of both houses of the general assembly. Important local officials, such as sheriffs and coroners, were also appointed. Male citizens could vote if they were citizens of the United States, if they had resided in Louisiana for three consecutive years preceding the election, if they had resided in the county wherein they offered to vote for two consecutive years preceding the election, and if they owned taxable property. The Constitution of 1812 did not give the voters power to elect a governor. The voters balloted for their choice among the candidates. The names of the two candidates who received the highest number of votes were submitted to the general assembly, and this body had final authority in selecting one or the other for the governorship.

Even though it was not obligatory, the general assembly invariably confirmed the choice of the majority of the voters. In national elections, Congressmen were popularly elected from their respective districts. United States Senators were elected by the general assembly. Presidential electors were after 1824 popularly elected on a party ticket.

The first governor to be elected under the Constitution of 1812 was William Charles Cole Claiborne (1812-16). He had served as territorial governor for nine years, having been appointed by Jefferson. Claiborne was succeeded by Louisiana's first democratically elected Creole governor, General Jacques Villere (1816-20). In the third gubernatorial contest, Thomas B. Robertson (1820-24), became the state's chief executive. At the completion of Robertson's administration in 1824, Louisianians were becoming more vitally concerned with the great national issues, and especially the ones that were intimately related to their economic welfare.
POLITICAL ORIGINS
OF THE
WHIG PARTY IN LOUISIANA
In 1824, five candidates competed for the governorship of Louisiana. They were not party men, in the usual sense of the word. The situation in Louisiana was closely analogous to the contemporary one in the higher sphere of national politics. It was largely a campaign of personalities where provincial prejudices served as issues. Bernard Marigny, Jacques Villere, and Henry Johnson were the principal contenders; while Philemon Thomas and Thomas Butler were supported as local favorites. The vituperations of the campaign seemed to have fallen largely upon 1 Bernard Marigny.

This prominent citizen, long since a familiar figure in public life, was destined for many subsequent years to be a staunch leader of the Louisiana Democracy. He had the advantage of an excellent social position, as his illustrious family, the de Manderville, was counted among the most aristocratic and opulent of the state. Voters of the Jeffersonian cast were warned against this extravagant son of the purple who consorted with foreign patricians; who had a contempt for the simplicity of Democracy; and who was by birth and breeding a Monarchist. They were reminded of the fact that he had created discord and then departed for France, swearing that he was disgusted and

1 New Orleans Courier, 1824, passim.
2 Stanley Clisby Arthur and George Cambell Huchet de Kernion, Old Families of Louisiana (New Orleans, 1931), 316-320.
3 New Orleans Courier, January 14, 1824.
would never return. He also had sworn on that occasion, that he would forever be an irreconcilable enemy of the American population. Absence had not improved his irascible and vindictive nature; for, when he became a candidate he issued the statement that if he were not elected, he would prevent any Creole from being so honored, even if he had to spend his life in politics. True Republicans were also warned that Bernard Marigny should not be allowed to command the gubernatorial chair by virtue of his great wealth. He had boasted that he could compose the New Orleans city council and the state legislature according to his own dictation. Honest voters were warned of the evils inherent in these imprecatons. They were urged to vigilance and activity, so that the honor of the state might be vindicated and sustained.

Marigny was hardly the man to be routed by the malevolence of his critics. He blithely ignored their charges and retained his charming composure. With the suave condescension of a true Creole nobleman, he presented the legislature with a copy of Jefferson's Manual and assured the members that during his residence in France, he had never lost sight of Louisiana or its legislative institutions.

Henry Johnson was serving in the United States Senate in 1824. Johnson's enemies declared that he had been elected on condition that he would not contend for the governorship. They also accused him of imitating the wiles of Van Buren; he covertly used his influence in Congress in support of Adams, when public opinion in Louisiana favored either Clay or Jackson. Jacques Villere had greater political prestige than any

4 New Orleans Louisianian and Friend of the Laws, February 17, 1824.  
5 New Orleans Courier, January 21, 1824.  
6 Ibid., May 5, 1824.  
8 New Orleans Courier, March 5, 1824.  
9 New Orleans Louisiana Gazette, June 25, 1824.
Oroole in Louisiana. He had served the state with distinction as a Legislator, Judge, and Governor. He drew his support largely from "l'ancienne population."

The election, as constitutionally prescribed, began on the first Monday in July, and continued through Wednesday, with these results:

Henry Johnson, 2,847; Jacques Villere, 1,831; Bernard Marigny, 1,427; Philemon Thomas, 236; and Thomas Butler, 184; total 6,525.

According to the constitution, the legislature always elected the governor, though in all cases it followed the popular mandate. Fifty-seven members meeting in joint session voted: Johnson, 41; Villere, 15; and blank, 1. Henry Johnson, having obtained a clear majority, was declared duly elected. Dominick Bouligny was chosen by the legislature to replace Johnson in the United States Senate.

In the presidential campaign of 1824, the electors who cast the vote of Louisiana were chosen by the legislature. Edward Livingston, Congressman from the first district, was accredited with conceiving the potentiality of Andrew Jackson's candidacy. He brought the full pressure of his political influence to bear in favor of the General, and the legislature was divided with eager contention. On Monday, November 22, a joint session convened to select the electors. Five ballots were necessary to complete the ticket, which was split between Jackson and Adams, and voted in the college: for Jackson, P. Lacoste, J. B. Plauche, and S. Hiriat; for Adams, William Nott, and J. H. Shepherd.

11 Louisiana Senate Journal, 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 3.
12 Louisiana House Journal (French ed.), 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 3-4.
13 Louisiana Senate Journal, 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 3.
14 Louisiana House Journal (French ed.), 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 6-7.
16 Louisiana House Journal (French ed.), 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 8.
17 Ibid.; Louisiana Senate Journal, 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 12-13; Register of Debates, 18 Cong., 2 Sess., 526.
Clay had more friends in the Louisiana legislature than did either
Jackson or Adams. It was claimed that the Adams-Jackson combination
took deliberate advantage of the absence of several Clay men in order
to defeat the Kentuckian. It is quite possible that Clay would have
been elected president in the ensuing House election, had he received
the electoral vote of Louisiana. In the final analysis, the Louisiana
House delegation by a vote of 2 to 1 gave the state to Adams. Henry
Hosford Gurley, of the second district, and William Leigh Brant, of the
third district, were the Adams supporters. Edward Livingston, of the
first district, voted for Jackson.

This may well be regarded as one of the significant elections in
the history of Louisiana politics. It marks the transition, which
when completed, changed the political pattern of the state. Dominant
provincial loyalties, and the purely local point of view rapidly receded
before the advancing mandates of party organization. The magnetic per-
sonality of Andrew Jackson created partisans who bitterly fought for their
hero with paradoxical success for over a decade. The name Jackson made
a powerful appeal, which, at times, outweighed all other considerations.
It inspired Westerners with a blind faith in the infallibility of the
man, and all that he symbolized.

Jackson's defeat in 1825 raised the cry of "bargain and corruption"
against Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams, and nowhere was it shouted
with more vehemence than in Louisiana. The press, coupled with a new
class, the professional politician, began an immediate campaign to elect

18 Frederick Jackson Turner, Rise of the New West (Albert Bushnell
Hart, ed., American Nation, New York, 1906-1908, XIV), 260; Carl Schurz,
Henry Clay, 2 vols. (John T. Morse, ed., American Statesmen, Boston 1899,
XIX, XX) I, 233.
19 Register of Debates, 18 Cong., 2 Sess., 527.
the "Hero" in 1828. Such energy and cohesion were unprecedented, and
the apprehension of the Adams and Clay men caused them to counter in
defense of their leaders. Thus was born the Democratic Republican
and National Republican parties. The strife between these two factions
is strongly evident in the congressional elections of 1826. The Demo­
cratic Republicans claimed a victory, but this was emphatically denied
by the Administration party.

These claims and counterclaims cannot be accepted without reserva­
vations. In 1826, the party lines in Louisiana were very elastic.
The editor of the New Orleans Louisiana Gazette essayed an analysis
in which, no doubt, he closely approximated the true nature of the
situation:

In the third congressional district the opposition to
Mr. Brent did not grow out of dissatisfaction to that gentleman's
political course. Mr. Brownson, the opposing candidate was, as
we are informed and believe, a warm supporter of the Administration
(Adams). If any deduction can be drawn from the result of that
election, it is where candidates are of the same politics, the
people do not feel disposed to change. In the first district,
there was fairly an issue between the friends of General Jackson
and Mr. Adams. Mr. Foucher avowed himself the supporter
of the Administration, in all its measures.--Mr. Livingston
represented the feelings of the political friends of
General Jackson, opposed such measures of the cabinet, as
he thought injurious to the general welfare. Mr. Livingston's
majority, above 900, is well known. We are told that several
of the friends of Mr. Adams voted for Mr. Livingston, and we
know that many of General Jackson's warm supporters voted for
Mr. Foucher. In the second district, Colonel Hamilton was brought
forward on account of the vote given by Mr. Gurley in favor of
Mr. Adams. Mr. Gurley's majority was 137. Many friends of General
Jackson voted for Mr. Gurley because they liked his general course
as a representative, and because they thought he gave his vote
honestly and conscientiously--and we are told that many of the
political friends of Mr. Clay voted for Colonel Hamilton.
As the efficiency of the Democratic Republican method of political organization began to show to advantage, it provoked the Adams men to plan and effect a more systematic procedure for the control of local and national offices. The American System was adopted as the creed and anti-Jacksonism was the battle cry.

The presidential campaign which would elect a chief magistrate in 1828 was brought before the public with startling vigor during the fall of 1826. This premature agitation did not dissipate as the months passed, but rather it was the all absorbing topic of public and private opinion. The intrusive shadow of the "Man on Horseback" called forth a storm of fearful hostility.

The forceful character of Jackson was productive of as much campaign material in Louisiana as any other conflict of opinion.

The War of 1812 had brought Jackson to Louisiana as a soldier. During the New Orleans campaign the General had acquired many influential and unforgiving enemies. They refused to forget his alleged indiscretions and when he stood before the country for election to the presidency, Louisianians pointed an accusing finger toward the Democratic Republican candidate and recalled that in their own state he had substituted his will to that of the law.

Furthermore, he had trampled upon the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Louisiana. He had violated the sacred right to the writ of habeas corpus. He had caused to be arrested and imprisoned a firm and courageous judge, who mindful of his oath, insisted upon respect for individual liberty and maintenance of supremacy of the law. He had

22 For an objective account of Jackson's activities in New Orleans see Charles Gayarre, History of Louisiana, 4 vols. (New Orleans, 1903), I, chap. XI, passim. See also Richmond Enquirer, January 20, 1824.
insulted Louisiana in the person of her Governor, William C. C. Claiborne; in this incident, Claiborne was a victim of his devotion to the public good, and to his love of country, for induced by these sentiments, he had transferred to him all his military authority, and put at his disposal all the resources of the state. He had denounced Louisianians in mass; he had denounced many of Louisiana's most respected citizens. He had denounced the Louisiana legislators as traitors to the country. National Republicans were urged never to permit the past to be effaced from their memory, because therein was a valuable revelation of the true nature of Jackson. His whole career was dissected to prove that he had accomplished nothing which would display the necessary talent for adequately and honorably filling the office of chief executive. The only reason that his partisans could give for his elevation was that he fought and won the battle of New Orleans. He was obviously lacking in strength of mind, comprehensiveness of views, and originality of conceptions; but his partisans answered this by shouting, "Hurrah for Jackson; he saved New Orleans!" He never originated, matured, or caused to be adopted any great measure of national utility, but that was a minor consideration to Jacksonians, who always answered, "He saved New Orleans!" He never evinced one trait or quality of a great, or accomplished, or a skillful statesman, "But what of it," cried the Democrats, "He drove the British out of Louisiana!" The National Republicans of the state observed with gloomy apprehension that this singular qualification, standing alone, was the only one which would

23 Objectively narrated in Fortier, History of Louisiana, I, chap. VI, passim.
recommende the General for the first magistracy. It was also observed that other heroes had not been so pretentious, nor asked so great a reward for their heroism.

The Democratic Republicans of Louisiana retorted that their leader was a man of the people, a man of pure Republican principles whose destiny it was to rescue the nation from Aristocrats, Plutocrats, and Monarchists, for they were prostituting American institutions, destroying liberty, and corrupting the Constitution. His talents as a civilian and soldier warranted the confidence of the people.

But, replied the National Republicans, what of the moral character of Andrew Jackson? By the testimony of the very men who were supporting him, he was known to be a passionate, headstrong, revengeful, and profane individual; a cock-fighter, a horse-racer, a homicide, a man who so delighted in blood that he loudly boasted of his foul exploits.

The Democratic Republicans dismissed this by observing that Jackson had caused 1200 Englishmen to be shot just below New Orleans. What of that?

During the whole of 1827, the Anti-Jackson presses of New Orleans maintained a vigorous attack upon the entire career of Jackson, pointing out each misdemeanor as a grave warning which should prevent all thoughtful people from supporting him.

It was Jackson, who, at the outset of his career, had refused to obey the civil government which had directed him to disband his army. He had carried on war against the Indians in a merciless manner and

25 New Orleans Argus, November, 1828, passim.
26 Ibid., April 19, 1828.
spirit, and hurled upon them an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions. He had suspended the proceedings of the Louisiana legislature for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people. He had arrested a Louisiana editor for venturing to publish strictures on his high-handed conduct; thus violating the liberty of the press. He had treated with contempt a writ of habeas corpus, and had arrested a Louisiana judge who issued it, thus rendering the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power. He had executed six militia men in time of peace, whose only crime was returning to their homes by advice of their officers, their term of service having expired. He also had executed six regulars in peace time for desertion—a waste of human blood, not called for as an example, since they were shot in detail, in a place remote from the army, at which there were not troops sufficient to execute them in a body. He had made war upon a nation with which the United States had been at peace, had invaded its territory and captured its towns; this was the usurpation of constitutional powers which were properly vested in the people. He had insolently and contemptuously rebuked the Governor of Georgia and had insulted the prerogative of that State. He had issued a general order directing the officers in his military division to disregard any order of the government which did not come through him. He had, when the representatives of the people instituted an inquiry into his conduct, manifested the utmost indignation and endeavored to intimidate them by threats of violence. He had meditated a personal assault upon a member in his place in the Senate Chamber, and was prevented from executing it only by a threat to take his life if he made the attempt. He had, while governor of a Territory, cited
before him a judge, whose sole offense was the issuing, according to
duty, a writ of habeas corpus. He had promulgated decrees, illegal
and oppressive, declaring at the time, that as Governor of Florida,
he was invested by all the powers exercised by the Captain General
of the island of Cuba, powers foreign to the United States Constitu-
tution and unacknowledged by our laws.

Jackson had gravely stated that had he been commander of that
military district, he would have hung the members of the Hartford
Convention under the second section of the rules and regulations for
the government of the army, a latitude of construction highly un-
warrantable and dangerous. He had alleged as an objection to the
illustrious Madison's re-election that as a philosopher he could not
look with composure on blood and carnage. He had negotiated in a highly
illegal fashion while serving as a commissioner of Indian affairs, and
stipulated for a land grant for himself, which met the disapproval of
the Senate of the United States. He, as a general in the army of
the United States, had intruded into the legislature of his own State,
and harangued the members on an important question then pending.
William Lowndes had said, "The Presidency is not an office to be so-
licted or declined." Jackson had effected to adopt this sentiment,
yet his hypocrisy was revealed by the numerous electioneering letters
which he had written.

Jackson, while a United States Senator, had contented himself
with giving a negative vote on a nomination brought about by bribery
and corruption; he being, by his own story, cognizant of the fact;
thus he abandoned his solemn duty and betrayed his constituents.
He had circulated base slander against the second officer in the cabinet and could not substantiate the charges by his own witnesses. To accomplish his ambitions, he had taken to his bosom a man, long his deadliest enemy, and whose life he once attempted.

He had proved, by numerous disclosures, that he was grossly incompetent to fill the highly important station to which he aspired. His glaring ignorance; his passionate, headstrong, revengeful, profane nature made him impossible as a reliable leader of a free people.

Again, his excellence as a cock-fighter, horse-racer, and feudist was readily admitted. He had but one claim upon the nation for gratitude; he had won a great military victory, but that, it was reiterated, in no manner qualified him for high civil responsibilities.

By way of recapitulation, the Louisiana National Republican press observed that Rome had had her Caesar, England her Cromwell, France her Napoleon, and Mexico her Iturbide. Louisiana and America should be wiser, and profit by the grief of these nations, instead of being dazzled by the lustre of military glory.

The National Republican party claimed a substantial numerical superiority in the state legislature during the 1827-28 session. Of the senate, composed of seventeen members, twelve were Adams men and five were Jacksonians. Of the forty-nine members of the house, twenty-nine were Adams men, and nineteen were Jacksonians. One place was vacant. This claim, if validated would give the Administration a majority of five in the senate, and twenty in the house, with a joint-ballot majority of twenty-five. Realizing that this advantage was only

27 Ibid., November, 1827, passim.
28 Ibid., November 20, 1827.
temporary at best, the National Republicans launched an immediate program to strengthen their position. The objective to be accomplished embraced the retention of a majority in the state legislature, the election of a governor, of congressmen and of presidential electors. Such a pretentious program demanded co-ordination, and could not be accomplished without the aid of machinery.

Political meetings were called in the most important parishes of the state. Delegates were chosen at these local meetings and met in convention at Baton Rouge on November 5, 1827. The convention adopted and circulated an "Address to the People of Louisiana." This campaign document reviewed the qualifications and accomplishments of John Quincy Adams, and excoriated the glaring deficiencies of Andrew Jackson. That a reckless and untutored soldier should be acceptable as the President of the United States was an untenable, unacceptable, unspeakable proposition. Adams was represented as a man of adequate and admirable training, of pure intent, and of rich and trustworthy experience. His diplomatic connections and his sound, deliberate wisdom were offered as guarantees for foreign and domestic tranquility.

The convention adopted a series of resolutions; the 'corrupt bargain' cry was rejected as vilification and base calumny; the opposition was censured for dishonorable campaign methods; Adams was congratulated for his plan to establish an observatory and national university; his

29 Delegates came from these parishes: Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Orleans, Jefferson, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, La Fourche, Terrebonne, East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, West Feliciana, St. Mary, St. Martin, and St. James. New Orleans Argus, November 20, 1827; Baton Rouge Gazette, December 8, 1827.
position upon internal improvements was declared sound and progressive; and his re-election would meet with general approbation.

In New Orleans, ward meetings and mass meetings of both parties culminated in definite organization. Central Committees of Correspondence and Vigilance were elected, and party candidates were officially endorsed.

Jackson visited New Orleans in January, 1828, ostensibly to be present at the anniversary celebration of the Battle of New Orleans. His partisans acclaimed his presence as an honor, but the enemies of the General interpreted the visit as a shrewd electioneering scheme, and took careful cognizance of the fact that he was entertained in the home of Bernard Marigny. It was sarcastically observed that Marigny, the erstwhile contemptuously proud monarchist, was now posing as the champion of the Louisiana proletariat.

The Democratic Republicans took advantage of the enthusiasm which had been created by the presence of their great leader, and a state convention met in New Orleans on January 15. Marigny presided over the assembly and made a dramatic appeal just before adjournment. Three thousand copies of the proceedings were ordered to be printed and distributed. It was pointed out that Louisiana owed a debt of gratitude to Jackson, and that he had been grievously wronged by unscrupulous politicians. He was an unassuming representative of the people, who opposed the debasement of the common man, and he was the genuine friend of the West. His election would forever end government by the arrogant privileged classes, and place it under the direction of the people.

30 New Orleans Argus, November 20, 1827; Baton Rouge Gazette, December 8, 1827.
31 New Orleans Argus, January 7, 1828; New Orleans Bee, January 22, 1828.
32 New Orleans Argus, January 17, 1828.
As the general state elections of 1828 approached, four candidates were announced for the governorship. The National Republicans supported Peter Derbigny and Philemon Thomas. Bernard Marigny and Thoras Butler were the Democratic Republican entries.

In the First Congressional District, the Adams party endorsed Edward D. White. Edward Livingston, the Jackson candidate, was scorned by the Nationals, and accused of the theft of public property. In the Second Congressional District, H. H. Gurley was the Adams candidate; Lafayette Saunders was the Jacksonian. In the Third Congressional District, William L. Brent was the National, and Walter H. Overton was the Democratic Republican choice.

The central committee of the National Republican party, acting in an advisory capacity for the parish of Orleans, and in a general measure, for the state at large, adopted and advocated a uniform ticket. There was a definite recognition of the growing relationship existing between the local and national elections, and consequently, a candidate was proposed for every office. In order to demonstrate how these local elections were tending toward partisan contest, the ticket proposed is quoted:

For Governor
Peter Derbigny

For Congress (First District)
Edward D. White

33 Ibid., May 6, July 7, 1828. This charge had reference to the famous Batture litigation. For a full treatment and interpretation of this subject see William Bass Hatcher, "The Political Career of Edward Livingston," 138-171. This is a doctor's dissertation in history, Louisiana State University, 1934; typescript in the University library.

34 Baton Rouge Gazette, January 5, 1828; New Orleans Argus, July 2, 1828.
For the State Legislature (Orleans Parish)

G. A. Wagaman
P. Landreaux
M. Duralde
Charles Maurain
J. H. Shepherd
D. F. Burthe
Antonio Ducros

Presidential Electors

James Villere - For the first district
Charles Bushnell - " second "
Andre Leblanc - " third "
Neuville Decloquet - " fourth "
Benjamin Morris - " fifth "

With a view of concentrating their full voting strength by avoiding
a plurality of candidates, other organizations of both parties through­
out the state designed similar programs and endeavored to co-ordinate
them. Even so, as has been stated, both parties were forced to offer
two candidates for the governorship, one a Creole, and the other an
American. The apparent object in each case was to propitiate the Creole
vote as the means of gaining a legislative majority. Political meetings
were numerous. The intrusion of national politics into state elections
brought forth a wail from the State's Rights men, who "deplored the
intermingling of political questions appertaining to the states of this
Union in their separate capacity with those that belong to the general
government, as tending to destroy the sovereignty and independence of
the former, and to erect upon their ruins a consolidated empire subver­
sive of the liberties of the American people,—a disastrous consequence."

35 The Louisiana Clay electors quoted above had been selected at the
36 Resolution adopted at a meeting called to endorse Philemon Thomas,
reported in the Baton Rouge Gazette, May 24, 1828. Convictions of this
character were also approved at a public meeting called to promote the
interests of Thomas Butler. See ibid., November 3, 1827.
The gubernatorial election of July terminated with these results; 37
Derbigny, 3253; Butler, 1629; Marigny, 1291; and Thomas, 1194. The newly elected legislature, on November 18, 1828, all but unanimously 38
confirmed the popular choice, and Derbigny was proclaimed Governor.

The National Republicans carried the first and second congressional districts, electing White and Gurley, but lost the third to the Demo- 39
cratic Republicans, as Overton defeated Brent. The National Republicans also claimed a sweeping victory in the legislative elections. The Argus reported that the newly elected body was composed of twenty-six Nationals, twenty-one Democrats, with three doubtful, in the house; and in the senate, eleven were Nationals, and six were Democrats. The final report of the Louisiana Gazette, however, appears, when weighed by subsequent evidence, to have been more correct. This report con- 42
coded the Democrats a definite joint-ballot majority.

In the general state elections the Adams ticket in Orleans parish was unanimously successful. The National Republicans seemingly pos- 43
sessed a reliable control over the city, but the Democratic Republicans were not dismayed. They met in ward and general meetings and these, co-operating with the Central Committee of Correspondence and Vigilance, successfully countered the gains of the Administration. A gentleman of Baton Rouge, who went to New Orleans to sell cotton, reported that the

37 Louisiana House Journal (French ed.), 9 Leg., 1’ Sess., 5-6;
New Orleans Argus, November 22, 1828.
38 Louisiana Senate Journal (French ed.), 9 Leg., 1 Sess., 8.
39 New Orleans Argus, July 11, 1828.
40 New Orleans Louisiana Gazette, July 21, 1828.
41 New Orleans Argus, July 28, 1828.
42 New Orleans Louisiana Gazette, July 26, 1828.
43 New Orleans Argus, July 29, 1828.
city had lost all interest in the cotton market; Jackson! Jackson! Jackson! was the theme from morning to night. The General's popularity advanced, and in November he won a conclusive, though somewhat surprising victory.

In the state at large, Jackson received 4,603 of the votes reported, while Adams was recipient of 4,066. Jackson carried sixteen of the thirty-three parishes, to wit: Orleans, Iberville, West Baton Rouge, Point Coupée, West Feliciana, East Feliciana, St. Helena, Washington, St. Tammany, East Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Natchitoches, Rapides, Ouachita, Concordia, and Catahoula. Adams won twelve parishes: St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. James, Lafourche Interior, Terrebonne, St. Mary, St. Martin, St. Landry, and Avoyelles. The vote was equally divided in Ascension and Assumption. Livingston, Claiborne, and Carroll made no returns. It is thus evident that Adams was supported by those parishes whose economy revolved about the sugar industry. This area, threatened by the disaster which an unrestricted foreign competition would certainly bring, keenly felt the need of the National Republican protective policy. Jackson's endorsement came from the city of New Orleans, and from the "interior". His personal popularity will largely explain his victory in the city. The "interior" cotton farmers had no need or desire for the application of the protective principle. No West Indian latifundia challenged their staple. To them, a protective tariff meant an increase in overhead expenses, and from their point of view there was no major advantage to offset this. Another Democratic Republican
advantage was that during the two previous decades migrants from the South and the older West had taken up land in the northern and western portions of the state. Theirs were the pattern of life and the psychology of the "common man". It was only natural that Jackson should gain their ready allegiance, for his political philosophy was so entirely compatible with their own.

John B. Plauché, Thomas W. Scott, Trasimond Landry, Placide Bossier, and Alexander Mouton were accordingly declared Louisiana's electors. They assembled in New Orleans on the third day of December, 1828, and for the presidency gave the vote of the state to the "Old Hero". John C. Calhoun was the choice for Vice-President. Robert Canfield was appointed messenger to carry the official ballot to Washington.

The newly elected Governor was inaugurated on Monday, December 15, 1828. Pierre Auguste Boursigay Derbigny was a native of France and was of noble birth. He had fled from his native country to escape the persecution of the Revolution. He first went to San Domingo, and later wandered into Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Florida. Finally he came to Louisiana, where he found a congenial environment. Governor Derbigny was a man of diversified talents, being an orator, linguist, and legal scholar. He had served in the Louisiana legislature, also as a judge of the state supreme court, and was twice secretary of state.

The year 1828 closed with the National Republicans controlling the gubernatorial chair, and the congressional delegation. Their

44 Ibid., July 29, 1828.
45 Louisiana House Journal, 9 Leg., 1 Sess., 33.
legislative majority was questionable, but they were strongly entrenched in both houses. Their general position was excellent, but they were apprehensive, for the force of Jacksonian Democracy with its powerful popular appeal, had shown a disconcerting strength which could not be carelessly ignored.

On January 12, 1829, the general assembly met in joint session to consider the election of a United States Senator. Dominick Bouligny was the incumbent. It will be recalled that he had been elected in November, 1824, to complete the term of Henry Johnson, which term was scheduled to expire March 4, 1829. Bouligny stood for re-election. His competitors were the former governor, Henry Johnson, and the former congressman of the first district, Edward Livingston. Livingston was elected.

Inasmuch as this was a party election, the true partisan character of the legislature was thereby revealed. The Democratic Republicans had a joint-ballot majority of two. The National Republicans divided their allegiance between Bouligny and Johnson:

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47 Hatcher, "Edward Livingston," 312; Louisiana Courier, January 12, 1829; Louisiana Senate Journal (French ed.), 9 Leg., 1 Sess., 51-52. 48 Louisiana House Journal (French ed.), 9 Leg., 1 Sess., 64-65.
When Livingston assumed office, the party strength of the Louisiana Senatorial delegation was divided, as Josiah S. Johnston was a National Republican.

Jackson was inaugurated President on March 4, 1829. To celebrate the occasion, the Democratic Republicans of New Orleans held a great public dinner at Cooper's Hotel. Party spirit was high and there was a renewal of pledges to strengthen the advantages which had been gained throughout the state.

The results of the several recent elections did not quiet the opposing presses. The sheets were filled with incendiary debates. Each side abandoned dignity and courtesy to give vent to the most acrimonious sentiments. Editors branded one another with uncomplimentary apppellations. Bloodshed and violence filled the atmosphere, and party loyalty was accentuated to the point of fanaticism.

Editing a New Orleans paper during this time was serious business, as testified by J. C. De St. Romes, editor of the Courier: De St. Romes declared that he was innocently engaged in watching a game of backgammon in Hewlett's Coffee House. Little did he suspect that a dastard was creeping upon him. Suddenly, he received from behind a stunning blow in the face! For a moment he was incapacitated, and could not arise from his chair, but upon recovery he perceived a few steps from him, the coward, the traitor, the infamous, the pusillanimous John Gibson, editor of the Argus! Gibson reached his hand to draw a weapon. De St. Romes

49 James Brown, Louisiana Senator, resigned in 1824. Josiah Stoddard Johnston was elected in 1825 over Livingston to replace Brown. Louisiana House Journal, 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 67.
50 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, March 5, 1829.
51 New Orleans Courier, August 21, 1829.
seized upon an umbrella, and with a dexterous thrust to the abdomen, destroyed Gibson's equilibrium. De St. Romes thereupon discarded his umbrella, seized Gibson by the throat, and flung his villainous adversary face up upon the reading table—some thirty feet from the original spot of attack. Strangling seemingly would not kill the vicious would-be assassin, so De St. Romes reached for a pen-knife, his only weapon, to "open the guts" of the detestable Gibson. Alas! He had left his pen-knife at home! He renewed the strangling process again and shook from the clothing of Gibson two pistols and a dagger. De St. Romes was in the act of seizing the dagger to nail his assailant to the table, when he was torn by a crowd of friends and enemies from a prey that could no longer escape. Gibson, thereby, was able to effect a hasty and recreant retreat.

During April, 1829, the Democratic Republican papers of New Orleans launched an attack upon the executive acts of Governor Derbigny. A Democratic meeting convened at Hewlett's and drew up resolutions of censure. Derbigny was staunchly supported by his own party, which countered with repeated attacks upon the city administration.

Denis Prieur, who had been elected Mayor in 1828, was a "whole-hog" Jacksonian. His wide popularity throughout the city was not an effective shield against the stinging thrust of John Gibson, who charged the popular mayor with favoritism in the city council, with negligence in the conduct of public affairs, and with allowing illegal procedures,
granting sinecures, encouraging corruption, and practicing tyranny and injustice in dealing with public measures.

Prieur interpreted this attack as personal castigation, defamatory to his private reputation. He swore out a libel against the editor. Even this measure did not prevent a public meeting from restating the charges. The chairman of this meeting was D. F. Burthe, a National Republican, who later became a Whig leader of some celebrity.

A peculiar situation arose in the latter part of 1829. Governor Derbigny was accidentally killed, and according to the order of succession, as designated by the constitution, the president of the senate would act as governor. Arnaud Beauvais held that position, and his immediate right of succession was not questioned, but, the constitution provided for an annual election of the president of the senate; the first Monday in January being named as the day of election. Therefore, if Beauvais were not re-elected as president of the senate, he would be constitutionally ineligible to act as governor. Should he be re-elected, the problem would yet be unsolved, for his term as senator expired on the first Monday in July, 1830. Thus, an interregnum was unavoidable. The constitutional limitations regarding succession led to proposals whereby Beauvais would be allowed to serve the entire unexpired term. Such an interpretation, however, lacked proper sanction, and was rejected.

After considerable partisan confusion, the legislature resolved that an

55 Ibid., May 25, 1829.
56 Ibid., May 27, 1829.
57 New Orleans Bee, October 8, 1829; Niles' Weekly Register, XXXVIII, 165.
58 Beauvais was elected president of the senate January 1, 1827. Louisiana Senate Journal, 8 Leg., 1 Sess., 3. He was re-elected January 7, 1828. Louisiana Senate Journal, 8 Leg., 2 Sess., 3. Beauvais was elected for the third consecutive time January 5, 1829. Louisiana Senate Journal (French ed.), 9 Leg., 1 Sess., 44.
59 Louisiana Senate Journal, 1812-44, passim.
election be called in July, and hoped, by submitting the problem to the people, to arrive at a settlement of the difficulty. The senate convened at Donaldsonville on January 4, 1830, at the residence of Valery Blanchard. Jacques Dupres was elected president, and accordingly, succeeded Beauvais as acting governor ad interim.

In view of the approaching gubernatorial contest, the mayoralty election of New Orleans, in 1830, assumed added significance. Political activity in the city was stimulated, for it was fully comprehended that the municipal election would be of interest and influence upon the state at large. The candidates announced were Dennis Prieur, incumbent; Dominick Bouligny, ex-United States Senator, and J. Burmudez, judge. The last two represented the Adams party. Bouligny withdrew on April 2. Prieur won an overwhelming victory. The vote was: Prieur, 1045; Burmudez, 452.

This sweeping victory for Prieur cannot, however, be interpreted as indicating the stable strength of the Democratic Republicans in New Orleans. Dennis Prieur, as mayor, was incomparably popular. Many of the votes cast for him were a tribute to his personality rather than to his party.

Previous to 1830, the National Republican party had been known generally and colloquially as the Adams party; its membership were called Adams men. The Democratic Republicans were referred to as the Jackson party or Jackson men. Candidates were most commonly distinguished as the Adams candidate or the Jackson candidate. When Clay became the

60 Louisiana Senate Journal, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 12. Provision was made for an election by an act of the legislature. Baton Rouge Gazette, February 20, 1830.
61 Ibid., 13.
62 Ibid., 13.
63 New Orleans Argus, April 6, 1830.
acknowledged leader of his party, his supporters were spoken and written of as the Clay party, Clay men, or Clay candidates.

Although national parties were rapidly replacing local factions, these national parties often were deficient in adhesiveness and unity. The greater issues had effectively divided the plebiscite into two hostile factions, but these, in cases of state elections, were incapable of concentrating their full strength upon individual representative candidates. This is well illustrated by the fact that at least eleven were announced for the office of governor in the campaign in 1830, which was called, it will be remembered, to determine a regular successor for the deceased Derbigny. These local favorites were sources of dissention in the ranks of both organizations. This condition may be easily explained by the fact that the lack of rapid facilities of transportation and communication prevented thorough campaigns. The same reason largely accounts for the sectional distrusts which led voters to repose their confidence in leaders with whom they were acquainted. The preponderant influence of the city of New Orleans was responsible for no little discord; the city party and the country party were at times reluctant to co-operate. National antagonism also was a constant source of dissention.

Andre Bienvenue Roman, Arnaud Beauvais, W. S. Hamilton, David A. Randall, Martin Duralde, Louis Esnault, James B. Bradford, and Isaac Thomas were the most important entrants in the battle for the succession. All save the first four named withdrew. Roman received the plurality of the vote, defeating Hamilton, his nearest competitor by a majority of 898.

64 New Orleans Courier, July 26, 28, 1824.
There were 7945 votes cast in the following manner:

**National Republicans, represented by:**

Roman----------------------3,443
Beauvais------------------1,503
Total 4,946

**Democratic Republicans, represented by:**

Hamilton-------------------2,545
Randall-------------------454
Total 2,999

National Republican majority-----1,947

The National Republicans were successful in all three congressional elections. Edward D. White was unopposed in the first district; Philemon Thomas was elected over Lafayette Saunders and General E. H. Ripley in the second district; and in the third, Henry A. Bullard defeated P. A. Rost. The victory was rendered more complete by the National Republican character of the newly elected legislature, as subsequent evidence will show.

As has been previously stated, Donaldsonville became the capital city of Louisiana in 1830. It was represented as being a flourishing town in the center of a productive agricultural district and of being easily accessible to all parts of the state. The rancorous objection to New Orleans as the seat of government had been agitated for several years.

65 Louisiana House Journal, 11 Leg., 1 Sess., 7-8. The compilation of the vote by parishes in the Journal is incorrect. Errors were made in the calculation of the vote received by each of the four candidates. The figures quoted are the correct ones, compiled by the writer. Returns, according to the Journal, were: Roman, 3630; Hamilton, 2130; Beauvais, 1476; Randall, 454.

66 Niles wrote as follows concerning the results of this election: "The protecting policy was the leading subject discussed at this election... and the governor, state legislature, and all members of congress, are decided supporters of it." Niles' Weekly Register, XXXVIII, 418.
years before the removal. From the rural point of view, New Orleans was the vortex of a system of intrigue and favoritism, dissipation and folly, which was dominated by the "ever excepted" city aristocracy. New Orleans was reported as being the scene of evil allurements which tempted legislators to neglect their duty; also, legislation from New Orleans tended to the detriment of country people, when their interest collided with the wishes of the city nabobs. The editor of the Baton Rouge Gazette wrote in angry protest, "we cannot consent that the whole state of Louisiana should stand in the attitude of a colony of the city of New Orleans." He further contended that the maintenance of the government in New Orleans was shockingly expensive. The editor naturally suggested Baton Rouge as an ideal location for the capital.

When the legislature assembled in December, 1830, the election of Roman as governor was one of its first acts. The legislators found Donaldsonville to be a dull, inhospitable and incommodious place, and so they decided to go back to the evil environment of New Orleans, much to the indignation of the Baton Rouge editor.

Andre Bienvenue Roman was a native of Louisiana. He was of French descent; the Roman family had settled in Louisiana about 1740. Jacques Roman, his father, was a successful sugar planter. Andre Bienvenue was born March 5, 1795, in St. Landry parish. He was educated at St. Mary's College, Baltimore. He was elected to the Louisiana house of representatives

67 Baton Rouge Gazette, November 1, 1828; March 6, December 11, 25, 1830; January 1, February 26, April 9, 1831; March 17, 31, April 28, 1832.
68 Louisiana House Journal, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 8.
69 Ibid., 17.
70 Baton Rouge Gazette, January 15, 1831.
in 1818, was speaker of that body for four years, parish judge for two years, and was again elected speaker of the house in 1830. He was a Clay man by political conviction.

Governor Roman took the oath of office on January 31, 1831. Supreme Court Justice Francois-Xavier Martin officiated. Even though Roman was fully cognizant that he was a party candidate, and that he had secured election by a party vote, he in his inaugural address sought to allay party strife. Among his conciliatory remarks, he declared:

The gratitude which I feel for the extreme kindness conferred on me by a majority of the votes of my fellow citizens, is increased still more from the idea that it is not due to party spirit that I am indebted for my election. That illiberality which some would wish to substitute for patriotism and which consists in inquiring not whether a candidate is capable and honest but whether he belongs to such a party, such a section of the state, or to such a population, has not been generally exerted against me.

Roman was possibly the most popular, and certainly the most progresive of the early governors of Louisiana. Inasmuch as his first administration was doubtless responsible for his second election as a Whig candidate, and inasmuch as his first administration set forth certain vital policies for which subsequent Whig administrations were to

72 New Orleans Argus, April 13, 1830.
73 Louisiana House Journal, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 58.
74 New Orleans Bee, December 10, 1833. Roman's legislative program is therein stated. The best analysis of the administrations of Roman is available in Dennis F. Burge, "Louisiana Under Governor Andre Bonaventure Roman, 1831-1835, 1839-1843." This is a master's thesis in history, Louisiana State University, 1937; typescript in the University library.
strive, it seems timely at this point to review briefly the successful
program of the last of the National Republican governors.

In order that Louisiana youths might receive advanced and professional
education, Jefferson and Franklin Colleges were established, and Mont-
pellier Academy was incorporated. Provisions for the maintenance of
these, as well as the already existing College of Louisiana, were made.
Roman endeavored to popularize the public schools and made numerous
recommendations for an adequate system for elementary instruction.

The disgraceful state penal condition had long been the target for
justifiable criticism. This situation was rectified by building in
Baton Rouge a model penitentiary.

The state militia was reorganized, and new equipment was issued to
the citizen militiamen.

The Louisiana legislature under the direction of Roman was especially
active in improving the means of communication and transportation. Six
railroads were incorporated. They were the Clinton and Port Hudson, the
New Orleans and Carrollton, the Alexandria and Chayenneville, the Red River,
the West Feliciana, the St. Bernard, and the New Orleans and Nashville.
Internal improvements were given a great impetus by the passage in 1832
of "An Act providing for the appointment of a Civil Engineer and for
other purposes." The objects of this act were to effect "(1) the estab-

75 Louisiana House Journal, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 55-56, 70; Louisiana
Senate Journal, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 45; Louisiana Acts, 10 Leg., 1 Sess.,
76 Ibid., 11 Leg., 1 Sess., 108-113.
77 Burge, "Roman," Chap. II, passim.
78 Louisiana House Journal, 10 Leg., 3 Sess., 87; Louisiana Senate
Journal, 10 Leg., 3 Sess., 50; Louisiana Acts, 11 Leg., 1 Sess., 105-107;
80 Louisiana Acts, 11 Leg., 1 Sess., passim; 2 Sess., passim; Burge, "Roman,"
49, 52, 64.
lishment of the office of Civil Engineer... (2) a fund for improvements, to be obtained by a loan on the credit of the state, (3) state subscription to the stock of certain improvement companies, and (4) direct appropriation and management of those improvements not adapted to private enterprise." Roman's enthusiasm coupled with the foregoing authorization was responsible for great activity in the building of roads and bridges, the establishment and operation of ferries, the flourishing of improvement companies, the removal of rafts, the drainage of miasmal swamps, and the improvement of levees. A permanent internal improvement labor force was sanctioned by an act which warranted the purchase of one hundred and fifty slaves.

Roman was a consistent advocate for the protective policy. In his message of November 26, 1831, he urged the general assembly to memorialize Congress to continue the tariff. He informed the legislature that violent attacks had been made in Congress on the duties imposed on foreign sugars. This naturally occasioned lively disquietude on the part of the Louisiana sugar growers. The legislature drew up the memorial suggested, and unanimously adopted it. To promote the cultivation of cane, the Louisiana Sugar Refinery Company was in 1833 incorporated.

The Compromise Tariff of 1833 was considered by the Louisiana sugar planters as a blow to their interests. To forestall calamitous effects,

81 The best study on this subject for the period under consideration is John Christian Ludvig Andreassen, "Internal Improvements in Louisiana, 1824-1837." This is a master's thesis in history, Louisiana State University, 1935; typescript in the University library.
82 Louisiana House Journal, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 3.
Governor Roman counselled the formation of a State Agricultural Society and the acquisition of a State-owned experimental station,

...in which all the resources of our inexhaustible soil could be developed and experiments made of the different methods which art and economy present, to enable us to surmount the obstacles which impede the march of our industry.84

To this end the Agricultural Society of Louisiana was incorporated, and to execute its purposes, it was permitted to raise a sum not to exceed $500,000.

As a friend of sound banking, and an advocate for the recharter of the United States Bank, Roman importuned the Louisiana legislature to exercise caution in granting charters to local banks. Regardless of his admonition, the general assembly, victim of the general speculative frenzy, sanctioned the creation of six banking companies. These were: the City Bank, the New Orleans Canal and Banking Company, the Union Bank, the Commercial Bank of New Orleans, the Mechanics' and Traders' Bank of New Orleans, and the Citizens Bank of Louisiana. As the titles of several of these institutions suggest, their functions were broader than simply conducting financial transactions. The Citizens Bank, for instance, incorporated with a capital of $12,000,000, was privileged to construct railroads and canals, and was given the right to absorb the Lake Borgne Navigation Company.

84 Louisiana House Journal, 11 Leg., 1 Sess., 98-99.
85 Louisiana Acts, 11 Leg., 1 Sess., 94-97.
86 Louisiana House Journal, 11 Leg., 1 Sess., 4-7.
87 Louisiana Acts, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 26-38.
88 Ibid., 38-62.
89 Ibid., 10 Leg., 2 Sess., 42-72.
90 Ibid., 11 Leg., 1 Sess., 151-171.
91 Ibid., 124-136.
92 Ibid., 172-194; Burge, "Roman," 63-67.
The failure to recharter the United States Bank in 1832, and the removal of deposits soon thereafter, stimulated a reckless expansion of credit through the agency of insecure state banks, which resulted in financial disaster. In proper sequence, it will be noted that the dislocated economy of Louisiana was in a large measure responsible for the local organization and early success of the Whig party.

Soon after the inauguration of Roman, the general assembly re-elected Josiah S. Johnston to the United States Senate. Only one ballot was necessary: Johnston, 29; Dawson, 22; Hiriat, 1; Blank, 1; Total 53.

Johnston's chief competitor, John B. Dawson, of West Feliciana, was the rising star of the Louisiana Democracy. Johnston's re-election was highly satisfactory to the National Republicans. He was feted, and received extravagant praise and was hailed as "the Henry Clay of Louisiana".

Roman issued a proclamation in October, 1831, which instructed the general assembly to meet in extra session, November 14, 1831. The exigency of the moment was the election of another United States Senator, for in April, 1831, Livingston resigned from the United States Upper House to accept the Portfolio of State in Jackson's Cabinet. George A. Waggaman was elected by the legislature to fill the vacancy. Waggaman was a National Republican. This election gave the Clay party the unanimous support of the congressional delegation from Louisiana.

As the contest of 1832 approached, it was proclaimed throughout Louisiana that Jackson, true to prediction, had demonstrated his gross specialists.

93 Louisiana House Journal, 10 Leg., 1 Sess., 18.
94 New Orleans Bee, January 13, 1831.
95 Baton Rouge Gazette, October 8, 1831.
98 New Orleans Bee, November 15, 1832.
incompetence and utter destitution of those essential qualifications
which a president should possess to an eminent degree. He had glaringly
manifested his total unfitness, and his performance had revealed an
ignorance which was monstrous. The history of his Cabinet had been
characterized by events humiliating to the national pride and insulting
to public morals. He had deliberately lied in regard to his promise of
a one-term administration. The Supreme Court, because of his vindictive
jealousy, had been assailed. Presses had been corrupted by the patronage
of Federal office, and thereby "Heralds of Truth" had been degenerated
into vehicles of falsehood. Lands belonging to citizens of Louisiana
had been sold in disregard to righteous protest. The death blow had
been struck to the American System. The principle of proscription had
been practiced to reward clamorous demagogues at the expense of faithful
public servants. The nation mourned and languished, for the shadow of
an evil curse had fallen upon it.

Dr. A. E. McConnel from East Baton Rouge, who had been elected to the state
legislature on a Jackson ticket, voluntarily addressed a public gathering at
Hewlett's Coffee House, of New Orleans. He declared his secession from the
Democratic ranks, and prayed fervently that the wise and benevolent God in
heaven would be compassionate and forgive him for having even been a partisan
of Andrew Jackson. In a rage, eighty-five Baton Rouge Jacksonians met and de-
manded McConnel's resignation. Thereupon, 105 Clay men met, tacitly endorsed
McConnel, and flayed Jackson for opposing the Bank and the American System.

Enfin, Jackson had sacrificed the Constitution and mocked the laws. If
America was to avoid ruin, her people must act to destroy the "True Monster".

99 New Orleans Emporium, October 22, 1832.
100 Baton Rouge Gazette, September 17; October 8, 27, 1831.
Political meetings were held in public places and private homes; and widespread organization was once more effected.

Henry Clay was represented by the National Republicans as the only man who could save the industry of Louisiana, as Jackson was the sworn ally of the American System and especially the United States Bank. The likelihood of a bargain between Jackson and Van Buren was reiterated. A great meeting in New Orleans, one among many, composed of the "generous and high-minded Creole, the frank-hearted Irishman, the staid and honest German, the sensitive and chivalrous Frenchman, the shrewd and calculating American, united heart and soul in a deep, anxious, and enthusiastic expression of unanimous opinion to rid their native and adopted country of the unhappy and shameless misrule of the incumbent administration, and prayed Divine Providence and his angels to rescue the distracted country from threatening anarchy." Jacksonian Democracy was charged with that disrepute and corruption which made the term Anti-Christian party thoroughly applicable.

The Democratic Republicans took an aggressive stand, declaring that the Old Hero, as a man of the people, had not broken faith with his own. He had destroyed the Monster, preserved the Union, and humbled the pride of the Aristocrat. In New Orleans, great mass meetings at Davie Ball Room, and elsewhere, disturbed the 'Quiet Streets' with the reverberating cry of 'Hurrah for Jackson', and its echo was heard far beyond on plain and pine barren, where it was re-shouted with fanatical

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101 Ibid., April 14, 1832.
102 Ibid., November 1, 1830.
103 New Orleans Emporium, October 22, 1832.
104 New Orleans Bee, February 15, 1831.
frenzy until the triumphant day of election. Nor was the National Republican leader allowed respite. It was charged that Henry Clay, hero of the Packenham party, had coalesced with the Anti-Masons, which in itself should make him unacceptable. The charge was well-founded, for there was an attempt on foot to coalesce Anti-Masons and Clay men over the country as a whole. Louisiana Masons were especially sensitive to this development, for one of their number, Edward Livingston, Democratic Republican leader, was Grand High Priest of the Royal Arch Masons.

To restrain the action of National Republicans who were Masons, the editor of the New Orleans Emporium countered:

MASONS TO THE POLLS!

Elevate to the proudest niche in the venerable temple of your noble, philanthropic order one of its firmest supporters, its magnanimous adherent, your illustrious brother, HENRY CLAY. Bright is his fame as a craftsman! Firm has been his constancy to the holiest principles of the fraternity. Richly does he deserve your support, and well does every faithful and generous disciple of the order know his masonic merits. Craven and recreant to the brotherhood is the mason who would denounce so worthy, so magnanimous, and illustrious son of our ancient order! No one can be found so faithless. Every mason knows that Henry Clay is true to the heart's core. To the polls then, in aid of our abused, persecuted, but transcendent brother! Masons to the rescue! All that we hold dear as masons and men is at stake.106

The election of 1832 was held during an appalling scourge of cholera. The scourge lasted for over a year, and was reported by Governor Roman to extend to every quarter of the state. As a consequence, the vote was

105 Ibid., October 25, 1832.
106 New Orleans Emporium, November 5, 1832.
107 New Orleans Bee, November 3, 1832; December 10, 1833.
considerably less than that of 1828. In view of this, any conclusions as to true party strength would be somewhat tenuous. Clay won nine sugar parishes, and his popular vote was 1,831. Jackson gained the electoral vote by winning Orleans and twenty-one rural parishes. His popular vote was 3,918. Claiborne and St. Landry parishes made no returns.

Although defeated in the presidential contest, the National Republicans re-elected all three of their Congressmen: White, of the first district; Thomas, of the second, and Bullard, of the third.

The Democratic Republicans claimed to have elected a majority to the state legislature, but such claims as these are not wholly reliable, because at this time, as has been suggested, local elections did not always adhere to party lines.

In the latter part of 1833, Josiah S. Johnston, National Republican Senator, was killed in a steamboat accident. Hugh L. White, of Tennessee, who, in 1836 was to be the Whig nominee for president, was very seriously injured in the same disaster. Johnston's death occasioned much grief, and by no one was he more sincerely mourned than Henry Clay. The great Kentuckian arose in the Senate and eulogized the Louisianian. He proposed resolutions in memory of the departed, which were readily accepted.

Judge Alexander Porter succeeded Johnston in the Senate. Porter was a National Republican. Inasmuch as this was a party election, the

108 New Orleans Bee, November 28, 1832.
109 Niles' Weekly Register, XLVII, 403.
110 New Orleans Bee, July 19, 1832.
111 Ibid., December 10, 1833.
112 Cong. Debates, 23 Cong., 1 Sess., 11-12.
claims of the Democrats in regard to the legislative election of 1832 might be doubted. The vote on the second ballot was: Porter, 32; Joseph Walker, 30.

Henry A. Bullard resigned his seat in Congress on January 8, 1834, to accept a judgeship on the state supreme court bench. He addressed his resignation to Governor Roman, and Speaker Andrew Stevenson of the United States House of Representatives. The vacancy thus created in the third district necessitated the calling of a special election. Rice Garland, the "anti-Jackson candidate", won an encouraging victory.

During the latter part of 1833 and the early months of 1834, both parties were busy drilling and organizing their recruits.

The Louisiana Opposition did not relax in their furious assaults on Jackson. According to their presses, he was trying to take the electoral privilege from the people by nominating Van Buren as his successor. He had dismissed every independent and virtuous statesman that ever entered his Cabinet. He had gathered about him a venal and worthless band, destitute of talents, character or accountability, and allowed this selfish and sordid corps to control him and direct the Government to satiate their own avariciousness or to gratify their hostility to all that was good and great in the Republic. The broad principles of consolidation had been announced by presidential proclamation, and a trial had been made to change the American government from a confederated Republic to a highly centralized elective monarchy.

113 Louisiana House Journal, 11 Leg., 1 Sess., 10.
114 Niles' Weekly Register, XLV, 335.
115 Natchitoches Red River Chronicle, May 14, 1834.
The Constitution and laws had been administered according to Jackson's understanding, and this in itself was a mockery of jurisprudence, and a travesty on justice. The public treasure had been seized without the remotest authority, and its funds had been dispersed throughout the country to fatten and award Administration minions. A virtuous and able officer, William J. Davis, had been arbitrarily dismissed for noble opposition to an act involving a gross abuse of Executive powers; in truth, he had been guilty of obstructing a move which would culminate in national insolvency. Jackson had entered the Senate with his protest, and dared to expound the Constitution to Senators, telling them what they should and should not do, and making his own will the source of all authority. Every department of Government exhibited the grossest neglect and the darkest corruption. Millions from the Post Office had been spent for electioneering purposes, millions had been borrowed in direct violation of the Constitution, and as a consequence, the Postal Department suffered bankruptcy. The currency of the nation had been deranged, the commercial prosperity of the land had been crushed, industry depressed, and enterprise checked; from one end of the land to the other, the people groaned under distress, unequal in its extent, intensity and duration; thousands on thousands of the poor and laboring classes exposed by his madness to all the horrors of want, lifted up their voices daily against him. The whole population had lost confidence in just and noble Government. The crimes of the Jacksonian administration had bowed the fair brow of the country to the dust and had made the home of the free the abiding place of discontent and sorrow.

116 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, July 23, 1834.
Jackson's aspirations toward despotism and dictatorship were betrayed by these primary steps. Concisely, he had divided the people; nominated a blindly loyal subservient corps to support him; and had secured the national Treasury, all for the purpose of finally overthrowing the free institutions of the country and making himself lord of all. Jackson had accused Clay of corrupt bargaining, but Jackson and Van Buren had actually entered a corrupt coalition which had not one redeeming virtue.

Surely, if America was to avoid ruin, her people must act to destroy such depraved leadership, and "Arise! Arise!" and record their votes against "the most unholy, iniquitous, and accursed mis-rule that ever disgraced and degraded a free people."

It will be apparent as this study progresses, that the party presses of Louisiana did not confine their observations to an objective and dispassionate view of the contemporary political scene. The true issues, or substantial charges, are most usually apt to be grossly distorted, or greatly magnified. That Jackson, the individualist, was at times impulsive and guilty of indiscretions cannot be denied, but that Jackson, the President, was as depraved as the Louisiana National Republican presses depict him, is an aberration which impartial historical estimate will not admit.

The curtailment policy of the United States Bank was rather keenly felt in Louisiana. The unusual volume of the State's agricultural and industrial economy was dependent upon a liberal extension of credit, and upon a generous circulation of sound currency. With the advent of

117 Ibid., July 18, 1834.
118 New Orleans Emporium, November 6, 1834.
recession, the National Republican presses lashed out viciously and exploded into an untempered rage against the "Mean Old Hypocrite" and vulturine following.

Trade had declined, business of every kind was dull, the price of commodities was low, credit and confidence were impaired, business men refused to enter into contracts, and markets were stagnant and languishing.

This was the commercial situation, according to the pro-Bank New Orleans Price Current. The somber hues of the picture were calculated to leave in the Louisiana industrial mind a vivid impression of impending disaster. As a matter of fact, in 1834, even though the Branch Bank had begun its policy of curtailment, Louisiana business was reasonably solvent. On the other hand, pro-Bank propaganda was, and had been sufficiently effective to give disconcerting moments to hundreds of the rank and file Jacksonians. The Democratic Republican leaders, and the adamant old guard correctly interpreted the situation as a political maneuver. Patiently, yet with fiery determination, they explained, as they understood it, the true nature and cause of the general dislocation. All would be well when the "Monster" was slain. In this direction, they reviled the Bank, and ridiculed Old Nicholas Biddle

Who was up to his middle
In dirt and disgrace and confusion;

they were aggressive and courageous and promised
To take the damnable Bank
By a move on the flank,
And kick down the mammoth delusion.

119 New Orleans Price Current and Commercial Intelligencer, February 23, March 8, 29, April 12, passim, 1834.
120 New Orleans Bee, April 18, 1834.
Thrusts of this nature were regarded by the National Republicans as the rankest demagogy. They took advantage of the prevailing situation and their appeal was forceful and convincing. They contended that the Jacksonian party by its depraved leadership and inexorable folly had reduced Louisiana to a deplorable condition. The tariff had been deranged, and the sugar industry was on the brink of precipitate ruin; the public lands had remained unsold, private claims had not been adjudicated; the Government had extended no assistance toward internal improvements; the Post Office Department was corrupt, and mails were uncertain and irregular; and the country was bankrupt and poverty stricken as a result of the destruction of the United States Bank.

Henry Clay and his distinguished lieutenants throughout the nation were vividly conscious that a goodly portion of the adversaries of the Jacksonian administration was not actually affiliated with the National Republican party. As a political revolution was to these leaders the greatest immediate consideration, it seemed obvious to them that the easiest and best manner of consummating the desired end was to unite all the disaffected factions. Naturally, the old-line National Republicans were mobilized and regimented as the veteran corps. Recruits were gathered from the Anti-Masons, Administration rebels, political idealists, and nullifiers. Concerning the last group, States\’ Rights was a philosophy generally accepted throughout the South, but it was subject to all shades of interpretations. It was an active and a passive philosophy, a reality and a concept. One might accept the theory, and reject the feasibility, or desirability, of applying the principles of the Fort Hill Letter. Others, notably the radicals of
South Carolina, held not only to the theory of Nullification, but also to the justice of resistant action. Theorists or Realists, many came over and affiliated with the new Clay Opposition.

In parts of the nation, it was certain that some of the elements of the new party would not take kindly to the American System. In such cases, for the sake of achieving party solidarity, Clay's cherished program was either subordinated or ignored. As a national organization, the new conglomerate so effected was called the Whig party. From its inception, it was unwieldy, reflected all shades of Opposition opinion, lacked discipline, was difficult to co-ordinate, and sometimes in crises, it exhibited the course of maddening apathy. The single common bond was hatred of Jacksonism.

The transfer from National Republican to Whig was accomplished by Clay's Louisiana following without inconsistency or embarrassment. The electorate, between 1824 and 1834, had been substantially divided between the National Republicans and Democratic Republicans. Evidence indicates that the Whig membership was somewhat augmented by estranged Administration men, yet their number was not so great as to make their assimilation difficult. The dominant element of the Whig party in Louisiana had long since accepted, defended, and aggressively fought for the American System. They had no reason to change their original convictions. Thus, to them the transition, if such it might be termed, was largely one of nomenclature rather than one of policy or alignment.

There was no appreciable Nullification sentiment in Louisiana. The sensibilities of the State had been accurately weighed, and the press of both parties were in agreement that Nullification was unwar-
rented and highly dangerous to the safety of Louisiana and the Union.

Governor Roman in his legislative message of 1833, declared:

We cannot be persuaded that under a constitution which was adopted in order to give more power and stability to the general government, under a constitution in which the law of the majority is everywhere recognized, there is any justice in giving to one single state the power of judging and deciding exclusively by herself questions which all other states have equally the right to decide and determine; that one state has in fact the right to govern all the rest whenever it may please her to assemble a convention which may declare a law unconstitutional.122

In response, the legislature passed among others the following resolution:

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana in General Assembly Convened, that the attitude assumed by the Government of the United States, by the State of South Carolina, is justified neither by necessity nor law; that the whole course of her policy is calculated to involve the Union in unnatural excitement, and has a direct tendency to weaken the cause of liberty throughout the world.123

Public meetings were held in various towns of the state. In New Orleans, the call for a mass meeting was issued as early as June, 1832. This call was signed by fifty-six prominent citizens of both parties. The meeting convened and a great crowd was present. When the sugar interest was threatened, the meeting became so tempestuous that no uniform opinion was possible, except upon the universal repudiation of the doctrine of Nullification. Another mass meeting was held in January, 1833. The assemblage was eloquently addressed by the prominent Democrats, Varigny, Morse, Maybin, and Grimes.

121 Leslie Murry Norton, "Origin of the Whig Party in Louisiana," Chap. III. This is a master's thesis in history, Louisiana State University, 1933; typescript in the University library.
122 Louisiana House Journal, 11 Leg., 1 Sess., 4.
123 Ibid., 42.
124 New Orleans Bee, January 3, 22, 30, 1833; Baton Rouge Gazette, January 26, 1833.
125 Baton Rouge Gazette, June 23, 1833.
126 Ibid., June 28, 1832.
127 Ibid., January 3, 1833.
There is not sufficient evidence remotely to indicate that there was an active Anti-Masonic element in the Whig party of Louisiana.

The general state elections of 1834 were the climax of the decade of bitter, and often violent, political conflict which has been narrated. There was but a minimum of the clandestine about the campaign. Assaults were open and direct. Whigs and Democrats blatantly defined their positions in regard to issues, and freely admitted that the election was a contest which involved the major points that divided the people of the state, yea, even the American people. Elaborate political machinery was devised and set into motion. No artifice was necessary to stimulate excitement and enthusiasm; indeed, if artifice was present it was employed to keep the turmoil within legitimate limits.

The chief emphasis of this campaign was upon the election of governor. The success of the party ticket depended largely upon a gubernatorial victory. Prolonged consideration had been devoted in providing acceptable candidates for this particular office. John B. Dawson, of West Feliciana, was chosen as the standard bearer of the Democratic party. Edward D. White was selected as the Whig candidate. There is a significance in the fact that both these candidates were in the field early in 1832. Edward D. White was formally announced as the National Republican choice nearly two full years previous to the appearance of the Whig party. Denis Prieur entered the contest in 1832 as an independent. His intrusion threatened to complicate matters for the Democrats, and they resorted to highly interesting and humorous methods to force his withdrawal.

128 New Orleans Bee, July 12, 1832. Dawson was announced in the Baton Rouge Gazette, November 17, 1831.
Prieur was a Jackson man. He was popular, affable, and fond of the conviviality of the coffee houses. He had won the mayoralty of New Orleans in three consecutive elections, and as a candidate for that office, he was invincible. Prieur, as a gubernatorial prospect, preferred a campaign which would be nonpartisan, but the Democrats scorned his overtures, accused him of being a deserter and as being an important member of the Judas Iscariot faction which was seeking to destroy party unity. He was charged with being of Clay propensities, an aristocrat, and in league with the Union Bank. An act of the legislature of 1820 was cited to prove that Prieur was illegally holding office. The act specified that the mayor of New Orleans must be the head of a family, and the incumbent could not meet this qualification without embarrassment. Failing to accomplish their purpose by these means, the Democrats devised a more effective scheme. The city elections preceded state elections by three months. Prieur stood for re-election.

The Democrats entered John H. Holland to oppose him. The mayor realized that such a split in the city Democrat ranks would defeat him. He quietly

129 Baton Rouge Gazette, October 7, 1833.
130 Ibid., September 4, 1833.
131 Ibid., September 2, 1833.
132 Ibid., December 5, 1833.
133 New Orleans Bee, October 14, 1833.
134 Ibid., November 20, 1833.
135 Ibid., October 24, 1833.
136 Ibid., October 23, 1833. "Act 5. And be it further enacted, that the Mayor and the Recorder shall be chosen from among the citizens who are heads of families and resident within the city at the time of their election, and possess the other qualifications required by the existing laws." This was printed at the top of the editorial column of the Bee, for days; and it was continually used against Prieur in editorials.
137 Ibid., September 4, 1833.
138 Ibid., September 23, 30, 1833. Holland was coroner of Orleans parish.
withdraw from the gubernatorial contest; Holland was quietly withdrawn from the mayoralty contest, and the popular Prieur was quietly praised for sacrificing for the sake of party harmony his opportunity of becoming governor. Thus the election was limited to two candidates, which was an unprecedented event in the history of Louisiana politics.

Edward Douglas White was born in Maury County, Tennessee, in March, 1795. His parents, James and Mary (Wilcox) White removed to Louisiana before the province was ceded to the United States. When the territory of Orleans was organized, James White was appointed judge of the Western or Attakapas district, and later was judge of St. Martin parish. Edward D. White was educated at the University of Nashville. After leaving college, he studied law with Alexander Porter and began practice at Donaldsonville. In 1825 he was appointed judge of the city court of New Orleans and removed thither, but three years later he resigned that office and retired to his sugar plantation in the parish of Lafourche. In the fall of the same year he was elected to represent his district in the Twenty-first Congress and was twice re-elected.

John Barrow Dawson was born in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1800. He removed to Louisiana and settled in West Feliciana where he engaged in planting. He was elected to the lower house of the legislature, where

139 Ibid., March 17, 1834.
140 Ibid., April 17, 1834, quoted from the Covington Chronicle.
141 Diedrich Ramke, "The Early Political Career of Edward Douglas White", Chap. I, passim. This is a master's thesis in history, Louisiana State University, 1531; typescript in the University library. Also available in Louisiana Historical Quarterly, vol. XIX, no. II (April, 1936) 273-327. This thesis is more immediately concerned with the career of Chief Justice White, but Chap. I is an able treatment of the Judge's antecedents.
he served for several years. He was judge of the parish court, major 142
general of militia, and was by 1834 the strongest Democrat in the 143
state.

The names of White and Dawson became symbols of party tenets. 144

White was proclaimed a fast friend of protective tariff. He believed that planters should be secured by the national government against foreign competition. This would give impetus to active enterprise, promote frugality and economy, create a home market, and promote the interest of other American industry.

White was a jealous advocate of internal improvements. His anxious desire for the development of the physical and natural resources of the state had been pleasing to his friends and worthy of imitation.

White was a warm and substantial advocate of a National Bank, which would assure and wisely regulate a sound and uniform currency and liberal credit. His best efforts in Congress were directed toward the preservation of this useful institution. As a firm and consistent supporter of the American System, White was definitely identified with the progress and prosperity of Louisiana. His transition from National Republican to Whig was accomplished with consistency and therefore without embarrassment.

The Whig platform, published as a last minute reminder, contained in substance the doctrine of Louisiana Whigs. It advocated American rights, American interest, American independence, and American principles. It expressed contempt for tyranny, oppression, ruinous "experiments".

142 Louisiana House Journal, 7 Leg., 1 Sess., 46.
143 Fortier, Louisiana, II, 134-135.
144 New Orleans Daily News, June 2, 1834.
and vast prerogatives centering in the will of one man. It opposed hypocritical protensions, ambitious demagogues, and corruption in the Treasury. It favored a sound and stable currency, which was uniform and acceptable throughout the Union, and denounced all rag-systems and shin-plaster money. It favored improving the resources of the country, the rivers and navigable streams, and all other worthy projects which would promote union and progress. It espoused an appointive and independent judiciary, universal education, state progress and prosperity. It condemned Kitchen Cabinets, Custom House Coteries and all who were so degraded as to receive the yoke, or wear the collar of the Democratic party.

Dawson was, according to the Whigs, a notoriously ignorant, vain, weak-minded, weak-willed, incompetent upstart, who would rule with the tyranny of Andrew Jackson. Dawson was in league with the arch-traitor, Martin Van Buren, and would deliver the state of Louisiana, bound hand and foot over to the evil Magician. Furthermore, it was an established fact that Van Buren was the enemy of Louisiana. Patriots would rally around the standard of White and send Dawson to obscurity. As an act of charity good people would send his corrupt and mad masters at Washington to a lunatic asylum. Dawson laid aside his judicial robes and stalked about the country on election tours, and tried to inflame the passions of the people for his own aggrandizement. He was a nullifier; he opposed the restoration of the deposits and the recharter of the Bank;

145 Ibid., July 7, 1834.
146 Ibid., June 3, 1834.
147 Ibid., May 31, 1834.
148 Ibid., June 3, 1834.
he was opposed to internal improvements; and had been the intimate
connection of a counterfeiter, swindler, liar, plagiarist, and coward.

Dawson was totally lacking in knowledge of civil government and political
science, and was under the spell of malignant advisors, who constituted
an unholy clan, known as the Custom House Coterie. This infamous cabal
of Jacksonian Democrats was led by the Myrmidon, Martin Gordon, collector
of customs of the port of New Orleans, who with his lieutenants, scavengers
by the names of Wagner and Carleton, all officers of the United
States, controlled national affairs in Louisiana, and were trying to ex-
tend their evil influence to the council of the state by electing their

151 tool governor. Gordon was a martinet, he vexed the merchants, controlled
the "collar men", and was firmly established in the good graces of Andrew

150 Jackson. The Whigs demanded his removal.

The Democrats defended Gordon and retorted that White was under
the sinister influence of the "cold aristocrat", Alexander Porter.

149 New Orleans Bee, May 10, 1834.
150 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, May 19, 1833.
151 Ibid., March 10, May 13, 1834, constantly repeated. The New
Orleans Argus charged that the customs house agents had purchased with
United States funds two-thirds of the Louisiana presses "to abet the
purposes of the popinjay candidate, Dawson". New Orleans Argus, May 13, 1834.
152 Ibid., January 15, 1834.
153 New Orleans Bee, August 30, 1833. Gordon was reappointed as
collector of the port of New Orleans by Jackson in 1834. "As was antici-
pated, the senate, having rejected the nomination of Martin Gordon, as
collector at New Orleans, also rejected the nomination of his son, pre-
sented by the president, for the same office, without a division." Niles'
Weekly Register, XLV, 291. It would naturally follow that Whig Senators
were sensitive to the situation in Louisiana.
154 New Orleans Bee, July 1, 1834.
He was dominated by the Bank Party, the self-styled Whigs, who were
congraded with that prince of nullifiers, John C. Calhoun. George McDuffy,
the protege of Calhoun was a Bank man; White the protege of Porter, was a
Bank man. Did not the close co-operation of these men tend to prove that
they were all nullifiers and indiscriminate in their opposition to Andrew
Jackson? "White stabbed the native industry of the state," and sacri-
ficed the interest of Louisiana to appease the nullifiers.

The legislature, during this time, was deliberating upon the charter
of the Citizens Bank. The charter proposed to pledge the faith of the
state for twelve million dollars. Because of the general interest cre­
ated by this proposition, the Whigs endeavored to make of it a campaign
issue. It was stated as a remarkable fact that the friends of the Citizens
Bank were all enemies to the United States Bank. A comparison between
the capital and the pledge of these institutions would show that the
opposition to the United States Bank was nothing but a political hobby, a
thing which had grown out of Andrew Jackson. It was a personal matter at
first, but he had led the people to side with him. There was no justice
in his cause, but the people had been beguiled, in fact mesmerized, by
his hour of valor displayed on the banks of the Mississippi.

The Citizens Bank bill, while creating alignments and considerable
rancor, was not a major issue of the campaign. The recharter of the
United States Bank was a major issue. Marigny, Democrat, speaking in

155 Ibid., April 24, 1834.
156 Ibid., January 29, April 29, May 16, 1834, constantly repeated
at the head of the editorial column and in campaign essays.
157 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, March 14, May 31, 1834.
158 New Orleans Daily News, June 2, 1834.
favor of the Citizens Bank, blamed the United States Bank for the depressed state of business in 1834. The Bee, at this time a Democratic organ, took the position that the Citizens Bank would relieve the state from this thralldom of Nicholas Biddle.

Both parties made diversified appeals to heterogeneous elements of the state. Especial efforts were made to obtain the French and Irish vote. The election was so conducted as to arouse class consciousness, and it endeavored to give dignity to demagogy. The Bee declared that the Creoles had nothing to expect from the friends of Judge White but proscription, that the supporters of White were aristocrats who were dominated by Senator Alexander Porter. "To vote for the Bank and E. D. White, is to consent to become the willing panders to a powerful and aristocratic money institution, which is in every mode and shape it can find feasible, endeavoring to deprive you of your constitutional independence." Further, the Bee accused the "Whiteites" of appealing to the Irish vote on the grounds that Senator Porter, an Irishman, was friendly to White. The same paper charged that White had "voted in favor of a law [Compromise Tariff of 1833], calculated to bring distress and ruin upon the great flourishing interests of our state. Remember, that we sent him to Congress to advocate our rights, and to represent our wants. Remember, that he sold the one and mocked at the other."

159 New Orleans Bee, February 25, 1834.
160 Ibid., March 15, 1834.
161 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, May 1, 19; July 3, 8, 1834; New Orleans Bee, September 2, 1833, June 7, 21, 1834; New Orleans Argus, July 2, 1834. This theme was constantly repeated.
162 New Orleans Daily News, February 24, March 6, 8, 1834. A favorite theme in the several New Orleans papers.
163 New Orleans Bee, July 7, 1834.
164 Ibid.
165 Ibid., April 22, 1834.
This prolonged battle without doubt set the pace for much that later was so colorfully to characterize Louisiana politics.

Early in May, 1834, the New Orleans Whigs began a program for organization. Ward meetings were called. These meetings assembled pursuant to notice. Selected speakers addressed each gathering. Appropriate resolutions were adopted, usually of this character:

RESOLVED, That this meeting consider the actual languishing condition of internal improvements, of education, and of all the sources of our prosperity, and at the same time, the great capacity which nature has given to Louisiana to be eminent among her sister commonwealths, as imperiously demand that now, if ever, the helm of the state should be confided to a statesman well acquainted with the wishes and wants of the people, enlightened, impartial, and emphatically independent.

RESOLVED, That this meeting regards our fellow citizen, E. D. White, as possessing in a high degree all the qualities most needful for that responsible station, with a mind comprehensive and discriminating, with all the lights of education, with a minute knowledge of the state, unsurpassed by that of anyone, with a long experience in political affairs, with a temper that best benefits the statesman in a republic, and habits that are most enduring in the hearts of the people, he is deservedly regarded as a true model of a Louisianian. Under the administration of such a man, our two races of French and American would be happy, and Louisiana safe.

RESOLVED, That in the opinion of this meeting, that (the) president of the United States, in his executive proceedings in relation to the public revenues, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the constitution and laws, but in derogation of both.167

Whigs of the first ward met at Richardson Hotel; second, third, and fourth ward Whigs met at Hewlett's Exchange, those of the fifth

166 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, May 10, 1834. Ward meetings selected five representatives, each of whom was to serve on a general advisory and nominating committee.
167 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, June 2, 1834. Resolutions, in part, of the sixth ward Whigs.
ward met at Caldwell's Coffee House; and Whigs of the sixth, seventh, and eighth wards assembled at Bishop's Hotel, Orleans Cotton Press, and Bowman's Coffee House, respectively. General meetings rallied at St. Mary's Hall, Davis Ball Room, the Bull's Head Tavern, and John Brandt's Coffee House. The last meeting was conducted entirely in German. As the election drew to a close, the general committee met nightly at Hewlett's Exchange.

The Democrats organized in the same general manner. They were energetic and aggressive, but seemingly lost ground daily.

Fragmentary campaign notices from the state at large indicate a wide-spread interest.

The election began on Monday, July 7, and continued through Wednesday. There was a frenzy of excitement.

The final vote gave White 6423, Dawson 4193. In the congressional election, Henry Johnson, Whig of the first district, defeated Thomas C. Nicholls.

168 Ibid., June 2, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14; July 2; New Orleans Argus, June 11, July 17, 30, 1834, et cetera.
169 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, June 13, 14, 25; July 3, New Orleans Argus, June 26; July 6, 1834; et cetera.
170 New Orleans Argus, July 3, 1834.
171 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, July 3, 1834.
172 New Orleans Bee, August 30, September 11, November 12, 14, 21, 1833; January 11, 28, 1834; New Orleans Argus, 11, 26, July 1, 7, 1834; et cetera. "With a view to promote the best interests and welfare of Louisiana; to remove groundless prejudices and abolish odious distinctions and discrimination among the citizens; to cure and prevent abuses; and to secure a faithful, equitable, and efficient administration of the government; this press will support EDWARD D. WHITE as a candidate for the executive chair, at the next election." Thibodeauxville Intelligencer and Lafourche and Terrebonne Advertiser, August 2, 1833.
173 Louisiana House Journal (French ed.), 12 Leg., 1 Sess., 10-11. The legislature confirmed the popular choice by a vote of fifty-eight to three.
and Charles Gayarre. In the second district, E. P. Ripley, Democrat, defeated Thomas W. Chinn and Clark Woodroff. In the third district, Rice Garland, Whig, defeated Walker. The Whigs claimed victory in the legislative elections, and this claim was substantiated as valid.

The tension lifted, and the joy of the Whigs was unbounded. The editor of the *Louisiana Advertiser*, inspired with mad exuberance, wrote:

*Pause! Republicans! Whigs of New Orleans and Louisiana! The election is over—you have triumphed, the victory belongs to you. Never in the annals of the contested elections within our state, was a battle harder fought, nor victory more gloriously won. The Dawson men contested every inch of ground and left untried no effort to advance their cause. The worse passions of the people were appealed to with a view to enlist them in the struggle. The line of demarcation was distinctly drawn and was proclaimed from the headquarters of Dawsonism that "those who are not for us are against us." Violence was threatened, but all to no purpose. The sovereign people, the friends of law, liberty, and the constitution, and correct principles came forth as the noble lion aroused from his slumbers at midnight—they went to work as he became freemen—they hoisted their banner—and placed their motto in the breeze firmly resolved to "do or die." They fought, they conquered. They did not however fight for "the spoils of victory," they fought for a more noble, a more holy purpose—they fought for liberty. The God of battles smiled upon their efforts. The people have spoken!—They have put a VETO on the mad career of President Jackson—they have thus sealed with the power of their reprobation, his abuse of power and his usurpations. Louisiana is once more free from thralldom. She has nobly thrown off the usurper's yoke. Let her not throw away her victory but at once turn it to good account. No more apathy—but let our motto be, PERSEVERANCE and ENERGY.*

A few days later he continued:

*The victory gained by the Whigs of Louisiana is one of the greatest on record. We have elected our governor, two members to Congress, and a large majority to the state legislature, and if General Ripley is elected to Congress in the second district, we have been informed that he owed it to his disapproving the measures of the President at the polls. But besides this, the Whig vote in that district was divided between two candidates.*

174 *New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser*, July 12, 1834.
"One of the most respectful merchants of New Orleans" wrote to the editor of the Philadelphia Inquirer:

Our election terminated on the 9th inst. So far as returns are received, it is a complete route for the Jackson party, horse, foot, and dragoons. The qualifications for electors is such that the vote of the entire state does not exceed 8000, of which the Jackson party claimed for their candidate (Dawson) 5000 leaving 3000 for White. From present prospects it will be about reversed, and I believe Mr. White will go in by a majority of 2000. His present majority is already 1400. In this city, in every election since Jackson was a candidate for President, his friends have invariably carried their ticket until the present time, and the vote now stands—White 986, Dawson 512—majority 474, nearly two to one; and this not only after the most strenuous exertions on their part, but also after an unusual emigration to the North of the business men, who, to a man, almost, would have voted the Whig ticket. I have no doubt, if the election had taken place one month since, Whites majority in the city would have been doubled. The entire White Ticket for Senators and Representatives to the Legislature is also carried.176

An estimate of the election was presented to Messrs. Gales and Seaton of the National Intelligencer:

New Orleans, July 16, 1834

Messrs. Gales and Seaton:

I presume it will not be acceptable to have information of the glorious triumph the Whig party has just achieved in this State. The complete returns have been received today with the exception of two or three unimportant parishes. The whole vote will be rather above 10,000, of which Mr. White will have 6,000 and Mr. Dawson (the Jackson candidate) 4,000. The Whigs have elected their entire delegation to Congress and from two-thirds to three-fourths of the State legislature. In this district there were two Whig candidates, whose aggregate vote was 2,946, and the Jackson vote 1,384; Henry Johnson (Whig) is elected by a majority of 516 over the aggregate vote of both his opponents. In the second district there were four candidates: General Ripley is elected by a plurality of votes, and not a majority of the whole number—say 1,167 out of about 2,700. General Ripley has heretofore been a warm Jackson man, but, recently, he publicly renounced Jacksonism, and has been chosen by a majority of about 200 over Chinn, the regular Whig candidate, who injured his vote, by advocating Dawson for governor from personal feelings. (There is a family connection between these two gentlemen, and we were advised, before hearing from the election, 176 Washington National Intelligencer, July 28, 1834, copied from the Philadelphia Inquirer, July 26, 1834.
that Mr. Chinn's supporting Mr. Dawson would probably lose him his own election—Editors, National Intelligencer). In the third district, Mr. Garland is re-elected by a large majority over General Walker, the most popular and able Jackson man in the State, and who was, from those causes, selected last winter to run against Judge Porter for the United States senate. Nothing can exceed the dismay of our opponents, particularly in the city vote, where they have invariably carried their ticket since 1825, and now to be beaten by nearly two to one (958 to 542) is what they cannot understand.

You may put it down as certain, that the Jackson party is dead in Louisiana never again to revive. This defeat drives hundreds of wavored votes from their ranks to the Whigs.

May our sister states follow the example that Louisiana has set for them in the first general election that has taken place since the "Experiment" has been in operation.177

The Courier, a Jackson paper of New Orleans, bemoaned the situation in these terms:

"We have further returns today of the election, but they do not inspire us with the least hope. Gen. Walker, it appears, is beaten in the third Congressional District, by Mr. Garland—making our defeat total and complete. Our not being accustomed to disasters of this sort renders them peculiarly unpleasant."178

In observance of "the late transcendent triumph of principle over faction and despotic rule, over licentiousness and corruption," the victors in New Orleans celebrated by means of a great Whig festival. Hundreds attended, over a thousand partook of the "greatest possible profusion" of food, cannons roared, bands played, the steamboat, St. Leon, hourly brought fresh throngs; Randall Hunt addressed the great concourse in English, S. Mazureau declaimed in French. The Governor-elect, A. B. Roman, Washington, Lafayette, Clay, and Webster were praised by toasts.

There were ceremonial toasts to Victory; to the Constitution of the United States; to the Senate; to New Orleans; "to the present crisis,

177 Washington National Intelligencer July 31, 1834.
178 New Orleans Courier, July 16, 1834.
which is a contest between Liberty and Slavery;" to the Post Office
Department..."reduced to insolvency by corrupt mismanagement;" to the
Purse of the Nation, "in the hands of Congress a security for liberty;
in the hand of the Executive an Engine for corruption and oppression;"
and to Democracy, "the glorious pillars upon which the social edifice
rests."

There were many volunteer toasts. Some of these were: to the Bank
of the United States; to the Whigs of Louisiana; to the Union; to
Louisiana, "unconstrained, unshackled, and free;" to Henry Clay; and to
Edward D. White. A certain Mr. Sommers toasted Amos Kendall, and after
the salutation, described him as "that foul and loathsome reptile,"
who as a government agent had been nourished into importance by execu-
tive slime.

So it was that the Whig party originated in Louisiana. During the
next twenty years, thousands extolled its principles, sang of its virtues,
and plead for its support. For its dignity, some laid down their lives,
victims of the "code"..."dead on the field of honor..."

179 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, July 12, 1834.
POLITICAL BATTLES TO SUSTAIN THE AMERICAN SYSTEM

WAGED BY

THE WHIG PARTY IN LOUISIANA
After the election of 1834, a strange apathy temporarily paralyzed the Whig party. Waggaman’s term in the United States Senate was scheduled to expire March 4, 1835. On January 12, 1835, the legislature met to select a Senator for the new term. With a joint-ballot majority, the Whigs might easily have re-elected their incumbent. This they refused to do. Waggaman, on the first ballot, received only six of the sixty-six votes cast. His name was withdrawn on the second ballot. On the fourth and final trial, Charles Gayarre, a Democrat received the requisite majority. The editor of the Richmond Whig angrily wrote:

It will be read with indignation that with a decided Whig majority, the Legislature of Louisiana, from the prevalence among the opposition, of the same infatuation that prevents their union in other places, has displaced Mr. Waggaman, and elected Mr. Gayarre, a Jackson man, as Senator of the United States. There never was a party cursed with so much destitution of common sense in the management of its party concerns.

There is one possible and substantial explanation for Whig defection in this case. For years the city of New Orleans, as well as the state at large, had bitterly complained about the irregularities of the mails. So gross was the abuse that one press wag remarked, "If a female ruled this country, mails would be more regular." Samuel J. Peters, a Whig member of the city council of New Orleans, representing a large meeting of the city, wrote in 1834, a letter of protest to President Jackson.

Jackson petulantly replied that blame for the matter should not rest upon

1 Louisiana House Journal (French ed.) 12 Leg., 1 Sess., 16-17. Charles Gayarre, previously introduced as a congressional candidate of the first district, had served in the state legislature, as attorney general, and as presiding judge of the city court of New Orleans. He is the author of a four-volume History of Louisiana, cited in the bibliography.
2 Richmond Whig, quoted in the Baton Rouge Gazette, February 14, 1835.
3 New Orleans Crescent City, December 3, 1834.
the Postmaster General, but upon the Senate, which was dominated by the Whigs. According to the President, the Louisiana delegation, Waggaman and Porter, had acted with the majority in obstructing an appropriation which would have corrected the situation. Jackson's answer to Peters was given wide publicity.

Waggaman and Porter protested Jackson's charges. Porter, speaking before the Senate, declared that the Presidential letter was written for the purpose of embarrassing the Louisiana Senators as "it was intended to put them on their trial before the people of their State, on an accusation where the Executive of the United States should be the prosecutor on his own bill of indictment."

In 1835, Waggaman and Porter both voted affirmatively on a bill for the reorganization of the postal department. Waggaman defined his position by stoutly arguing for a daily mail service between Mobile and New Orleans.

Yet, in spite of these assertions it is probable that Jackson's letter had served to discredit Waggaman and his party in Louisiana. Otherwise, it is passing strange that a Whig legislature should desert to the Democracy. Something was indeed radically wrong, for they startlingly repeated their infidelity in January, 1836. Gayarre resigned because of illness. A relatively obscure Democratic planter of Terrebonne, John C. Nicholas, was elected as the successor.

5 Andrew Jackson to Samuel J. Peters, Washington, October 7, 1834, in Miles' Weekly Register, XLVII, 214-215, 412.
6 New Orleans Bee, passim, 1834-1835.
8 Cong. Globe, 23 Cong., 2 Sess., 211. "It was not until July of the following year, however, that it passed both Houses and became law."
9 Stephenson, Porter, 70.
The New Orleans Bee (Democratic) was positive that the rejection of Magee was in reality intended as an emphatic rebuke and warning to Porter. According to this paper, Porter's conduct had been most unsatisfactory. He had defended the Bank, obstructed beneficial legislation, and otherwise obstinately had pursued a negative course. He had raised the plethoric cry of panic, but his prediction of distress and ruin had been falsified by the general well-being of the country.

In the general state elections of 1836, the Whigs did rally to sustain the two congressional candidates who had been serving the party. Johnson, of the first district, and Garland of the third, were re-elected. The Democrats also returned their veteran of the second district, Eleazar W. Ripley.

The legislative elections gave the Democrats a commanding joint-ballot majority. Because Porter's Senatorial term expired March 4, 1837, the party proportions in the legislature assumed added significance. A Louisiana correspondent wrote the Washington Globe a letter of assurance that the "honorable Alexander Porter will never return to Washington city after his present term expires, in capacity of United States Senator. Our Legislature will be decidedly Van Buren. Our friend Alexander Mouton has been returned to the Legislature from Lafayette. He, it is probable will be the United States Senator; perhaps John H. Overton, or Gen. Dawson."

If Porter had his detractors, he also had a most impressive legion of admirers, both within his own state, and throughout the nation at large.

10 New Orleans Bee, January 13, 1835.
11 Ibid., July 18, 20, 1836.
12 Washington Globe, August 23, 1836. Quoted from Stephenson, Porter, 97. The writer is indebted to Mr. Stephenson for several previous citations in this section.
Porter was warmly praised by the Whig press of Louisiana. One paper so defended him: "He has proved himself a sound and able supporter of the state, which he represents, and an efficient guardian of the general interests of the Union, and we are confident that Louisiana cannot produce a man, as capable of representing her on the floor of our National Senate, with more talent and dignity." On November 12, 1836, Porter resigned his seat and retired to his Oak Lawn plantation. The New Orleans Courier commented, "...the Honorable Alexander Porter will not be a candidate for the Senate of the United States at the approaching election. It is surmised that the Judge's object in declining the chance of being elected, is to take the equally uncertain chance of becoming Governor of the State." This surmise, as events prove, was wholly erroneous. Early in January, 1837, the legislature met in joint session to fill the vacancy.

The Whigs were cognizant of their numerical inferiority, and consequently their helplessness. Even so, before proceeding to the election, Walter Brashear recommended to the suffrages of the members the name of A. B. Roman. Thereupon, Victorin Patin, representative from West Baton Rouge, arose and informed both houses that he was authorized to announce that Roman did not wish consideration as a candidate. Having no stronger man than Roman to offer, the Whigs were relegated to the equivocal position of choosing between rival Democratic nominees. For the first four ballots, neither John Slidell nor Alexander Mouton could command a majority. A

14 New Orleans Courier, October 25, 1836.
15 John Slidell, in 1837, was one of the six members of the lower house of the legislature who represented Orleans parish. Louisiana House Journal, 13 Leg., 1 Sess., 1.
few adamant Whigs, reserving their votes for Roman, held the balance of power. On the fifth ballot, it appeared that out of sixty-four members present, Mouton had obtained forty votes; Roman, twenty-one; and blank, four. Mouton was declared duly elected Senator to Congress to serve for the ensuing six years, commencing from the fourth of March, 1837.

In Louisiana, the Presidential campaign of 1836 brought into prominence a new and incendiary issue. The election revolved about the tragic theme of Abolition.

The Abolition issue was not new to other parts of the United States. Benjamin Lundy, a New Jersey Quaker, a man of generous views and pacific disposition, between 1815 and 1831, had travelled widely pleading the justice of emancipation. In behalf of his cause, he had established a paper, The Genius of Universal Emancipation, which, in many portions of the South, circulated with no serious opposition. Lundy found Southerners ready to lend a willing ear to his message, and to regard with sympathy the noble object he had in view. As a matter of fact, Bushrod Washington, of Virginia, was the first president of American Colonization Society, an organization which encouraged manumission. Indeed, during its period of inception, a number of emancipation movements actually originated in the South. Lundy estimated that in 1827 there were 120 anti-slavery societies in the United States, 106 being in the South. Out of a total national membership of 6,625, of these 5,150 were Southerners.

After 1830, reaction set in. Nat Turner's insurrection was the occasion and not the cause of the rapid fruition of this reaction. The

16 New Orleans Bee, January 11, 1837.
17 For a general survey of early Abolition movements, see William B. Hesseltine, A History of the South, 1607-1936 (New York, 1936), chap. X.
lafundia economy of the South had evolved to such an extent that slavery had become identified with, and indispensable to, the plantation system.

The sugar aristocracy of Louisiana, for instance, was convinced that the servile system was a necessary adjunct to composite social well-being. The tolerance of its generation did not embrace such an idealistic philosophy as the equality of man. Slavery was a natural condition, a component part of every social system, and ordained by God. The slaves themselves were the benefactors of this ancient arrangement, and accepted bondage with a genuine contentment that proved its righteousness.

This was the identical attitude of the affluent cotton planter of Louisiana. In the successful cultivation of his staple, negro slavery was also indispensably necessary. However much the Democratic cotton planter and the Whig sugar grower might disagree over Internal Improvements, the Bank, or the Tariff, they were entirely consonant in regard to their hostility toward abolition. By 1836, each was conditioned to assume the position and ready to be convinced that the Grimke sisters, the Tappan brothers, Elijah Lovejoy, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Charles Sumner, Ben Wade, Salmon P. Chase, Theodore Weld, Joshua R. Giddings, et aliae were emissaries of the Devil, who carried the torch of Hell. In due time, Oberlin College, petitions to Congress, the Underground Railroad, The Liberator, and the American Antislavery Society were regarded by Louisiana Whigs and Democrats alike with a contumacious anathema born of fear.

Even the lowly Whigs and Democrats of Louisiana dreaded the economic consequences of abolition. Their disaster, they believed would be consummated, if they were forced to compete in the labor mart with liberated hordes from the plantations.
The introduction of active Abolition into American politics was as a bombshell thrown into party ranks. Throughout the South resistance stiffened, and crystallized into an aggressive counter-attack. The issue of Abolition was ultimately responsible for the dissolution of the national Whig party. Each presidential election from 1836 to 1860 revolved about the fateful theme. This being the case, it is entirely fitting that at this point party reactions to Abolition as reflected in Louisiana politics receive some considerable attention.

Governor White, in his message to the Louisiana legislature of January 4, 1836, devoted an unusual amount of attention to the troublesome matter. He informed the general assembly that in the states of the North certain persons had arrogated unto themselves the right to meddle with the domestic affairs of the South. These fanatics, declared the Governor, were far away from the Southern scene, and consequently they were ignorant concerning the traditions and nature of Southern institutions. Under the stimulus of a stupid prejudice, they were forming affiliated associations and taking criminal steps toward effecting the destruction of the Southern social order.

He continued:

Covering themselves with a hypocritical masque and pretending to be the friends of a certain class of our population, they strive to plunge the latter into an abyss of misery and ruin. Here we have a prevailing peace and happiness, which is the result of servitude being prescribed as a duty. That servitude is eminently just, as it is rendered in exchange for a constant protection which accords to the weakness of the infant, or the vicissitudes of maturity, or the decrepitude of the aged. These fiery fanatics wish to introduce disorder, discontent, insubordination, and all the horrors of rebellion. If it were possible for them to do so, they would quickly kindle about us the flames of a servile war, thereby flooding the land with human blood; thus they will become also the criminal cause of the extermination of the unfortunate victims of their deceitful doctrines.
The Governor remarked that by generous subsidies the Northern intermediaries had prostituted a segment of the Northern press. Unscrupulous editors had printed and scattered stories of horror and atrocity, which had no other foundation of fact than that which existed in the inflamed minds of their authors. White observed that the United States mails were being used to transport, circulate, and scatter "even among ourselves," the most subversive, the most damnable, the most false misrepresentations. These pamphlets and books, daily vomited from the Abolition press, were filled with the most fantastic pictures and diabolical engravings which were calculated to pervert the minds of the impressionable. The Governor stated:

I am glad to be able to place before you a collection of these outrageous publications about which I have spoken. As incomplete as the collection is, you will be able to gain a sufficiently just idea of the kind of war for which to prepare ourselves, and that within our very own country, against our peace, our prosperity, our lives, and the lives of our children.

The Whig executive of Louisiana declared the federal government should take action to prevent the destructive projects of the Abolitionists. Especially should the use of the mails be subject to the strictest regulation. He pointed out the majority of the Northern people were sensible and virtuous, and looked with reprobation upon the maneuvers of the negrophiles. But, Alas!, the detestable negrophile fanatics, shielding themselves behind "Freedom of Speech" and "Freedom of the Press," were threatening the dearest interests of Louisiana, and the State would be compelled to take all necessary precautions to forestall the disasters that threatened it.

A committee of seven was appointed by the speaker of the house, Alcee Labranche, Democrat, "to consider that portion of the Governor's message relative to the abolition of slavery." Richard Winn, Democratic chairman, in due course announced the results of the committee's deliberations. Winn submitted a lengthy report to which was attached ten resolutions. In his report, the chairman defended slavery on constitutional and moral grounds. He explained that

Slavery is an inherent and natural principle of society, and it has been universally recognized from the foundation of the social order to the present age. It is consistent with morality and the Christian religion, and it has been unreservedly recognized as such by the positive sanction that has been given to us by the old and new testaments, and by our savior himself, and it would be equally easy to demonstrate that it is consistent with the constitution and laws of the United States.

The resolutions presented by the committee were as follows:

RESOLVED, ...that the right of property of our slaves is guaranteed to us by the constitution, and that slavery is a question that concerns only those states of the Union where it exists, and the free states have no justification for interference in any manner with it.

2. That the conduct of a certain group of the citizens of the free states who have concerned themselves with that question is an obvious and definite infraction of the constitution, and carries with it the greatest detriment to the welfare and tranquility of the south, and is blatant insult to our constitutional rights and guarantees.

3. That we have the right to demand, and we do hereby respectfully demand of those states without slaves, that they pass such laws as will protect us from the insults and the injuries of the abolitionists within the limits of those said states.

4. That if the course of the abolitionists of the north is tolerated much longer, the dissolution of the union is inevitable.

5. That if the slaveholding states are not protected by laws enacted by free states, to effect the bringing to an end the unjust conduct of

19 Ibid., 6.
their citizens, we ourselves will find it necessary to appeal to the
first law of nature, that of the preservation of our own existence,
and we shall adopt such measures as we judge just to protect ourselves.

6. That the measures adopted by the slaveholding states in this
actual crisis, ought to be tempered with discretion, but with an un-
shakable resolve, and that we will act in concert as a people en-
during injuries to preserve our constitutional rights, even if a last
resort be necessary.

7. That in order to achieve our purpose with unanimity and harmony,
our senators in congress are respectfully requested, and our repres-
entatives are invited to call a general assembly, as soon as possible
during the present session, of all those members of congress repre-
senting slaveholding states, with the object of taking into consider-
ation the course to be pursued and the measures to be adopted for the
conservation of our rights, and that they are respectfully urged to
proclaim to the world the results of their deliberations.

8. That any law by congress relative to slavery in the limits of
the district of Columbia, will be in the opinion of this legislature,
a violation of the constitutional rights of the citizens of that
district, as well as the rights of the other slaveholding states,
and such a violation will meet with their resentment.

9. That copies of this report and attached resolutions be trans-
mitted to the governor, and to the executives of each state in the
union, and to each of our senators and representatives in congress.

10. That the owners of public journals throughout the United States
are respectfully invited to publish these resolutions, as the unan-
imous and deliberate proceedings of the general assembly of the state
of Louisiana.

The foregoing report and resolutions were adopted without a division
by the house. While they were under advisement of the senate, the Governor
transmitted to the general assembly similar resolutions adopted by the
legislatures of North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. The Louisiana senate
amended the house resolutions, and the house adopted the amendments.

There was a division in the house regarding adherence to the senate's

20 Ibid., 34-35.
21 Ibid., 49.
22 Ibid., 50.
23 Ibid., 93.
amendments but this division did not parallel party lines. Governor White
did not sign these resolutions. He re-submitted the whole matter to the
first session of the Thirteenth Legislature (1837). He also submitted
reports of the action taken by the legislatures of Kentucky and South
Carolina. In response, both houses of the Louisiana general assembly
concurred in the following resolutions:

Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the
State of Louisiana, in General Assembly convened, That the Legislature
fully concur in the views set forth and so ably explained in that part
of the Governor's message which relates to Abolition Societies.

Be it further resolved, etc., That they give their full concurrence
to the intent and purpose of all the resolutions transmitted
to the Governor of Louisiana by the Executives of the State of
Kentucky and of the State of South Carolina.

Be it further resolved, etc., That they propose that a convention
composed of delegates from the slaveholding States be held at such
time and place as shall be determined upon by a majority of said States.

Be it further resolved, etc., That the object of said convention
shall be to inquire into and determine on the best possible means to
obtain "peaceably if they can, forcibly if the must," that respect
for their institutions to which they are entitled by the positive
enactments of the Federal compact, and by the stronger law of self
preservation.

And be it further resolved, etc., That the Governor of the State
be respectfully requested to send copies of these resolutions to the
Executives of each of the slaveholding States, and to request the
concurrence of said States to said resolutions, and their execution
as soon as conveniently possible.24

These resolutions became the official expression of the state, as they
were signed by Alcee Labranche, Democrat, speaker of the house; Charles
Derbigny, Whig, president of the senate, and Edward D. White, Whig, governor
of the state.

24 Louisiana Acts, 13 Leg., 1 Sess., 18-19.
For years, the national Democratic party, by tacit agreement, made possible by its greater solidarity, smothered the slavery issue. Both wings, North and South, in as far as it was humanly and politically possible, extended their efforts to prevent an open rupture over the matter. Toward the Liberty and Free Soil parties, the Democracy of the North, generally speaking, remained aloof and cool. This was not the case with the national Whig party. In the South, the maintainance of a united front on the slavery issue was far from an insuperable difficulty. In the North, however, there were frequent coalitions between Whigs and Abolitionists. Because this was true, Southern Whigs were incessantly reminded that their party and their national candidates were tainted with Abolitionism.

The only obvious defence which the Whigs could effectively employ was to hurl back the charge into the teeth of their accusers. Their obvious strategy in national politics was to insist, and assist in the selection of candidates whose general availability made them potent. Another strategem employed by the Louisiana Whigs was to co-operate in the creation of mass enthusiasm, or to take full advantage of such enthusiasm, as was so neatly manifest in the campaigns of 1840 and 1848.

Jackson, in 1835, was the incontestable master of his political following. The Whigs had often charged that he made his will law, and this was no exaggeration when applied to his management of the Democratic party. Compromise, or tactful concession, was foreign to his nature; he had no talents for persuasion, hence he dictated. An early historian of the Whig party commented that

The mystery of Jacksonianism was not at that day, or is it now, really known. A party of great vitality, energy, and enthusiasm was scarcely ever seen. The hero of New Orleans was one of those men who seem born to command. Unqualified obedience to the chief was the test of true democracy. No matter how learned, experienced, wise or
talented he might be, no statesman, politician, or office-holder, or editor in the Democratic ranks would retain his standing for a moment if he should incur a frown from that singular man. His will was law to his party and that party became the country. Never did Cromwell rule England with more absolute power than General Jackson ruled the United States.25

Because of his supreme authority, it was no secret in Democratic circles that Jackson would choose his successor. There were but few who had the temerity or independence to challenge that choice. That the mantle would fall upon the shoulders of Martin Van Buren, was accepted as an all but inevitable eventuality. By his adroit manipulations, the New Yorker had cleared the way to secure the nomination; and by his debonnaire behavior, notably in the Eaton affair, he had endeared himself to the heart of the President. Disgruntled delegates who met in national convention at Baltimore, May 20, 1835, swallowed what dissatisfaction that might have been entertained and ratified Jackson's selection. Richard W. Johnson, of Kentucky, received the vice-presidential nomination.

The Whigs held no national convention. The uncertainty of their unity and strength dictated a plurality of presidential candidates. These were to represent sections, rather than the nation at large. Three were accordingly placed in the field: Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts, for the Northeast; William Henry Harrison, of Ohio, for the Northwest; and Hugh L. White, of Tennessee, for the South and Southwest. By such a division of votes, the Whigs hoped to ensnare malcontents of every hue, and thereby throw the election into the House of Representatives.

The Louisiana state Democratic convention convened at the Methodist church in the town of Baton Rouge, at one o'clock, on Monday, May 2, 1836.

26 New Orleans Courier, October 10, 1836.
Delegates were present to represent all five of the electoral districts. Bernard Marigny was unanimously chosen president of the convention.

The President opened the convention with an eloquent address in French and in English. He explained that the object of the meeting was to publicize the Democratic position in the approaching national election, and to endorse the Baltimore nominees. Marigny assailed the Whig policies, dwelling particularly upon the Bank and Internal Improvements. He praised Jackson, and the Jacksonian administration and concluded his remarks with an ornate flourish which carried an appeal to the

Delegates of the Democratic party here assembled, let your votes be given with heartfelt acclamations. Of the name of Martin Van Buren, the inhabitants of the valley of the Mississippi as of the beautiful valley of the Ohio, will repeat this name so dear to the country; its echoes will be heard from the Alleghenies to the Atlantic, and the whole Union will declare itself with enthusiasm for this our well tried and faithful fellow citizen.27

Martin Van Buren and Richard M. Johnson were endorsed, and on resolution, a committee of five were instructed to draw up an address, which was to be published in the leading Democratic papers of Louisiana, and also in the Washington Globe. Electors were selected, these being J. B. Plauche, T. W. Scott, T. Landry, A. Mouton, and P. E. Bossier. They represented the first, second, third, fourth and fifth districts respectively.

The Whig state convention met in Donaldsonville. It was reported by the Democratic press as being a dull affair, wherein none of the city leaders were present. If the convention was dull, "on dit, the town of

27 New Orleans Bee, May 10, 1836.
28 Ibid., May 6, 1836.
Donaldsonville was not; it was kept in a continuous excitement during the two days that the Convention sat. The Jackson-Van Buren Editors there...came near being devoured by some of the Whig party!" The convention endorsed White and Tyler, but it seems that unanimity and enthusiasm were lacking. The electors named for the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth districts were A. Hoa, A. Barrow, A. Landry, J. Dupre, and F. Gaiennie.

Early in the campaign the New Orleans Bee reviewed the hapless condition of the Whigs:

The heterogeneous party have proclaimed two tickets for President and Vice-President, viz: Harrison and Granger in the North; and White and Tyler in the South—to both of which they cling with equal and undistinguishable pertinency. Ask a Whig of Louisiana,—Are you against Harrison? Are you against White? No. Are you in favor of Harrison? Yes. Are you in favor of White? Yes. Are you in favor of Granger for Vice-President? Yes. Are you also in favor of Tyler for Vice-President? Yes. Was ever such a party since the fall of Catiline, pushed to such an extremity?

Continuing the theme, the editor declared Harrison to be an Abolitionist. Francis Granger, of New York, was an Abolitionist "of the most fanatical character," for he was the chief mover and promoter of that diabolical excitement in the North, which recently had been so dangerously reflected in Congress. Disunion and civil war might easily have resulted had it not been for the wise, decisive and energetic proceedings of the Democratic friends of Mr. Van Buren in New England, New York, and Pennsylvania. The people of Louisiana were further informed that Granger, in his place in the House of Representatives of the United States, delivered inflammatory speeches in support of the petitions of the Aboli-

29 New Orleans Courier, June 28, 1836.
30 New Orleans Bee, August 1, 1836.
tionist, refusing to compromise his position of immediate emancipation of southern slaves. This being the case against Granger,

...Will the people of Louisiana, or of the Southern states, countenance for a moment a party of whom this man is a principal leader? A man who would not be permitted to live amongst us, if he dared to express the same opinions and views here which he enforced with all his eloquence on the floor of Congress?

In as far as Harrison was concerned, it was monotonously restated that he too was an Abolitionist and that he too was a favorite with the whole fanatical horde of the North. It was because of his Abolition convictions that his name was placed on the same ticket with that of Granger.

Furthermore, Harrison, while a member of the Ohio legislature had voted for a measure which would permit sheriffs, when prisoners before the bar were not able to pay fines or costs, to sell out such prisoners as servants to any person in Ohio, who would pay the whole amount due. In other words THE MAN-SELLING WHIG CANDIDATE voted in the Ohio legislature for a law providing for the SALE OF FREE WHITE MEN INTO BONDAGE. Whigs of the fanatical Harrison school would drag impoverished white men from their helpless families to be enchained in slavery. A majority of the opposition, with Harrison at their head, to realize their darling project of abolition, would do that which nature stamps as an impossibility, namely, make the negro and the white men equals.

Need we now ask will the Yeomanry, the Mechanics, and the Planters of Louisiana, aid in the elevation of General Harrison, who would raise the negro above his natural sphere, and lower the white man in the same ratio? They will not give their votes to White, the apostate, whose sole object in running is to defeat the election of the Poor Man's Friend, Martin Van Buren, who stands by the interests of the Planter, and is the incorruptible guardian of the purity of our institutions, and will preserve our inestimable Constitution inviolate.32

31 Ibid.
32 New Orleans Courier, October 15, 1836.
White, "the apostate," was also subjected to a merciless Democratic excoriation. He was, according to New Orleans Bee, only a decoy, who was being used to entrap Southern votes. The Whigs were asked the pertinent and embarrassing questions of how they could consistently support a man who had voted against every measure tending to bring Louisiana's public lands into market; who, with no sympathy for the sugar planters, had opposed the protective policy in toto, and had desired to annihilate the whole system; who, contrary to the Union spirit of the Whigs of Louisiana, was a sustainer of the doctrine of Nullification? Did he not hold that Congress was more competent to elect a president than the people, and was not his candidacy, being prosecuted for the sole purpose of carrying the election to the House of Representatives? Had he not advocated the extension of the franchise to free people of colour; and was he not a traitor to all previous political principles which he had so long professed? "How can the Whigs, who as a party, seemed willing to sacrifice the Constitution and liberty of their country, to preserve the charter of the Bank of the United States, how can they vote for Mr. White, who was one of the most decided and efficient enemies of that institution, and whose exertions coinciding in their full extent with the views of the President, and who contributed as much to its overthrow as any man in the Senate?", was the impertinent question of the New Orleans Bee.

As a warning to wavering Democrats who might be tempted to vote for White because he was a Southerner and a slaveholder, it needed remembering that Hugh L. White had shamefully apostatized from his former professions.

33 Ibid., October 23, 1836.
34 New Orleans Bee, October 14, 1836.
35 New Orleans Courier, September 15, 1836.
36 New Orleans Bee, August 1, 1836.
and ranged himself under the banner of the opposition with the view of
destroying measures which he once so proudly and nobly sustained. It was
to be regretted that in an evil hour he suffered ambition or resentment
to swerve him from the path of duty, but at the same time it was necessary
to visit upon him such a defeat as would be a lesson to future politicians.

The Bee caustically continued:

Oh! but then the great John Tyler, of Virginia, is joined to
the political fortunes of Mr. White; these two worthies are on the
same ticket. Yes, White and Tyler are coupled together.... Tyler
the Nullifier, who in Congress advocated the doctrine...is recom-
manded to the people of Louisiana for the office next in rank to
that of Chief Magistrate. There are few nullifiers in this state;
the atmosphere and climate appear to be uncongenial to their nature;
there are few here who would tolerate any attempt to mutilate the
proud and glorious flag of our country....the name of John Tyler, of
Virginia, will not greatly augment the strength of the Whig party
with any class of our population.

The candidacy of Webster excited no interest in Louisiana. The
Democratic Bee did, however, concede that Webster "altho by far the most
deserving of the opposition candidates—a man of intrinsic merits—he is
entirely out of the question beyond Massachusetts, where we are sorry to
see his playing second fiddle to such an empiric as Harrison."

In defence of Van Buren, he was constantly presented to the people
of Louisiana as the only candidate that could safely be supported when
they properly regarded their own interests and domestic policy. It should
be apparent, urged the Louisiana Democratic press, that White, even though
a slaveholder, was simply a cat's paw for Webster and a foil for Harrison.
As a serious candidate, White need not be considered. He was simply a
stupid actor, unwittingly involved in a dark plot to foist upon the South

37 Ibid., October 27, 1836.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
Harrison and his infamous friends. The ultimate object of these fanatics, in fact their sole aim was the destruction of the South. Actually, the contest was between Harrison and Van Buren, and every vote given to the slaveholder White was in reality a vote for the Abolitionist Harrison.

Van Buren had a clear record, and he had boldly declared himself:

I prefer not only you, but all the people of the United States shall now understand that if the desire of that portion of them which is favorable to my elevation to the chief magistracy should be gratified, I must go into the presidential chair, the inflexible and uncompromising opponent of any attempt on the part of Congress to abolish slavery in the district of Columbia against the wishes of the slaveholding states; and also with the determination equally decided to resist the slightest interference with the subjects in the states where it exists.40

When the Whig press thundered a broadside at the Abolition leanings of Van Buren, it was answered, in part, with this salvo:

...The whiggies in the east denounce Mr. Van Buren for being disposed "to propitiate the slave holding interests" by protecting the South in the peaceable and constitutional enjoyment of their property. He is bitterly denounced by the leading abolitionists, wherever they dare to raise their voices—and here the whiggies impudently assert that he is in favor of abolishing slavery! The truth is, the opposition, composed of abolitionists, nullifiers, and federalists are acting in concert.... These factions are laboring to rule or dismember the confederacy.... Abolitionists and nullifiers are operating as allies...to make two governments...the abolitionists in the North, the nullifiers in the South. Such would be the result, should the Union ever be dissolved in consequence of interference on the part of the North with slavery as it exists in the Southern States.41

Beyond his soundness on the slavery issue, Van Buren's record as a statesman and diplomatist were stressed. He was intimately acquainted with public business, he was bland and agreeable of manners, he disarmed malevolence, and these had given him a reputation and popularity which few public men ever attain. He had been reproached as being an intriguer

40 Ibid., passim, 1836. This declaration was published daily.
41 New Orleans Courier, October 17, 1836. Quoted from the Louisville (Ky.) Advertiser.
and a magician, but he had such stoical forbearance as not to be excited by personal censure and abuse.

As for Colonel Johnson, his qualifications were too generally known to require recommendations. Surely Louisiana could not hesitate a single moment in her preference of him, over the Abolitionist Cranger or the Nullifier Tyler.

During 1856, the Whig journals of Louisiana defensively blared away at the abolitionist tendencies of Martin Van Buren, and periodically scorned the shibboleth that he was a "Northern man with Southern principles." On the other hand, they contended, the "soundness" of White and Tyler transcended all suspicion. White and Tyler were Southerners, and they were slaveholders. Admittedly, each of them had once been affiliated with the Democracy, but this was not of itself damning, for they, like thousands of other staunch Whigs, had courageously demonstrated their independence when convinced that Executive despotism, along with the other legion of evils inherent in Jacksonism, was reducing the nation to ruin.

The greatest factor which favored the "hapless" Whigs was the uncertain economic situation. State banks had been lavish in their issuance of notes, and had thereby far exceeded their powers of redemption. The conservatives of the community were apprehensively watching the mad speculation which paralleled the creation of state banks. Cautious men knew that sound business was transacted only on the basis of sound currency. Their experienced judgment convinced them that the gaudy commercial bubble which so recently had been blown, was ephemeral, and presently would burst, leaving only the

42 New Orleans Bee, October 22, 1836.
43 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, passim, 1836; New Orleans Commercial Bulletin, passim, 1836.
void which it had occupied. They profoundly desired the re-charter of the United States Bank, which had in time past so salutarily controlled the enterprise of the nation.

During 1835 and 1836, the Louisiana agricultural situation was also unstable. With the reduction of the tariff, foreign sugars glutted the American market. The price was reduced to six cents a pound. Sugar could not profitably be produced in Louisiana at this quotation. Sugar planters were restless and dissatisfied. To avoid ruin, many turned temporarily to cotton cultivation, but during the while they nursed their injury, and were presently to give it political expression.

There was a minor attempt to introduce religion into the campaign. Van Buren had seemingly somewhere, sometime been "accused" by the Whigs of the North as being a Catholic. During the decade of the thirties, as every student of the period knows, religious bigotry in the North and East ran high as also did the sentiment against foreigners. Van Buren was actually a communicant of the Dutch Reform Church, but the New Orleans Democratic press took no heed of that fact. They accepted and defended him as a Catholic, mindful of course that a substantial part of the voters of south Louisiana were affiliated with the Roman Church. The Whigs were blistered for their intolerance, and so the matter rested.

It should be noted here, in view of future developments, that the naturalized citizens of Louisiana were gaining recognition and commanding political attention. To this group the Louisiana Democracy appealed:

Never can the Democratic Party be so narrow minded as to look upon naturalized citizens as foreigners. The term thus applied to

44 New Orleans Courier, October 29, 1836.
them by the opposite party, plainly marks out the course that will be pursued by the Whigs toward naturalized citizens, should Harrison and White be elected to the Presidential Chair. They would indeed be proscribed as foreigners; they would be excluded from public employment; and be considered as interlopers in the country, only suffered to act the part of "hewers of wood and drawers of water," by a party whose chief characteristic is the aristocratic one of exclusiveness.45

Inasmuch as there already was a Native American Association existing in New Orleans, the above appeal was not without its own particular force. Reams of balderdash were printed, the majority of which is trivial and of no consequence. Predictions and analyses were made. Should the election go to the House, the Louisiana Democrats demonstrated by meticulous analysis to the Louisiana Whigs that White had not the remotest chance of victory.

The usual rallies were held, the usual local orations filled the atmosphere, and the usual resolutions were passed. Concerning resolutions, the following is a fair example of the stand of the Democracy:

RESOLVED, that this meeting views with contempt the efforts being made in other States to elevate to the Presidency Wm. H. Harrison, an avowed and ardent advocate of negro emancipation; and that we regard the attempt to impose Hugh L. White upon the people of Louisiana, as subsidiary endeavor to secure the election of the abolition candidate.

RESOLVED, that in order to defeat this serious intrigue—to preserve the property and the rights of the people of this State inviolate, we will use all honorable means to advance the election of Martin Van Buren, who has pledged himself to resist, to the uttermost of his abilities, all legislation of Congress on the subject of slavery.47

The polling began on Monday, November 7, and continued through Wednesday. The final results were: Van Buren and Johnson, 3653; White

45 Ibid., October 31, 1836.
46 New Orleans Courier, October 14, 1836.
47 Ibid., November 2, 1836.
and Tyler, 3384. Returns from Natchitoches and Claiborne parishes were missing, but those were not of sufficient moment to alter the result.

The contest in New Orleans was unusually close. White won the city by a ten-vote majority. In the state at large, the contest was also close, Van Buren's ticket winning by less than 300 votes. An analysis of the vote distribution reveals that White carried a majority of the sugar parishes constituting the first and third congressional districts. His majority in the first district was insignificant, only seventeen. In the third district, however, the Whig majority was quite substantial, being 442. Van Buren won Louisiana's electoral vote by a landslide in the second district. Three of the first district parishes carried by the Whigs in 1832 were lost in 1836. These were Plaquemines, Jefferson, and St. John the Baptist. On the other hand, the Whigs gained two parishes in this district, St. Bernard and Assumption. In all five of the parishes mentioned, the vote was light. Two parishes of the third district, Avoyelles and Concordia, which had been won by the Democrats in 1832, joined the Whig cause in 1836. These gained by the Whigs were somewhat counterbalanced by the loss of Rapides. In the second congressional district, the stronghold of the Democracy, the vote given by parishes to Jackson was identical with that given to Van Buren. West Baton Rouge, in 1836, as in 1832, was the only Whig parish of the second district. The total vote of both parties in 1832 was 5749. The party vote was: Democrat, 3918; Whig, 1831. The total vote in 1836 was 7038. As before stated, the Democrats received 3654, and the Whigs 3384. These figures reveal that the Whigs had gained 1533 votes over 1832. The Democrats, by the same reckoning had lost 264. Two causes may be assigned to explain these
statistical gains made by the Whigs. It will be recalled that 1832 was a "cholera year." The general health of the state was excellent in 1836. A general state-wide increase of the poll was to be expected. A reaction toward conservatism in business has previously been offered as a reason for a substantial return to the Whig point of view.

As the ominous shadow of panic fell upon Louisiana, the legislators of the state passed an act chartering a new financial institution, the Farmer's Bank. Governor White vetoed the bill, and in a message forbade the distribution of Federal funds within the state on the basis proposed by the legislature.

During 1837, every bank in New Orleans suspended specie payment. Louisiana was laid prostrate. As the harrowing year drew to a close, the Governor wrote to the legislature:

From the summit of the loftiest prosperity, we have been precipitated into a state of financial embarrassment that is without comparison. We as an enterprising and industrious people are now experiencing the full disastrous effects of the sudden and violent reaction which has taken place toward our monetary system. An unsuspected blow has been struck at credit and confidence. The products of agriculture, and prosperity in general, have suffered an alarming depreciation. All of our industries are paralyzed, and to add to our misfortune, we are exposed to the plague of an entirely irregular and vicious circulation.

In Louisiana, the situation was perfect for a political revolution. The Whig press took advantage of their priceless opportunity, and opened a withering fire on their adversaries. Events and developments were proving the Whig contention that a national bank was eminently necessary. The "whole-hog" Democrats, fully aware of the precariousness of their situation, decided that the best strategy was to take the offensive.

48 Louisiana House Journal (French ed.), 13 Leg., 2 Sess., 4-5.  
49 Gayarre, Louisiana, IV, 668.  
50 Louisiana House Journal, 13 Leg., 2 Sess., 2.
On January 11, 1838, John Slidell presented the following resolution to the Louisiana lower house:

Since the establishment of a national bank situated in one of the Northern cities would necessarily give to the management of such a corporation influence tending to control commerce and exchange in each part of the Union, and considering the attitudes which of late have frequently manifested by the North and East to interfere with the domestic institutions of the States possessing slaves, it becomes necessary to the security of the Southern States that they free themselves from all financial dependence of a section of the country that has exhibited such hostility to their institutions.

Therefore be it resolved, That the establishment of a national bank is not advisable and is very dangerous, and that our senators in congress be instructed, and our representatives be requested to oppose any bill having for its purpose the establishment of any such institution.51

While Slidell's resolution was still pending in the house, a large gathering of Democrats, on January 24, assembled in a rather informal meeting at the City Exchange, New Orleans. Horatio Davis addressed the concourse, after which this resolution was adopted:

Whereas, A resolution has been presented to the general assembly instructing our Senators and requesting our representatives in Congress to oppose the charter of a National Bank; and whereas great efforts have been made by the enemies of democratic principles to impress upon the minds of the general assembly, the opinion of the people are in favor of such a bank;

And whereas, we deem it important for the confutation of these errors, that the people should at this time, give free and full expression to their opinions upon this subject, therefore resolved, that...a Bank cannot...and should not be created by Congress.52

Slidell's legislative resolution came up for final consideration on February 12. It was carried, the vote being twenty-two to twenty-one. A motion to reject the preamble of the resolution was lost by the vote of twenty-eight to fifteen. The whole proposition was lost in the senate.

52 New Orleans Courier, January 25, 1838.
53 Louisiana House Journal, 13 Leg., 2 Sess., 58.
These Democratic expressions are most significant, because in the
Louisiana general elections of 1838, "The Whigs rallied under the banners
of a national bank; it alone formed the bone of contention, for all other
conflicting views of national policy appear to have been kept entirely
out of sight by them." 54

The Democratic state convention met at the Merchant's Exchange,
New Orleans, January 25, 1838. As to the great issue, they had already
defined their position. Their immediate object in meeting was the selection
of a gubernatorial candidate. Thomas Wadsworth nominated Denis Prieur.
Wadsworth considered Prieur's proven integrity, his sound political prin­
ciples, and his personal popularity were qualities which strongly recom­
mended him to the consideration of the convention. Duncan Kenner also
spoke in favor of Wadsworth's nominee, and declared that Prieur's can­
didacy had better prospects of success than any other that could be put
forth by the Democratic party.

Prieur's chief competitors for the nomination were B. Z. Canoge,
Joseph Walker, John R. Grymes, and John B. Dawson. All save the last
named withdrew. Prieur won the nomination by defeating Dawson twenty­
four votes to seventeen. Ratification meetings were held, and with the
coming of spring, the "Friend of the People" took to the stump.

"The soi disant democrat convention" which nominated Prieur ran into
immediate difficulties. "Country" allegiance was far from unanimous in
its acceptance of the "City" candidate. The editor of the St. Francisville

54 New Orleans Courier, July 16, 1838.
55 Ibid., January 27, 1838.
56 Ibid., January 29, 1838.
57 Ibid., January 21; February 20; May 8; June 6, 21, 1838.
Louisiana Chronicle bitterly complained that only fourteen country parishes were represented at the New Orleans meeting, and these, in session with the Democratic members of the general assembly, could not be considered a fair exposition of the voice of the people. He analyzed the vote given in the convention to prove that the light country representation had been submerged to satisfy the selfish schemes of the city delegation. A full country representation would never have permitted a vote which would have left a remote chance of augmenting the already great powers of New Orleans, for Louisiana as a whole could not be brought to the point of placing executive, as well as monied powers, "under the heel of city boots, to be crushed, trampled on, and laughed at by "swell heads", "big bugs", or whatever other name the aristocracy of New Orleans might be designated either by themselves, or by us poor country loons." The editor continued by professing Democratic convictions, and declared that the country Democrats had been preferential to the nomination of one of their highly respected associates, John B. Dawson. Inasmuch as the name of Dawson had been dropped "in favor of city leven," the editor "with no compunction of conscience" had hoisted the gubernatorial flag of Henry Johnson. As to the prospective candidacy of A. B. Roman,

...we have insuperable objections, which we will refrain from exposing unless dared by our own supporters; we shall hardly even then think it necessary; his career has been marked by that haughty bearing in office which suits not republicans; particularly when contrasted with the open, and sincere friendship of Henry Johnson to all classes.58

Henry Johnson had every reason to believe that he would be designated by the Whigs for the governorship. He accordingly declined candidacy in the

58 St. Francisville Louisiana Chronicle, February 12, 1838.
congressional contest, and thereupon Edward D. White became the Whig nominee in the first district. Johnson's maneuvers were doomed to defeat, for the "insuperable objections" to Roman were not generally prevalent. Early in the campaign Roman was popularly espoused by the Whig party. Johnson properly estimated the swing of Whig sentiment, and discreetly withdrew his name. The New Orleans Courier commented that Roman had shown "the most ungenerous and ungrateful conduct in forcing the resignation of the man who had once made him governor". The same paper averred that Roman was selected by the Whigs solely on account of his birth, "not because they had any particular affection for native Louisianians, but from the belief that they would by this means obtain a larger vote for the ran than their principles could ever command." The Whigs by the nomination of Roman hoped to flatter the native population and at the same time to insure the triumph of a despicable faction in New Orleans. Denis Prieur was portrayed by the Courier as being essentially a Louisianian, a true "Creole." Louisiana was the land of his birth and affections; he had grown with its growth; rejoiced in its prosperity; mourned in its adversity; sustained its character by his conduct in peace; and risked his life by his conduct in war. He was an American, and was not cursed with those narrow prejudices which had on more than one occasion distinguished his opponent.

The congressional and legislative elections were perhaps more lively, and perhaps more provocative of interest than was the gubernatorial campaign. It has been stated that in the first district Johnson had retired

59 New Orleans Courier, May 15, 1838.
60 Ibid., February 10; May 26, 1838.
in favor of White. The Democrats of this district rallied about the
reliable John Slidell. Rice Garland, Whig, was unopposed in the third
district. In the second district, Thomas Withers Chinn was designated by
the Whigs as their champion. This district, represented by Eleazar
Theolock Ripley, had long been regarded as the impregnable citadel of
the Louisiana Democracy.

In the general elections, "the State of Louisiana...pronounced her
sovereign voice in condemnation of Mr. Van Buren and his administration." 61
The Whigs enjoyed a rare landslide. Roman won a popular victory and the
resultant legislative election over Prieur. All three of the Whig con-
gressional candidates were successful; and the triumph was crowned by
the return of a Whig majority to the Fourteenth Legislature.

A Whig of New Orleans gave the following interesting account to the
Washington National Intelligencer:

Messrs. Gales & Seaton: Our general election terminated on the
4th instant, after the most severe and animated contest ever held in
Louisiana. The Locofoocos made their death-struggle, and have 'died
in the last ditch'. I have delayed writing you until we had sufficient
returns to leave no doubt of the result; and I now have the pleasure
to inform you we have carried the Governor, the entire delegation to
Congress, and the Legislature. Mr. Prieur, their candidate, has been
for 10 years Mayor of this city, where his connexions and great official
influence had made his friends calculate on a majority of 600 to 800,
and the Whigs always conceded that he would carry New Orleans by 250
to 300; instead of which, he had only the meager majority of 8 votes.
As a proof that even this was owing to the above circumstances in his
favor, the city has given 620 majority for the Whig ticket to Congress,
and in the district about 1200 for Mr. White, our former Representative
and present excellent and patriotic Chief Magistrate, over Mr. Slidell.
We have also carried our entire city delegation to the Legislature;
but the great triumph has been in the 2d Congressional district, at
present represented by Gen. Ripley, which was the hotbed of Van Burenism,
and was always considered as good for 1200 majority for the Adminis-

61 New Orleans Weekly Picayune, July 16, 1838.
62 Louisiana House Journal, 14 Leg., 1 Sess., 7; Louisiana Senate Journal,
14 Leg., 1 Sess., 6-7.
63 New Orleans True American, July 12, 21, 1838; New Orleans Louisiana
Advertiser, July 14, 29, 1838.
tration, and, where, on this occasion, we have elected Chinn by about 400. Mr. Garland, the present representative, walked over the course in the 3rd district without an opponent, as the Locos thought it useless to start a candidate.

Our Legislature consists of 50 members. We already have returns of the election of 29 Whigs, and shall probably have 6 or 8 more; leaving the lower House stand at 35 or 37 to 15 or 13. As our opponents clamor for the right of instruction, our Senators, Messrs. Nicholas and Kouten, will have an opportunity next session of acting under the orders of the Legislature.

The Whig party fought openly and boldly under the banner of 'a National Bank and sound currency', which motto headed their tickets, and was placarded in the streets....Enormous bets were depending upon the result of the contest, and our opponents not only lose their candidates, but have the additional chagrin of losing their money.  

As it was to be expected, the Louisiana Whigs anticipated the presidential election of 1840 with the keenest enthusiasm. Whigs generally were in favor of a national nominating convention; multiple candidate and "favorite sons" could thereby be avoided. In accord with the general demand, the Whig members of Congress assembled to set a date and a place for a national convention. The date agreed upon was December 4, 1839. The place designated was Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

In the interim a mass meeting of Whigs assembled at Harrisburg on September 4, 1839. The object of this meeting was to promote union and harmony. Henry Clay was subject to extravagant praise, but the opinion was expressed that William Henry Harrison was the only Whig who could concentrate the party in a successful assault against the administration.

From the standpoint of merits and talents, Henry Clay was the logical choice for the nomination, but there were two factors which militated against him. He was the chief advocate of a protective tariff, an issue which was not favored by the South Atlantic states. His affiliation

64 Washington National Intelligencer, July 17, 1838.
with the Masonic order made him unacceptable to the erstwhile Anti-Masons of the Eastern states.

Alexander Porter, enjoying temporary retirement on his Louisiana plantation, would have none of the objections. He optimistically anticipated the nomination of Clay. To J. J. Crittenden, of Kentucky, he wrote: "I rejoice for Mr. Clay's sake and his country's that his chances of success grow brighter and brighter every day. If I can only live to see justice done to him I think I shall be able to sing the nunc dimittas, though I never could turn a tune in my life."

Henry Clay was entirely sensible to the fact that many members of the convention were opposed to his candidacy. He realized that the objections which were being urged against him were sufficiently well-founded to destroy the solidarity of his very loose organization. None the less, the presidential bee buzzed loudly in his bonnet.

"In pursuance of (the) resolution adopted by the opposition members of congress, for the assembling of a National Convention, composed of delegates from all the states, in proportion to their representation in congress, for the purpose of recommending suitable persons as candidates for the offices of president and vice-president of the United States at the next election;

The delegates from the respective states to the said National Convention, assembled at Harrisburg, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, at 12 o'clock N. on the 4th of December, A. D. 1839; when,

65 Alexander Porter to J. J. Crittenden, Oak Lawn (Louisiana), March 9, 1838; Crittenden Papers (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).
'On motion of Mr. Williamson, of Pennsylvania, Isaac C. Pates, of Massachusetts, was called to the chair, and Charles B. Penrose and John Smith of Pennsylvania, were appointed as secretaries.

"It was resolved, That the Secretary call the respective states in the order in which they are called in the Congress of the United States, and that as they (were) so called, the delegates from each state (would) present their credentials.

"Which (having been) ordered; the Secretary proceeded to call the states...."

Only one Whig delegate from Louisiana was in attendance. This was C. Mason Graham of Rapides Parish. Mr. Graham served on three committees: to report permanent officers; to select candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency; and to inform the nominees of their nomination. This last committee was composed of one delegate from each state represented.

Clay, regardless of his aspirations, did not place personal ambition before party harmony. Previous to the convention, he had addressed a letter to the Kentucky delegation. This letter, in the possession of General Leslie Combs, was on motion of William Preston, read before the convention. Clay stated in this communication that he had been urged to be a candidate for the nomination and that he had been requested not to be. He felt that under these embarrassing circumstances, it most advisable to leave to the convention at Harrisburg the free selection of candidates, as being the assembly to which, by common consent, that important duty has

67 Ibid., 9.
68 Ibid., 10, 25.
69 Ibid., 21.
been referred. Representing, as it probably will, all parts of the United States, bringing together the feelings and views of all, and comparing and weighing the local information which it will derive from every portion, will be most competent to make a nomination acceptable to the great majority of its constituents." Clay concluded his communication by declaring his profound gratitude to those of his fellow citizens who were zealous of seeing him placed in the exalted and responsible station of the presidency, but regardless, he felt compelled to say, in entire truth and sincerity, that if the deliberations of the convention should lead them to the choice of another as the candidate of the opposition, that such candidate ought to be nominated, and that he, Clay, would be far from feeling any discontent; it would have his best wishes, and receive his cordial support.

Alexander Porter had been appointed by the Whig members of the Louisiana legislature as a delegate to the Harrisburg convention. Porter was authorized by the Arkansas Whig committee to cast their vote in favor of Clay, as none of the Arkansans were able to be in attendance. Porter did not go to Harrisburg, and fear of the charge of "ruckerizing" caused the convention to prohibit Graham from exercising the proxy conferred on Porter.

Henry Clay, despite the objection to him in the convention and his own gesture to withdraw for the sake of harmony, led all candidates for

70 Ibid., 22-23.
71 Ibid., passim.
nomination on the first ballot. On the second day of balloting, a resolu-
tion favoring Harrison as the party nominee carried. John Tyler, of
Virginia, was unanimously endorsed as the vice-presidential choice.

A resolution was passed by the convention recommending to the sev-
eral states that they hold conventions for the purposes of selecting
electoral tickets and of perfecting general, effective organization.

A second resolution recommended the Whig young men of the several
states to assemble at the city of Baltimore on the first Monday of May,
1840, "to take such measures as will most effectually aid the advance-
ment of the Whig cause." The date and city proposed were neatly calcu-
lated to coincide with the assembling of the Democratic national nominating
convention.

The Louisiana Whig press, almost universally committed to Clay,
accepted the Harrisburg nominations with a flourish of enthusiasm; but
Porter could not acquiesce with so much grace. To Crittenden he wrote,
"Just think of a man such as Mr. Clay after 30 years of such service as no
man has rendered to this Republic except Washington, without whom the Whig
party could not this day exist, cast aside for a driveller. What are we
coming to? Envy I see is hereafter to exclude talent & genius & virtue
from the first office of the Republic--they are to be filled by poor devils
who can be made the instruments of second rate men & used by demagogues--I
have not been so much excited for the last twenty years. I am so much so
I dare not trust myself to write more.

72 Notices of endorsement appeared in Whig papers throughout Louisiana.
Some of these were: New Orleans Bee, New Orleans Crisis, New Orleans
German-American, New Orleans True American, New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser,
Baton Rouge Gazette, Clinton Feliciana Whig and People's Press, Monroe
Ouachita Standard, Alexandria Red River Whig, Franklin Planter's Banner, and
the Natchitoches Constitutional Advocate.

73 Porter to Crittenden, New Orleans, December 18, 1839; Crittenden Papers.
In commenting on the same subject, Clay wrote to N. Bouligny, of New Orleans, that "if the nomination at Harrisburg produced surprise, honor and good faith imposed on me the duty of acquiescing in and supporting it; and I promptly and publicly avow my purpose to do so."

The New Orleans Daily Times (Democrat) observed:

The Whigs begin to find that the friends of Henry Clay are not as well satisfied with the nomination of the old lady, as was anticipated. Many of their papers have openly avowed they would support Mr. Van Buren in preference to such an imbecile, poor, miserable old man, whose intellect whatever he had, is almost gone. Besides they see, many of them, that if Harrison is elected, Webster will be president 'de facto' while Clay will have but little to say on the subject. There is no question about it, that Clay's friends hate Harrison and Webster's; and Webster's hate Harrison and Clay's. With such discordant materials in a party what possible hope can they have for success?

There was a general realization among the Whigs that they were united upon one and only one principle, and that was opposition to the Administration. So diverse were the opinions of the party, that the issuance of an address or a platform was avoided. The Keystone, an Administration organ published in Harrisburg, commented,

The recent Federal convention which met in this place, adjourned sine die, without having made any provision to issue an address to the people of the United States, explanatory of the grounds upon which they claim their support, and without the passage of a single resolution expressive of their own sentiments upon the various questions of National policy now in agitation. Indeed, so far from acceding in this particular to the reasonable expectation of the public, a proposition to appoint a committee whose duty it should be to report an address, was openly and violently OPPOSED by Mr. Leigh, of Virginia, and eventually VOTED DOWN by the almost unanimous voice of the convention. Who, we would now ask, is afraid to meet the issue upon all the momentous topics which now in some measure divide the American people?

74 Henry Clay to N. Bouligny, Washington, January 19, 1840; Clay Papers (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).
75 New Orleans Daily Times, January 30, 1840.
76 Harrisburg Keystone, December 11, 1839.
A few months later, Clay, cognizant that the Democrats were making capital out of the failure of the Whigs to issue a statement of principles, corresponded with John II. Clayton about the matter. He wrote

Favor me...with an expression of your opinion as to the propriety of promulgating anything like a creed. The danger is supplying fresh alimont for demagogues. On the other hand, I think perhaps erroneously, that the Harrisburg Convention having omitted to publish any address, our cause suffers from the imputation of the other side that the Whigs have no principles which they dare openly avow. It is a safe general rule that it is best to remain silent and not act, unless you are fully convinced that what you mean to say or do is right; and in this instance I do not wish to depart from the rule. 77

The young Whigs, as had been strategically planned, met simultaneously with the Democratic National Nominating Convention. By far the most spectacular was the national convention of young Whigs.

A thousand banners burnished by the sun, floating in the breeze, ten thousand handkerchiefs waved by the fair daughters of the city...A hundred thousand faces were before you,—age, manhood, youth and beauty filled every place where a foothold could be got, or any portion of the procession be seen....The free men of the land were there—the fiery son of the South, the substantial citizen of the East, the hardy pioneer of the West....It was the epitome of the nation. 78

The Democrats in much speech making expressed their disgust of the Whig "animal show." Van Buren was the easy choice for re-nomination, but there was much dissention regarding Colonel Richard N. Johnson, as the vice-presidential nominee. Because of this dissention, the convention

77 Henry Clay to John II. Clayton, Washington, May 29, 1840; Clayton Papers (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress).
named no vice-presidential candidate. This omission, and its cause, gave the Whigs the opportunity to give vent to some effective derision, and ably to counter the Democrat charge that the Whigs had no principles.

The platform issued by the Democratic convention favored strict construction and Jeffersonian democracy; and denounced assumption of states' debts; internal improvements at the expense of the Federal Government; protective tariffs; the United States Bank, or any connection between government and banking institutions; and congressional abolition or private agitation calculated to disturb the principle that the states were the sole and proper judges of anything appertaining to such of their own affairs which was not contrary to the Constitution.

The campaign, which was prosecuted with unrelaxing vigor throughout the entire year of 1840, turned largely about the issues of abolition, executive usurpation, and the depressed state of business.

Each party accused the presidential candidate of the other with having abolition leanings. The New Orleans Democrat boldly and unequivocally charged:

We declare Harrison is an avowed Abolitionist; that all the northern Whig members of Congress are Abolitionists, and have on all occasions voted in favor of abolition to a man, while all the democratic members of Congress are opposed to abolition, in favor of southern rights, and have invariably voted with the south, in opposition to abolition, to a man.

We have also stated and defied contradiction, that "Nothing has so far prevented the passage of a law in Congress for the immediate abolition of slavery in the United States, but the firm resistance

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79 Baton Rouge Gazette, May 23, 1840: The Democratic National convention adjourned on the 6th instant in the city of Baltimore. Mr. Van Buren was re-nominated for the office of President, but no nomination was made for Vice-President. After a hot discussion, Mr. Clay of Alabama, offered a resolution that it was inexpedient to nominate a candidate for Vice-Presidency. The resolution was adopted at the close of the session.
and self-devotion of the northern Democratic members of Congress, all the northern Whig members of Congress having given abundant evidence, by their test votes, that they would have sustained such a law.\[90\]

The New Orleans Bee answered by pointing to records in which it was proved that Harrison supported the Talmadge Resolution in 1820, whereas Van Buren, during the same year, as a member of the New York legislature, had voted for a resolution which declared that Congress could constitutionally prohibit slavery in the territories of the United States. He had, also, voted for a resolution requesting New York representatives and senators in Congress to oppose the admission of any state into the Union which did not make constitutional provision for the prohibition of slavery, and such prohibition of slavery therein would be an "indispensable condition of admission." Thus, "He had voted in the New York Senate to instruct Rufus King, the Senator to the United States Senate, to oppose the admission of Missouri." Thus, "He had voted in the New York Senate to instruct Rufus King, the Senator to the United States Senate, to oppose the admission of Missouri."

Furthermore, continued the Bee, Van Buren in 1821, as a member of the New York constitutional convention, voted to give free negroes the right of suffrage. This was cited as a second point of evidence regarding the negrophilism of Martin Van Buren.

In 1822, Van Buren voted to prohibit the introduction of slaves into the territory of Florida. In 1836, he declared that he could not pronounce that Congress did not possess the power of interfering with or abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia.

80 New Orleans Democrat, October 1, 1840.
81 New Orleans Bee, June 3, 1840. The Bee in 1840 was under Whig editorship.
82 Ibid., June 19, 1840.
83 Ibid., June 23, 1840.
84 Ibid., August 3, 1840.
"The abolition question," concluded the Bee, "is an issue which the
locofocos have attempted to force upon the country, though, as we have
seen, Mr. Van Buren stands condemned and convicted of the very designs
which his followers are attempting to impute to his opponents. Abolition-
ism is a hobby which the federal locofocos are riding, with the double
view of diverting the attention of the people from the misdeeds of our
rulers, and of awakening and turning to their profit the fears of the
South on a subject of exciting import."

The charge that the Whigs were abolitionists naturally was hurled
with just as much abandon by the Democrats. The Clinton Feliciana Whig
remarked, "The whole body of Whigs, North and South, are charged as
being leagued and cooperating with these diabolical incendiaries....that
many Whigs are abolitionists we sincerely deplore, but that all aboli-
tonists are Whigs is untrue." A long list of northern Van Buren Democrats
was attached to the editorial by way of confirming the point.

The Whig press was filled with refutations of the Democratic accu-
sations. Documents were printed, speeches were reported to prove that
Harrison was the "Friend of the South" and that Van Buren was the deadly
enemy of the institution of slavery.

Yet so pernicious was the report of coalition between the Whigs of
the North and the Abolitionists, that even after the election it did not
subside. Months later an Opelousas editor warned his readers that Southern

85 Ibid., October 14, 1840. The Louisiana Whigs emphatically charged
that there was a union existing between northern locofocos and the abo-
lationists. Ibid., October 20, 1840.
86 Clinton Feliciana Whig and People's Press, January 30, 1839.
87 New Orleans Bee, 1840, passim; practically daily articles, which
bandy the same essential points with tireless repetition.
interests and Southern institutions were not safe in Whig hands. The Abolitionists, he maintained, had gained a great victory in Congress when the Whigs aided them in securing the passage of the twenty-first rule, which allowed abolition petitions to be presented to Congress "...our representative voting for it. Would it be believed—John Moore voting with the Abolitionists! Tell it not in Gath! Let not the sound reach New England—lest the enemy hear it and rejoice." He concluded with the assertion that Northern Democrats were true to the South, whereas Northern Whigs were busily engaged in attacking the constitutional rights of the South.

Occasionally, non-partisan articles upbraided the Abolitionists. Editorial conclusion, regardless of party, was usually identical: "the Abolitionists were preparing to blow to fragments the best government ever conceived."

Announcing James G. Birney, New York, and Thomas Earle, Pennsylvania, as the Abolition (Liberty) party candidates, the New Orleans Bee, in defense of Harrison, furiously exploded:

Let us hear no more of the miserable and worse than despicable calumny that would associate Harrison with this deluded fraction of the northern population. Or, if federal locofocoism, in the extremity of its desperation, and the recklessness of its profligacy, continue the foul and odious slander, let it be regarded with that scorn and loathing which abortive malice is certain to elicit.

Under Andrew Jackson, "executive usurpation" was a rallying cry that carried conviction and weight. "Old Hickory" had not been reluctant to exercise generously his constitutional prerogatives. Forces set in motion by "King Andrew" were not easily halted, and continued to move with dangerous

88 Opelousas Hebdomadal Enquirer, July 27, 1841. Moore, a Whig, had been elected to the Twenty-Seventh Congress by the third district of Louisiana.
89 The Clinton Louisiana Democrat, May 9, 1840.
90 New Orleans Bee, June 11, 1840.
and distressing effect during the administration of Martin Van Buren.

The New Orleans Crisis (whose motto was, "Lay on Macduff, and damned be he who first cries hold—enough") expressed the opinion that:

We believe there is an honest conviction pervading the minds of those who have rightly studied the structure of our government, and who are familiar with the existing posture of our national affairs, that the present contest between the administration and its opponents has had no parallel in importance, since the time of the Revolution....Such has been the progress of Executive usurpation since the inauguration of President Jackson in 1828, that all the constitutional safeguards, devised by the wisdom of our ancestors, have been trampled under foot, and we behold the Army, Navy Treasury, and Legislature, all under the control of one man....Usurpation has been at work, the beautiful system of checks and balances has been destroyed; and the various departments of the government have been merged into one....A crisis has arisen in the affairs of this government—it is in the power of the people by one united effort, to bring back the Republic to its original simplicity. If they do not choose to do that, the alternative is plain and simple, they have only to fit their necks for the yoke which their rulers are preparing for them.91

The Alexandria Red River Whig arraigned the "daring outrages" which had been committed upon established law and usage, and warned that the insidious accumulation of supreme power in the hands of the executive must be forthwith checked, and that "rank agrarianism" must be rebuked, "otherwise the sun of American liberty that rose in effulgence and attained its meridian in splendor, will descend in darkness and set in blood." 92

According to the Monroe Ouachita Standard the Van Buren government was one of usurpation and destruction, whose sole aim was to aggrandize those in power at the expense of the liberties of the people. 93

The New Orleans Bee accused the Van Buren Administration of consolidating all the powers of government in the executive branch. The rejection

91 New Orleans Crisis, August 13, 1840.
92 Alexandria Red River Whig, October 17, 1840.
93 Monroe Ouachita Standard, March 29, 1839.
of the five regularly accredited congressmen of New Jersey was cited as an illustration of its recklessness and despotism. Van Buren had further revealed his malignant designs by proposing a large standing army, which would be directly under executive control, but happily, this scheme had been frustrated. The "standing army bill" now laid "a thing for scorn and disgust in the filthy sewer to which the sub-treasury bill was thrice consigned by popular reprobation."

The most forceful argument used by the Whigs, and the one which carried conviction to every strata of Louisiana society was that the Administration was responsible for the prevailing economic dislocation. The destruction of the United States Bank, the establishment of numerous state banks, the issuance of vast amounts of paper money, and the fever of speculation all contributed to the depression which had become darker by 1840. Property prices had depreciated, and wages for labor had been reduced, commerce had been paralyzed, the currency had been ruined, and every branch of industry had fallen upon evil days. "No state," declared the Bee, "has suffered more than ours from the abuses and errors of the administration. The blows aimed by the executive at the commerce and credit of the country have fallen with horrible force upon Louisiana."

Van Buren's entire administration was reviewed as a period of irreparable economic disaster. By destroying the great regulator of banking corporations, the United States Bank, the number of state banks had been aug-

94 New Orleans Bee, June 30; October 14, 22, 1840.
95 Ibid., July 8; August 11, 22, 25, 1840. The same points were subjects for almost daily reiteration.
96 Ibid., September 15, 1840.
mented from three hundred and fifty to nine hundred, and these institutions were irresponsible; their issues were irredeemable. The Sub-Treasury was calculated to benefit the rich and reduce the poor to infinite poverty.

The Democrats countered, but their cause lost its virulence in the face of the undeniable business recession.

So urgent was this situation that Governor Roman felt impelled to review it in a message to the Louisiana legislature. He wrote:

In the midst of this copiousness of all the original sources of opulence, unprecedented distress and embarrassment pervade every class of society. Commerce—the necessary agent between the producer and consumer—lies prostrated; and our rich products, so liberally lavished, deprived of their natural exchanger, remains dormant, or are sold at ruinous prices. — The remedial power is, unfortunately, not within the reach of the legislature of Louisiana. It forms part of the rights belonging to congress: to that body alone, has been delegated power of regulating commerce, the very life of which is the circulating medium required for the exchange of commodities.

These, who for the last ten years, have swayed the destinies of the Union, have considered as useless and dangerous the national institution, which had most effectually succeeded to check over issues, and to maintain, in every state, a circulation always equivalent to specie, by exercising an efficient control over our local institutions, in requiring of them specie for all balances, created against them, over a certain amount. They have assailed the bank of the United States, on account of its too extended powers; and instead of placing them in more reasonable bounds, instead of correcting the imperfections of its charter, as pointed out by experience—they have preferred to destroy it. They have pretended that, through the agency of the state banks, all the wants of the community, for domestic exchanges and circulation, could be fully met; and that "the considerations, on which the bank of the United States rested its claim to the public favor, were imaginary and groundless." Their will has become the law of the land, and the national bank has ceased to exist. The state banks, from that time, no more restrained, and freed from the control that prevented their increase, when wanting the basis of solid capital, began to multiply in every part of the Union. They extended their discounts beyond measure, and have since inundated the Union with an unprotected

97 Ibid., August 13, 17, 1840.
98 Ibid., August 21, 1840.
99 New Orleans Democrat, October 28, 1840.
currency. Extravagant speculations were the necessary result of this new order of things; all classes of society were hurried along; no project was too vast or chimerical not to be attempted by individuals, corporations, and even legislatures. The facility with which new loans were negotiated, stimulated the spirit of commercial enterprise, and caused a startling difference between exportations and importations—a difference which in the two years of 1835 and 1836, amounted to eighty-nine millions five hundred and nineteen thousand one hundred and sixty dollars. This immense debt, due to foreign countries, occasioned a constant demand for the precious metals piled in the vaults of our banks.

Our general government failing in their financial experiment, did not profit by the lesson of experience; and instead of attributing the faults of the state banks to the real cause—the want of a regulator to their issues—they seem desirous to inflict punishment upon these institutions, because in obeying their own directions they had undertaken more than they could perform; and those very banks who were formerly designated as a able to furnish a healthy circulation are now endeavored to be made subject to public indignation monopolists.

The Governor repeated his strictures of the President and of the general government for ignoring their obligation to every branch of society and industry. He reviewed the precarious condition of the state banks of Louisiana, which banks had been unable since October 18 to resume specie payments.

The critical situation of our banks impose grave duties upon you. Your fellow-citizens, after having sustained the late crisis with moderation, prudence, and firmness which have done them honor, now turn to you. They know that you cannot at present entirely change the present posture of affairs; but they await, with confidence, as a result of your wisdom and patriotism, such measures as may be within your constitutional power, that may assist in sustaining the value of the paper currency which has been emitted and received by virtue of law enacted by yourselves.

Meanwhile, neither party in Louisiana was overlooking the general state elections of July. There was a considerable fight in the second and third congressional districts. Rice Garland, of the third district, who was elected on the Whig ticket to the Twenty-Sixth Congress, resigned early in 1840 to accept a judgeship on the state supreme court bench.

100 Baton Rouge Gazette, March 14, 1840.
John Moore, of St. Mary parish, was brought out to fill the vacancy. His Democrat opponent was Richard Winn. Winn was an able and aggressive campaigner. He was a

...perfect specimen of Martin Van Buren, on a small scale. It is difficult to conceive a more subtle, cunning, and intriguing spirit. He canvassed the district with a true Machiavellian policy. He eschewed in some instances national politics, and took advantage of local questions. In others, he avowed himself all things to all men. 101

Winn labored with indefatigable industry, but he reaped defeat and disappointment for his pains. Moore emerged with a very slight majority. 102 The Whig candidate received 3418 votes, whereas his opponent gained 3352.

"The mortification of the federal locofocos was indescribable," for Winn was "their Magnus Apollo--their great gun of locofocoism."

Chinn, Whig incumbent of the second district, declined candidacy for the Twenty-Seventh Congress. He was the owner of numerous slaves, but he had consistently voted to receive abolition petitions. For this boldness and independence, Chinn was praised by his home-town paper, the Baton Rouge Gazette. It was also stated that Chinn had not found serving in Congress to be the dignity and honor that he had anticipated. Scenes witnessed in that honorable body during its last session had been quite enough to disgust more than one member of it. Thomas Gibbs was nominated to replace Chinn. The Democrats of the second district rallied to the support of their tried and true, John B. Dawson, who won the election by only thirteen votes. White, in the first district, defeated Gilbert Leonard by an overwhelming majority of 2045.

101 New Orleans Bee, July 28, 1840.
102 Ibid., July 24, 1840.
103 Ibid., July 28, 1840.
104 Baton Rouge Gazette, March 28, 1840.
105 Ibid., June 27, 1840.
106 New Orleans Bee, July 28, 1840.
107 Baton Rouge Gazette, July 18, 1840; New Orleans Bee, July 13, 1840.
In the legislative elections, the Whigs succeeded in returning a joint-ballot majority. The new senate was composed of nine Democrats and eight Whigs. The Whigs captured twenty-eight of the fifty house seats.

The Whigs rightfully boasted that in the congressional elections they had won a popular majority of 2066 votes. It was observed that in the approaching presidential election there would be no local considerations to distract the two parties.

The Bee prophesied:

The third district will do her duty, and will give Harrison from six hundred to eight hundred majority. In the first we shall, at the very worse, hold our own, and we shall strive to add a few hundred to our present majority. The second will give a Whig majority, for Gen. Dawson's election is no test of party strength in that district. He is omnipotent in that section of the State. His election by thirteen votes, proves that the Whigs of the second district are clearly in the ascendant. We are sincerely of the opinion that the majority for Harrison in Louisiana, cannot fall below 2,500 and will very likely exceed 3,000.

After the interlude of the general elections, Louisiana Whigs and Democrats furiously renewed their bitter struggle. For four months the newspapers relegated all save political items to secondary consideration. The Whig Central Committee of the Parish of Orleans issued an address "To the Independent Voters of Louisiana." Because this address admirably summarizes the Whig daily press agitation for the year, 1840, it will be analyzed.

The Jackson-Van Buren regime was taken to task on seven counts.

(1) All public offices, however elevated or humble, had been given to appointees strictly on the basis of their Democratic affiliation. Prefer-
ence has been given to those who had been most active in elections. Character and qualifications had not been considerations; vote-getting ability had been the chief requirement. Under such a principle of appointment, robbery had been the order of the day for ten years, and the nation had been defrauded of its treasure. (2) Because of proscription, two-thirds of the citizens of the United States had been completely disqualified from office, and had been made aliens in their own country. (3) There had been an invariable preference shown to members of Congress in the distribution of offices, and this pernicious practice had converted congressmen into tools and satellites of the executive. (4) Governmental extravagance had impoverished the nation. In spite of huge expenditures, the navy had not been increased, fortifications had not been constructed, and no internal improvements had been made. (5) There had been an unnecessary increase of the Executive's patronage, and this constant multiplication of offices had corrupted the nation and exhausted its finances. (6) The Sub-Treasury Bill was a measure fraught with danger to American institutions, for it placed the public funds precisely where it ought not to be: in the hands of the President and his minions. The Democratic experiments had created universal confusion and distress. The people had been deluded, and the monetary disorders of the country had fearfully increased. A storm, unprecedented both in violence and duration, had passed over the land, carrying ruin and devastation in its train. The nation had been told that the government had nothing to do with the currency, and that the people expected too much from it if they expected it to regulate the currency. Thus, all the boasted reforms, the delusive promises, and the financial schemes of the Jackson-Van Buren misrule resolved themselves into
a situation where the President has taken the custody of the public treasury out of the hands of the people and seized it with his own. He paid himself, his officers, and his retainers in a better currency than that which the people were compelled to receive in their private transactions. (7) The most daring act by which the present administration and its most prominent supporters had marked their contempt for the laws of the country, was the exclusion of the New Jersey representatives from their seats, and which, if not quite as violent in appearance, was as despotic in its character, as that of Caesar in dispersing the Roman senate, or Cromwell in expelling the parliament of England, or of Bonaparte in driving the council of five hundred from their seats. The only difference had been that in the American case, the forms of law had been observed, and the act had been perpetrated by a brute majority of votes, instead of a direct application of physical force. (8) The Van Buren administration had next evinced its contempt for the spirit of republican institutions by a bill framed by the Secretary of War, which was recommended to Congress by the President himself, which ostensibly providing for the organization of the militia, had in reality provided for the creation of a standing army of 200,000 men. The vast military power which it proposed to confer on the President, was the most obnoxious feature of the bill. By means of it and the Sub-Treasury Bill, the sword and the purse would be united in the hands of the executive.

The Address declared that

Thinking men of all parties, not under the excitement of party zeal, are convinced that a change, a speedy and radical change of measures is absolutely necessary. How is this change to be accomplished? Is it by retaining in office men who have long since passed the Rubicon which formed the landmark between their country's interest and their own; and whose vanity and ambition will not permit
them to retrace their steps? Or is it by placing in their stead men who know the people's wrongs and sympathise with their misfortunes—men who are pertinaciously wedded to no system—who have no visionary theories to sustain—no party pledges to redeem—no predecessor in whose footsteps they are bound to follow even when they perceive that they lead into morasses or quicksands.

Unquestionably a change of men is necessary to bring about a change of measures. GEN. WM. HENRY HARRISON, an honest man, a distinguished patriot has been selected by deputies from the people from every part of the union as a fit instrument to bring about this reform. This choice has been ratified by the acclamations of his countrymen.

To arrest the tide of popular enthusiasm with which his name has been received, the opponents of Gen. Harrison have vainly resorted to every calumny which ingenuity could invent or credulity believe. There are only two of these idle stories which it is deemed necessary to notice; not because they are less absurd or groundless than others, but because they have been so industriously circulated that silence might be construed into an admission of their truth. These charges are, that Gen. Harrison is an abolitionist; and that while a member of the Ohio legislature he voted for a law "to sell debtors in certain cases," or, as the phrase goes, "to sell white men as slaves."

The Orleans Whig Central Committee expounded upon the glaring inconsistency of the two charges. Harrison, by the Democrats, had been represented as so enthusiastic a lover of freedom that he would violate the Constitution of his country, and involve it in all the horrors of civil war for the purpose of liberating negro slaves, and at the same time the same party had portrayed Harrison as a man so insensible to human liberty that he was willing, yes, eager, to make bondsmen of his own countrymen, friends, and constituents.

Now, what were the actual facts? Harrison was by birth and rearing a Virginian. He and his ancestors before him had been owners of slaves.

General Harrison, residing for years among Abolitionists in the free state of Ohio, might with impunity have avowed their principles. He had never in the unguarded moments of his private conversations, or in the solemnity of public debate, uttered an opinion that favored Abolitionism. As the congressional representative of a free state, he had in those years of crisis, 1819 and 1822, consistently voted with the South. In 1835, when Harrison was a
candidate for the presidency, his opponents, the supporters of Martin Van Buren, had pursued the same course they were currently pursuing: in one section of the Union where slavery was prohibited, they were proclaiming him a friend of slavery and an advocate of the slave states, while in the South they had charged him with being an Abolitionist. In his celebrated Vincennes speech, the Whig candidate was not satisfied with disavowing any opinions in common with the Abolitionists, but he denounced the negrophile fanatics in the strongest terms that language could afford. He tore away the veil with which they sought to conceal their infamous designs, and depicted in the darkest colors, the calamities which, if persevered in, they would inevitably entail upon the country. On another memorable occasion, he had declared that, "neither the states where it does not exist, nor the government of the United States can, without usurpation of power, and the violation of a solemn compact, do anything to remove slavery without the consent of those who are immediately concerned." This had been the language used by General Harrison in reference to the Abolitionists, and that, too, when he was addressing not an audience of southern planters, but of farmers in a free state, and one in which the strongest prejudices existed against slavery. Could a Louisiana have used stronger language? No! Then how could any man who had used it be called an Abolitionist.

The Whig Committeemen next turn their fire upon the Democrat candidate:

When, we will ask, did Martin Van Buren avow his opinions on this subject with half the frankness or energy? Was it by his vote in favor of that very clause in the Missouri bill which General Harrison voted against? Was it by his vote admitting colored persons to the right of suffrage? CITIZENS OF LOUISIANA! when you deposit your vote for President, in November next, recollect that the negroes of New York are at the same time depositing theirs. Recollect that the votes which you give may be counterbalanced by those of the colored fellow-citizens of Martin Van Buren, who will, no doubt, not be unmindful that it is to this NORTHERN MAN WITH SOUTHERN PRINCIPLES they are indebted for this inestimable privilege of voting for your chief magistrate.
As to the second charge against Harrison, it had been so patently manufactured for electioneering purposes that it would hardly frighten the rebellious tenant of a nursery into silence or submission. It only added another instance of the facility with which the most trifling incidents had been magnified into an important event. The truth was that it had been found in the State of Ohio that persons convicted of offences and sentenced to remain in prison until they paid the costs of the prosecution, were frequently unable to comply with the sentence, in consequence of which they remained in jail at the expense of the State. Considerations of humanity and economy both suggested the necessity of applying some remedy for this evil. A bill had accordingly been introduced into the legislature of that State, providing that the county commissioners might, in such cases, compel them to work on the public roads; or hire them out to the highest bidder, until their wages would discharge the costs of prosecution. This was the bill in favor of which Gen. Harrison had voted in the senate of Ohio. "The unfortunate debtors whom it was to sell as slaves, were actually convicted felons; and the selling them as slaves consisted in transferring them from the noisome cells of a prison to the open air."

If that be slavery, every inmate of a penitentiary or workhouse was a slave. They were all deprived of their liberty and doomed to compulsory labor. Nevertheless, the legislatures of almost every state in the Union had adopted this mode of punishment, in some form or other—and who ever called it cruelty? When such a proposition had been suggested and favorably reviewed by a legislative committee of Louisiana, had there been a hue and cry raised that there lurked in the suggestion a hidden design to sell free men into slavery?
The "Address" was thus concluded:

These are the dark spots which the microscopic vision of party rancor has discovered in the character of Gen'l Harrison; spots which when impartially examined, so far from obscuring the lustre of that character, will add to its brilliancy.

In this as in all other cases, detected calumny has recoiled on its authors, and benefited its intended victims. The name of HARRISON has been received with enthusiasm, and his popularity seems to break down all the artificial barriers and landmarks of party.

FELLOW-CITIZENS, you who have heretofore differed from us in opinion, we call on you to take a candid retrospect of the present administration, and if you are convinced it has been false to its promises, to pause before you ratify its acts and to recollect that there is a point where adherence to party would be treason to our country.

WHIGS OF LOUISIANA! the eyes of the nation so lately riveted in anxious suspense on Virginia, are now fixed upon us. Let us not, by our culpable supineness, or still more culpable divisions, disappoint their hopes. Let us rally around the standard of HARRISON and REFORM, and recollect that our cause is the cause of our COUNTRY. 112

The Whig Address and the months of press comment that paralleled it, significantly reveal that it was difficult for the Democracy to successfully attack Harrison. "General Jackson, Mr. Van Buren and most other

Democrats," states Marquis James, "sympathized with Mr. Clay. They would have preferred him as an opponent. General Harrison exhibited too many possibilities reminiscent of the Jackson appeals of 1824 and 1828: a fine military record; a respectable if virtually forgotten civil record as a territorial governor and frontier congressman; and no record whatever on any current issue. Such a standard bearer presented few points for attack."

From the standpoint of extravagant methods, no election in the annals of American politics is comparable to the "Log Cabin and Hard Cider" campaign of 1840. A Democrat writer of the Baltimore American in disparagement stated of General Harrison:

Give him a barrel of hard cider and settle a pension of two thousand a year on him and, my word for it, he will sit the remainder of his life in a log cabin.

The Whigs quickly perceived the possibilities of this taunt, and proceeded to make capital of it. They agreed that their candidate was a unostentatious man, rightfully identified with the common people. It was true, they maintained, that Harrison could live in comfort on a less amount per year than Van Buren spent on his wardrobe. The extravagant taste of Van Buren could be satisfied with no less than champagne, but Harrison, and the plain folk who were his friends, were content with homely hard cider. Raising log cabins and drinking "hard" or "near-hard" cider became the sine qua non of every true Whig. "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too" became the rallying cry, and as a "catchy" political slogan, it was the "catchiest" ever devised. Throughout the United States, the Whigs marched by the thousands, thronged to "unparalleled assemblages," orated and suffered orations, and sang themselves hoarse with such songs as

113 Marquis James, The Life of Andrew Jackson (New York, 1938), 738.
What has caused this great commotion, motion,
Our country through?
It is the ball a-rolling on,
For Tippecanoe and Tyler too, For Tippecanoe and Tyler too.
And with them we'll beat little Van, Van, Van;
Van is a used-up man.

In the west, they were singing this roundelay:

Old Tip he wears a homespun suit,
No has no ruffled shirt—wirt—wirt;
("wirt wirt simulated by spitting through the teeth")
But Mat he has the golden plate,
And he's a little squirt—wirt—wirt.

Louisiana Whigs were not left without original campaign songs. The editor of the New Orleans German-American wrote one, and by way of apology, remarked that he deemed it his duty to make the contribution. His brain-storm, he explained, was to be sung to the tune of "The Last Rose of Summer." This was it:

Tis the last Locofoco
Left voting alone;
All his bottle companions
Are vanquished and gone,
No favor of office—
No brib'ry is nigh—
So poor Locofoco
Work now or you'll die

I will leave thee, thou loafer—
Thou pimple-nosed gem;
Thy kindred are snoring
So snore thou with them.
In the street or the gutter,
With mud for thy bed,
Stagger out with thy julep,
And make belief dead.

No watchman will follow
Thy serpentine way,
While to Tivoli Circle
Thy drunken feet stray;
Oh no, thou art harmless—
Thy magic has flown—
Now gather the harvest
Corruption has sown.115

114 James, Jackson, 739.
115 New Orleans German-American, July 15, 1840.
The Whigs of Louisiana began organization for the presidential campaign very shortly after ascertaining the nominations. A Whig state convention met at New Orleans in March, 1840. The following electoral ticket was selected: first district, William Dubuys; second district, Joseph Bernard; third district, LeoFroy Barras; fourth district, Jacques Dupre; and fifth district, Seth Lewis. Machinery was set into motion to insure local and national cooperation. At a meeting of the New Orleans Young Men's Tippecanoe Club, Balie Peyton, A. C. Bullit, J. Hise, J. B. Duncan, C. Roselieus, H. B. Eggleston, and H. E. Lawrence were appointed delegates to attend the Nashville Whig Convention, which assembled in August, 1840.

From inference, it might be drawn with a fair degree of certitude that "Tippecanoe Clubs" were organized, or Harrison conclaves assembled, in every parish of the state. Along with log cabins and hard cider, the coon was added as a party symbol. To such a campaign, the volatile temperament of Louisianians was certain to respond. Even Porter, "the cold aristocrat," could not for long restrain himself. Early in the year, at a great Whig festival held in St. Martinville, he read a letter from Clay which predicted the certain election of Harrison. Then, "the Judge delivered one of his most felicitous and eloquent speeches. Dr. R. F. McGuire naively confided to his diary:

Whigs and Democrats met at Monroe 1st June to discuss politics. I made a speech of five hours. Downs followed, did not answer but

116 Baton Rouge Gazette, March 14, 1840.
117 New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, May 11, 1840.
118 Ibid., May 9, 1840.
119 Solomon Weathersbee Downs was in 1840 a prominent leader of the North Louisiana Democracy. Subsequently (1847), he was elected to the United States Senate. For a sketch of his career see Minnie Markett Ruffin, "General Solomon W. Downs (1801-1854), Democratic Leader of North Louisiana, 1840-1854," in Louisiana Historical Quarterly, vol. XVII, no. 1 (January, 1934), 5-17.
ovalled and closed the day, others spoke next day but few were there then. The first (meeting) was the largest crowd I ever saw in our town and most appeared anxious to hear, many are so far changed as to admit that they will try a change as they think all is not right(1) and if Harrison does no better, they will try some other man, so say

Far to the south, in New Orleans, it was reported,

Never have we beheld so immense a throng. Thousands on thousands were present. Every nook and corner was occupied. Hundreds went away unable to obtain an inch of ground. Mr. Prentiss121 was heard with profound attention that was interrupted only by frequent and tremendous bursts of applause. He took a general view of the political questions of the day and of the merits and services of the two candidates for the presidency. He enforced a most cogent and convincing argument by fertility of illustration, splendor of imagery, and bursts of overpowering eloquence.122

In the middle region of the state, Rapides parish, a tremendous throng assembled at a Whig barbecue. There was "a great deal of speechifying, drinking, and eating...and Tippecanoe songs to enliven the occasion." So successful was the occasion, that it was shortly thereafter repeated.

The Alexandria Red River Whig reported that eight hundred persons were present. Vidalia, over to the east, was host to an "immense gathering of

120 "The Diary of R. F. McGuire" is in the possession of Miss Maida McClendon, of West Monroe, Louisiana. McGuire possessed that professional versatility demanded by the frontier, be it the Ouachita, or otherwise. Not only was he doctor of medicine and an attorney at law, but also, as the quotation testifies, he was an orator of rare stamina.

121 Sergeant Smith Prentiss (1808-1860), a native of Maine, migrated in young manhood to Natchez, Mississippi. He was admitted to the bar in 1829, and began practice at Vicksburg. He was elected to the Mississippi house of representatives in 1835, and was elected to Congress in 1833, serving until March 3, 1839. He thereupon resumed his law practice in Vicksburg. In 1845, Prentiss moved to New Orleans. He enjoyed an arresting reputation as one of the greatest orators of his generation. For further reference, see Dallas Claude Dickey, "Seargent Smith Prentiss, Whig Orator of the Old South." This is a doctor's dissertation in Speech, Louisiana State University, 1938; typescript in the University library.

122 New Orleans Bee, June 25, 1840.
123 Baton Rouge Gazette, May 9, 1840.
124 Ibid., June 6, 1840.
the people." Seventy delegates were appointed to attend the State Whig
125 Convention. From the southwest it was reported that Whigs of the
"Parishes of Lafayette and St. Mary will hold a meeting." The "great
meeting at Bank's Arcade, New Orleans, must have shaken locofocoism with
126 a shivering fit of terror."

At a mighty gathering of Whigs, who assembled in the Orleans Ball
127 Room, New Orleans, Randall Hunt rose amid acclamations of applause.
After a magnificent exordium, "he proceeded in a strain of admirable
elocution and powerful argument" to assail the administration for its
abuses of power. He touched upon the veto, the Sub-Treasury, the army
bill, the gross and glaring violations of the constitution, which had
marked the official acts of the administration. He held up to public
excoriation that act of lawless despotism, the disfranchisement of New
Jersey. Hunt was in the midst of a scathing examination of the doctrine
of low wages, "when overcome by the heat of the room and his own excitement,
he was compelled by indisposition to pause, to the regret of every Whig
128 present." Albert Hoa next spoke. "The display of oratory was closed by
129 W. C. C. Claiborne, Esq., in a speech abounding in eloquence and effect,
and the immense crowd dispersed, every man resolving to do his duty in the
130 coming contest."

125 New Orleans Bee, September 24, 1840.
126 Ibid., October 12, 1840.
127 Randall Hunt was a prominent barrister of New Orleans, and a Whig
member of the legislature.
128 Albert Hoa was also a prominent attorney of New Orleans, and likewise
a member of the Louisiana legislature.
129 William C. C. Claiborne was the son of Louisiana's first governor.
130 New Orleans Bee, October 12, 1840.
Back to the north, Dr. McGuire was again confiding to his diary:

"Largo Whig barbecue here on 21st. Political speeches made at the courthouse all the week." In Plaquemine, a huge log cabin was built on wheels.

The political mania appeared to have extended even to the children. An "affray" was so described:

A few evenings ago we saw a number of little fellows just returning from school, and as they walked along, they put the question to each other—"Are you a Whig or a loco fico?" The whigs had an overwhelming majority, in fact, it would have been unanimous with them, had not a little shaver scarcely old enough to pronounce the word properly, sung out "I am a loco fico." A shout was immediately raised against him, and another boy proposed to fight it out. The little Democratic champion was true steel, and had his jacket off in a minute. Some of the older boys, however, interfered and very properly, prevented the battle. They all then attempted to win him over, but the bantling loco fico was as stubborn as old hickory himself and preferred walking home "solitary and alone."

It was reported that a recent mother of triplets named one of her babes William; a second she yodeled Henry; and the third received the appellation Harrison. Hearing the news, a young lady of Baton Rouge remarked that the mother had gone the whole Whig ticket.

Signor Coiffi, whose exact identity has been obscured by the passing years, composed a march expressly for the Whigs, which was the "theme song" for a log-cabin raising of one Saturday in June, "which was a glorious day for the Whigs of New Orleans."

It was the day of the dedication of our Log Cabin to the gallant hero of Tippecanoe and the Thames. This rustic and primeval edifice—emblem of honest poverty, homely patriotism, and purity of principle was completed by the stout-hearted and strong-armed Harrison boys of New Orleans—the genuine democracy of our city, amid the most heart-thrilling demonstrations of popular enthusiasm. At 4 o'clock a lofty

131 New Orleans Bee, October 12, 1840.
132 Baton Rouge Gazette, June 20, 1840.
133 Ibid., August 15, 1840.
134 Ibid., June 20, 1840.
flag staff was planted in the center, and as the noble banner of our country's freedom, the starred and striped standard of America, rose slowly to its summit and yielded its folds to the breeze, the air was filled with the glad huzzas sent forth from the assembled thousands, while the inspiring strains of martial music responded to the shouts of the countless multitude.

Then the "young Tips" went into action. There were hundreds present, and they were splendidly organized. Some mounted logs, some carried clapboards, others brought hammers and nails, while others wielded axes and rallets. In an incredibly short time the roof was in fair progress towards its completion. Never was there witnessed such zeal, activity and industry. In less than two hours the roof of a building nearly eighty feet long and thirty-two broad, was completed. They were inspired by the continuous applause of an immense crowd of spectators. Their spirits were refreshed and their nerves were braced by ample draughts of hard cider "and other pleasant and innocent beverages." Appropriate addresses were delivered by prominent Whigs—Colonel Christy, Balie Peyton, and Richard Chinn, Esq.—and their remarks were frequently interrupted by the plaudits of the thousands. At a seasonable hour the multitude adjourned, "not a single incident having occurred to mar the happiness of the occasion."

Scores of meetings of both parties are on record. The more important committees of each organization met daily. If the newspapers adequately reflect the thoughts and activities of the people of Louisiana, politics had all but excluded the more prosaic pursuits of existence. It was apparent, as the season wore on, that Whig enthusiasm was winning the day. Even when "the weather was exceedingly cold and windy," the young Tips, hundreds of them, met at the Pontchartrain Railroad, and marched in a hilarious procession down the great thoroughfare of Canal Street.

135 New Orleans Bee, June 15, 1840.
136 Ibid., October 26, 1840.
The scattered flames of Whig enthusiasm burst into a conjoined holocaust at the Whig State Convention, which met in Baton Rouge, September 28, 1840. The Young Men's Tippecanoe Club of New Orleans proposed the holding of such a convention at Baton Rouge, and the Tippecanoe Club of Baton Rouge responded by "heartily approving the proposition." Committees of arrangement were appointed, and the following notice was published:

On Monday next, the 28th of September, this great convention will be held. The Whigs of the State, have been making active preparations to be present, and an assembly worthy of the mighty cause that moves the people with irresistible power, will meet in our town. The Whigs of this Parish, must turn out to a man. From all parts of Louisiana there will be delegates, and our parish should not be backward in responding to the deep-moving feelings which have aroused a multitude to travel from their distant homes. Let the sturdy yeoman leave the work he may be doing, let the merchant leave his counting room, the clerk his desk, the professional man his pursuits, and all unite with the ardor and enthusiasm that a sincere love of country inspires, and blend their voices together in the cry that is now echoed from the frontiers of wintry Maine to the sunny regions of Louisiana. Reform alone can save us now.

Among the Orleans delegates, there was a correspondent who has left posterity a vivid account of the passage to Baton Rouge. He records that the New Orleans delegation first assembled at its log cabin on St. Charles street. They then marched to the river, and embarked Sunday morning, September 27, at nine o'clock, A. M. on a fine stern-wheeler, the Daniel Webster. The steamer was festooned with flags and banners of various descriptions and of the most beautiful workmanship, and it presented a spectacle truly magnificent and imposing. The vessel swung down the river, and then up again, so as to afford the inhabitants of the city a view of the glorious pageant. The spectators on shore thundered their appreciation, and no sound could drown out their exhilarating shouts of, "Hurrah for

137 Baton Rouge Gazette, August 29, 1840.
138 Ibid., September 25, 1840.
parrisonl" Having arrived at Lafayette (a suburb of New Orleans), a part of the delegation of the parish of Jefferson was taken on board. The Jeffersonians had with them a most splendid banner. A salute was fired, and the happy crowd then proceeded to Carrolton, where the remainder of the Jeffersonians had arranged to embark. So numerous were those who were clamoring to go to Baton Rouge, that it was necessary to call the Tuskina into service. Even so, at least 350 Whigs were left on the Daniel Webster, but there were ways and means for them to arrive at the conclusion that the considerable pressure was a matter of trifling consequence. In fact, there prevailed such a wonderous degree of excitement and gayety, that the reporter confessed his inability to convey an adequate idea of it. At St. Charles, St. John the Baptiste, and St. James, delegates representing their respective parishes, were taken on board. At Governor Homan's plantation, opposite Jefferson Academy, a salute was fired. Along the whole "coast," multitudes assembled to cheer and to fire guns and cannons. The Daniel Webster passed the General Harrison, which was bound for New Orleans. Spontaneous cheers broke out from the passengers of both boats. In short, "the entire route along the river was a scene of triumph and irrepressible enthusiasm."

On the evening of September 27, boats, some from remote parts of the state, began to arrive at Baton Rouge. The populace of the town abandoned their homes and flocked to the banks of the river. The local artillery boomed out volley after volley; and the glad strains of martial music made the woods around re-echo the heart-inspiring sound. Steamboats continued

139 New Orleans Bee, September 30, 1840; see also Baton Rouge Gazette, October 3, 1840.
to arrive during the night, and the delegates from each parish, as they landed, were received with every gesture of welcome and hospitality. Late in the night, a rain began to fall, and there were grave apprehensions that the anticipated jubilee would be spoiled by gloomy weather. With the coming of the great morning, the clouds began to lift, the mist rolled away, and the victorious sun burst through in unchallenged glory. Soon the shore was crowded with a multitude burning with enthusiasm and excited by the fervent emotions inspired by the gorgeous and soul-stirring scene. Peal after peal resounded from the artillery, and "loud acclamations of the people arose on the air like the deep surging sound of the mighty sea."

With waving banners, the delegations left their boats, and to the accompaniment of martial music, they marched with measured tread to the designated scene of rendezvous—the Presbyterian church, where they formed themselves into a procession.

The procession had been carefully prearranged. The entire parade was under the command of the Grand Martial, John Phillips, who had as assistant marshalls Judge H. B. Favrot and A. Matta, all three of whom were members of the East Baton Rouge Tippecanoe Club. These gentlemen led the march. Following them were the Committee on Arrangements and the invited guests, which included a numerous delegation from Mississippi. Next in order were the Tippecanoe Clubs, grouped by electoral districts. Brass bands were placed between the electoral units. In the middle of the array was placed a huge log cabin on wheels, drawn by fifteen horses—the same log cabin which was built in Plaquemine. "There it was...emblematic of the humble roof that sheltered Harrison...with the string of the latch not drawn in, the barrel of hard cider, and the rude implements of husbandry."
the procession moved forward, it extended for over a mile. Dozens of magnificent and brightly colored banners, richly embroidered with mottoes and variegated symbols, were wafted by the breeze, and they added an indescribable brilliancy to the scene. The line of march was up Main street to Church street, down Lafayette street to the Boulevard, along the Boulevard to St. Ferdinand street, and down St. Ferdinand street to "a beautiful and romantic grove situated a little more than a mile from the town." The marchers were cheered from every window and balcony by the fairest ladies of Louisiana.

The Reverend Mr. Lacy opened the proceedings with a fervent prayer, and then the open-air convention effected its organization. For president, the venerable Philemon Thomas was chosen. His selection was most apropos, for he had witnessed the birth of the State, and had been among the founders of the Whig party. Fred Buisson, David B. Morgan, Narcisse Landery, Neuville De Clouet, and Horatio Spriggs were named vice-presidents to represent their respective districts. William H. Wikoff, Frederick Wilkinson, and Adolphe Layet were made secretaries. R. N. Ogden, Charles M. Conrad, William Dubuys, Walter Brashear, and J. B. Armand were appointed as a committee to draft resolutions expressive of the sentiments of the convention. The chairmen of the delegations from Mississippi were invited to take seats on the rostrum, and the same courtesy was extended to Seth Lewis and Jacques Dupre, two of the candidates on the Whig electoral ticket. Orations were then delivered by Edward D. White, William H. Sparks, Thomas W. Chinn, Judge Canonge, and J. S. Yerger, of Vicksburg, Mississippi.

As the day wore on, the correspondent of New Orleans did not lose his passion for details, but he nevertheless, in his weariness, became
or shelter of a majestic ash tree,

just in honor of the truly splendid oratory of Mr. Yerger, of Mississippi...who has enraptured the thousands who have been listening to his masterly exposition of the errors and delinquencies of this administration....Every parish of the state was represented in the Convention. Some of them had sent very numerous delegations.... As regards the number present, I should suppose five thousand to be rather under than over the mark. It is generally believed there were fully six thousand persons in attendance, including from six hundred to eight hundred ladies. When we remember that nothing of the kind has ever been attempted before in Louisiana, that political excitement here really attains the pitch which it reaches in other states, it must be acknowledged that a Convention of five thousand delegates is a spectacle of which Louisiana may well be proud.140

A barbecue ended the convention, and in the twilight, the fatigued delegates straggled back to the river. The boats were loosed from their moorings, and prows were turned toward those far-away places from whence they had come. As the steamers left Baton Rouge, their whistles were blown as a token of reluctant farewell. Then through the still of the night, from an unidentified deck, a tipsy troubadour, battling with more or less success with an evasive key, sang out

Farewell, dear Van,
You're not our man;
To guide the ship,
We'll try old Tip.

On August 6, following the Whig convention, the Democrats of the state also gathered at Baton Rouge. It was reported, no doubt with forgivable bias, that although a good demonstration, it was hardly impressive in comparison to that of their rivals. Some seven hundred delegates were present, and these were regaled by many orators, including Seth Barton, Pierre Soule, and Isaac Preston.141

140 New Orleans Bee, September 30, 1840.
141 Baton Rouge Gazette, October 10, 1840.
Balloting began on November 2. In New Orleans, "Not a solitary right—not a single fracas disgraced the polls during the three days' struggle. Nothing could be more exciting and animated than the contest of the last day. Both parties fought with unshrinking valor—the Whigs with the confidence of anticipated victory; the Van Burenites with a constancy which the certainty of defeat could not vanquish.

The total vote in Louisiana was 18,912. Harrison's popular majority was 3,680. His national electoral vote was 234; Van Buren's, 60. The "Republican Restoration" had been effected.

The Democrats claimed the Whigs had won by unexampled corruption and extensive frauds on the ballot box. This charge is interesting and is more noteworthy because the Democrats in 1838 had made the same accusations. In that year the Whigs, according to their rivals, had "manufactured votes with the greatest rapidity." Handbills had been stuck up in the most public places which invited every loafer to come forward and obtain the sacred privilege of the franchise. The Whigs had gone to even more degrading extremes; they had swept the levee of its dregs and this penitentiary-looking set had been marched triumphantly to the polls by their Whig commanders. Such a complaint, but on a much more sensational scale, was to be made by the Whigs against the Democrats in 1844.

One Louisiana editor declared that the Democracy was "unterrified and unsubdued." He expressed the highest emotion as he "observed the buoyant and elastic spirit of the democratic party and their presses throughout the

142 New Orleans Bee, November 3, 1840.
143 Ibid., November 5, 1840.
144 Stanwood, The Presidency, I, 203. The New Orleans Bee gives the total vote as 17,037, and the Whig majority as 3,651, New Orleans Bee, November 12, 1840.
145 New Orleans True American, November 26, 1840.
146 New Orleans Morning Intelligencer, December 15, 1840.
147 New Orleans Courier, July 16, 1838.
country since the late disastrous defeat by the combined forces of northern
federalists and Abolitionists, and disappointed aspirants of the South."

General Harrison was inaugurated on March 4, 1841. It was a gala
occasion for the Whigs. They flocked to Washington by the thousands. The
president-elect, who rode to the Capitol on a white charger, was escorted
by an impressive militia contingent. In his address, President Harrison
said he took that occasion to repeat the assurances that he hitherto gave
his determination to arrest the progress of executive dominance,
and that there would be a restoration of the government to its pristine
health and vigor. He considered the veto solely as a conservative power
"to be used only, first, to protect the Constitution from violation; second,
the people from the effects of hasty legislation where their will had
probably been disregarded or not well understood; and thirdly, to prevent
the effects of combinations violative of the rights of minorities."

President Harrison touched upon the abuse of the patronage, upon the
currency, and upon the embarrassed state of business.

As to the relation between Clay and Harrison, Clay observed that

Notwithstanding professions of the most ardent attachment to me
by Harrison, circumstances have transpired which confirm an opinion
I have long since formed, that he is apprehensive that the new Admini-
istration may not be regarded as his but mine. Artful men for sinister
purposes will endeavor to foster this jealousy. And to preserve my
utility, I must avoid giving it any countenance....We must support
the administration, or rather, I should say, we must not fall out
with it because precisely the friends we could wish have not in every
instance been called to the Cabinet. I have strong fears and strong
hopes. And sometimes the one & sometimes the other predominate. But
we must under all circumstances do our duty to our country. I shall
strive to perform mine.149

(New York, 1917), IV, 1373-1389.
149 Clay to Clayton, Washington, December 17, 1840; Clayton Papers;
ibid. to id., Washington, February 12, 1841; ibid.
A Louisianian, Zachary Taylor, one day destined to be President of the United States, wrote from Baton Rouge:

I am looking forward with the greatest patience and anxiety, for the time to arrive when Genl. Harrison will take charge of the Gov't as I consider the change a most fortunate one for the nation, & therefore the sooner we get clear of the present incumbent of the White House the better. Few if any in the land, take deeper interest than I do in the success of the great and leading measures of Genl. Harrisons administration, not only as regards the welfare and prosperity of the country, as well as on acct. of personal, as well as many other considerations. Much I consider depends on his cabinet.

The Whigs, even before the inauguration, had begun to gird themselves for the resurgence of the Democracy. It was rumored that Frances Blair, Amos Kendall, and others of their dye were forming an association to censure the measures of the Harrison administration, whether they be right or wrong.

Unfortunately for the Whig party, "the angel of death flapped his sable wings of the seat of the exhalted." President Harrison died on April 4, 1841, exactly one month after assuming office. From the extremities of the state came notices of mourning. In New Orleans, ships and public buildings lowered their flags to half-mast, and "the demonstrations of sorrow were as varied as they were numerous." A long non-partisan procession marched through the principal streets, and a memorial service was held in the church of Reverend Theodore Clapp, which church "was crowded to suffocation." In Baton Rouge, "the shops were closed and all business suspended, and the solemnities that mark the passage of the honored dead to the tomb were observed." Many other notices related that the passage of

150 Zachary Taylor to Crittenden, Baton Rouge, La., January 29, 1841; Crittenden Papers.
151 Natchitoches Reporter, January 27, 1841.
152 New Orleans Bee, April 13, 1841.
153 Monroe Olive Branch, April 21, 1841.
155 New Orleans Weekly Crescent, May 15, 1841.
156 Baton Rouge Gazette, May 16, 1841.
the Chief Magistrate had fallen as a genuine sorrow upon all parts of the "interior."

Meanwhile, speculation was rife with respect to the course which would be pursued by Tyler.

157 New Orleans Weekly Crescent, April 18, 1841.
INFAMY PERPETRATED

ON

THE WHIG PARTY IN LOUISIANA
The senatorial term of John C. Nicholas was scheduled to expire March 3, 1841. Nicholas had not achieved any particular honors during his service in the Senate. When the Louisiana general assembly met, January 11, 1841, to provide for the approaching term, Senator Joseph Walker, Democrat of Rapides, informed the legislature that the incumbent desired consideration as a candidate to succeed himself. Thereupon, Representative Philemon Thomas, Whig of East Baton Rouge, nominated Alexander Barrow. On the first ballot, Barrow received thirty-six votes, Nicholas obtained thirty, and one card was blank. Barrow having obtained a clear majority, was declared duly elected United States Senator, to represent Louisiana from March 4, 1841, until March 4, 1847.

Barrow has not until this time figured prominently in the narrative of the Louisiana Whig party. His career in the United States Senate, covering a period of less than five years, was especially marked by his bitter opposition to the annexation of Texas. Barrow was born in Tennessee; educated at West Point; studied law in Nashville; admitted to the Tennessee bar in 1822; soon after moved to Louisiana, where he abandoned law to become a planter. He served several terms in the Louisiana legislature, as Whig representative of West Feliciana.

Louisiana Whigs, along with their partisans throughout the United States, viewed the elevation of John Tyler with no little concern, and well they might have been somewhat doubtful and uncomfortable. Tyler's record had been one of opposition to every principle held dear by the old-line adherents of Henry Clay. Tyler had been adverse to the re-charter

1 Louisiana Senate Journal, 15 Leg., 1 Sess., 16.
2 Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 674.
of the United States Bank, to the levying of a protective tariff, to the federal government making internal improvements, and to the distribution of the funds derived from the sale of public lands. He believed in a strict construction of the Constitution and was an ardent advocate of state rights. His break with the Democratic party was not caused by any conversion to Whig principles, but by his opposition to the Force bill, and his disapproval of the removal of the deposits. He had voted with the majority when Jackson was censured by the Senate for the assumption of power "not conferred by the Constitution and laws, but in derogation of both." Then instructed by the Virginia legislature to vote for the expunging resolution, Tyler in protest resigned his seat.

As a Democrat, Tyler had always acted with courageous consistency, and the leaders of the Whig convention at Harrisburg could not have been ignorant of his record. It was averred that the state rights Whigs had maneuvered his nomination as vice-presidential candidate. It was generally conceded that Tyler had little if any claim upon the Whig party. He was strictly undeserving of any honors from the organization. His doubtful membership, like that of many others, was based on the tenuous proposition that he had become estranged to the Jackson-Van Buren leaders.

John Tyler was the first vice-president to inherit the presidency. He suppressed the objections to his assumption of the title, "President of the United States." Clay conceded the title, but he had no idea of surrendering the leadership of the Whig party to the erstwhile vice-president.

3 Chitwood, Oliver Perry, John Tyler, Champion of the Old South (New York, 1939), 135-40.
4 Dictionary of American Biography, XIX, 92.
5 Schurz, Henry Clay, II, 180.
The Whig press of Louisiana, reflecting the national attitude, guardedly, but withal optimistically, conjectured on the future course of the Executive.

Henry A. Wise, a strong supporter of Tyler, and a congressman of Virginia wrote that Tyler's state rights friends were urgently advising him as to his immediate procedure. They counselled the formation of a new cabinet; the hasty settling of the negotiations then pending with Great Britain, and with that in view, the retention of Webster as head of the new cabinet; the annexation of Texas as soon as possible; and the application of the veto on any proposition to re-charter the United States Bank, any measure creating a protective tariff, or any bill for the distribution of the proceeds of the sales of public lands. All of this advice, according to Wise, was in harmony with the views of the President.

In April, 1841, Tyler issued an address to the people of the United States. His studied phraseology was noncommittal, although its general tone was Whig in character. Clay wrote for a more specific exposition of the President's principles, but Tyler's answer was far from a definitive declaration of Whig principles. The President vaguely indicated that Congress would be left to its own action. He predicted the inevitable repeal of the Sub-Treasury law, advised against the establishment of a United States Bank, and opposed any distribution measure which would not provide for the abrogation of the annual appropriations for river and harbor improvements.

By an executive proclamation, Congress was convened in special session, May 31, 1841. Tyler, in his message, indicated his favorable disposition

6 Ibid., 200-201.
7 James D. Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents of the United States, 20 vols. (New York, 1897), V, 1889-1892.
toward the distribution of the proceeds of the sales of public lands. He advised against the alteration of the Compromise Act of 1833, except in event of urgent necessity, and such necessity was not then existent. With an idea of demonstrating the unsoundness of the United States Bank, the "pot bank" scheme, and the Sub-Treasury system, the financial exigencies since 1836 were briefly reviewed. Congress was advised to make provision for a suitable fiscal agent, but the President reserved to himself the ultimate power of rejecting any measure which might conflict with the Constitution or otherwise jeopardize the prosperity of the country.

To the staunch Whigs, Clay in particular, the message was unsatisfactory. There was a Whig majority in both houses. Clay's friends dominated the cabinet. It was perfectly natural that the great Kentuckian should take the initiative, and exercise a leadership which was rightfully his. On June 7, he, by way of resolutions, presented a legislative program which partook of the character of a belated Whig platform.

The most essential part of these resolutions read as follows:

Resolved, therefore, as the opinion of the Senate, that the following subjects ought first, if not exclusively, to engage the deliberations of Congress at the present session, viz:
1. The repeal of the Sub-Treasury;
2. The incorporation of a bank adapted to the wants of the people, and of the Government;
3. The provision of an adequate revenue for the Government by the imposition of duties, and including an authority to contract a temporary loan to cover the public debt created by the last administration;
4. The protective distribution of the proceeds of the public lands;
5. The passage of necessary appropriation bills, and
6. Some modification of the banking system of the District of Columbia for the benefit of the people of the District.

Resolved, That it is expedient to distribute the business to be done at this session, between the Senate and House of Representatives, so as to avoid both Houses acting on the same subject at the same time.

Clay informed the Senate that he did not desire immediate action on the resolutions presented. He asked that they be printed, and laid upon the table, and this request was approved.

Three days before the presentation of the resolutions cited, Clay had made his first assault on the Sub-Treasury. He had introduced a bill to repeal the act entitled "An act to provide for the collection, safekeeping, transfer, and disbursement of the public revenue," which had been approved on July 4, 1840. On July 8, 1841, the repeal of the Sub-Treasury act was effected in the Senate; Alexander Barrow voted affirmatively, and Alexander Mouton did not vote. The bill passed the House on August 9; the Louisiana Whig representatives, White and Moore, voted affirmatively, but Dawson, Democrat, cast his ballot negatively. President Tyler promptly signed the measure.

Louisiana Whigs were following the development of Clay's program with perhaps more intensified interests than any other similar group in the nation. Universally, they were of the opinion that favorable federal action would be of inestimable benefit to the diversified economy and to the almost fabulous potentialities of the state. Local opinion had already been conditioned for the reception of Clay's second project: "the incorporation of a bank adapted to the wants of the people and of the Government." No satisfactory correctives had been applied to relieve the persistent financial disorders. Both houses of the Whig-dominated Fourteenth Legislature (1839) had concurred in a resolution favorable to re-chartering

9 Ibid., 22.
10 Ibid., 13, 21.
11 Ibid., 34-35.
12 Ibid., 313.
the United States Bank. The import of Louisiana's legislative resolutions and that of Clay's senatorial announcement were entirely co-incidental.

Section eight of the legislative resolutions stated:

"Be it resolved, etc., That in the opinion of this legislature, a national bank properly constituted, (due regard being had for the rights of the States,) cannot fail to be an important auxiliary in carrying into effect the power of Congress to create and regulate a currency of equal value, credit and use, wherever it may circulate, and to facilitate the fiscal operations of the general government."\(^{13}\)

Governor Roman's bitter remonstrance of 1840 against the Democratic administration for its destruction of the United States Bank has been previously cited. In his legislative message of January, 1841, he informed the general assembly of the strong probability of the re-establishment of a National Bank. He stated that this was an additional reason for legislative assistance toward the immediate liquidation of insolvent local banks, for the National Bank would not assume the obligation of guaranteeing these unstable institutions. Such local banks, according to the Governor, paralyzed the operations and usefulness of the substantial local banks. Chimerical capital and unrestrained speculation would cease with the creation of a national financial regulator.\(^{14}\)

In response to a request from both Houses of Congress, the Secretary of the Treasury, Thomas Ewing, presented to the Senate a plan of a bank and fiscal agent. A bill to create a "Fiscal Bank of the United States" was submitted with the report. This bank was to have its central office in the District of Columbia. This particular location was designated to circumvent the question of constitutionality, for Congress was the governing agency for the District.

\(^{13}\) Louisiana Acts, 14, Leg., 1 Sess., 220-224.
\(^{14}\) Louisiana Senate Journal (French ed.), 16 Leg., 1 Sess., 3.
\(^{15}\) Cong. Globe, 27 Cong., 1 Sess., 7.
The Fiscal Bank was authorized to establish branches for deposits and discounts in the several states, provided consent for each establishment could be gained from the states. This clause was also purported to meet the constitutional objections of the strict constructionist and state rights president, and those of his followers who entertained similar political proclivities. In the hands of a select committee, the bill underwent changes. The select committee assumed the constitutional power of Congress to establish the Bank and the concomitant power of establishing within the several states, without their consent, branch banks:

Entertaining these deliberate views, the committee are decidedly of opinion that no bill for the establishment of a Bank in the District of Columbia will be effectual which does not contain a clear recognition of the constitutional power of Congress to establish branches wherever, in the United States, the public wants, in its judgment, require them. They cannot consent that a Bank, emanating from the will of the nation, and imperatively demanded by the necessities of the Government, and of the nation shall be wholly dependant for its useful operation upon the will of each and every State, distinctly expressed.16

There followed days of wrangling, and on one of these days Barrow presented a memorial from the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce which petitioned for the establishment of the Bank. The memorial was tabled, and no subsequent action was taken on it. Finally, a compromise amendment was added to the measure, which provided:

And the said directors may establish one or more offices of discount and deposit in any Territory or District of the United States, and in any State, with the consent of such State. And when established, the said office or offices shall only be withdrawn or removed by said directors prior to the expiration of this charter, with the previous assent of Congress:

Provided, in respect to any State which shall not at the first session of the Legislature thereof, has after the passage of this act, by resolution, or other legislative proceedings, unconditionally assent or dissent to the establishment of such office or offices within it, such assent of the said States shall be thereafter presumed.18

16 Ibid., 80.
17 Ibid., 115.
18 Ibid., 254.
This amendment was represented as being in accord with the views of Tyler himself. The vote on the bill, as amended, was twenty-six to twenty-three. Barrow voted affirmatively; Mouton voted negatively.

Soon after the House passed the Fiscal Bank Act by a vote of 128 to 97, Moore and White, Louisiana's Whig representatives, voted yea; Dawson failed to vote.

Tyler, on constitutional grounds, applied the veto to the act. In expressing his objections, he declared:

The power of Congress to create a National Bank to operate per se over the Union has been a question of dispute from the origin of your Government....It will suffice to say that my own opinion has been uniformly proclaimed to be against the exercise of any such power by this Government....Its (speaking of the Second Bank of the United States) power of local discount has, in fact, proved to be a fruitful source of favoritism and corruption, alike destructive to the public morals and to the general weal....On general principles, the right of Congress to prescribe terms to any State, implies a superiority of power and control, deprives the transaction of all pretense to compact between them, and terminates as we have seen, the total abrogation of freedom of action on the part of the States.

Barrow and Mouton gave consistent party votes when the question arose on passing the bill over the veto. The question was defeated by the vote twenty-five to twenty-four.

The Baton Rouge Gazette declared that the veto had created profound sensation, a greater sensation than any other political event in the state's history. The editor, who had predicted Tyler's acquiescence, so mused:

Well, our sage conjectures upon President Tyler's course are "null and void"—breath spent in vain. He has vetoed the bank-bill, and we intend to provide each of our subscribers with a copy of the

19 Ibid., 260.
20 Ibid., 303.
21 Ibid., 337-38.
22 Ibid., 352.
veto message sometime during the day. We shall strike off an extra and send it round by the carrier. How amusing to slip along in his wake, and observe the variety of features with which readers of opposite parties will pour over it: the long, grim, death-inviting visages of the Whigs, and the jolly, side-splitting countenances of the locos.

In a more serious vein, the editor took the position that the Whigs had no reason to censure Tyler for his course, for Tyler had been more righteous than the Whigs, for the Whigs had taken him as he was, knowing him to be different from themselves. They had vainly imagined that a sham sanctimony would make the "twain one flesh." The ordinance had been without unction, for Tyler, after encountering the perils of Calypso had returned to the Ithaca of his affections. He had been no Federalist when they took him, and he had never promised them that he would become one, nor had the Whigs exacted from him such a pledge. If they had been betrayed, it was by their hopes only, and their disappointment was merited, for Tyler had been corrupted by the blandishments of power, but Tyler had not been so corrupted as to forsake his conservative views. It was undeniable that he had been elected to office by a party which he knew to be a bank party, but he had not told them that he was a bank man, or that he intended to become a bank man. The Whigs had known the contrary, and the charge of treason could come with as good grace from Tyler against the Whigs as from the Whigs against Tyler. A little trickery had been practiced by both and no open recrimination would now be justifiable in either.

After these objective observations, the editor, Whig that he was, became subjective and somewhat inconsistent:

The President, on various occasions, and under various circumstances, has admitted that a bank, conformable to the constitution,

23 Baton Rouge Gazette, August 28, 1841.
might be established. In his inaugural address, he stated that he should be happy to conform to the views of Congress, by signing a bill for a constitutional bank. A bank then, according to the President, may be constitutional, and branches of a constitutional bank, in spite of all remonstrances, may be located in any State, Territory or District under the general government.

The same writer, regaining his objectivity, found it difficult to pity the Whigs. Certainly they had been unfortunate, for they had spent years of toil and loads of treasure to win the presidential triumph, and then they had been defeated by their own victory. There was, however, a lesson in their misfortune. In the future they would realize the importance of knowing their candidates. The conclusion was:

There is then, still an existing possibility that a national bank will be created at the present session of Congress. This result depends upon one question—"Is John Tyler more honest, and less ambitious than other politicians, or is he not?" If the President has acted thus far from motives purely conscientious, the prospect is still fair, that the extra session will be fruitful of "good works." If he has acted, as many believe, from motives of policy, with an eye single to his own glory," like Gen. Jackson, we may conclude with Cuffy, that "the jug is up." If he has resolved in his own mind to try for a second term, he will throw his "Virginia principles" between the nation and every form of government bank. He will follow the footsteps of the "General" and "little Van," and it will go hard for the Whigs, but he will find himself at the termination of four years, like the chief of Kinderhook, a "used-up man." For he has sinned too often and wilfully against locoism to ever obtain forgiveness at her hands. When the veto message was read in the Senate, someone asked Benton if he would not now accept Tyler as his man. "No," said the "Great Isolate," "I would as soon accept again to my arms and bed, my wife after she has slept four years with my neighbor, as to accept John Tyler after his four years' connection with Whiggery."

The Whigs never intended to give him the seat he is in nor would they on any probable grounds promote him again, let his future conduct be what it will. They took him in the first instance, not in consideration of his Whig opinion, but in consideration of the Old Dominion....They have been duped by him, and they did not make a dupe of him. With them he will find neither pardon or mercy.24

24 Ibid., September 4, 1841.
The Whigs of Congress, by delegation, consulted with the President in an effort to conciliate the divergent views, or perhaps in an effort to apply pressure. Tyler hospitably received the committee but the position he assumed was enigmatic. The Whigs then prepared a new bill, one to establish a "Fiscal Corporation," which was hastily pressed through the House of Representatives. The Louisiana delegation as usual voted according to their party loyalties. The Senate passed the House bill by a vote of twenty-seven to twenty-two, Barrow concurring and Mouton objecting. Tyler would not concede the new bill. In his veto message he expressed objections which were substantially those which he used in returning the first measure.

The rage of the Whigs was unbounded. Clay called a caucus of the Whig leaders of Congress, which issued a statement solemnly declaring that "all political connection between them and John Tyler was at an end."

Throughout the United States the Whigs raised their voices over the "perfidy" and "treachery" of the President.

At a Whig convention which met at Baton Rouge in October, 1841, F. D. Conrad of East Baton Rouge, addressed the assembly, and urged the propriety of embodying and adopting resolutions expressive of the feelings and sentiments of the Louisiana Whigs relative to the veto and to the question of the National Bank. The proposal of Conrad was unanimously adopted, and a committee on resolutions was appointed which reported:

This convention...does not deem it inappropriate to give some expression of their sentiments and feelings in relation to the astounding occurrences which have lately transpired at Washington in the executive administration of the government--coming directly

26 Ibid., 423.
27 Ibid., 444.
and freshly from their constituents—witnesses of the disappointment
depicted upon every countenance, and the grief which pervades every
heart at contemplating the sudden and disastrous change of senti-
ments and bold abuse of power which have characterized the late acts
of the President of the United States, the members of this convention
feel conscious that resolutions embodying the opinions of those who
sent them here, in relation to matters so momentous and so peculiarly
amenable to their judgment, will not only be acceptable to their
constituents, but be viewed as the discharge of the duty which cir-
cumstances imposed upon them.

Therefore be it Resolved, That the Whigs of Louisiana in
maintaining their share of the patriotic struggle, a part of whose
results was the elevation of John Tyler to the dignified position
of Vice President, thought they were elevating a Whig to that high
station—who, for the happiness and prosperity of his country, would
battle for the maintenance of Whig principles, principles that have
been so thoroughly discussed—so separated from and contrasted with,
the destructive principles opposed to them, that the simplest mind
might comprehend, and the most indifferent appreciate them.

Resolved, That from the vast importance of the subject in itself,
together with the magnitude attributed to it by the whole Whig party,
a Bank of the United States was a leading predominant article in the
creed and faith of every Whig—that it is impossible, therefore, to
suppose that Mr. Tyler was ignorant of that which the humblest indi-
vidual—the least connected with politics, perfectly understood, to
wit: That a Bank of the United States was a fundamental article of
the Whig creed—that knowing this, if Mr. Tyler dissented from the
views of the party on this essential and indispensable point, it was
his duty as an honorable and conscientious man, openly and expressly
to avow it. That a different course was deceptive and unworthy of a
distinguished public man, bound by the ties of gratitude and honor
to a magnanimous, a patriotic party—and certainly no argument founded
in good sense, in candor, and in morality, can maintain for an instant
that it was not the belief of both the party and their candidate—that
apart from his expressed pledges, all the circumstances attending the
canvas bespoke a tacit, but not less inviolable pledge that he had
resolved to sacrifice any previous and shadowy scruples to the evident
necessity and settled constitutionality of a National Bank.

Other resolutions of a kindred vein followed. It was also resolved
that Tyler's exercise of the veto was a great and dangerous abuse of power,
and that without a Bank of the United States a sound and wholesome currency,
and a prosperous administration of the government would not be possible.
Copies of these resolutions were ordered to be sent to the Louisiana congressional delegation and to every Whig paper in the state.

Throughout Louisiana editors abandoned dignity in condemnation of Tyler's course. The editor of the New Orleans Signal, a Tyler organ, declared that the President had been more vilified and abused by the Whigs than any other man in the nation. He reproved those who had "not the decency and self-respect to speak of the Chief Magistrate of the Union in terms other than that of low billingsgate which would call a blush to the cheeks of a fish woman."

Hope for the creation of a United States Bank vanished, so Clay turned to the next item on the program which he had presented to the Senate. This item, it will be recalled, proposed the enactment of a protective tariff which would replace the expiring one of 1833. The planter Whigs of Louisiana regarded the tariff as even more essential than a National Bank, for experience had taught them that deprived of protection, they could not operate. Reflecting this general conviction, Governor Roman in his legislative message of January, 1841, so commented:

Congress will soon find it necessary to consider a revision of the tariff, and it seems to me to be an opportune moment to address that body of your representatives on the disastrous effects produced by the present tariff upon the culture of cane, which forms one of the principle products of our soil. If those sound doctrines, which have previously prevailed in the councils of the nation, are again permitted fair consideration, it will not be difficult for us to prove that protection is necessary to us, for without it we shall be ruined by foreign competition.

It was the Governor's belief that the condition of public finance imperiously demanded a new tariff, and that the schedules of 1816 would

28 Baton Rouge Gazette, October 9, 1841.
29 New Orleans Signal, April 25, 1843.
not only furnish sufficient revenue, but at the same time it would place
Louisiana agriculture in a position to produce all the sugar necessary
for domestic consumption. No official legislative action was taken on
Roman's suggestion, but the whole matter was given forceful expression
by the sugar planters of Louisiana, who met in a state convention at
Donaldsonville, May 16, 1842. The planters drew up a memorial to Congress
which appealed for an adequate tariff, and demonstrated in a lengthy
exposition how such a policy would benefit all classes and pursuits,
especially the cotton growers.

A bill for the distribution of the revenues derived from the sales
of public lands had been accepted by Tyler in 1841, but because it was a
party measure, there were grave doubts in Whig minds relative to its
permanency. By the incorporation of the proposed tariff and the accomplished
distribution act into a single bill, Clay hoped to insure the continued
operation of both.

The Compromise Act of 1833 was foreordained to expire on June 31, 1842.
The Treasury of the United States was faced with a heavy deficit even before
this date, and there was general alarm over the situation. To provide for
the current exigency, Clay framed a provisional tariff, which was referred
to as the "little" tariff bill. The provisional tariff bill embraced the
Distribution Act, and the combined measure was reported in the House of
Representatives on June 10, 1842.

30 Louisiana Senate Journal, 15 Leg., 1 Sess., 4.
31 Baton Rouge Gazette, June 4, 1842.
While this matter was under advisement, Porter, mirroring the general Whig attitude of Louisiana, wrote to J. J. Crittenden, of Kentucky:

I am bewildered and alarmed at the present state of things in Washington. What is to become of this country, with a man at her head, who presents no question of inquiry to the mind, except whether he is a bigger fool, than knave. Will the tariff bill pass? Will it do so think you, without a repeal of the distribution clauses? It is a hard problem to solve whether it is wiser and better to leave the country without revenue to carry on the government, or to establish a precedent by which the Representative branch of the government in its most important duty, namely that of taxation is made a mere cypher—and the executive everything. The duty on sugar is a matter of life and death with us in Louisiana, but if the government can be carried on at all without a surrender of a right of the people, I would prefer it to yielding to the capricious despotism of any such man.33

Clay's measure was successful in both Houses of Congress. The Louisiana Whig delegations were consistent in their support. Tyler vetoed the Provisional Tariff bill, objecting both to the taxation and distribution content.

Again the rage of the Louisiana Whigs was unrestrained. The New Orleans Bee unleashed a tirade upon the President:

Mr. Tyler has again exerted the royal prerogative in suppressing the wishes of the people. He has returned with objections, the bill providing for the continuance of the custom-house laws till Congress can enact a well considered tariff bill. His reason for so doing is because the bill provided that the distribution act shall not be repealed by it. There needed not this additional act of treachery on the part of the executive to prove his utter want of honesty and principle; but inasmuch as the bill was in strict conformity with the constitution, his "little excellency" was bereft of the hypocritical refuge of conscientious scruples, under which he cloaked his former apostasies, and has exhibited the nakedness of his treason to the scorn and derision of mankind. It is clear now that John Tyler is against the "distribution act," and so fully bent is he upon its repeal, that he is willing to strand the treasury or swamp the government, rather than it should remain upon the statute books.

And yet his understrappers talk about persecution! What whig measure, what principle of the whig party is he in favor of? Elected

33 Porter to Crittenden, White Sulphur Springs, Va., July 6, 1842; Crittenden Papers.
34 Cong. Globe. 27 Cong., 1 Sess., 679, 688.
35 Ibid., 894-95.
by the Whigs he is against every principle of theirs. He repudiates them, their policies and their measures. So violent is his zeal against them, that he has not scrupled to cross his own path and give the lie direct to his own acts to thwart and harass them.36

The object of Tyler, proclaimed the Bee, was manifest. He had approved the distribution act in September, 1841, and had thereby given great offense to the locofoocos, and now he was insisting upon its repeal as a peace offering to the Democrats. He might as well have vetoed the tariff bill because it did not repeal the bankrupt law, or any other act which had no connection with it. Were the locos to hold out the repeal of the pension, or any other law, as a condition of his being taken back into their fold, he would resort to any specie of tyranny to serve their purposes. He had become abandoned, depraved, reckless, and faithless, so,

Let vetoes come! We trust that Congress will hold out against this petty and vindictive nincompoop. The national legislature might as well be turned into a registry office at once, to record the edicts of the executive as to be driven into measures by such unwarranted means.

Is it any wonder that the whig party suffer defeat with such a President of their making at the head of the government? We acknowledge the awful responsibility of having placed him there; and terribly have we answered for it. The people have held us to a fearful accountability—perhaps justly too, for having deserted our great leader when we should not. Our own folly, and the decree of an All-wise Providence have brought us into our present straits. We may plead in extenuation for placing John Tyler upon the Whig ticket, that the imagination, drugged with stimulants concocted of direst poison, could not have conceived the existence of such a phenomenon of perfidy. He is the exemplification of the capacity of nature in creating objects of contempt and scorn. We endeavor never to think of him.37

The declaration of a few weeks later was: "The veto of the little Tariff Bill—that groundless act of petty tyranny to the whigs, base

36 New Orleans Bee, July 9, 1842.
37 Ibid.
Clay prepared a second tariff bill, one which was designed for "permanency." In framing it, he again included the distribution clause. While the measure was being debated in Congress, Porter wrote to Crittenden:

"My principal reason for writing you so soon, proceeds from a wish to say something to you about the course the whigs ought to pursue should the juggling montebank veto the revenue bill. I know how much better the judgments are of the men who will have to chalk that course than mine is. But still my objection can do no harm. When I first heard of the last veto, I was so angry that I would have been willing to burn my own sugar house & see all the others in our state destroyed rather than yield to him. But soberer thoughts have at least come over me, & I hope wiser ones. Whether it is the result of temperament, or a just view of things I cannot say, but I fear much in a party point of view the adoption of the course you indicate is to be pursued. The protection of our industry and a national Bank, are the two great questions which now occupy the American mind. Will the people bear the postponement of proper legislation on the first, for the sake of the land bill? I doubt it—my doubts amount almost to conviction they will not. Their sufferings are immediate and pressing for want of a tariff. Their pockets, and in many instances their sustenance depends upon its adoption. Would they be willing to forego the advantage it could offer, for the distant benefit they would indirectly receive from the Land Bill? I fear they will not. And I think it would be better to postpone the distribution measure until we had less stringent times. I would infinitely prefer going before the people on that question with the tariff existing, than to try it with the angry feelings which the want of the latter will inevitably excite."

Clay's second tariff bill passed both Houses, but the President again applied the veto. His objections were substantially those which accompanied the veto of the "little," or provisional tariff. In the final analysis, the Whigs were forced to surrender the distribution

38 Ibid., August 23, 1942.
39 Porter to Crittenden, White Sulphur Springs, Va., July 21, 1842; Crittenden Papers.
40 Cong. Globe, 27 Cong., 1 Sess., 867-68.
feature. A strictly tariff measure, subsequently known as the Tariff of 1842, was approved by the Chief Executive. Clay suffered the humiliation of witnessing a separate land bill "go to oblivion by way of a pocket veto."

The Tariff of 1842 gave Louisiana sugar satisfactory protection, and proved to be the salvation of the culture. In 1841, there were 525 sugar plantations in Louisiana, which employed 40,000 laborers. The planters were receiving six cents per pound for their sugar, and at that figure, they faced bankruptcy. Prior to 1841, 156 sugar estates had been forced to abandon the growing of cane. In 1846, it was reported by De Bow's Review that

...the rich cane fields of Louisiana are crowning with wealth the labors of her enterprising planters, and causing to start up, as if by magic along the banks of the Mississippi, the costly mansion and the magnificent sugar mill. Is the question settled, then, in favor of the constitutionality and expediency of protecting home industry.44

While Congress was wrangling over the tariff, Louisiana was preparing for the July general elections. Alexander Mouton seemed to the Democrats their strongest candidate. He was a native of the state, and was a direct descendant from Acadian forebears. Living in the French-speaking Attakapas country, his early educational opportunities had been limited, but he overcame his handicaps, and won a legal education. His record as a legislator and as a United States Senator had given him favorable pub-

41 Glyndon G. Van Deusen, Life of Henry Clay (Boston, 1937), 360.
42 E. Brunner, History of Louisiana (New York, 1843), 262.
43 Louisiana House Journal, 14 Leg., 2 Sess., 128.
licity, and inasmuch as he was a "country" man, his candidacy, even prior to formal nomination was popular on the interior. Mouton was tendered the candidacy by a Democrat mass convention which assembled at New Orleans early in 1840. He accepted, resigned his Senatorship in 1842, and returned to Louisiana for the canvass.

The Whigs, strongly intrenched in the legislature, were in a position to elect Mouton's successor. They named Charles M. Conrad to fill the vacancy, and the Democrats made only "courtesy" nominations. Conrad obtained an absolute majority on the first ballot, and was declared duly elected.

Conrad, like so many successful Louisiana politicians, was not a native of the state. He was born in Virginia, moved at an early age to Mississippi, studied law in New Orleans, and was admitted to the Louisiana bar in 1828. He began his political career as a Jacksonian Democrat, but when the Bank became the great issue, he espoused the Whig cause, and his party record following the transition was one of energy and consistency. He became a member of the legislature, and because of his generous employment of his unusual talents he had strong claims upon the party. Barrow presented the credentials of his new colleague to the United States Senate, and Conrad's qualifications were accepted and he took his seat.

45 Franklin Republican, February 10, 1841; Natchitoches Herald, April 10, 1841; Clinton Louisiana Democrat, May 9, 1840; et cetera.
46 Baton Rouge Gazette, February 29, 1840.
47 Louisiana Senate Journal (French ed.), 16 Leg., 1 Sess., 44.
48 Baton Rouge Gazette, April 15, 1842.
49 Louisiana Senate Journal (French ed.), 16 Leg., 1 Sess., 60; Baton Rouge Gazette, March 12, 1842.
50 William C. Honeycutt, "Early Political Career of Charles McGill Conrad," 9-10. This is a master's thesis in history, Louisiana State University, 1939; typescript in the University library.
Henry Johnson received the official endorsement of the Whig party as its gubernatorial entry. A Whig state convention which assembled in New Orleans, March 2, 1840, anticipating the election over two years, made the nomination. The career of Johnson had been a long and impressive one. He had served as clerk of the second superior court of the Territory of Orleans; district judge of the Orleans parish court in 1811; delegate to the first state constitutional convention in 1812; unsuccessful candidate for election in 1812 to the Thirteenth Congress; practiced law in Donaldsonville; elected to the United States Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of William C. C. Claiborne; re-elected in 1823, and served to May 27, 1824, when he resigned to become a gubernatorial candidate. His career subsequent to his election to the governorship has been recorded in the present work.

Johnson's nomination was generally acceptable to the Whigs. "Plain Dealer," however, in an open letter accused the Whig nominee as being the agent responsible for much of the past discord that had marred the record of the party. "Plain Dealer's" complaints were not generally voiced.

The Democratic state convention which met January 8, 1842, in the rotunda of the St. Louis Exchange, New Orleans, in a series of resolutions, threw down the gage of its battle. The resolutions declared that Congress had no constitutional power to establish a National Bank, and that the

52 Baton Rouge Gazette, February 29, March 14, 1840.
53 Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1152.
54 Opelousas Gazette, January 15, 1841; Franklin Planter's Banner, February 4, 1841; New Orleans Louisiana Advertiser, April 20, 1840; Alexandria Red River Whig, October 17, 1840; Natchitoches Constitutional Advocate, December 23, 1840; New Orleans Bee, 1840-42, passim; Baton Rouge Gazette, 1840-42, passim.
55 Franklin Planter's Banner, February 4, 1841.
The increase in the public debt of Louisiana, governmental exorbitance, the augmentation of taxation, and the local banking extravaganza were directly attributable to Whig mis-rule. The final resolution was of especial significance:

Resolved, That the Constitution of the State ought to be amended; and whatever shades of difference of opinions may exist on the details, few will be found to doubt amendments would provide for the election of the Governor immediately by the people, for a shorter term, and with less power and patronage; that the constitution should be extended to the Florida parishes, which are now without a constitution; that a more equal and just system of representation, both for the Senate and House of Representatives, should be adopted; that property qualifications for office should be abolished; that all officers should be made more immediately responsible to the people, by limiting the term of office to shorter periods and that equal rights and privileges should be extended to every citizen.56

The appalling condition of local finances made it comparatively easy for the Democrats to divert attention from the National Bank warfare then being waged in Congress. There can be no question but that banking conditions had the determining influence in swinging the political pendulum of Louisiana back to the Democratic side. Regardless of the true sources of the debacle, it was a Whig governor and a Whig legislature that enacted legislation calculated to be remedial. It was the Whig party which was held responsible for the ensuing calamity. Being largely responsible for a political revolution, the "Bank Law" deserves particular examination.

In response to Roman's message of January, 1840, a bill sponsored to protect the public and stockholders from the dangers inherent in the continued operation of insolvent banks was passed in the house but lost in the senate. The snarl between the house and senate was not strictly a party fight, but none the less the representatives of the people had been

56 Baton Rouge Gazette, January 22, 1842.
compelled to separate again without having advanced a step in the important
labor of regulating the currency. Some of the people were quite hopeless,
holding that mandatory measures were futile, as the bank had already
spoiled the chances for normal recovery. Others contended that from
the standpoint of justice, the banks were strictly subservient to the
disposition of the legislature. A large proportion were under the con-
viction that those bankrupt by resumption and consequent partial liquidation
would be negligible in number when compared to the people as a whole.
It was repeatedly urged that the majority of the population would ultimately
profit by legally eliminating the unsound institutions. Regardless, the
ensuing meeting of the legislature was awaited fearfully by all elements
of the community, for "in the midst of peace, the people found themselves
in worse condition and more embarrassed in their pecuniary interests than
in time of war." The legislators themselves were subject to no little
abuse, for in their private capacities they owed the banks about one million
dollars. It was small wonder, so went the popular complaint the general
assembly had so wantonly pledged the state and had been so reluctant to
take action.

In his December message of 1841, Roman again appealed to the legislature
to act. He advised the subordination of personal interests and party
spirit, and appealed to the legislators to take definitive action upon
the plan he had previously announced. The banks, continued the Governor,

57 New Orleans Bee, March 10, 1840.
58 New Orleans Courier, February 8, 1841.
59 New Orleans Morning Advertiser, October 28, 1841.
60 New Orleans Courier, November 29, 1841.
61 Burge, Roman, 129.
by their prolonged suspension had impaired the validity of their con-
tracts. He informed the legislature that five New Orleans banks had
admitted a state that approximated collapse, but on the other hand, the
majority of the New Orleans banks, if the proper procedure were observed,
could sustain themselves. This procedure would involve the compulsion
of all Louisiana banks to meet their charter obligations by the resumption
of specie payments. A great shock would be caused, but that was unavoid-
able, for it had to come sooner or later. "While we delay this crisis,"
he counselled, "we delay our power of resistance, and we increase its
intensity by the additional number of institutions that must succumb."

The house and senate both initiated legislation to regulate banking,
but they could not co-ordinate their measures. As the monetary situation
became desperately acute, the populace of New Orleans followed the legis-
lative conflict with breathless excitement. Many lived in silent dread
as to what the outcome would be. Meanwhile, the banks were "shivering
in the wind, curtailing their issues, and in busy preparation to meet
the coming storm." Several commercial houses had failed, and it was
apparent that others would also be forced to close. The pressure was
considered to be greater than it had been in 1837.

The legislature could not withstand the pressure of public opinion,
or ignore its responsibility to the community. A conference committee
finally framed a bank bill which was unanimously adopted by the senate
and sustained by a large majority of the house. Some of the legislators

62 Louisiana Senate Journal, 15 Leg., 2 Sess., 1-5.
63 New Orleans Bee, March 2, 1842.
64 Opelousas Gazette, January 22, 1842.
objected to the bill, but because the matter had to be disposed, they
65 voted for it.

The bank bill re-affirmed the charters of all the New Orleans banks,
but directed that they immediately resume specie payments. To stabilize
their cash liabilities, the banks were required to keep on hand the full
value of their liabilities, one-third being in cash, and two-thirds
being in proper paper. Banks which complied with established terms
could renew their debts. All banks entering into liquidation were re­
lieved from payment of bonuses to the state, or of further performance
of public works of improvements, unless the state was a stockholder in
such bank. After September 30, 1842, the stockholders of no bank were
to number less than fifty. The purchase of capital stock was prohibited
to all banks. Any bank refusing to comply with any provision of the act
was to be ordered into liquidation. The Governor was authorized to ap­
point annually a Board of Currency, consisting of three members who
would receive $4,000 each as a yearly salary. The principal duties of
the board of currency were to examine the banks, enforce the provisions
66 of the bill, and to prevent over-issuances of paper.

Several additional measures were passed to facilitate the execution
of the provisions of the bank bill. One of these provided for the legal
67 liquidation of foundering institutions. Another act stipulated that
specie payments be resumed on December 1, 1842; that any bank before final
liquidation must have on final settlement sufficient assets to discharge

65 New Orleans Bee, February 2, 1842.
67 Ibid., 234-54.
all of its liabilities; that banks taking up the circulation of liqui-
dating banks were to suffer losses in proportion to that of other
creditors; and that the Board of Currency would be subject to criminal
prosecution. Three miscellaneous acts made it unlawful for banks to
issue any collateral for circulation which was not redeemable in gold
and silver; to prevent any stockholder from examining the ledgers and
records of a bank wherein he held stock; and to increase their liabilities
or circulations until such were reviewed.

The bank bill, true to expectations, did not revive prosperity. On
the contrary, the enforcement of its provisions was the cause of the
failure of nine of the fifteen New Orleans banks. The depreciation of
municipal notes precipitated a riot of "a desperate and reckless rabble,"
but this was suppressed by resolute citizens. In retrospect, it was
observed that the law was a good one, for the nine banks which had been
liquidated were operating on the gullibility of the public and were a
menace to sound business. The immediate conclusion, however, was that
the bank bill was a Whig measure, urged by a Whig governor, and passed
by a Whig legislature. The Democrats nicely turned the tables on their
opponents and used the economic distress to great advantage in tempering
the public mind for the July elections. The Whigs vainly protested that
the state was only "reaping the blessings of the locofoco tampering with
the currency."

68 Ibid., 214-28.
69 Ibid., 26-27.
70 Ibid., 152-54.
71 Ibid., 112.
72 New Orleans Bee, May 21, 22, 23, 1842.
73 Lafayette Morning Herald and Jeffersonian, December 13, 1842.
74 New Orleans Bee, June 2, 1842.
In Louisiana, during the late thirties and early forties, there had been a perennial clamor for a revision or a re-writing of the state constitution. The Whigs, conservatively inclined, were not particularly enthusiastic about the movement. The Democrats consistently appealed for universal, white male suffrage; for an elective judiciary; and for an application of the elective principle to the filling of other offices. The most widely quoted campaign speech of Alexander Mouton was made at Clinton. It was first published in the Clinton Jeffersonian and then made "the rounds of the locofoco papers of the state." Mouton advocated the right of free suffrage to the full extent. He declared that all sovereign political power rested with the people and not with the money or wealth of the country, that the government and laws emanated from this sovereign power through its delegated authorities or agents, and hence the right of the people to change or alter their form of government. The current form of government of Louisiana, continued Mouton, was oppressive and tyrannical; it was founded on the principle that the mass of the people were ignorant and incapable of judging for themselves, and hence that none were intelligent but the wealthy, who claimed the sole right to manage its concerns. He contended that the framers of the Constitution of 1812 had transcended their powers and had trampled down the reserved rights of the sovereign people of Louisiana. They had framed a constitution which had deprived the citizen of his right to vote unless he should be in possession of certain properties. In Louisiana, the possession of a negro entitled a citizen to vote, in which case was clearly the negro and not the citizen that voted, and upon the same principle a man might justly claim the right to as many votes as the number of slaves he owned or upon
whom he paid taxes. It was clear to his mind that there was not a man living in Louisiana who could cast his vote in the July elections for himself, as such, on the high grounds of a free American citizen. Was not such a state of things reproachful and degrading in the extreme?

Taking away from the people the right of choosing their own immediate officers or agents, and the assumption of the power of appointing such officers or agents over the heads of the people and above responsibility of the people was another tyrannical feature of the Constitution to which Mouton declared that he would ever exert his inveterate opposition. It was extraordinary, with the pre-Revolutionary example before them, that the framers of the Louisiana constitution should have attempted to usurp such a dangerous power over the people as that which gives to the executive the right to select and appoint men from one section of the state and send them to preside over the people of other and distant parishes. It was the right of the people to choose their immediate officers or agents to superintend their immediate concerns.

To the Democratic charges that he was an enemy of "reform," Henry Johnson answered:

I have been charged also...of being opposed to a Convention to change the Constitution of the State, and to an extension of the right of suffrage. If elected Governor, I shall not be a member of the contemplated Convention, nor in the event of my election should I attempt in the slightest degree to influence the proceedings of the members of that body, if assembled. My opinion on these questions, therefore, are of no importance to the public. Under such circumstances, I ask, what have my opinions, in relation to these questions, to do with the election of Governor. Nevertheless, I have no objections to express them, and do now repeat what I have publicly stated on several occasions since these topics have been agitated, that I am in favor of a Convention to change the

75 Baton Rouge Gazette, June 24, 1842.
Constitution of the State; and that I am in favor of extending the right of suffrage, so as to allow every free white citizen of the proper age and residence the right to vote, without property qualification. I advocated such a principle in the Convention that framed the present Constitution, and am still in favor of it. You are authorized to use this letter as you may deem proper.  

Both parties were well organized and meetings were regularly held. The candidates made extensive speaking tours, but seemingly there were no bitter personal exchanges. The Democrats, without criminations, protested that Johnson had already served the state as governor, and that he was perpetually holding public office. The Democratic principle of rotation demanded his retirement. The Whigs replied that Johnson's natural faculties coupled with his broad experience in public life made him the superior candidate.

The general elections were preceded by the mayoralty elections in New Orleans. Denis Prieur, Democrat, decisively defeated William Freret, Whig. The victory was joyously hailed by the Democrats as a forecast of a July landslide. The Whig press broadcasted a strong counter propaganda, such as:

Our country friends must not suffer themselves to be humbugged by the outcry of the loofoocos at their success in the late Municipal election in this city. We certainly dreaded the triumph of Mr. Prieur, because we foresaw and foretold that the locos would attempt to pull wool over the eyes of the country whigs, by persuading them that it was a party test, that the city was revolutionized, and would give Mouton a majority in July. What we predicted has come to pass. The very sincere and candid locofoocos have raised a shout of exultation at their victory, and stunned the whigs by their vociferations of joy at what they are pleased to term a "Democratic triumph." It is natural enough that these gentry should make much of any sort of triumph in New Orleans. It is so seldom

76 Ibid., June 25, 1842.
77 Ibid., April 16, 1842; Opelousas Gazette, July 2, 1842.
78 New Orleans Bee, May 26, 1842.
they are enabled to carry the day in this stronghold of whiggery, that such an imperfect, inconclusive result as that obtained on the 4th instant, may well be hailed by them with the most clamorous demonstrations of hilarity.

Let the country whigs however remember, and mark the assertion, that the whig party in this city is as strong as ever; that we have a majority, and shall elect our entire ticket in July, besides giving Henry Johnson an overwhelming vote. The election of Mr. Price proved two things; first, the immense personal popularity of that gentleman—a popularity which as we all know, obtained for him a majority in New Orleans in 1838, while the entire whig legislative ticket was elected, and Governor White received 600 majority for Congress. Secondly, that the whig party lost an immense number of votes, as well from the total absence of organization, as on account of a mixing up of extraneous questions which deterred nearly every naturalized whig in the city from casting his suffrage in behalf of the whig candidate...

The Whigs made one final, desperate effort to rally just on the eve of the election. A huge meeting at the St. Louis exchange, New Orleans, radiated "the true spirit of Republicanism." Zenon Cavelier was appointed president, and eighteen were named vice presidents. Six secretaries recorded the proceedings, and twenty-three committee men were named by the President to prepare a report and resolutions for the consideration of the meeting.

The resolutions committee reported that the approaching election involved issues that had never been surpassed in importance. The result would determine the character of national and Louisiana legislation. As respected Louisiana, considered apart from the federal government, there

79 Ibid., April 21, 1842.
was not an interest that did not cry aloud for preservation from that remorseless legislation which had ever characterized the locofoco party when in power. This party, which seemingly built up systems to destroy them, overthrew the national currency with the avowed purpose of giving the country a better and more abundant one, and in carrying out their plan, caused local banks to spring up like Jonas' gourd, in a night's time, overspreading the country with their issues, and stimulating speculation to its highest point of extravagance. They alone caused the destruction of the national currency, and upon its ruin they had brought into existence the shin plaster system which had fallen to the ground by its own weight. It was their policy that had created an unnatural excitement throughout the country, inducing luxurious living and an abandonment of the economic and industrial habits of the American people. Now, forsooth, when their schemes had proved abortive, and the fallacies of their theories had become apparent, they were striving to get the power to crush and oppress those who had been beguiled by their iniquitous machinations into the snares that had been laid for them. If the locofocos obtained an ascendency in the Louisiana legislature, the imagination could not set bounds to the ruins, oppression and tyranny that would be inflicted upon the state. The same remorseless, overbearing and headstrong legislation that had overwhelmed the prosperity of Mississippi, would be repeated in Louisiana. There would not be left a sign or token of Louisiana's former prosperity. The little that had thus far been preserved from the general wreck would be swallowed up in the Maelstrom of a party whose banners bore the piratical inscription,
"to the victors belong the spoils." Theirs was a principle of plunder, openly avowed and universally acted upon. Let them but obtain entire control of the state government of Louisiana, and vengeance would give vigor to the blow that baffled ambition would long ago have struck. The axe had been whetted for the stroke, and if they secured the power to lift it over the head of Louisiana, the doom of the state would be seen in the exhausted resources of her citizens. Locofoocoism was devoid of the wisdom that remedied existing evils; it was without the mercy that tempers power with justice. In respect to national affairs, the Whigs might well ask the planters what would save them but a tariff? What would insure the ease and comfort of the mechanics but a duty on foreign goods, such a duty as would enable them to sell their own manufactures at prices that would give them a living? What state in the Union was more deeply concerned than Louisiana in a protective tariff? What city was more interested in a sound national circulation? None! Would the state then elect legislators, who would send a Senator to Congress to oppose the interests of Louisiana? Would the city commit suicide by assisting in putting in the United States Senate, a man who would strive to prolong the miseries of an uncertain and vacillating currency? Would the mechanic vote for a party that would invite the foreign article into the Louisiana market, to the exclusion of their own work—the products of the sweat of their brows? Who would join these "free trade" Utopians, who would give "hire and salary" to foreign artisans, and bribe foreign governments to oppress and cripple Louisiana's trade, by opening the port of New Orleans to the debasement of Louisiana's own industry?

81 Ibid.
The Whigs suffered a rout in the gubernatorial election. Mouton received 9669 votes and Johnson received 8104. Of the seventy-one legislators voting, Mouton received sixty confirmation ballots. "The Whigs were chagrined at the success of their opponents and...doubly mortified inasmuch as they had every reason to believe that Henry Johnson's election was a matter of certainty." It was asked:

What then, are the causes which have lost us our Governor? To our mind they are clear enough. In the first place, the whigs of the country had to fight the battle unassisted by their brethren in town. While the locofocos were artfully employing every device to carry their end, their antagonists were for the most part indifferent and apathetic. While the former poured their documents into the country by the thousands, and disseminated calumny and misrepresentation in every quarter, the latter remained lukewarm—either callous to the consequences, or too much accustomed to victory to anticipate a reverse.

In the legislative elections, the Whigs retained a bare joint-ballot majority. Concerning this, the comment was,

If locofocoism aided by collateral issues and by machinations, intrigue and craft has succeeded in securing the election of Alexander Mouton, thank Heaven we are spared the horrors of a locofoco majority in the legislature! That party will not be able to carry into effect its pernicious and destructive designs...We will not be threatened on the one hand with a poll tax designed to evade the constitution and introduce universal suffrage; nor on the other with repudiation—that lasting memento of infamy which has smirched the escutcheon of a sister state. We have saved much from the general wreck, in maintaining a Whig majority in the legislature of Louisiana.

In the Congressional elections, the Whigs retained two of their entries and lost one. In the first district, Edward D. White, Whig, defeated Miles Taylor, Democrat; in the second district, John B. Dawson,

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82 New Orleans Courier, July 29, 1842; Opelousas Gazette, July 16, 1842.
83 Louisiana Senate Journal, 16 Leg., 1 Sess., 8; Ibid. (French ed.), 15.
84 New Orleans Bee, July 12, 1842.
85 Baton Rouge Gazette, July 16, 1842.
86 New Orleans Bee, July 14, 1842.
Democrat, defeated John Buhler, Whig, and in the third district, John Moore, Whig, was victorious over James G. Bryce.

In New Orleans, the Democrats gave expression to their exuberance. Their victory in the gubernatorial race was appropriated by the firing of cannon and by a great procession which moved through the principal streets.

Commenting on the general elections, with particular emphasis on the gubernatorial contest, the New Orleans Bee complained that the principle of rotation in office and the question of a constitutional convention as connected with free suffrage, were the hooks that had been well baited by the locofocos to catch unwary Whigs. Inasmuch as Johnson had been governor once, it was urged that he belonged to a trio of Whig politicians who constantly sought to perpetuate power by alternately succeeding each other in office. The Whigs had been falsely charged with all the evils resulting from locofoco legislation and the sufferings occasioned by locofoco dislocation of the currency. The Bee, speaking with a voice that should have been the product of Whig experience, gloomily remarked that

It is a melancholy fact that whenever the finances of a state become disordered, whether this evil arise from causes wholly uncontrollable, or spring from unwise and hostile legislation, the dominant party are certain to incur the responsibility and the censure. The wretched blunders of the last legislature with that mis-shaped abortion—the bank bill—fostered as it was chiefly by locofoco kindness, went further towards accomplishing the defeat of the Whigs, than perhaps all other causes combined. The Whigs were in a majority in the last legislature, and though the bill became a law despite the strenuous opposition of most of them, the whole party had to shoulder its fatal influence.

87 Opelousas Gazette, July 16, 1842.
88 New Orleans Courier, July 22, 1842.
There are other causes which contributed to this seeming locofoco victory, which we may peradventure advert to hereafter, but the principal ones have been explained, and it only remains for the whigs to emulate their antagonists in one respect—to take their whipping manfully and without whimpering. Let them remember, that in 1844, the clarion voice of stout HARRY OF THE WEST will call them to the contest, and let them prepare in season for that period when their countless battalions will overwhelm the serried hosts of locofocoism and redeem Louisiana. 39

Hardly had the flames of the general election fires died down when new fuel was thrown on the smoldering political coals of Louisiana. A congressional election was called for the first Monday of July, 1843. This call was in conformity with a new apportionment bill, which increased the Louisiana House delegation from three to four, and which obligated elections in the four newly created districts.

John Hueston, "converted" Whig editor of the Baton Rouge Gazette, in a series of very bold articles estimated the several candidates. George K. Rogers, the Whig nominee of the first district, "although an honest man, and endowed with many noble qualities of heart, did not possess those sterling properties of the head, which his purposed mission required. His opponent, John Slidell, was his superior in talents and education...." In the second district, the case was very different. Edward D. White, "by natural and acquired qualifications stood above comparison with Aloece Louis Labranche." It was doubtful if the Democratic nominee had either the talents or character to take a respectable stand among statesmen. In the third district, there could not be one good reason for preferring John B. Dawson to James M. Elam. In point of talent and business habits, the comparison would certainly be in favor.

89 New Orleans Bee, July 12, 1842.
of the latter. Concerning the candidates of the fourth district, John Moore had proved himself to his constituency. Congress could not boast a soberer, a more industrious, a more deserving member. His whole course had been most noble and faithful. But Moore's Democratic opponent, Pierre Evariste John Baptiste Bossier! He was able to neither speak nor write. He probably could answer to his name when called, and maybe the process of giving a party vote would not prove too difficult when ayes and nays were demanded. Even granting this, he would probably more often say oui than aye.

But he is a Creole, and once killed a man, and was called chivalrous, and hence ought to make a good Congressman! By a parity of reasoning, Mr. Labranche will make a very indifferent Congressman, for, though he is a Creole, he never killed anybody, is not called chivalrous, and "once upon a time," when the wrath of John R. Grymes waxed hot against him, it is said that he valiantly fled, and took refuge behind some ladies who were passing, imploring their protection.91

Distrust and previous election irregularities prompted the parties to declare themselves mutually desirous that the approaching election should be conducted on fair and honorable terms, and without resort to unusual or illegal modes for the creation of voters. In New Orleans, the Democratic Executive Committee of the first congressional district, and the Clay Club, representing the Whigs of the same district, appointed committees to agree upon rulers of fair play. The Democrats were represented by Denis Prieur, John L. Lewis, and Emile La Sere, and the Clay Club appointed Glendy Burke, Martin Blache, William L. Hodge, A. C. Bullitt, and M. Cruzat. Five major agreements were settled upon.

(1) Neither party for the approaching election would qualify, or attempt

91 Baton Rouge Gazette, August 12, 1843.
to qualify any voters by means of cab, carriage, or pedlar's licenses; by purchase of public lands or other property; by payment of the passenger tax under the recent action of the legislature, or by any other similar or unusual modes; nor would there be any attempts to introduce any voters from one district or one parish to another by means of "colonization," but there would rigidly be enforced a bona fide residence in the ward or parish where the party offered to vote, and all votes offered on a temporary residence would be rejected. (2) The challenging committees of each party at the respective polls would challenge and jointly object to any such vote being received except in such cases where the party was well known to follow the profession indicated by the license under which he claimed to vote, or was a bona fide owner of the property on which the license had been issued, or on satisfactory proof being made to that effect by the oath of the party or otherwise. (3) It was expressly understood that this arrangement was to have a retrospective effect on all arrangements that might have already been made toward qualifying voters in any of the previously mentioned modes, and was to be applied to any voters that might have thus been qualified. (4) To avoid confusion and delay, it was agreed that not more than two regular challengers for each party should be on duty at any one poll at the same time. (5) The parties mutually and honorably pledged that the terms agreed upon would be carried into full effect, both in letter and spirit, and that their best exertions and influence would be used to discourage and prevent any violation of it, directly or indirectly by any member of their respective parties.

The Whigs, in the election, suffered a stunning defeat. The Democrats won all four of the congressional seats. In Baton Rouge, John Hueston poured forth upon the pages of his Gazette an unrestrained and intemperate rage. In New Orleans, the victory of John Slidell, henceforth to be a national and an international figure, was celebrated by a Democratic parade and banquet, both of which were described in very sour terms by the Whig Daily Tropic. The banquet was held in the lavish ball room of the St. Louis exchange, and the brilliant chandeliers, "designed to reflect light on virtue, innocence, and purity...blazed in splendor upon the dark and grizzled and motley crowd of locos and Tylerites there congregated."

Perhaps the Whigs had been a bit too gullible in their pre-election pledges of fair play to the Democrats. If this was the case, the indications seem to be that their lesson had been well learned. After the election, the executive committee of the Clay Club of New Orleans advertised that it would enable prospective voters to meet the property qualifications on the most reasonable terms, and that foreigners of New Orleans, who were Whig sympathizers, would be guided toward citizenship and the franchise by "Col. Wm. Christy, No. 21, St. Charles Street, who will take much pleasure in affording them any facilities required."

John Hueston and Alee Labranche staged the last sad act of the congressional campaign of 1843. Labranche, greatly indignant over Hueston's printed estimate, made a physical attack upon the Baton Rouge

93 Baton Rouge Gazette, August 12, 1843.
94 New Orleans Daily Tropic, July 12, 1843.
95 New Orleans Commercial Bulletin, August 24, 1843.
96 Ibid.
editor. The "fracas" occurred at the St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans. The parties were separated before serious injury resulted to either.

Hueston published his card:

...since it has been stated that I had a difference with Mr. Labranche, I must say this is a mistake. A person in company with two or three others, did come and ask my name, Wednesday evening, while I was playing a game of billiards with a friend in the St. Charles Exchange, and when I answered to it, one of the company threw his arms around my arms and body, and endeavored to hold me, while the person who had asked my name struck me on the head with a stick. I threw the man who had taken hold of me, disengaged myself from him, and turned to look for the one who had used the stick. He was gone—I was informed afterwards that this man was Mr. Labranche, member elect to Congress, from the second Congressional District, Louisiana.97

A challenge ensued, and was accepted. The affair of honor was conducted at that most famous of such rendezvous, "the Oaks". Hueston chose double-barreled guns for weapons. Forty yards was the intervening distance agreed upon. Firing was to take place any time between the count of from one to five.

On the first round Mr. Labranche fired both barrels, Mr. Hueston lost one fire—the time having elapsed before he could fire a second time.—Second round—One of Mr. L's balls cut the knees of Mr. H's pantaloons, without injuring the flesh. Third round—One ball passed through Mr. H's hat. Fourth round—the first shot from Mr. L. passed through Mr. H's body, entering on the left side, over the last rib and coming out a little higher on the right side—Mr. Hueston threw his gun forward, and fell on his back. He was taken on a litter and carried to a house near by, where Dr. Graham assisted by Drs. Labatut and Stone rendered him all the assistance in their power;—but in vain. He died at 11 o'clock the same evening, in possession of all his mental faculties, surrounded by a circle of friends, his death was calm and manly. After he was conveyed to the house he conversed with his friends and not once did he recur to the unfortunate affair. On the ground Mr. Hueston displayed the most undaunted courage, coolness and fortitude. Thus has fallen one of the ablest champions of the press and one of the boldest advocates of the cause he had espoused.98

97 Baton Rouge Gazette, August 26, 1843.
98 Ibid.
The unexpired senatorial term of Mouton, which was being served by Conrad, was to end on March 3, 1843. Conrad's chances for re-election had been considerably damaged by his daring opposition in the United States Senate to a movement which proposed the payment of one thousand dollars to Andrew Jackson as a reimbursement for the fine which the General had incurred in 1815 for his contempt of Louisiana civil law. Conrad's course was doubly irritating to his home constituency inasmuch as the Louisiana legislature had passed a resolution instructing the Louisiana senators and requesting the Louisiana representatives "to use their best efforts to procure the passage of a law to return to General Andrew Jackson the fine imposed on him by Judge D. A. Hall, on the 31st of March, 1815." Concerning the improbability of Conrad's re-election, a New Orleans Tyler organ remarked,

...several of the so-called Whig members of the legislature will not vote for Mr. Conrad under any circumstances, for the reason of his endangering the tariff bill last session by following so submissively the lead of Mr. Crittenden; for his opposition to the great treaty of Washington, and for his extraordinary course in relation to General Jackson's fine. Several moderate men in the party have openly proclaimed thus early their hostility to him.

Porter, who had won high esteem with Louisiana and national Whigs generally, was obviously the most desirable candidate that the party could offer. Accordingly, his name was presented to the legislature. State Senator Isaac E. Morse, of the county of Attakapas, Democrat, gave glowing tribute to the character of Porter when addressing the joint session he declared that his party would make no nomination, and that the Democrats of the legislature had concluded to vote for "a distinguished member of the

100 Louisiana Acts, 16 Leg., 1 Sess., 21.
101 New Orleans Daily Republican, December 17, 1842.
whig party who has once before filled the office of U. S. Senator." A
die-hard Democrat, T. W. Wadsworth, Representative of Plaquemine parish,
retorted that the gentleman might be authorized to speak for a portion
of the Democratic party, but he did not speak for all of its members in
the legislature. In an election which all but ignored party lines,
porter received forty-five votes; Conrad received twenty-two; and John
 slidell received five. Two ballots were blank.

The gallery and lobby were crowded with spectators, who evinced the
most intense interest in the election. When it was discovered that
Mr. Porter had a majority of votes there was a loud demonstration
of gratification among them, which was only silenced by an authori-
tative rap of the President's hammer; when the final result was
announced, they repeated their approval by still louder acclamations.104

Henry Clay, currently in New Orleans, wrote to Crittenden,

You will have heard of Porter's Election. It has given very
general satisfaction, there being but one regret accompanying it,
and that is that Mr. Conrad has been sacrificed in consequence of
a faithful discharge of his duty. But Judge Porter has had no
agency in bringing about the result, and members of the Legislature
were even assured, prior to the election, that he approves of Mr.
C's course about the fine. The judge is not here and some doubt
is entertained of his acceptance, but I think he will accept.105

Porter, at this time was in very delicate health. As a recuperative
measure, he travelled widely during the summer of 1843. He visited the
most fashionable watering places, but his ailment, heart disease, was so
grave that there was despair for his recovery.

Unable to take his seat in the Senate, Porter bitterly reflected:

I am cruelly situated in regard to my public duties. I accepted
the place I hold in the Senate with infinite reluctance, but since
I have taken it feelings & views, principally connected with the
Presidential election have taken great hold on my ...mind, & I never

102 New Orleans Daily Picayune, January 10, 1843.
103 Louisiana Senate Journal (French ed.), 16 Leg., 1 Sess., 15.
104 New Orleans Daily Picayune, January 10, 1843.
105 Clay to Crittenden, New Orleans, January 14, 1843; Crittenden Papers.
desired any thing more than to have spent this winter in Washington. But it appears to be otherwise ordered. Two courses are open to me. One is to resign. The other is to hold on to the Spring & try & reach the Capital about April. I am undetermined but inclined to the former. In the first place it is the most correct course as I ought not to hold an office, the duties of which I cannot discharge. Then the Whigs are in a majority in our Legislature now, & tho a small one, they may not be so next year. Again Mr. Conrad who was the cause of so much dissension last year, is now absent in Europe, & I think our chance of electing a Whig very good—If I defer it I think it very probable should my disease continue that I could not go on at all—& then my position would be most painful.106

As he did not improve, Porter retired to his beautiful estate, Oak Lawn. Here, during the winter of 1843, he was visited by Henry Clay. The death of Porter, on January 13, 1844, was a shocking blow to the strength and dignity of the Whig party in Louisiana.

The obituary of the Baton Rouge Gazette, by its very simplicity and genuineness testifies to the sterling worth of the man:

The death of this valuable and enlightened citizen has left a vacuum that cannot easily be filled. As a private citizen he was beloved by all who knew him. As a jurist, his decisions were marked with soundness of judgment, a knowledge of law, and a high sense of equity. As a member of the legislature and of Congress, he was honored with the respect and confidence always paid to an able statesman. His life has been a life of usefulness, his devotion to the public good has been almost unequalled, attending to his public duties when an enfeebled constitution would have dictated rest from the cares and turmoils of public life. As long as Louisiana will last, its records will be a bright monument to the memory of this distinguished man.107

Henry Johnson was elected by the legislature to fill the senatorial vacancy created by Porter's death. The election was rigidly partisan, with the Democrats supporting Joseph Walker. The final ballot was

Johnson, thirty-nine; Walker, thirty-six; Blank, two.

106 Porter to Crittenden, Oak Lawn, December 2, 1843; Crittenden Papers.
107 Baton Rouge Gazette, January 27, 1844.
In Louisiana, the candidacy of Henry Clay for the presidency in 1844 was dated from the defection of John Tyler in 1841. During the intervening years, Louisiana Whig editors had the pleasant custom of eulogizing the party leader. The following is a fair example of this praise:

November, 1840, crowned with glorious but delusive triumph our long and doubtful struggle against high-handed power, misrule and corruption. In the darkest hour of that struggle one gallant champion stood distinguished as the head of the phalanx of freedom, in his fearless attitude an impersonation of American Independence—his clarion voice cheering on his companions—his eagle eye and dauntless brow infusing into them the quenchless ardor of his own indomitable courage. The spirit of the nation was roused—the satellites of power and minions of corruption quailed and fled, and the cause of truth and liberty was triumphantly vindicated. The gallant champion still survives—the name of HENRY CLAY is still a tower of strength. 109

Clay, during the fall and winter of 1842-3 was a visitor to Louisiana. He came to the state on "a mere matter of business...entirely unconnected with politics." The reason for his coming made no whit of difference to the Louisiana Whigs. They hailed his presence with unstinted enthusiasm, and the popular hero was bombarded with invitations to visit various towns of the state. His natural dignity and charm were elements that produced praise even from his political opponents. Upon his return to Ashland, he wrote to Clayton: "The public papers did not exaggerate the enthusiasm which marked my reception in the S. West. I should not be surprised if we carry the whole of the S. West, including Alabama and Mississippi. My friends do assure me that Tennessee is perfectly safe." 111

109 Baton Rouge Gazette, January 13, 1844.
110 Ibid., October 22, 1842. The Baton Rouge Gazette of December 17, 1842, gives an excellent contemporary description of the personal appearance of Clay.
111 Clay to Clayton, Ashland, April 14, 1843; Clayton Papers.
During January and February of 1844, Clay was back in Louisiana. This visit was more than "a mere matter of business...entirely unconnected with politics." The Whigs of the state, upon the call of the Central Clay Club of New Orleans, assembled in the "Crescent City" on February 22, 1844, to honor the presence of their great leader. The editor of the Baton Rouge Gazette records the passing of the Harry of the West, the Rainbow, and the Ambassador, each loaded with merry Whigs from the upper parishes, who with their bands of music and their shouts to the shore, made the welkin ring.

At an early hour on the morning of the 22d every ship and steamer in the port of New Orleans had its colors and signals flying; every public place displayed its stars and stripes; and on every corner there was a glad assemblage of local Whigs, who were on hand to extend welcome to the arriving country delegations. The display and pageantry was grand in the extreme. All of the delegations were then formed into an immense and orderly procession of about 8000 souls. They were a veritable "Army with banners" and badges—a host—a phalanx of stout hearts from every parish in the state. "Trumpets, drums, and horns had they, and brass drums and cymbals, too." Patriotische music made glad the procession as it marched solemnly and slowly through the principal thoroughfares, until finally they met on the Place d'Armes. Here, they proceeded to organize by selecting the venerable Philemon Thomas as president, and eighteen prominent leaders as vice presidents. The President opened the convention.

112 Baton Rouge Gazette, February 24, 1844.
113 The Place d'Armes is now known as Jackson Square.
with an appropriate address, after which a Grand Committee was elected and entrusted with the duties of naming an electoral ticket, of naming delegates to the previously-announced Baltimore national convention, and of performing other such functions as were necessary.

Eloquence, being called forth by the day and the occasion, was poured out in overwhelming torrents, and with a convincing force that brought out the heartiest manifestations of the congregated multitudes. "The Honorable Sergeant S. Prentiss, of Mississippi, addressed the vast assemblage in one of his heart-stirring speeches, which was constantly interrupted by the deafening shouts of his delighted audience." The distinguished orator was more than his usual self. His masterly speech combined all the attributes of genius, logic, and humor, and he swayed with magic power the vast multitude by which he was surrounded.

Prentiss was followed by A. B. Roman, whose lofty sentiments were voiced with beauty and power. George Poindexter closed the day with stirring oratory of the most felicitous character.

After adjournment, the delegates marched back toward Canal Street with Whig banners flying, and to the sound of drums and trumpets. The march was directed to the St. Charles Hotel, where Mr. Clay was receiving company in the gentlemen's parlor. On their arrival, the large room was

115 The electors designated were: first district, Jacques Toutant; second district, Zenon Cavelier; third district, G. C. Guion; fourth district, Lafayette Saunderg; fifth district, Jacques Dupre; and sixth district, Edward Sparrow; substitutes: W. C. C. Claiborne, Samuel J. Peters, Narcisse Landry, Joseph Bernard, Lastie Dupre, and John Waddell.


117 George Poindexter had served Mississippi as judge, governor, Congressman, and United States Senator. Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1815-19.
instantly crowded to suffocation with men of all ages and conditions, from the grey-haired and venerable man to the beardless youth, the wealthy and the poor, all eager and anxious to exchange salutations with the great Statesman, who was looked upon as the very impersonation of pure Whig principles, and as the man destined to bring back to the government purity and simplicity, and to restore the Republic to its pristine vigor and prosperity. So great was the densely-packed and overflowing mass, that it was utterly impossible for a hundredth part of the people even to approach him, and at last yielding with reluctance to the entreaties of the gentlemen around him, Mr. Clay consented to present himself before the incalculable crowd waiting in front of the St. Louis Exchange.

Immediately on his appearing, shouts, loud, hearty, cheering, and enthusiastic, such as can proceed only from the breast of freemen, rent the air, and loud and reiterated calls were made on the time-honored patriot to speak—aye, for five minutes—nay, even but one word, so anxious were the people to hear the sound of that voice which had so long been raised in the service of the Republic. There stood the uncompromising and untiring opponent of all arbitrary power—the ever-ready and always-able advocate of the rights of the people, the defender of the Constitution, Henry Clay, firm and erect, hale and vigorous, with fire and enthusiasm kindling the quick glance of his eye, and high hopes resting on his forehead and illuminating his countenance. Even yet he did not speak. Entreaty followed on entreaty, until at last, finding himself so hemmed in on all sides that
retreat was absolutely impossible, he at length, with evident reluctance, came forward, and said:

You call for a speech from me, my fellow citizens; it is not proper that I should make a speech, and I will not make a speech. But this I may say to you, you are engaged in a good cause, an honest cause, a glorious cause. The principles which you are advocating tend to the advancement of the prosperity of the Republic, and I will tell you from all quarters—from the farthest corners of Maine to the extremest points of Louisiana, the signs of the times are propitious, and not a speck obscures the sky.

On the second day of the convention, the electors, and the delegates to the national convention were announced, and these were unanimously confirmed. On motion of W. L. Hodge, it was unanimously resolved that the delegates to the Baltimore convention be instructed to vote for Henry Clay "as the first--THE LAST--THE ONLY choice of the whigs of Louisiana, for President of these United States, and that in no contingency whatever, except that of death are they to cast their vote for any other candidate; leaving the vote on a suitable candidate for Vice-President to their discretion."

In May, 1844, the Whig national nominating convention assembled in Baltimore. Streams of population poured in from every section of the United States, "as if the whole union was thither bound." Louisiana sent a delegation thirty-one strong.

At eleven o'clock, A. M., on Wednesday, May 1, the delegates met in the Universal Church. There was a full attendance and the church was

118 New Orleans Daily Tropic, February 24, 1844; Baton Rouge Gazette, March 2, 1844.
119 Baton Rouge Gazette, May 18, 1844.
crowded to overflowing "with eager and earnest spectators." Reverdy Johnson, of Maryland, called the convention to order. Senator Jabez W. Huntington, of Connecticut announced that Arthur L. Hopkins, of Alabama, had been designated as president of the convention, pro tempore. Hopkins' name was received with cheers, and that gentleman, upon assuming the chair, suggested the propriety of invoking the blessings of Almighty God on the occasion. The Reverend Mr. Johns, of Baltimore, led the convention in a repetition of the Lord's prayer, and following he offered up "some of the most appropriate prayers of the Episcopal Church." Another of the city clergymen, Reverend Mr. Williams, read appropriate passages from the word of God, and exhorted the delegates to "walk worthy of their vocation." One might legitimately wonder if the minister was at the moment thinking of John Tyler.

The Honorable Ambrose Spencer, of New York, was chosen president of the convention, and Henry Johnson served Louisiana as one of the vice presidents. The name of the Honorable Ambrose Spencer was received with applause, and all the officers appeared to give entire satisfaction to all the members of the convention, for their names were unanimously accepted. Loud applause greeted Spencer when he took the stand, and the array of distinguished men from all parts of the country upon the platform was very impressive. The President, on taking the chair, made the following address:

I should have felt great diffidence in my capacity in discharging the duties of the Chair, but for consideration that we meet as brothers in principle, animated by one common purpose to rescue our beloved country and its institutions from the degradation into which they have fallen, and to place on a firm basis its honor, its prosperity, its happiness, and its glory....(In regard to nominations), I may, however, remark, that public opinion which is omnipotent here, has anticipated our selection, to the first station, in designating an
individual pre-eminont as a patriot and a statesman, whose name has conferred honor on his country, and whose counsels and voice in our Cabinet and our Legislative Hall, have had a potency in favor of liberty, the honor of the country and its best interests, which no other name has attained since the immortal Washington.

B. Watkins Leigh, of Virginia, proposed the following resolution:

Resolved, That this Convention unanimously nominate and recommend to the people of the United States Henry Clay, of Kentucky, as President of these United States.

A thousand voices cried out, "Amen! Amen!" and then there were "such cheers and clapping of hands as the world never heard before. The cheers were prolonged for many minutes, and with such deafening shouts as made the church quake."

Theodore Frelinghuysen, of New Jersey, was on the third ballot nominated vice-presidential candidate. The convention before adjournment, adopted a platform which praised Clay and Frelinghuysen, and which defined the Whig principles. The key plank was:

Resolved, that these principles may be summed as comprising--a well regulated National Currency--a Tariff for Revenue to defray the necessary Expenses of the Government, and discriminating with special reference to the protection of the Domestic Labor of the Country--the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands--a single term for the Presidency--a reform of Executive usurpation--and generally such an administration of the affairs of the country, as shall impart to every branch of the public service the greatest practicable efficiency, controlled by a well regulated and wise economy.121

The Democrats met in Baltimore a few days after the adjournment of the Whig convention. Van Buren, because of his views on Texas annexation, had lost the favor of the South, and consequently was not re-nominated. James K. Polk, of Tennessee, and George M. Dallas, of Pennsylvania, both comparatively obscure in a national sense, were chosen as party leaders.

121 Ibid.
Two other national parties were also in the field. The Liberty party nominated James G. Birney, of New York. An abortive Tyler party, composed largely of officeholders, re-nominated the President. The mottoes of the Tyler convention were "No-annexation of Texas--Postponement is rejection" and "Tyler and Texas." Tyler's candidacy evoked no enthusiasm. In a letter dated August 20, he withdrew his name. As a political pariah, he realized that he had no chance of victory over the major parties. In his letter of withdrawal, he stoutly and somewhat bitterly defended the rectitude of his record.

In Louisiana, the campaign of 1844 was fought out on two principal fronts: the annexation of Texas and abolition. The Whigs made desperate efforts to revive the old issues, but the popular response was feeble. Nevertheless, daily appeals went out. The Baton Rouge Gazette solemnly warned:

This year will set at rest, at least for years to come, the all-engrossing question that revolutionizes the union, namely Bank or no Bank; tariff or no tariff; distribution or no distribution; and finally the question of national credit or national repudiation. These questions are now for the first time fully and fairly before the people.124

In regard to the tariff, the Opelousas St. Landry Whig admonished the sugar planters to remember

That Henry Clay is in favor of the present tariff which imposes a duty of TWO AND A HALF CENTS PER POUND ON SUGAR! Remember also, that James K. Polk is OPPOSED to the present Tariff, and above all, that he is deadly hostile to protection on sugar! Mr. Polk has written and spoken more in opposition to the sugar duty than any man in the Union, and desires to see foreign sugars admitted FREE OF DUTY! He has denounced the sugar planters of Louisiana as a "few wealthy nabobs," who are not entitled to protection. Remember him at the polls.125

122 Opelousas Gazette, June 15, 1844.
123 New Orleans Daily Picayune, August 28, 29, 1844.
124 Baton Rouge Gazette, March 16, 1844.
125 Opelousas St. Landry Whig, October 3, 1844.
On the matter of territorial expansion, even though it necessitated agitation over the slavery issue, the Democratic convention had taken a deliberate and bold stand. It had been resolved "that the re-occupation of Oregon and the re-annexation of Texas at the earliest practical period are great American measures, which this convention recommends to the cordial support of the Democracy of the Union." Polk was naturally committed to his party's announced stand on the matter, for it will be recalled that Van Buren had lost the Democratic nomination largely because of his opposition to annexation.

Before coming to Louisiana in 1843, Clay had received numerous inquiries emanating from public meetings and prominent individuals which desired to know his opinion on the Texas question. While in New Orleans he was informed, much to his surprise, that Tyler had sent a treaty of annexation to the Senate, and that a poll revealed that two-thirds of that body favored it. Feeling that it was his patriotic duty to publicly express himself, Clay, from Raleigh, N. C., addressed a letter, dated April 17, 1844, to the editors of the Washington National Intelligencer. He concluded this communication by stating that he considered annexation, at that time, without the assent of Mexico, as a measure compromising the national character, which would involve the United States in a war with Mexico, and probably involve the United States in a war with foreign powers. He considered annexation dangerous to the integrity of the Union, inexpedient in view of the financial condition of the country, and uncalled for by any general expression of public opinion. Clay denied the contention that the acquisition of Texas would bolster the economic and political
Clay's "Raleigh Letter" made his candidacy unpopular in the South, for prevailing southern opinion favored annexation. In Louisiana, as elsewhere, it was contended that such a course would lend security to the "peculiar institution," and add to the political strength of the South. Besides being a land of fabulous economic opportunity, Texas might with propriety be divided into four or five slaveholding states.

As the campaign progressed, Clay was brought to the realization that his "Raleigh" pronunciamento was doing his political position considerable damage. The "Raleigh Letter" was re-written many times, and at least there were verbal modifications. Replying to two gentlemen of New Orleans, Clay, in a letter dated August 29, stated that he far from having any personal objection to acquiring Texas, would be glad to see it occur, if it could be accomplished without national dishonor, and without war.

It was only natural that a majority of Louisianans should favor annexation. The very proximity of Texas, should there have been no other contributing factors, was sufficient to evoke among Louisianans the keenest interest in their neighboring national State. During the Revolution of 1836, a mass meeting, which was attended by thousands, assembled at Bank's Arcade, New Orleans, "to encourage, sympathize with, and support the Texans

126 Clay to the Editors of the Washington National Intelligencer, Raleigh, N. C., April 17, 1840; Washington National Intelligencer, April 27, 1844; also quoted in the Baton Rouge Gazette, May 11, 1844.

127 New Orleans Bee, August 29, 1844; Opelousas St. Landry Whig, September 14, 1844.
in their...struggles for liberty and national independence." This
meeting was addressed by such prominent Whigs as William Christy and
Randall Hunt. In 1837, the trade relations between Louisiana and
Texas was so important as to prompt the citizens of Natchitoches to
memorialize the legislature to build a railroad to the Sabine river.
There was a plethora of Texas news items in the Louisiana papers between
1836 and 1845.

A careful examination of the evidence tends to prove that the Whigs
of Louisiana favored annexation. The delicacy of their position, as a
part of a great national organization, caused them to act with wary
discretion and lukewarm circumspection. Resolutions adopted at their
public meetings approximate those which were the official expression of
a nominations ratification meeting held in New Orleans, which were:

RESOLVED, That we discover nothing in the position of Henry Clay,
regarding the question of the annexation of Texas to the United
States, as clearly defined by his recently published (Raleigh) letter,
that can authorize any withdrawal of the confidence that has been
placed in him as a sound, enlightened statesman and patriot; we find
in that letter renewed and abundant proofs of his ardent love of
country, straightforward independence and lofty regard for the honor —
and integrity of the American Union.

RESOLVED, That we recognize, in the declaration of Henry Clay,
in his letter concerning Annexation, that any attempt on the part
of European powers to authorize or in any way to subjugate Texas,
should be resisted by the United States unto war....130

Throughout the campaign, the Louisiana Whig papers infrequently praised
Clay's Raleigh declaration, but otherwise more or less mooted the Texas
question. The New Orleans Daily Tropic went to the extreme of declaring
that it was not even a party issue.

128 New Orleans Bee, April 5, 1836.
129 Ibid., January 18, 1837.
130 Baton Rouge Gazette, May 25, 1844.
131 New Orleans Daily Tropic, April 26, 1844.
The Louisiana Democrats, sensing the public pulse, made capital of annexation. Their papers, their resolutions, and their public men cried loudly for the "re-annexation of Texas," as the following anecdote from the Louisville (Ky.) Journal illustrates:

You will proclaim it to our countrymen in the East, West, North, and South, and let the alarm go forth that a leading Locofoco of Louisiana, (who is abroad,) Judge Downs proclaimed; "Texas or disunion--Texas if it should cost us millions of money and oceans of blood!!"...This same little Judge Downs said in the same tone, that all who voted against Tyler's Texas treaty ought to be hung, and by G-d if he had it in his power he would hang them.132

The premise that Louisiana Whigs were inclined to favor annexation has been advanced. In substantiation of this view, the subsequent history of the Texas matter, as related to Louisiana, should here be interpolated.

Neither of the Whig Senators of Louisiana voted for the treaty of annexation. As a matter of fact, all the Whigs in the Senate, Henderson of Mississippi excepted, so voted. Thomas H. Benton, Democratic Senator of Missouri, was bitterly hostile to Tyler's treaty. Benton interpreted the annexation movement as a scheme being manipulated by the followers of John C. Calhoun to popularize and elevate their leader to the presidency. Benton and Calhoun were inveterate enemies. By 1844, Benton was no particular friend of the South. After the defeat of the treaty of annexation, he brought in a bill which would authorize the President to negotiate with Mexico and Texas for the annexation of the latter, with a boundary made up of the desert west of the Neuces and of the highlands dividing the waters of the Mississippi from those of the Rio Grande; and slavery was to be prohibited in the northern parts of the territory concerned, so as to

132 Baton Rouge Gazette, August 31, 1844.
divide the region about equally between slaveholding and non-slaveholding
states.

Benton's bill clearly implied that Congress was the controlling
agency over territorial additions, and if this were conceded, it would
be an admission that Congress possessed authority over slavery in the
territories. To such a supposition, the angry retort in Louisiana was:

The bill introduced by Mr. Benton, at the present session, is so
palpably absurd and injudicious, that it should not receive the
support of any party. We had rather not have Texas, than to have it
on such terms. No southern whig even can vote for it, without
inflicting evils of an ominous and durable nature upon his constituents.
It is a fire brand thrown into the Senate. It must promote the dis­
cussion of slavery. Is Mr. Benton determined to force this subject
into the arena? Not satisfied with the excitement that prevails
already--with foreign influence brought to bear and against us--with
the rapid inroads this sweeping fanaticism has already made, and the
terrible prospects of the future unless immediately checked by the
immediate annexation of slaveholding Texas with all her present
limits, boundaries and institutions--will this Senator representing
a slave-owning constituency, continue to refuse his assent to the
measure, unless tramelled by a compromise with and concessions to
the abolitionists? Will he exasperate political parties--add another
element to our distracted councils--stifle public sentiment--shake the
perpetuity of the Union--circumscribe the progress of free principles--
and facilitate the hostile designs of England upon our country--merely
because Mr. Calhoun is in charge of negotiating these measures. Yet
Mr. Benton is the advocate of annexation! If he is—if he be sincere—
let him abandon his bill. Texas with her slaves, or not at all.134

In connection with this subject, it is interesting to note that there
was some considerable interest in a "Calhoun for President" movement in
Louisiana. In April, 1843, a short-lived paper, the New Orleans Signal
was established, which in its initial issue announced that it was commencing
the task of conducting the first avowed Calhoun paper in Louisiana. All in
sympathy with its intent were invited to "step forward boldly and rear the
banner of Free Trade and Statesrights."

133 William H. Meigs, Life of Thomas Hart Benton (Philadelphia, 1904), 348-49.
134 New Orleans Jeffersonian Republican, December 30, 1844.
135 New Orleans Signal, April 26, 1843.
Senator Barrow in a long letter addressed to his constituency, expressed his unqualified disapprobation of the annexation of Texas. He logically and quite plausibly set forth his objections. He attempted to prove that nothing by way of political equilibrium could be gained by annexation; that such an act would tarnish, if not destroy the national honor; that the "peculiar institution" would not benefit by such an act; that industry would be dislocated by the admission of Texas into the Union; and that in rejecting annexation, the United States would have nothing to fear from England and France. A few months later Barrow told the Senate he "wished it understood that at no time, and under no circumstances, would he give his vote for the scheme for the annexation of Texas to the United States. He believed it would be highly detrimental to the interests of Louisiana."

Louisiana's other Whig Senator, Henry Johnson, took a different view of the matter. He espoused the cause of annexation, but was not an open advocate until after the presidential election.

In his January message of 1845, Governor Mouton so advised the legislature:

I cannot close this communication without calling your attention to a question which during the preceding year has been much discussed by the people of this State, one which I consider of the greatest importance to our welfare and tranquility, and certainly calculated in its result to affect seriously, for good or for evil, the interest of the whole Union; I allude to the annexation of Texas to our confederation. Whatever may have been the division and the causes of the division among us, upon that question, I sincerely believe that late events together with the lights that have been thrown upon it by discussions, have satisfied the great majority of the people, not only of the propriety, but the necessity of the measure; although the

137 New Orleans Bee, February 12, 1845.
advantages that may be derived from it, in a pecuniary point of
view, more will accrue to that portion of the union engaged
principally in commerce and manufactures than ourselves, yet in
adding to our safety and to our tranquility it is recommended to
us by the most weighty considerations. 138

This portion of the Governor's message was referred to a select
committee, which was under the chairmanship of D. F. Burthe, Whig of
Orleans parish. Burthe reported that it was inexpedient for the legislature
to act on the matter. Charles Gayarre, Democrat of Orleans, representing
the minority of the same committee, reported resolutions strongly in
favor of immediate annexation. After some debate, the subject was made
the special order of the day for January 14. Upon the day of recon-
consideration, William S. Cambell, Whig of St. Landry Parish, offered the
following substitute resolutions:

Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the
State of Louisiana in General Assembly Convened, that it is their
deliberate opinion that a majority of the people of Louisiana are in
favor of the immediate Annexation of Texas to the United States, and
by any lawful and constitutional means; Provided, it be stipulated
in the act of annexation that Texas shall enjoy all the rights and
privileges now secured to that portion of Territory ceded by France
to the United States, under the name of Louisiana, and lying South
of 36 degrees and 30 minutes North latitude.

Be it further resolved, etc., That the Governor be requested to
transmit a copy of these resolutions to each of the Senators and
Representatives in Congress from Louisiana, with a request that they
be submitted to both Houses of Congress. 140

While the resolutions were being considered by the legislature, the
New Orleans Bee, the most influential Whig paper of the state, commented
that the Whigs had a house majority of eight, and predicted that the

138 Louisiana Senate Journal, 17 Leg., 1 Sess., 3.
139 New Orleans Bee, January 16, 1845.
140 Louisiana Acts, 17 Leg., 1 Sess., 3; New Orleans Daily Picayune,
January 15, 1845.
resolutions would undoubtedly receive the votes of the Whig members from the northern and western parts of the state. If the final action of the legislature can be trusted as the true image of state sentiment, the declaration made by the Democratic New Orleans Jeffersonian Republican may be given credence: "There is every reason to believe that the Whigs of Louisiana are, in the present aspect of the case, decidedly in favor of annexation."

The house passed these resolutions by a vote of thirty-six to sixteen, "some few locos absolutely voting against annexation, because they were not allowed to dictate the terms upon which it should be effected." In the Senate, the vote was unanimously favorable, John Harnanson, Democrat of Rapides, excepted. Henry Johnson presented the resolutions to the United States Senate. He expressed it as his opinion that in Louisiana annexation was popularly espoused, and that the preponderance of Louisiana opinion was accurately reflected in the legislative declaration. Johnson stated that he fully concurred with the resolutions. Barrow repeated that he would never endorse Annexation.

The final Louisiana episode on the Texas question occurred in the lower house of the legislature. "Mr. Bickam (Washington parish), a locofoco member, offered a resolution inviting Mr. Barrow to resign, inasmuch as by his declaration of unconditional hostility to the annexation of Texas, he had shown a 'contemptuous disregard to the wishes and best

141 New Orleans Bee, January 11, 1845.
142 New Orleans Jeffersonian Republican, January 14, 1845.
143 New Orleans Bee, January 15, 1845.
144 Louisiana Senate Journal, 17 Leg., 1 Sess., 11.
145 New Orleans Bee, February 12, 1845.
interests of his constituents." It was immediately moved to lay the resolution indefinitely on the table.

When the vote was taken, several whig members declared that though opposed to the doctrine of instruction, they were willing and anxious to meet the question, and on that account only, would vote against the motion to lay upon the table. Among them were such staunch and undoubted whigs as Messrs. Stille, Parham, Crossman, &c. The motion nevertheless prevailed and the resolution was laid on the table by a vote of 22 to 20. It was the courtesy of the whigs alone which prompted them to allow the resolution to go to a second reading, and induced them to vote against the summary proposition to kill it on its presentation. Had the resolution taken the usual course, it would have been rejected by a majority of nearly two to one. There are a number of whigs in the House favorable to annexation; but there is not one who would dream of evicting Alexander Barrow because that gentleman has the independence to think for himself. The slavish doctrine that makes the United States Senator a blind tool of legislative behest, finds no favor of the whig party in Louisiana.146

If there were a "number of Whigs" in the legislature favorable to annexation, it may be irrefutably concluded that there were a "number of Whigs" among the electorate of Louisiana who were also in favor of it. The Whigs polled 4,979 more votes for Clay in 1844 than they had given to Johnson in 1842. This great gain, however, was insufficient to offset the Democratic accruments, which carried the state for Polk. Democrat migrants, the local constitutional controversy, and the late banking disorders were all partially responsible for the inflation of the Democracy, but certainly the Texas question accounts for much of it.

Neither of the presidential candidates of 1844 could be accused of being abolitionists, for both were southerners and both were slaveholders. Clay had publicly defined his position as to abolitionism. He had declared that slavery was an evil. He regretted its existence, and he wished that

146 Ibid., February 15, 1845.
there was not one slave in the United States. He continued:

I have regretted extremely the agitation of Abolitionists in free States. It has done no good, but harm...Abolition is a delusion, which cannot last. It is impossible it should endure. What is it? In pursuit of a principle—a great principle, it undertakes to tread down and trample in the dust all opposing principles, however sacred. It sets up the right of the people of one State to dictate to the people of other States. It arrays State against State. To make the black man free, it would virtually enslave the whole man. With a single idea, some of its partisans rush on blindly, regardless of all consequences. They have dared even to threaten our glorious union with desolation. And suppose that unhallowed object achieved, would it emancipate the slaves? What is their next step? Is it to light up a war between the dismembered parts of the Union, and through blood and devastation & conflagration to march forward to Emancipation? Are they at all sure that through such diabolical means they would be able finally to arrive at their object? No, my friend, let each State, and the people of each State, take care of their own interest, leaving other States and the People of other States to take care of theirs. We have enough to do in our own respective and legitimate spheres of action—enough for the exercise of all the charities and sympathies of our nature.147

Throughout the campaign of 1844, the Louisiana party presses, with abandon and recklessness, hurled charges and countercharges, accusations and counteraccusations against their opponents on the abolition issue. The Whig papers constantly harped on the theme of "Coalition of James G. Birney with the Polk Party." So far as Clay being leagued with the Abolitionists, or being a favorite of that party, there is not a man in the United States, who is so constantly and vehemently abused by them as Mr. Clay. Whenever those fanatics get together, their theme is whiggery and Henry Clay—they can never forget and never will forgive the scathing rebuke which he gave them in the United States Senate in 1839, nor the dreadful castigation which he inflicted on Mr. Mendenhall at Richmond, Indiana, two years ago. Mr. Polk and the annexation of Texas are trifles, in the estimation of the abolitionists, compared with their profound and relentless hatred of Henry Clay. All over the country, this third party, as it is termed, is endeavoring to secure Polk's election, by detaching Mr. Clay's adherents

147 Clay to Jacob Gibson, Ashland, July 25, 1842; Clay Papers.
from the whig ranks, and the chief hope of locofocoism in the non-
slave holding States, is founded upon the belief that the abolitionists
will entrap whigs enough to enable the Polkats to obtain a plurality
of votes.\textsuperscript{148}

The Louisiana general elections of 1844 were as interesting prelimi-
naries to the more engaging presidential contest. The Whigs maintained
a joint-ballot legislative majority. Of the representatives elected,
 thirty-one were Whigs and twenty-six were Democrats; of the senators,
eight were Whigs and eight were Democrats. There was one vacancy in the
senate, due to the resignation of Isaac E. Morse, "of the county of
\textsuperscript{149}Attakapas." To fill the vacancy, a special election was called. The
candidates were Alexander Declouet, Whig, and Antonio E. Mouton, Democrat.

Declouet was elected, which,

...under all the circumstances is a glorious victory. Mr. Declouet
contended not only against Mr. Mouton, the candidate, but also
against his brother, the Governor, and Mr. Morse the last Senator.
It is notorious that for weeks past, Gov. Mouton has been engaged
in the elevating business of electioneering for his brother, but
with what effect, the result shows. The whigs of that district
have repudiated both, and determined to do their own thinking and
voting.\textsuperscript{151}

In the congressional elections, first district, John Slidell was re-
elected without opposition; second district, Bannon Goforth Thibodeaux,
Whig, defeated Alcee Louis Labranche; third district, John B. Dawson
was unopposed; and in the fourth district, Isaac E. Morse, Democrat,
was victorious over Louis Bardelon, Whig.

\textsuperscript{148} New Orleans Bee, September 7, 1844.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., July 19, 1844. Morse had been elected to Congress to fill
the vacancy occasioned by the death of Peter E. Bossier.
\textsuperscript{150} New Orleans Daily Tropic, September 16, 1844.
\textsuperscript{151} Baton Rouge Gazette, September 21, 1844; New Orleans Daily Tropic,
September 16, 1844.
\textsuperscript{152} New Orleans Daily Picayune, July 6, 1844.
\textsuperscript{153} New Orleans Daily Tropic, July 6, 1844.
\textsuperscript{154} Opelousas Gazette, July 13, 1844.
\textsuperscript{155} New Orleans Daily Tropic, July 13, 1844.
Popular political enthusiasm in Louisiana during 1844 even exceeded that which had been so manifest in 1840. All the tried and proved devices were brought out again: Clay Clubs and Young Hickory Clubs, Clay Dragoons and Frelinghuysen Rangers, Clay Glee Clubs and the Mill Boys, barbecues, conventions and "spontaneous gatherings of the people," banners, transparencies, processions, and songs without number. Organization had been effected in every section of the state.

On October 7, 1844, pursuant to previous arrangements, twelve thousand Whigs of Louisiana descended upon Baton Rouge. Here was a convention absolutely comprising a larger number of Whigs than the aggregate of the Whig votes cast at the presidential election of 1840.

At twelve o'clock, Sunday, October 6, the steamboats Alex Scott, Eclipse, Annawan, New World, and Fame left New Orleans bearing 1335 delegates. From Carrollton to Baton Rouge the journey resembled the triumphant march of a conquering army. The plantations along the coast were literally lined with spectators, and decked out in all the glowing paraphernalia of flags and banners, standards and transparencies. The entire population of the river parishes appeared to have assembled on the banks of the Mississippi. Hundreds on hundreds of the bright-eyed daughters of Louisiana waved their kerchiefs to the Whig host as they passed along, while one continued succession of shouts raised from the shore and repeated from the boats, filled the air with the inspiring

156 Opelousas St. Landry Whig, September 5, 12, 19, 26; October 3, 17, 24, 31, 1844; Baton Rouge Gazette, January 13, 27; March 2, 9, 16, 23; May 18, 25; June 1, 8, 29; July 13, 20; August 3, 10, 24, 31; September 7, 21, 28; October 5, 12, 26; November 2, 1844; New Orleans Daily Tropic, February 10, 16, 19, 20, 22; April 16; June 25, 29; August 24; September 18, 19, 1844; New Orleans Bee, passim, 1844; ad infinitum.
outcries of Whig enthusiasm. The joyous Whigs along the coast had taken
possession of every article in the shape of firearms that could be obtained,
and from time to time the hurrahs from the boats and the land were mingled
with the rolling boom of artillery or the rattling echoes of musketry.

The boats from New Orleans and Jefferson arrived a short distance from
Baton Rouge some hours before daylight, and there rendezvoused until
sunrise, when again taking up the line of march, they proceeded toward the
town. On their approach, a salute was fired from Baton Rouge, which was
answered from the boats by the patriotic members of the Native American
Artillery. A number of boats from up and down the coast had already arrived.
Among these were the Lodi, Music, Rainbow, and Princess. All were densely
crowded with passengers, and splendidly decorated with American flags and
Whig banners, bearing appropriate mottoes and devices. Just as the various
boats were rounding to, the steamboat HARRY OF THE WEST, which for some
weeks had been lying aground on the upper Mississippi, came into sight,
and no sooner had her name been perceived, than a shout arose from the
thousands who had assembled, a shout which mocked the thunder of the cannon.

At eight o'clock the Whigs began to disembark. Delegation after
delegation landed and were received with deafening cheers. There seemed
to be no end of the masses of men which clustered along the levee. There
was an almost countless host from East Baton Rouge and the neighboring
parishes, which had dispatched their delegations by land.

By nine o'clock the various delegations had completed their landing.
They formed themselves into a great procession and deployed through the
principal streets of the town. Those in the vanguard rolled the GREAT
WHIG BALL which had been brought down by the Natchez "Straight-Outs." Following the ball was the Mississippi delegation. This delegation carried twenty-eight banners. The principal banner was an enormous one of blue satin, which bore upon it a full-length portrait of Henry Clay. The motto affixed was "Think of Your Bleeding and Prostrate Country."

Then came the representatives of the First and Second Municipalities of New Orleans. Their leading banner had for one of its mottoes "Ravien avec ou Dessus," and on the reverse side was inscribed "Donne Par Les Dames De La 1re Municipalite a L'Association Republicaine Whig No. 1."

Then followed different banners belonging to the Central Clay Club. Next in order came a silk flag of American growth and manufacture. Then came Colonel Umbrella, with an umbrella of immense proportions having "Protection" printed upon it. This was succeeded by a banner having the ship of state painted upon it, and a number of banners belonging to the various wards and clubs of the second municipality.

Next in order was the Parish of Jefferson. Their banner was of white satin, and upon it was embroidered a sugar plantation with the sugar mill in full operation. On one side the motto was "The South Has Her Interests and Rights," and on the reverse, "Clay, Frelinghuysen, and the Tariff."

This was followed by a minature log cabin of 1840, with a live coon upon it.

Then came the parish delegations, arranged according to congressional districts. These companies were separated by bands of music, which played the liveliest Whig tunes. Each parish had its beautiful and appropriate banners. After the parish delegations, there followed a barouche filled
with ladies who proudly displayed the Prize Banner, which was to be given
to the parish sending the largest delegation in proportion to its vote.
This was succeeded by a number of open carriages containing twenty-six
young girls dressed in white, each bearing a banner representing one of the
states of the Union. After these, there followed "forty carriages filled
with the beauty of the city." Next in the parade was a detachment of the
Native American artillery from New Orleans, with two of their brass field
pieces.

When the procession began its march, it numbered about 3300. This
was exclusive of a large number of delegates, who to avoid the dust and
heat, joined the cortege at the suburbs of the town. Before the procession
had reached the place of meeting, the number had swelled to over four thousand.

The delegation from Iberville, which had arrived in Baton Rouge too
late to join in the march, now hastened to the rendezvous. They numbered
220, being 16 more than the Whig vote of 1840. They were preceded by a
band of music and eighty-six ladies wearing gay Whig badges. The ladies
carried a banner upon which was inscribed "Whig Or No Husbands." They also
wore the same motto on their badges.

When the great procession arrived at the place designated for the
convention, a splendid and imposing spectacle presented itself. The place
selected was a natural amphitheatre, which was densely shaded by a mag-
nificent grove of beautiful magnolias. Well located was a large rostrum,
covered by a canopy, and elegantly decorated with flags, banners, mottoes, and devices. The spacious area forming a semi-circle before the rostrum was exclusively occupied by about 1500 ladies. Around, beside, and in the rear congregated a vast multitude, which according to "conservative estimate," could not be computed at less than TWELVE THOUSAND souls.

Thomas L. Elam called the convention to order, and nominated the venerable General Philemon Thomas as president. "The meeting was formally opened by an eloquent and fervid address to the Throne of Grace, by the Rev. Mr. Woodbridge of East Baton Rouge." Vice presidents and secretaries were then appointed. A letter from the Honorable S. S. Prentiss, giving his reasons for not being able to attend the meeting, was read. Thereupon, the President briefly addressed the convention, after which he appointed a committee of seven to draft resolutions. Colonel A. L. Bingaman of Mississippi was called for and introduced by the President. He was received with enthusiasm. William Yerger, also of Mississippi, was next introduced, and he spoke most eloquently and ably in defense of the great doctrines of the Whig party. His elucidation of the effects of a tariff was exceedingly clear and convincing; he spoke for nearly two hours and his speech was received with the greatest applause.


Randall Hunt moved that a committee of seven be appointed to prepare and report an address to the Whigs of Louisiana. Seven were accordingly named. On motion, it was resolved that a committee of five be appointed to report the number of delegates with a view of ascertaining the parish entitled to the Prize Banner, which would be presented by the ladies of East and West Baton Rouge. When this committee reported, the President informed the convention that the parish of Iberville was entitled to the Prize Banner, which announcement was received with shouts of applause. Miss Mary Gale made the presentation, and John A. Darden, representing Iberville, received the Banner. After a speech in French by Adolphe Mazereau, the convention adjourned to partake of refreshments.

The final estimate of the New Orleans Bee in regard to the convention was:

It has been reserved for Louisiana, for our own REGENERATED AND WHIG LOUISIANA, to exhibit the sublime spectacle of a convention, absolutely comprising a larger number of whigs than the aggregate of whig votes cast at the Presidential election of 1840. When the extreme distance from the various extremities of the State is recollected; when we bear in mind the difficulties of water communication, amid a comparatively spare population, with a country, not dotted, as is the north, with large and flourishing towns, but only displaying, here and there, at remote intervals, a few scattered villages and hamlets, it will be universally admitted that the Whig Mass Convention at Baton Rouge, on the 7th October, eclipsed in splendor, magnificence, imposing array, and every attribute of grandeur, any public assemblage ever convened in the valley of the Mississippi, and was only exceeded numerically by the mammoth gathering at Nashville. Such an outpouring of the masses—such an overwhelming multitude of gallant, ardent and enthusiastic whigs it has never before been our good fortune to encounter. The demonstration made by the locofocos

159 Randall Hunt, General Bernard, Francis Gardiere, Colonel Henry G. Huntington, Duncan F. Kenner, General Robert McCoulsan, and James M. Elam.
160 Opelousas St. Landry Whig, October 17, 1844.
161 Baton Rouge Gazette, October 12, 1844; Opelousas St. Landry Whig, October 17, 1844; New Orleans Daily Picayune, October 9, 1844; New Orleans Bee, October 9, 1844. For an account of the preliminary convention of Clay Clubs which assembled at Baton Rouge, August 19, 1844, see Baton Rouge Gazette, August 24, 1844.
the week preceding, was utterly overshadowed and thrown into obscurity and insignificance by this tremendous gathering.

The moral effect of the Convention will be most auspicious. All doubt, dismay or apprehension are already given to the winds. The few locofocos who witnessed the spectacle were utterly astounded and appalled, and we doubt not that but for the desperation which prompts them to make a final effort, they would surrender the State, without scarcely striking a blow. Hereafter, the whigs have nothing to do but to press forward to the contest—to complete their organization—to bring out their voters, and to achieve a victory.162

Among Louisiana Whigs, there was more than a political interest in Henry Clay. He was personally known and beloved by many leaders of the state. His daughter, Susan, was married to Martin Duralde, of New Orleans. As a mark of their devotion, "Many Whigs of New Orleans" just after the election of 1844, contributed $5000 to relieve Clay of certain embarrassing debts. When the Louisiana Democratic editors spoke disparaging Clay's gambling, drinking, and dueling, the Whig editors hotly defended their idol. Clay was accused of having espoused the cause of Native Americanism. This was branded as the basest loco calumny. His famous speech of 1822 was quoted to show his favorable attitude toward the better class of emigrants. The New Orleans Courier, Democratic, according to the New Orleans Daily Tropic, Whig, was endeavoring to embroil the Catholics of New Orleans against the Whigs. The Daily Tropic let it be known that throughout the Union, the Catholics were supporting Clay. In Louisiana, a majority of the electoral ticket was Catholic. In addition to the electors, former Governor A. B. Roman; Judge J. F. Canonge, Charles Derbigny, Stephen Mazereau, General

162 New Orleans Bee, October 9, 1844.
163 Kelly and Cunningham, of New Orleans, to Henry White, of Philadelphia, January 19, 1845; Clay Papers; John Tilford to Henry Clay, Lexington, February 17, 1845; ibid.
164 New Orleans Daily Tropic, September 28, 1844.
Joseph Bernard, and Congressman Bannor G. Thibodeaux, Whigs all, were Catholics, and were warm supporters of Clay.

As the election days approached, both parties sent out warnings for vigilance. The Whig paper throughout 1844 had protested against the votes of illegally naturalized foreigners. Early in the year it was claimed that a Whig candidate had been defeated in a local election by the basest conspiracy, the foulest fraud that the brain of villainy ever concocted—"We have not been defeated by the free people...but by a horde of illegally naturalized foreign voters, men who have scarcely changed the clothes they wore when first they landed upon our shore."

The Whigs accused the Democrats of fraudulent practices in the summer elections. The evidence was strongly in favor of the charge. In an address to the citizens of the state of Louisiana, the Whigs reminded the people that the judge of the city court of Lafayette (suburb of New Orleans), B. C. Elliot, had been "guilty of the grossest violations of his official duty and the laws of the land in issuing nearly two thousand spurious certificates of naturalization." These illegal voters, so ran the well substantiated accusation, were employed by the Democrats.

The Democrats, in their turn, charged the Whigs with irregularities. They held a public protest meeting at the St. Louis Exchange, New Orleans, and passed resolutions of censure upon those Whigs who obstructed legalized votes. Just before the first presidential election day, the Democratic New Orleans Courier warned:

LOOK OUT FOR FRAUDS DEMOCRATS! There is no doubt that the Whigs are meditating the most awful frauds, deceptions, and humbugs

165 Ibid., April 23; October 5, 1844.
166 Ibid., February 25, 1844.
167 New Orleans Bee, July 31, 1844. See also Ibid., July 3, 4, 5, 6, 1844.
between now and the day of the election. No election has passed in New Orleans for some years, that has not witnessed some gross delusion practiced by the Whigs. We call upon the Democracy to be on their guard.\textsuperscript{168}

On the morning of the first day of the election, the Whig New Orleans Bee admonished:

\noindent TO THE WHIG INSPECTORS. The Whig Election Judges have an arduous labor before them today. Hundreds, if not thousands of SPURIOUS VOTES will be attempted to be palmed off upon the Judges. Every effort that a desperate faction can make to carry the city, will be made. Let them (Judges) put searching interrogatories to all suspicious persons, and admit no vote the legality of which they are not fully and entirely convinced.\textsuperscript{169}

On the morning of the second day of the election, the Courier announced:

\noindent DEMOCRATS ATTENTION! The Whigs are making arrangements to carry all the spurious voters of their party, rejected yesterday, to some other parish or precinct, in order that they may better effect their purpose than they could do here. They must not do this without a counteracting move on our side. Hundreds of good and true democrats were deprived their rights yesterday by the whig inspectors, and want of time prevented many others from voting. All these, and all other democrats, who have a right to vote, are earnestly invited to attend the call of a meeting this evening at the headquarters of the First Municipality, next door to the Courier office. Come one and all and be punctual!\textsuperscript{170}

Before the conclusion of the election, the Bee, divining the rather obvious scheme of the Democrats, sent out an alarm:

\noindent There are not 500 legal voters in the Parish of Plaquemine. We have reason to believe that the Locofoocos contemplate colonizing and quartering their rejected votes upon this parish. Let the whigs take heed in time. The battle is not yet over. The polls out of the city do not close until Wednesday night. LOOK TO IT WHIGS OF ORLEANS. Be not cheated out of your victory by the fraudulent vote of another parish. FORE WARNED IS FORE ARMED.\textsuperscript{171}

168 New Orleans Courier, October 23, 1844.
169 New Orleans Bee, November 4, 1844.
170 New Orleans Courier, November 5, 1844.
171 New Orleans Bee, November 5, 1844.
The election in Louisiana began on Monday, November 4. When the "hot burning strife" was over, it was ascertained by the "Governor, in the presence of the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, the Judge of the First Judicial District, and the Parish Judge of the Parish and City of New Orleans," that the electoral vote of the state of Louisiana had been won by James K. Polk and George M. Dallas. The Whig electors, Edward Sparrow, Jacques Dupre, Lafayette Saunders, George S. Guion, Zenon Cavelier, and Jacques Toutant received 12,821 votes. The Democratic electors, T. W. Scott, Trasimond Landry, J. B. Plauche, G. Leonard, Solomon W. Downs, and A. E. Mouton received 13,477 votes.

After the election, the Bee, on unimpeachable evidence charged John Slidell, Judge Gilbert Leonard, John Claiborne, John C. Larue and other Democratic leaders with having engineered an "ATROCIOUS FRAUD AND INFAMY!"

We stated yesterday that ominous whispers were circulating through our streets of a contemplated STUPENDOUS SYSTEM OF FRAUD, PERJURY AND SCOUNDRELISM in the Parish of Plaquemines, whereby that Parish, with a voting population of less than five hundred, would be made to give one thousand or twelve hundred locofoco majority. We were laughed at by a few honest locofocos who could not conceive of the existence of such villainy, but we had received our information from sources too authentic to doubt the fact. The system has been carried out. THE INFAMY HAS BEEN PERPETRATED.

The "system" used by the Democrats had been simple enough. The very elastic election laws of Louisiana allowed voters to cast their ballots at any polling place in the county. Plaquemines parish was a part of Orleans county. The Democrats took advantage of the existing elasticity. They had chartered two steamboats, the Planter and the Agnes. These were crowded "with objects wearing the human form" who "made the air ring with shouts for Dallas and Polk." The boats proceeded to Plaquemines, where

\[\text{172 Ibid., December 4, 1844.}\]
the illegal voters were disgorged, and "driven like a herd of swine" up the road. When permitted to break their line, they sent up "a sort of demoniac yell" and rushed to the polls, "and commenced their work of perpetuating freedom."

A comparison of election figures conclusively proves that Plaquemines had been colonized. In 1840, the total vote was 290; in 1842 it was 272; and the presidential election of 1844, it was 1,044.

The Whigs had a goodly number of eyewitnesses to the Plaquemines frauds. A whole boatload of young Whigs, determined to watch their enemies, had chartered the *Swiftsure* and were present when the "steal" took place. The *Bee* published sworn affidavits of those who had seen the irregularities.

In an exhaustive statement which was signed by Emile La Sere, John Slidell, A. G. Wilson, W. A. Elmore, John Claiborne, John T. Ker, P. Stickney, J. S. McFarlane, and Samuel Locke, the signatories, Democratic leaders, admitted taking a boatload of voters to Plaquemines, but every man on board was legally entitled to vote. These 132, "or thereabouts," had been for one pretext or another deprived of their right to vote in New Orleans. It was not illegal for them to vote in Point La Hache (Plaquemines), "because that was in Orleans County." There was no fraud or unfairness. "We have thus made a plain, a full, a true statement of the part which we bore in this transaction. Nothing entertained, nothing withheld." "But what the hell!," the article continues in spirit, "didn't the Whigs publicly announce that they would send their rejected voters to

173 *New Orleans Bee*, November 7, 1844.
The plan of the Democrats was simply one to counteract the truly dishonest Whigs.

Other Democrats who had participated in the colonization of Plaquemines, notably Judge Gilbert Leonard, categorically denied that they had been guilty as accused. The Democratic Courier concluded that there had been no frauds—the fine weather doubtless had been responsible for the increased vote in Plaquemines.

The Whigs tried to institute legislative and congressional investigations, but they failed. Slidell, in answer to the castigation of Senator Barrow, did not deny that there might have been some frauds, but countered by declaring "that nine-tenths of all the election frauds that have ever been perpetrated in that State were of Whig origin and in favor of Whig candidates."

The whole matter finally died, and the Whigs accepted the accomplished fact of the election with such grace as they could summon, and admitted that the Texas question probably had been the true cause of their undoing.

As for the Democrats of New Orleans and neighboring towns, they celebrated the victory by a magnificent torchlight procession. It was reported that nothing like it either in brilliancy or numbers had ever occurred in the South. The various transparencies, emblems, mottoes, and devices gotten up by the respective Hickory Clubs gave evidence of the greatest devotion to principle. Between 4000 and 5000 persons participated. It was claimed that if the Whigs had succeeded in getting up so splendid a spectacle—

175 New Orleans Courier, November 13, 1844.
176 New Orleans Daily Republican, November 8, 1844.
177 New Orleans Courier, November 7, 1844.
179 James K. Greer, "Louisiana Politics, 1845-1861," in Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XII (New Orleans, 1917-), 408.
180 New Orleans Bee, November 28, 1844.
"stretching, as it did, a distance of nearly two miles, three to five abreast"—the number would have been swollen in their reports to twenty thousand, "such being the magnifying powers of the Koon tribe."

Even though the Plaquemines affair did not determine a President, it had great significance in Louisiana. It had greater significance to the Whig party in Louisiana. Momentum and vitality were thereby given to the Native American movement, and this emerging party was within a few years to absorb the bulk of the Whig membership. The New Orleans Bee, perspicaciously observed:

The first fruits of one class of frauds,—that of pushing foreign voters upon the polls with fraudulent and fictitious certificates on naturalisation in their hands,—are ripening into a Native American party, which is becoming, day by day, employed to seduce the emigrant population into the commission of outrages upon the constitution and acts of insubordination to the authorities, have given rise to this party, and all the ill-will, intemperance and mischief that may grow out of a division of the citizens into two classes will be justly attributed to those demagogues and shallow-minded persons, who, under cover of an exclusive love for emigrants, array them against the spirit of our institutions and the letter of the law.182

The New Orleans Daily Tropic, heretofore as loyal a Whig paper as was in the state, issued a call for the formation of an American party in Louisiana. After weeks of advocating a more stringent naturalization law, this paper changed its name to the Daily Tropic and American Republican, and changed its politics from Whig to American.

Throughout the nation the Whigs commiserated over the defeat of Henry Clay. Former Governor Roman wrote to the defeated candidate:

At the very moment that I learned of the disastrous result of the Presidential contest, I determined to write to you; but I soon

181 New Orleans Courier, November 28, 1844.
182 Ibid., November 7, 1844.
183 New Orleans Daily Tropic, December 23, 1844.
184 New Orleans Daily Tropic and American Republican, December 18, 1844.
perceived that I felt too strongly to express myself with anything like calmness, and on that account I have delayed until now to condole with you on our unexpected misfortune.

...You have done enough for fame; the station of President could have added nothing to yours. The country alone was to have benefited by your election. When posterity shall wonder that you did not obtain the first office in the gift of your countrymen, the only answer that can be given must raise you higher than the office could ever have done; it is because "he had rather be right than President." 185

The pious, politically minded Theodore Frelinghuysen wrote Clay:

I address you this morning with very different feelings from my expectations of a few weeks ago. The alliance of the foreign vote, and that most impractical of all organizations, the Abolitionists, have defeated the strongest national vote ever given to a Presidential candidate. The Whigs in this city and State have struggled most nobly. All classes of American citizens have ardently, cordially, and with the freest sacrifices, contended for your just claims to patriotic confidence, and could you this morning behold the depression of spirits and sinking of hearts that pervade the community, I am sure you would feel, "Well in truth, my defeat has been the occasion of a more precious tribute and vindication than even the majority of numbers."

The Abolitionists were inimitably obstinate, and seemed resolved to distinguish their importance, right or wrong....At the South, I was denounced as an Abolitionist, rank and uncompromising....Here, the Abolitionists have been rancorous in their hostility...

But, my dear sir, leaving this painful subject, let us look away to brighter and better prospects, and surer hopes, in the promises and consolations of the Gospel of our Savior...."Come unto me," cries this exhausted Savior, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Let us then, repair to him. 186

"Disappointment," wrote Dr. W. N. Mercer of New Orleans, "seems to pervade all classes. I have heard men of the opposite party express their regret at the success of their party. A grey haired man assured me he could not restrain his tears--my own child wept bitterly.

185 Calvin Colton, ed., The Private Correspondence of Henry Clay (New York, 1856), 512; Andre B. Roman to Clay, Parish of St. James, December 2, 1844. 186 Ibid., 495-6; Theodore Frelinghuysen to Clay, New York, November 9, 1844. 187 W. N. Mercer to Clay, New Orleans, December 7, 1844; Clay Papers.
A PRESIDENT IS DRAWN

FROM

THE WHIG PARTY IN LOUISIANA
It has been stated that the advent of Jacksonian Democracy in Louisiana precipitated a perpetual clamor for the liberalization of the Constitution of 1812. Between 1812 and 1845, the population of the state rapidly increased. Immigrants to the upper parishes, small-scale farmers and cotton planters for the most part, were entirely indifferent to protection and to a Bank. They were inclined toward satisfaction in regard to the Federal land policy, and they were attached as a matter of heritage to the traditions of local self-government. They consequently demanded that the right to vote be given to all white, adult male citizens, and that local officers be elected rather than appointed. In the lower parishes, especially Orleans, migrants from abroad had come in by the thousands. These were mostly Germans and Irish, and smaller proportions came from every other nation of western Europe. Evidence has been previously presented to show that both parties had used these foreigners to inflate the local electorate. The irregularities contingent upon this practice had been deplored by the more responsible leadership of each of the parties, and Native Americanism had thereby been given an impetus toward substantial organization.

Whig leadership in Louisiana, it has been observed, was inclined to react with coolness, in instances with hostility, to any suggestions or movements to extend the franchise, or to establish an elective judiciary. The bulk of the Whig party was not bitterly hostile to some liberalization, but there was an emphatic opposition to the "agrarian and levelling" influences of the radicals.

On two occasions, the electorate had overwhelmingly signified its desire for calling a constitutional convention. Pursuant to the second

1 In the plebiscite of 1842, the vote was: for the convention, 13,396; against the convention, 4,030 (Louisiana Senate Journal, 16 Leg., 1 Sess., 10.); in the plebiscite of 1843 the vote was: for the convention, 11,229; against the convention, 2,767 (ibid., 16 Leg., 2 Sess., 9.).
plebiscite, in 1844, an act of the legislature authorized the electing
and assembling of such a body. The bill stipulated the manner in which the
seventy-seven members were to be elected, and named Jackson, of East
Felicianas as the convention town.

In the general July elections of 1844, the injunction had gone forth
that insofar as the convention was concerned, party affiliations should
be forgotten, and the only consideration which should have weight was
the capabilities of the candidates. As a matter of fact, the injunction
was largely disregarded. The gubernatorial, legislative, and congressional
elections, the annexation question, and the looming presidential struggle
would not permit such ideal indifference. The convention elections, in the
majority of instances, were fought out on the basis of party lines, but in
a few cases, they were contests between radicals and conservatives, or free
lances against the field.

After the elections, most of the papers of the states reported the
individual membership as being either Whig or Democratic. The New Orleans
3 Bee lists thirty-nine Whigs and thirty-eight Democrats. The New Orleans
Daily Tropic states that the convention would be composed of thirty-eight
4 Whigs, thirty-four Democrats, and five Conservatives. With less

3 Whigs: Garcia, Koner, Pugh, Chinn, Sellers, Lewis, Roselius, Mazureau,
Claiborne, Culbertson, Conrad, Benjamin, Legendre, F. B. Conrad, St. Amant,
Boudousque, Roman, Winchester, Bourg, Taylor, Winder, Beatty, Hubert,
Guion, Burton, Bunfield, Dunn, Saunders, Labauve, Dix, King, Hudspeth,
Taylor, Derbes, Briant, Wilcoxon, Prudhomme, Stephens, and Garrett;
Democrats: Crymes, Leonard, Preston, Penn, Scott, Porcho, A Democrat,
Voohris, Brezials, Walker, Downe, Soule, Marigny, Cenas, Eustis, Wadsworth,
Trist, Carriere, McRae, Ratclifl, Wederstrandth, Combs, Reid, McCalop,
Ledaux, Scott, Couvillion, Prescott, A Democrat, Wickoff, Prescott, Splanet,
O'Bryan, Brent, Hynson, Porter, Humble, A Democrat, New Orleans Bee, July
19, 1844. The personnel which assembled in Jackson was not identical with
that here listed by the Bee.

4 New Orleans Daily Tropic, July 14, 1844.
partisanship, and therefore with more accuracy, the New Orleans Daily
Picayune reported that the Democrats had won forty-two seats and the
Whigs thirty-three, but "it should be remembered that to this body
several of the members were elected without reference to party pre-
dictions."

The convention assembled in the town of Jackson on August 5, 1844.
It was an extremely able body, with men in its membership destined to
national and international fame. Among the distinguished Whigs present
were Thomas W. Chinn, Felix Garcia, Duncan Kenner, A. B. Roman, Christian
Roselius, Charles M. Conrad, and Judah P. Benjamin. The most prominent
Democrats of the convention were Solomon W. Downs, George Eustis, John
R. Grymes, Gilbert Leonard, Bernard Marigny, Isaac T. Preston, Thomas
W. Wadsworth, George S. Guion, and Pierre Soule.

When the convention was ready for organization, Lafayette Saunders,
Whig of East Feliciana, moved that Bernard Marigny, Democrat of Orleans,
take the chair, and the motion was carried without a division. Horatio
Davis, Democrat, was by the chair appointed Secretary pro tem. He was
instructed to examine the credentials of those who were claiming seats,
and to render a report on the following day. There followed some dis-
cussion, and on motion a committee of five was appointed to examine the
credentials of those claiming seats.

On August 7, the convention effected its organization. A. B. Roman,
the most distinguished Whig, refused candidacy as the president. Thereupon,
without formal nominations, the convention balloted, and Garcia, Whig, received twenty-eight votes; Walker, Democrat, received twenty-eight; Bernard Marigny, Democrat received eight; and eleven ballots were scattered among Grymes, Wadsworth, and Eustis, Democrats, and Guion, Whig. This first ballot was a test of strength which revealed to the Whigs that from the standpoint of numbers, their party was in a subordinate position; and consequently they would be unable to dominate the convention.

Following the first ballot, Garcia announced his withdrawal from further candidacy. Thomas W. Chinn, Whig of Iberville, stated that he favored formal nominations from the floor, and to his suggestion that that course be pursued, there were no objections. He nominated Grymes, Democrat of Orleans. Martin G. Penn, Democrat of Livingston, nominated Joseph Walker. After the third ballot, the candidates withdrew. Seventy-two voters participated in the fourth ballot, which gave the presidency to Walker. The New Orleans Daily Picayune, non-partisan, commented that the election of Walker was considered a triumph by the sure-enough or radical section of the Democracy, "for Grymes, though a Democrat, had been placed in nomination by a Whig, and had been supported by the Whigs and Conservatives."

The convention elected Horatio Davis, Democrat, as permanent secretary. The opponents of Davis received a combined minority of only thirty votes.

Even before organization had been achieved, the members of the convention had begun to show their "party teeth." Emile La Sere, Democrat,
appeared to contest the seat of Conrad, and J. B. Plauche, Democrat, contended for the seat of Benjamin. On motion of Martin G. Penn, Democrat, the matter was referred to the committee on credentials. This committee was composed of three Democrats and two Whigs. A divided report was returned. The majority made no definitive decision, but presented evidence to show that the election was irregularly consummated.

The first point of evidence presented was a marginal note on the certification of election made by Charles Maurain, parish judge of New Orleans, to the effect that the election was improperly conducted. The second point of evidence offered was the written testimony of S. W. Waters, a Democratic election inspector of the second ward of the second municipality. Waters stated that the Whig inspector, R. N. Vienne, had refused to accept as valid the ballot of a voter who had been qualified by Judge Benjamin C. Elliott. Subsequently, Waters refused to accept any vote until the "Elliott" voter was recognized. According to Waters, bystanders threatened him with violence, and he was forced to leave the polls. Thereafter, Vienne conducted the election without restraint or supervision.

Testimony was also offered by Vienne. He asserted that he refused to take the "Elliott" votes because the senate of the state, sitting as a high court of impeachment, and the Circuit Court of the United States, in the case of Diamond vs. Summers, had pronounced them illegal. Vienne further stated that he did insist upon the acceptance of voters and votes where the qualifications were unquestionable.

Conrad and Benjamin had protested that the credentials committee should take into consideration only the prima facie evidence of the mere certificates of election. To this, the majority of the committee dissented. Conrad and Benjamin then had asked for the issuance of a process by which testimony touching the case might be taken in the city of New Orleans. From this too, the majority of the committee had dissented.

The majority of the committee in presenting the matter to the convention recommended two courses which might be used to obtain a settlement. The first suggested that a process be issued authorizing testimony to be taken in New Orleans. The second suggested that authority be given the committee to take definitive action. The minority of the committee made no other report than expressing their assent to the objections of Benjamin and Conrad.

Soule, champion of La Sere and Plauche, "spoke for some time in his fervid and eloquent manner in support of the grounds taken by the majority of the committee." As it was near the hour of adjournment, Conrad answered very briefly, but assured the convention, and Soule in particular, that a proper reply would be given in the immediate future.

Conrad, replying to Soule on August 16, declared that the convention was no place for party controversy. He was profoundly regretful that the spirit of party had invaded that body. He had been out of New Orleans at the time of his election; he had received the news of his election while in Europe, and had returned as a matter of duty. Conrad reviewed the evidence which had been presented, and emphasized the points that his opponents had not claimed that illegal votes had been cast, nor had they 12

12 New Orleans Daily Picayune, August 18, 1844.
claimed that the count had been fraudulently distended. Thomas W. Wadsworth plead for a settlement which would not involve party spirit. He felt that the extraneous matter of the pending presidential contest should not color the thinking and acting of the convention members.
Wadsworth made it clear that out of the convention he was a Democrat, and that he without hesitation would stump the state for Polk and Dallas, but as a member of the convention, he put aside party prejudices, and wished for a settlement of this particular matter in an impartial and just manner. An open rupture between Whigs and Democrats in the convention would destroy objectivity and the possibility of constructively consumating the task for which they had assembled.

The futile wrangling over the seating of Conrad and Benjamin came to an abrupt close with an agreement of the contestants to re-submit their cases to the people of New Orleans. An election was accordingly held in November, which gave conclusive victories to Conrad and Benjamin.

On August 22, Miles Taylor, Whig of St. Landry, offered a resolution that the convention adjourn to re-assemble in New Orleans on the second Tuesday of January, 1845. The argument for adjournment was that New Orleans offered library and printing facilities which were unavailable in Jackson. A warm debate preceded the vote on adjournment. The debate did not involve Whigs and Democrats as such; it resolved itself into a "city versus country" contest. On the motion, however, the Whigs nearly unanimously voted for

13 Proceedings and Debates, 54.
14 Ibid., 63.
15 New Orleans Daily Picayune, August 27, 1844.
16 New Orleans Bee, November 26, 1844.
adjournment. Of the forty-four yeas, twenty-seven were Whigs. Only four Whigs voted against the motion. The Democrats made an effort to make political capital out of the adjournment. They charged that the recess was a Whig stratagem which had been accomplished by Whig votes. Downs and Preston in a published pamphlet made the "bold and unscrupulous assertion" that it was a political move on the part of the Whig members of the convention. The Baton Rouge Gazette somewhat inaccurately replied:

The locofoco majority in the Convention is not less than 12, and to say in the face of that majority that the adjournment was "essentially" a political move on the part of the Whigs, is at least, but a poor compliment to the perspicuity of that majority, and ought not to gain credence when we reflect that amongst them are found the names of Grymes, Soule, and Eustis, three as "expert attorneys" as the city of New Orleans can produce.19

The adjourned session assembled in New Orleans at the appointed time. Its work of reform was tedious, so tedious that a Democratic organ complained and admitted:

...The people have lost confidence in the convention; it no longer creates interest or attention....Although the adjournment of the convention was a Whig measure, and effected by Whig management and tactics, yet a powerful responsibility rests upon a few weak-headed democrats who aided in effecting the shameful result; and unless these few shall retrieve themselves in the future aid, which it is in their power to give, in the formation of a wholesome democratic republican constitution, then on their head will the whole blame of a failure rest.20

18 Burton, Chinn, Dunn, and Saunders.
19 Baton Rouge Gazette, August 31, 1844.
20 New Orleans Weekly Jeffersonian Republican, January 24, 1845.
The adjourned session in New Orleans, in spite of party and factional strife, succeeded in writing a new constitution. The major party controversy raged about the extension of the franchise to all adult, white males, and the elimination of the property qualification previously required of voters. Conrad, of Orleans, led the Whig attack on this point. He declared that universal and unrestricted suffrage would stifle the voice of the real and permanent population of the State, and place her true interests at the mercy of those having no identity of feelings or of interests in common with her—commit her destinies to strangers and the substance of her children to be devoured by these "birds of passage" that flock among us for a brief season and then fly away to other regions. I am far from believing that this is the wish of the citizens of this State, the owners of the soil, those whose interests, whose affections, are bound up inseparably with Louisiana—that such an unfortunate and mischievous system should prevail....It would be a shameful betrayal of our trust to displace the rightful owners, the legitimate owners of the soil to give place to "birds of passage"...birds of prey that would perch upon the vitals of the State, and devastate her institutions....The people never had the remotest idea that anything so dangerous would be entertained, much less consummated. I have heard a great deal of declamation about the inestimable privilege of suffrage, which, without doubt, a great blessing, a great boon...; it ought to be justly prized, it will not be extended to those who are unworthy to exercise it—whose very touch would pollute it.21

Whig opposition could not forestall the adoption of an article which provided that in all elections by the people every free white male, who had been for two years a citizen of the United States, and who had attained the age of twenty-one years, and who had resided in the state two consecutive years next preceding the election and the last year thereof in the parish wherein he offered to vote, had the right of voting. The Whigs sustained a second major defeat when the majority enacted an article stipulating that candidates and officeholders need not be owners of property.

21 Proceedings and Debates, 26-30.
One of the fiercest battles waged in the convention was over the apportionment of legislative representation. This was not an issue between Whigs and Democrats, but between "city" and "country". Party lines were obliterated. Downs, of Ouachita, championed the country, and contended that each parish was entitled to one representative, and if the population of any parish, three-fifths of the slaves included, exceeded an established ratio, such parish would be awarded additional representation on the basis of that ratio. The "country" also proposed that no parish or city should ever be entitled to more than one-fifth of the whole number of representatives.

The limitation imposed on parochial representation was quite obviously a measure designed to reduce the legislative power of the parish of Orleans. The city delegation, principally Conrad, Benjamin, Rustis, Marigny, and Roselius, led a fight for two months to secure for New Orleans a more advantageous representation.

Roselius bitterly attacked the federal ratio plan. He asserted that New Orleans paid one-third of the taxes of the state, and that one-third of the white population of Louisiana resided in that city. If three-fifths of the slaves were included in apportioning representation, and if every parish were represented by one or more legislators, and if constitutional limitations were imposed on the representation of New Orleans, then it was painfully apparent that the city and its interests would be completely subordinated. Roselius contended for a ratio of representation which would be based upon taxable property, or one based upon free, white male population.

23 Proceedings and Debates, 360ff.
The arguments advanced by Rosolius were substantially those presented by others of the city delegation.

Downs answered Rosolius by declaring that if the ratio were based upon the white population, New Orleans would command nearly one-half of the seats in the house. Kenner, the acknowledged leader of the "country Whigs," substantiated Downs by pleading the justice of allowing additional representation to the southern agricultural parishes.

Marigny passionately contended that the city delegation would never submit to the proposed limitation. He threatened that if such an article was adopted he would immediately move for an adjournment sine die.

The party presses of New Orleans laid aside their differences and united in defense of the city delegation. The obdurately Whig Bee even yielded to defend the obdurately Democratic Marigny.

In the final analysis, the convention voted that apportionment should be based on qualified electors, and that one representative should be allowed for every 276 voters, New Orleans excepted. The city was limited to eight electoral districts, and to twenty representatives, who would be apportioned among the districts.

By the Constitution of 1845, the governor would be selected by a direct popular vote of a majority of the electors. The office of lieutenant governor was created. Judges would no longer serve for terms of good behavior, but would be appointed by the governor and the senate for terms of six years. Local officers, such as sheriffs, formerly appointed by the governor, would henceforward be elected by the constituency.

24 New Orleans Daily Picayune, February 1, 1845.
26 Ibid., 421.
27 New Orleans Bee, February 18, 1845.
they were to serve. The general assembly was forbidden "to pledge the faith of the State, for the payment of any bonds, bills, or other contracts or obligations for the benefit or use of any person or persons, corporations, or body politic whatever." The general assembly, however, was given authority to issue new bonds in payment of its outstanding obligations or liabilities, the valuation of such bonds were not to exceed the amount of the original obligations they were intended to replace. A system of free public schools was authorized, and the office of superintendent of education was created. It was determined that the seat of state government should be removed from New Orleans, "and shall not be fixed within sixty miles of this dreaded city."

The final debate of the convention arose over the question of whom should be considered electors when the constitution was submitted for ratification. It was the opinion of Winchester and Roselius that only those qualified under the Constitution of 1812 would be legally entitled to vote upon adoption or rejection of the Constitution of 1845. Debate upon this proposal was very animated, with Downs leading the fight against it. It was ultimately decided that all electors who could qualify under the terms of the new instrument would be permitted to vote upon its ratification.

The convention then proceeded to vote upon the final adoption of the constitution. This solemnity occupied about one hour, as nearly every member considered himself bound to specify at some length the reason for his vote. The final vote was fifty-five to fifteen in favor of adoption. According to the New Orleans Bee, twenty-one Whigs endorsed the new

28 New Orleans Bee, May 15, 1845.
constitution and thirteen were for rejection. Of the Democrats, only
363 votes voted negatively.

The Whig papers were generally favorable in their reviews of the new
constitution. The New Orleans Tropic and Daily Jeffersonian, again warm
in its devotion to the Whig cause, commented:

We doubt if any other Convention, whether composed of Whigs,
Democrats, or Conservatives, would be likely to establish a
fundamental law that, as a whole, would be obnoxious to less
objection than this. It is fortunate, that all parties were pretty
strongly represented in the Convention. Mutual concessions were of
necessity made, and thus were the extremes of party policy avoided.
If the Whigs were nominally in a minority, the array of talent which,
at any juncture, they could bring to bear upon momentous questions,
gave to their influence a weight that was felt, it not always ac-
knowledged. This influence, aided by the conservative action of a
portion of the other party, finds its best comment in the constitution
soon to receive the people's sanction. The provision which declares
that the Legislature shall establish free public schools throughout
the state, and shall provide means for their support by taxation on
property or otherwise, is alone sufficient to redeem it from almost
any amount of error. And then a death blow has been given to that
monster of radicalism which, by means of an elective judiciary, would
have placed mere demagogues upon the Bench, and opened the temples
of Justice to all the inroads of an ever-shifting party supremacy.
--The elective franchise, too, while it extends the right of voting
to every free white male, 21 years old, who has been a citizen of
the United States two years, and who has resided that time in the
State, goes far to guard the ballot box against that tumultuous
influx of newly vamped up votes which has too often worked fraud
against rightful voters, and almost forced the people, in various
parts of the Union, to despair of the republic. And the mode of
revising the Constitution is made so easy, that any defects which
experience may detect, can be obviated without difficulty. The
provision, which excludes the city from any competition with other
places for the seat of government, we look upon as one of those way-
ward impulses which a returning sense of justice will sooner or later
make all who voted for it regret. On the whole, then, we think the
Constitution ought to be adopted, and that the good people of Louisiana
will adopt it by a large vote.30

29 Yeas: Beatty, Bourg, Brunfield, Burton, Chinn, Culbertson, Dunn, Garrett,
Guion, Hudspeth, Kenner, Labauve, Lewis, Prudhomme, Pugh, Roselius, Saunders,
Sellers, Stephens, Taylor, and Winder; nays: Benjamin, Boudousque, Briant,
Claiborne, Conrad of Jefferson, Conrad of Orleans, Derbis, Garcia, Legendre,
Masureau, Roman, St. Amant, and Winchester. New Orleans Bee, May 15, 1845.
30 New Orleans Daily Tropic and American Republican, July 15, 1845.
Tho scuno paper, just prior to tho plebiscite, ro-assertcd its position of favoring adoption:

We sanction the constitution. The Whigs as a party give it their sanction. The Locofocos, as a party give it theirs. Some members of both parties will undoubtedly vote against it; but the masses will universally go for it. So far as we know, there is no organized opposition to it anywhere, and we hope every voter in Louisiana will attend the polls on Monday and record his vote in its favor. To the Whigs we need not say a word. They certainly will do their duty. We do not wish to see them getting up meetings, and making harangues, as though the constitution was in danger of being rejected....The Whigs are deeply interested in the vote. As the advocates of conservatism, the sworn foes of radicalism, they find in the new constitution far more congenial principles than do their opponents....In fact, as a whole, the constitution is Whig in its principles, Whig in the measures it proposes to carry out, Whig in its paternity....As a party, we repeat, the Whigs have a deep stake in the new constitution, and as a party they will see that it is adopted.31

As forecast, the Constitution of 1845 met with no organized opposition.32 The vote was: for, 12,277; against, 1,395. The figures indicate that the balloting did not follow party lines. The negative votes were concentrated in New Orleans, where there was some little disposition to feel that the constitution discriminated to the disadvantage of the city.

In the third district, public attention was for a season diverted from the constitution to the election of a Congressman. John B. Dawson died at his home, St. Francisville, in June, 1845. The Democrats of the third congressional district nominated John H. Harmanson to fill the vacancy. The Whigs advanced Judge J. T. Cooley, of West Feliciana. The campaign was one of unusual bitterness. Harmanson was charged with personal and professional irregularities. In addition to personalities, current national issues were emphasized. Harmanson announced that he advocated strict construction, no bank, a strictly revenue tariff, no assumption

31 Ibid., November 1, 1845.
32 New Orleans Bee, December 2, 1845.
33 New Orleans Daily Tropic and American Republican, November 5, 1845.
34 New Orleans Daily Picayune, August 14, 1845.
35 New Orleans Bee, September 24; October 12, 13, 1845.
of state debts, the annexation of Texas, and assertion of full American rights to Oregon. Cooley replied that he favored a tariff akin to that of 1842, and all other sound Whig principles. He could not understand what the next Congress would have to do with annexation, as that had already been accomplished. As to the American right to Oregon, "that too is purely locofooo," for no one doubted the American right to Oregon. The third district, usually returning a Democratic majority, was consistent in this instance, for Harmanson won the election.

When the new constitution was adopted, it was specified that a general state election would be held on the third Monday of January, 1846. Neither of the major parties seemed inclined to approach these elections in their usual bombastic styles. A Whig organ of New Orleans remarked:

It is gratifying to know that the two great parties into which the State is divided indicate, by timely and vigorous action in primary assemblies, their appreciation of the momentous consequences which must flow from the change about to take place. The result of the approaching contest, not so much it is to be hoped, for men as for principles, will in all probability, fix the political character of the State for years. It cannot be denied that both parties boast of men whose integrity and honor are established, and who, if elected, would take care that the State receive no detriment. Such men we hope to see nominated; and then after a well fought battle for the supremacy, the vanquished party can repose on its laurels as truly as the victorious one.38

Prior to holding a state nominating convention, the Whigs throughout Louisiana had held local rallies. The party candidates by general consensus were destined to be William Debuys, of New Orleans, for governor, and Edward Sparrow, of Concordia, for lieutenant governor. Debuys was described as

36 Plaquemines Planters Gazette, September 6, 1845.
37 New Orleans Daily Tropic and American Republican, November 25, 1845.
38 Ibid., July 15, 1845.
39 The Whig papers of New Orleans, during the early months of 1845, carry the proceedings of Whig meetings which were held in every quarter of the state. A majority of these local meetings endorsed Debuys and Sparrow.
a Louisianian by birth, a faithful officer, and a staunch Whig. According to those who had dealt with him, he had as a representative, speaker of the house, state treasurer, and postmaster, discharged his duties in admirable fashion. As for Sparrow, he was one of the noblest and truest hearted Whigs in the state, and his name was a tower of strength.

Late in May, 1845, the city Whigs, "meaning no offense," reminded the country Whigs that the time was ripe for calling the state convention. This numerous body assembled at the Methodist church, Baton Rouge, on July 21. All the parishes were represented except eight. James W. Elam, of East Baton Rouge, was the temporary chairman, and William Moore, of St. Landry, was unanimously appointed permanent president. In accord with the popular mandate, Thomas R. Patton, of Carroll, nominated Debuys for governor, which nomination was confirmed by acclamation. W. S. Cambell, of St. Landry, then nominated Sparrow for lieutenant governor, and this nomination was also confirmed by acclamation. A committee of four was appointed to notify the candidates of their nomination. These committee men, A. Legendre, W. L. Hodge, B. M. Bower, and O. N. Ogden, were chosen to represent their respective congressional districts. The convention completed its work in less than one hour, tendered its thanks to "the officiating Clergyman and to the Trustees of the Methodist Church for the use of their building," and adjourned sine die.

The Whig candidates were notified of their nomination, and each, in an appropriate letter, signified his acceptance. Debuys pledged himself, if elected, to be most particular in carrying out "the measures and principles

40 New Orleans Daily Tropic and American Republican, May 22, 1845.
42 Opelousas St. Landry Whig, August 7, 1845.
consecrated in the new Constitution," and in the appointment of judges, he would select only the most worthy and capable.

The Democrats also held their state convention in Baton Rouge. Judge Isaac Johnson was nominated for the governorship. Trasimond Landry, a veteran of Louisiana party politics, was named as candidate for lieutenant governor. The Whigs sincerely admitted that the candidates of their adversaries were unusually able men.

The Native Americans, essaying their first gubernatorial campaign in Louisiana, nominated Charles Derbigny and L. De Shields for the offices of governor and lieutenant governor, respectively. The Nativist movement was not new in Louisiana. It has been told elsewhere how thousands of foreigners flocked into the state. As early as 1835 they were making so severe a negative imprint upon the politics of Louisiana, that William Christy and other local leaders of New Orleans had vigorously urged that they be kept out of office and away from the polls. Soon after, there was organized a Native American Association. In 1839, the Association issued a pamphlet which assailed the naturalization laws, and demanded their revision. New fuel was added to the fire when in 1843 the Whigs were defeated in a New Orleans state senatorial election by foreign voters who had been fraudulently naturalized by Judge Benjamin C. Elliott, a tool of the local Democracy. The presidential fiasco of 1844 crystallized the movement toward state-wide organization. The Whigs, as a matter of self-defense were practically forced to support Nativism. In December

43 New Orleans Bee, July 24, 1845.
44 New Orleans Daily Picayune, July 16, 1845.
45 New Orleans Daily Tropic and Republican, July 16, 1845.
of 1844, Benjamin and other prominent New Orleans Whigs, participated in the issuance of a call for the formation of a Louisiana Native American party. These Whig leaders had no thought of withdrawing from their own organization; their idea was to create pressure and sentiment against the granting of hasty and unwise citizenship. Some of the most violent arguments of the constitutional convention had been over the enfranchisement of foreigners. It is not strange that with the final collapse of the Whig party in Louisiana, much of its loyal membership found their affinity with Native Americanism.

Whig leaders, as previously indicated, were duly sensible to the fact that the Constitution of 1845 would most probably militate to the disadvantage of their party. These leaders could hope for little from the newly enfranchised voters, for there was the beginning of the realization that the "levelling influences" were destined to contribute to the final impotence and dissolution of the Whig party in Louisiana. The grave concern is well reflected by the party press. "Every man of common sense must admit," commented the Opelousas St. Landry Whig, "that this election is the most important one ever held in our State." The Franklin Planter's Banner averred that "This will be an election of far more importance than the people probably imagine. The business that will come up before the legislature, to be elected at that time, is hardly of less importance than the formation of the new constitution."

The major issue of the state campaign was the national tariff. The Whigs of Louisiana were frantic because of the initial moves made by the

47 Opelousas St. Landry Whig, August 21, 1845.
48 Franklin Planter's Banner, December 6, 1845.
Polk administration to revamp the Tariff of 1842. The following is a fair editorial sample:

The Tariff of 1842, that glorious measure of the Whigs, the guaranty of our national prosperity, upon which the hopes of millions rest—the Tariff of 1842, which protects the domestic industry of the country against ruinous foreign competition, and which by building up a home market, is sure to make us independent in the true and legitimate sense of that word—the Tariff of 1842, which protects not only the Northern manufacturer, but the Southern planter, and the Western wool grower, MUST BE ABANDONED. President Polk is pledged to propose a reduction, Secretary Walker is maturing the details of his "revenue standard," and ample majorities are relied upon to effect the detestable scheme.

As was natural, the Democratic papers of Louisiana were not quiet on the subject. "It will be the aim of the party, in the next Congress, and through the Press," ran an editorial, "to break down this system of false valuations and prohibitory duties." Lengthy articles, which in the New Orleans papers were tiresome in their frequency, debated the matter pro and con.

Each of the gubernatorial candidates made state-wide campaign tours. Debys is reported to have visited every parish of the state. Each of the candidates took the tariff issue to the people. Even the country papers became all absorbed in the controversy.

Although the campaign was exceedingly lively, decorum was everywhere observed. Exchanges of personalities were absent. Meetings were perhaps more numerous than in previous state campaigns. In New Orleans, on the eve of election, the Native Americans, Whigs, and Democrats held rallies. Amidst "great enthusiasm," Soule at the Treme Exchange, addressed the

49 New Orleans Daily Tropic and American Republican, August 13, 1845.
50 New Orleans Jeffersonian Republican, January 6, 1845.
51 New Orleans Bee, September 10, 1845.
52 New Orleans Daily Picayune, August 14, 1845; New Orleans Bee, September 10, 1845; Plaquemines Planter's Gazette, September 27, 1845; New Orleans Daily Delta, January 15, 1846, et cetera.
Democrats in French. Another Democratic meeting, held at the Poydras Market, "was a rousor...Mr. Hackett made a speech which called forth the pregnant plaudits of the meeting." The Whigs, a part of them, met at the Conti Street Hotel. There was another Whig gathering at Viasca's Coffee House, which was addressed in Spanish by Stephen Mazureau.

On February 10, 1846, the legislature met in joint session to officially receive the gubernatorial returns. It appeared that some three or four parishes had not been reported, but the votes in possession of the authorities summed up as follows: Isaac Johnson, 12,403; William Debuys, 10,335; Charles Derbigny, 588; Trasimond Landry, 12,484; Edward Sparrow, 11,729; L. De Shields, 474.

After announcing the vote, some difficulty arose as to whether proclamation should be made of the result until all returns had come in. The constitutional point was argued for some time, and after some time the senate withdrew to consult as a separate body. Returning in a few minutes, the president announced that the senate as a body had agreed that a formal announcement at that time would not be contested. Johnson and Landry were then proclaimed duly elected governor and lieutenant governor of Louisiana. The Democrats had also secured a majority of the legislative seats.

Concurrently with the general elections, a special congressional election was held in the first district. Slidell, the incumbent, had on November 10, 1845, resigned his seat. Three candidates, all Democrats,
made bids to succeed Slidell. Emile La Sere won an overwhelming victory over his rivals.

Governor Johnson and Lieutenant Governor Landry were ceremoniously inducted into office on February 12, 1846. The inauguration took place in New Orleans, at the Reverend Theodore Clapp's church. The hour was high noon. The church, as large as it was, could not remotely accommodate the immense crowd. By one o'clock, all of the state dignitaries had found their stations. "The Hon. Henry Clay entered just at this time, and was greeted with the most enthusiastic applause.... The introduction of the illustrious Harry of the West was a most interesting scene."

Following their defeat in the general state elections, the Whigs of Louisiana received a second staggering blow, for on July 30, 1846, the Walker Tariff became the law of the land. The sugar-growing Whigs were not willing to consider the act final. The inhabitants of St. Mary parish, "who were engaged in the cultivation and manufacture of sugar," memorialized Congress to repeal the Tariff of 1846. Late in December, 1846, Henry Johnson reported the appeal to the Senate. The secretary read the memorial which set forth that--

The undersigned, fully convinced that the condition of our national affairs required rather an increase than a diminution of the revenue, do, as men mindful of their own individual protection and safety from utter ruin, and as patriotic men, desirous of their country's good, most earnestly and respectfully remonstrate against the provisions of the tariff of 1846, and pray for its repeal. The undersigned are aware that their immediate Representative in the lower House of Congress (Isaac E. Morse) is not inclined to favor their industry with his official support, and thus take this occasion as a community, as a people whose representative has been forgetful of a sacred trust—the defence, namely, of the interests of all his constituents, to protest against his acts so obviously in contravention

55 New Orleans Daily Delta, January 18, 1846.
56 New Orleans Daily Tropic and American Republican, February 13, 1846.
of their vital interests; silence on their part would very naturally
be construed into acquiescence in the course he has thought propor
to pursue, and therefore we all, without distinction of political
party, disclaim any approval of his proceedings in relation to this
matter.

Johnson said this petition came from about two hundred and fifty of
the most respectable citizens of Louisiana. His opinion was that the law
of July last would be destructive of the interests of Louisiana. On this
subject they had had experience that authorized him to say so. When the
duty on sugar was reduced so low previous to the tariff of 1842, the
reduction as was well known, proved destructive, even ruinous, to the great
mass of the new planters in Louisiana. The old planters, who were com­
paratively free from debt, did not feel the effect so much; but the new
planters, who were compelled to spend heavily in the purchase of machinery,
and the erection of buildings, and to incur debts in consequence, had been
involved in ruin. Hundreds were compelled to sell their plantations, and
many turned to cotton growing. He admitted that sugar was selling fairly
well at present; but this was not owing to the act of the last session.
The effect of that law had probably not yet been felt. It was owing to
other causes—to the failure of the crops in Louisiana and on the islands.
Johnson's opinion was that when the effects of the Walker Tariff began to
be felt, it would be found to be ruinous to the sugar planters of Louisiana
as had been the law before 1842. Louisiana had had a test, and a twenty
per cent tariff was found to be ruinous. Johnson stated that it was not
his object in presenting this petition to censure Morse, who represented
the petitioners in Congress. He entertained a high respect for that
Representative; but it was his duty to present the memorial, for he had
opposed reduction. He was not aware there was anything very extraordinary on his part in bringing the matter to the attention of Congress, or on the part of his constituents in framing it. If at any time a Representative was found to act contrary to the true interests of his people, it was their right to protest against his acts, and this course was often pursued. They frequently saw the legislatures of the different states even remonstrating against the acts of Senators. He repeated, that in complying with the request of the petitioners, he did not wish to be understood as censuring the conduct of their Representative, for he entertained for him a very high respect and personal friendship. In performing his duty in this instance, Moore had incurred the displeasure of a portion of his constituents who were within their province in registering a protest. There were other Whig Senators who urged repeal or modification of the Tariff of 1846, but there was no definitive congressional action during that session.

Slidell had resigned from Congress because he had been appointed by President Polk as minister to Mexico. Slidell was commissioned to amicably adjust American claims, to settle the annexation dispute, and to enter into negotiations regarding the Texas boundary. The very strained relations between the United States and Mexico prompted the Mexican President to deny Slidell reception. Slidell returned to New Orleans. Feeling in the city ran high, and it was proposed by the Democratic New Orleans Courier that the citizens of New Orleans, without distinction of party, give some public manifestation in favor of Slidell. To this proposal, the angry Whig retort was:

Should such a demonstration take place, and the Whigs have anything to do with it, it will be expected that Plaquemines be represented by a delegation composed of at least a majority of 1000 of its legal voters. The Whigs who saw the gallant Clay robbed of the vote of Louisiana, by
Plaquemines, will never consent to honor Mr. Slidell without honoring, at the same time, the occasion which made him a great man, and an undoubted patriot. We go, then, for the Hon. John Slidell, the Mission to Mexico, James K. Polk, immortal Plaquemines, and the 1000 gun battery. Friends of Henry Clay, three cheers for the purity of the elective franchise, and a public dinner to its most distinguished advocate.57

Senator Alexander Barrow died in Barnum’s Hotel, at Baltimore, Maryland, December 29, 1846. The legislature, to fill the vacancy, met in joint session on January 20, 1847. Between the legislative elections of 1846 and the session of 1847, the Whigs had partially recovered their losses. In the lower house, the parties were evenly divided, with forty-eight members each. In the senate, the Whigs had thirteen members, and the Democrats had seventeen. There were two vacancies. The candidates nominated to succeed Barrow were Soule and Morse, Democrats; Bordelon and Roman, Whigs. The 113 legislators who participated in the election voted: Soule, 59; Morse, 1; Bordelon, 52; and Roman, 1. Soule was accordingly declared elected.59

Meanwhile, in April, 1846, the war with Mexico had broken out. Hostilities had not come as a surprise. Mexico had previously announced that the annexation of Texas by the United States would be interpreted as an aggressive act. When Congress effected annexation, the leaders of Mexico were loud in their anger. The United States had moved troops into the disputed region beyond the Nueces river, and thereby war was precipitated.

After hostilities had actually begun, the Louisiana Whigs accepted the war with every show of enthusiasm. The most prominent Whigs of New Orleans urged action, and bestirred themselves to send aid to General

57 New Orleans Daily Tropic and American Republican, April 17, 1846.
58 New Orleans Weekly Delta, January 11, 1847.
59 New Orleans Daily Picayune, January 20, 1847.
Zachary Taylor. Local meetings were called, and these passed resolutions favoring a vigorous prosecution of the conflict. The Whigs of the fourth congressional district formally announced that there might have been differences of opinion regarding the cause of the war, but that now it was in process, they "yielded to no portion of the inhabitants of this widespread union in their ardent aspirations and fervent prayers for the success of our arms." The Whig members of the legislature unanimously voted to sustain the war. The New Orleans Daily Tropic—and Louisiana, in 1846, had no advocate more ardently Whig—boldly prophesied:

The American people will sweep over the whole continent—such is the order of things. The participators in the present movement are but instruments in the hands of Providence, working out a great result—the improvement in the human race, the vastness of which is incomprehensible, yet plainly visible to the human mind.62

The "official" organ of the Whig party in Louisiana, the New Orleans Bee, even before conflict began, had sent out the clarion that the Whigs of Louisiana in case of strife could be relied upon to fight for the common country.

Lafayette Saunders, Whig veteran of many political wars, was authorized by General E. P. Gaines to raise a regiment of 1000 volunteers. "The noble sons of the Florida District, the chivalrous men of the Red River country, and the brave men of the Ouachita and Opelousas Parishes" were particularly called upon to "prepare their fleet steed" and flock to Saunders standards.

Farrar, venerated Whig member of the legislature, offered a resolution which declared that Louisiana would be at all times ready to support the

60 Franklin Planter's Banner, July 22, 1844.
61 New Orleans Daily Tropic, May 5, 1846. This paper had abandoned its longer title in January, 1846. Subsequently, it was undeviatingly a Whig organ.
62 Ibid., May 12, 1846.
63 New Orleans Bee, June 14, 1845.
64 Baton Rouge Gazette, May 16, 1846.
government of the United States in all its relations with foreign powers, and as a part of that support, would furnish all material means within the power of the state. The resolution was unanimously confirmed by Farrar's Whig colleagues. At a public meeting in New Orleans, Farrar and Roselius expressed themselves in indignant language respecting some scurrilous attempts that had been made to class the Whigs as enemies of the war, or as being a whit less zealous than the Democrats for a vigorous prosecution of it. It was reported that they had gone even further than this, by claiming that the Louisiana Whigs were emphatically the war men; had been in the lead in giving a most cordial support to the most energetic measures for carrying it on, and had constantly urged that the administration was remiss in its duties for not sending at once an overwhelming force to precipitantly flog Mexico in all quarters.

The Whig newspaper published the "glorious news" of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Matamoras, Monterey, and Buena Vista. Whig editors throughout the state severely castigated the members of Congress who voted to censure Taylor for his liberal terms to the Mexicans following the Battle of Monterey. Their greatest ire, however, was provoked when the Louisiana volunteers were returned after a futile soiree in Mexico. One of them blazed:

The administration of President Polk, which holds power by a damnable fraud upon the electors of this Republic, and which is seeking to retain its power by means disgracful to the actors, and libellous to the spirit of the age, has voluntarily and deliberately tendered an insult to the free people of this State, which demands a prompt, conclusive, and unqualified explanation. Can it be given?

It can, so thinks the editor. It was a party move. Had not the proceedings of Secretary of War Marcy from the very outset, and the sanction

Lafayette Southern Traveller, January 8, 1848.
given to his course by President Polk, demonstrated that party and not the country, was the only thing to be regarded in the war? Was it not common knowledge that Democrats of the most doubtful qualifications had been appointed almost without exception to regimental commands, while Whigs with sterling qualifications had been utterly neglected?

The foregoing is not an extreme example of Whig journalistic reproach. Daily editorials accused the Democratic administration of bungling the war. Polk and Marcy were repeatedly flayed for incompetence, and for playing politics. When a part of Taylor's command was sent to support General Winfield Scott, it was just another political move, and,

If those who are charged with the prosecution of the war, dream, that depriving Old Taylor of an opportunity of more victories, that they can obliterate all memory of the past—let them disabuse their minds of that fallacy....It is impossible to arrest the flood of national enthusiasm and gratitude that is rapidly bearing Gen. Taylor to the highest place in the Republic.

When Taylor's name gained national fame, sharp politicians realized its potential possibilities. This was especially the case with the Whig leaders of Louisiana, for the local party was in sad need of a new infusion of inspiration. Taylor, being a Louisianian, was a most desirable acquisition. He had won the universal admiration of the state. Editors began to praise the General, his homely virtues, his "Rough and Ready" ways, his splendid intellect, his skill as a commander, the valor of his officers, the devotion of his men, and even the merits of his war horse, Whitey. "The friends of General Taylor" began to hold meetings, and the weeks passed the Taylor boom gained momentum.

67 New Orleans Daily Tropic, August 4, 1846.
68 New Orleans Bee, June 2, 1847.
69 It is impractical to cite the total of these articles. The interested reader is referred to contemporary Louisiana Whig papers; such editorials were printed daily.
So great was the popular enthusiasm, there seemingly was a spontaneous movement to run Taylor for the presidency, and that "without party preferences."

Taylor, in the meanwhile, was aware that he had become sensationaly popular. He was not a politician, but he was inclined toward the Whig party. He, however, was wont to protest that he was not an "ultra Whig.

After being assailed by the Democrats in Congress, he with considerable heat, estimated his defamers:

Cass is certainly one of the most unprincipled demagogues in our country, and if his moral or personal courage was equal to his capacity, he would be one of the most dangerous men in the country; but his timidity will prevent his going or risking too much, or going too far, in carrying out his nefarious schemes; he has the head but not the heart to do so; altho, one of my most bitter revilers at the last session of Congress, he would, if called on to explain, if there was any difficulty or danger involved in the matter, would take shelter under his privilege as a Senator, or would make any disclaimer required of him; he and many others who went out of their way at the last session to slander me, I presume by order, now regret they had not held their peace on that occasion. I do not think there is a more unprincipled editor in all the land, nor a more unprincipled man so far as veracity is concerned, than Richie of the organ (Washington Union); he has assailed me without regard to truth, for the vilest purposes; but fortunately he has afflicted on me as yet no injury, & if he can reconcile his low and vindictive abuse to his ideas of right and wrong, be it so, I can be contented; the old man appears to have taken as deep interest in the Virginia elections--

Genl Scott's success at Cerro Gordo & elsewhere will give him a high standing among his countrymen nor would I if I could detract one iota from the same; the battle of Buena Vista aided in taking Vera Cruz, & opened the way to the city of Mexico, & he was in a position to reap the fruits of the same, which no doubt he has taken advantage of & on this has reached and taken possession of the capital of the country. There is not a doubt in my mind that he was sent out to break me down, & that the plan was laid by the Genl to strip me of my command, or so large a portion of it, & in such a way, that I would leave the country and return to the U. States in disgust, which would have the effect of accomplishing their nefarious plans without involving any one but myself--That he Scott--sold himself to Marcy for the command in Mexico, body & soul, one

70 Alexandria Red River Republican, February 12, 1848.
condition of which was to break me down by driving me from Mexico, while the war was in progress, & perhaps from the army, there is not a doubt in my mind.71

After having been put under the orders of Scott, Taylor wrote:

If it was not that my friends had connected my name with the presidency at the coming election, which I deeply regret, I would at once leave here and return to the United States, and perhaps from the service...but I do not wish to take any step which would disappoint my friends, or give my enemies any advantages over me, or place myself in their power; yet (sic) circumstances may take place which will compel me to leave...the service let the consequences be what they may; being subjected to the immediate command of General S. would be among then, after his deceitful and contemptable course towards me; this may drive me from the country rather sooner than I had contemplated leaving it.72

There can be no doubt that the presidential bait was exceedingly tempting to Taylor, but he wrote scores of letters depreciating his own talents, denying that he had a wish for the office, regretting that his friends had ever thought of him for that position, but always concluding in effect, "if I am a candidate for the office in question, it has been the doings of the people, and by no agency of mine in the matter, & if they think proper to elect me, I will serve them honestly and faithfully to the best of my abilities in conformity to the provisions of the constitution."73

As the boom progressed, Taylor continued, in a very guarded manner, to protest his indifference. He noted, however, that Clay's chances for the presidency were meager, and that he would not under any circumstance suffer himself to be used for the purpose of elevating Clay or anyone else.74

71 Zachary Taylor to Colonel J. P. Taylor, Camp near Monterey, Mexico, May 29, 1847; Zachary Taylor to Jefferson Davis, Camp near Monterey, Mexico, July 27, 1847; Taylor Papers.
72 Zachary Taylor to Colonel J. P. Taylor, Camp near Monterey, Mexico, June 4, 1847; Taylor Papers.
73 Zachary Taylor to Colonel J. P. Taylor, Camp near Monterey, Mexico, June 27, 1847; Taylor Papers.
74 Zachary Taylor to Colonel J. P. Taylor, Head Quarters, Army of Occupation, Camp near Monterey, Mexico, September, 1847; Taylor Papers.
Taylor in a personal letter pledged Clay his friendship. In part, he wrote:

Permit me to repeat that whatever representation may be made to me, from any source, conveying any expression of disrespect toward yourself or your friends...will be expelled and discredited....I am much rejoiced that I have this opportunity to assure you not only of my frank and full confidence in your friendship and kindly feelings, that I warmly appreciate your wishes for my own success and your expressed desire to contribute to it.75

Concerning his political views, General Taylor admitted that he had never in his life voted in a presidential election, but he was opposed to Jacksonian Democracy. To Jefferson Davis, Taylor wrote that it would be incumbent on Congress to either restore the Tariff of 1842, or resort to direct taxation to pay for the burdens of the war; that the National Bank was a dead issue; that the extraordinary expenses of the government made the matter of distribution of no consequence; that the Wilmot Proviso was a "mere bug bare (sic)...that was gotten up to...produce excitement in certain quarters," and would shortly disappear; that Congress would not permit the entrance of any slave states which might be created from the territory acquired from Mexico; that internal improvement would be carried on in spite of vetoes or anything which the president could interpose to prevent it; that the South should protect slavery by constitutional means, and should that fail, by an appeal to the sword--"I will be the last to yield one inch--"; that he had been opposed to the annexation of Texas, believing that the manner in which it had been done to have been unconstitutional; and that

Should a national convention think proper to nominate some one (sic) else for that high office, & should he be elected, it would not give me one moments concern in the way of unpleasant feelings--But should a

75 Zachary Taylor to Henry Clay, Head Quarters, Army of Occupation, Camp near Monterey, Mexico, November 4, 1847; Taylor Papers.
majority of the people think proper to elevate me to the office in question I will serve them as a matter of duty, honestly and faithfully to the best of my ability, strictly in conformity to the principles of the constitution, as nearly as it can be.76

In another letter Taylor amplified his position on slavery. How inferences could be drawn that he was unfriendly to the South or to Southern institutions was difficult for him to comprehend. His own pecuniary interests as a slaveholder, aside from any other considerations, should allay any such suspicions. He would respect the feelings of the nonslave-holding states, and at the same time be equally careful that no encroachments were made on the rights of the citizens of slaveholding states. He regarded the question of slavery as the most important one confronting the American people. It dangerously threatened the perpetuity of the Union. The intemperate fanatics, North and South, had made the whole matter so inflammatory that proper and calm discussion was no longer possible. The masses had been rendered so maddened by temper and passion that the nation was divided into hostile camps. In summary, he advised:

Let the South act promptly, boldly, and decisively, with arms in their hands if necessary, as the Union in that case will be blown to atoms, or will be no longer worth preserving. But I pray to God this state of things will not occur in my day, or in yours or that of our children or children's children, if ever.77

For months Taylor insisted that he would be the candidate for no particular part; his candidacy, if it materialized would be non-partisan. He stated that he was a Whig but that if he were elected, he did not wish or intend to be a party president "in the strict sense of the term." He

76 Zachary Taylor to Jefferson Davis, Camp near Monterey, Mexico, July 27, 1847; Taylor Papers.
77 Zachary Taylor to Jefferson Davis (?), Head Quarters, Army of Occupation, Camp near Monterey, Mexico, August 16, 1847; Taylor Papers. The recipient of this letter is not named, but internal evidence seems to indicate that it was addressed to Jefferson Davis, as suggested.
would, however, accept the Whig nomination if it were tendered him by a national convention, but it struck him as a better plan if the people of all parties acted in the matter through their primary assemblies and state legislatures.

In November, 1847, Taylor retired from his command in Northern Mexico, and returned to Louisiana. Now that the conviction that he was a victim of political persecution had been established, his arrival in New Orleans was psychologically perfect. His coming had been joyously anticipated, and his reception to the city was described as the most brilliant gala day the city had ever known.

When he entered the Mississippi, the vessels of all nations at the bar hoisted their colours, manned their yards, and gave three cheers to the renowned old Soldier. At the plantations, as he passed up, they assembled the negroes and cheered him on.

He stopped at the Barracks, below the city (where his family was) for two days during which it rained incessantly; but on the third day the sun rose gloriously and without a cloud; the temperature was delightful; and every face beamed with smiles and gratitude.

About 10 o'clock the city authorities alone, in a splendid steamer, escorted by a whole fleet of other steamers crowded with joyful spectators, waited on the General at the Barracks to tender to him the hospitality of the city and to beg him, while he remained, to be their honoured guest. The invitation was accepted, and as usual he was soon ready and embarked.

78 Zachary Taylor to an unknown recipient, Camp near Monterey, November, 1847; Taylor Papers.
79 New Orleans Bee, December 4, 1847; Alexandria Red River Republican, December 11, 1847.
with his suite around him. As the gaily decorated fleet came sweeping up the beautiful crescent which forms the boundary of New Orleans, a more splendid sight was never seen. Five miles of vessels, three or four tier deep were fullfledged with the plumage of flags from every quarter of the world. Their decks and spars were crowded with smiling faces and beating hearts. The levees and wharfs were thronged with an immense and deeply excited multitude. And, as the fleet approached, in passing as it did along the entire length of the city, first were heard loud strains of martial music; these were drowned by the joyous peals of a thousand bells; these again were hushed into silence by the roar of artillery; but louder still than all went up the long continued shouts of fifty thousand freemen in honor of a man whom Kings might envy.

From the landing he was conducted through a triumphal arch to the Cathedral, where he listened and responded to an address. He then mounted his old white horse, of Buena Vista memory; and escorted by all the military and fire companies, Masons, Odd Fellows, schools, societies and fifty thousand people, he paraded through the principal streets, uncovered. At every step and from every balcony and window, the bright eyes and sweet smiles of Orleans maidens sought to win his notice by strewing his path with flowers and by the waving of white handkerchiefs, while the air resounded with the shouts of men whose hearts would have burst without such relief. When they arrived at the St. Charles Hotel, the whole escort passed in review before the General. The old gentleman next attempted to address a few words of thanks to the crowd, but nothing could be heard save long, loud, and often repeated huzzas. To get him to his room and to look out the crowd required the efforts of several strong men.
After a few moments' repose, he was taken to the drawing room of the St. Charles, which though spacious was incapable of containing the throng of ladies who pressed forward to reward his great deeds by smiles and congratulations.

About 7 o'clock he sat down to a splendid dinner with as many of the most distinguished men as could be seated in the largest room of the hotel. Soon after, by invitation, he attended in succession three theatres; at each he was received in the most enthusiastic manner. All were crowded from pit to dome. When he entered, the performances were suspended; the orchestras struck up the most inspiring national airs. Every person rose uncovered, and the roofs were shaken by the shouts which went forth to testify the general joy at having the renowned old Hero again in Louisiana.

The same respect was paid him when he retired. During the night the splendid hotel where he was lodged was brilliantly illuminated and displayed many transparencies commemorative of the most interesting incidents of the General's life.

And thus ended a public reception said to have been more crowded and more enthusiastic than was ever before offered by New Orleans to any other man—not excepting Lafayette, Jackson, or Clay.

On Saturday, December 4, the Louisiana legislature presented Taylor with a sword. Governor Johnson made the presentation speech, and the General replied briefly but graciously. That evening "Old Rough and Ready" embarked for his home at Baton Rouge. Here he was received with extravagant demonstrations of affection and esteem. Guns boomed out a welcome all of.

80 New Orleans Daily Picayune, December 4, 1847; New Orleans Bee, December 4, 1847.
81 New Orleans Bee, December 6, 1847.
Sunday night, and on Monday, the fellow-townsmen of the Victor of Buena Vista formed a procession and marched to pay their adulations.

The Taylor Boom in Louisiana was somewhat jarred by the general state elections of November, 1847. The Democrats elected Le Sere, Harmonson, and Moore to Congress. The Whigs managed to return Thibodeaux, of the second district. The party was seemingly disorganized, and could not unite upon district candidates. In the legislative elections, the Whigs were successful in seating a joint-baillot majority of two. Even this representative body of Whigs seemingly was affected with instability, disloyalty, and dishonesty.

The first of the important actions of the newly assembled legislature was the election of a United States Senator, to replace Henry Johnson, who would retire on March 4, 1849. Duncan F. Kenner won the nomination of the Whig caucus. The Democrats seemed cautious in announcing their candidate, but it was generally known, before formal nomination, that their favor would rest upon John Slidell.

Even before the day set for the election, January 24, 1848, vague rumors were afloat that irregularities were to be expected. It was hinted that even though the Whigs could nominally command the election, they were insecure in their majority.

The hall on the election day presented a dramatic scene. There were numerous visitors and all were in a state of expectancy and excitement. The two chambers jointly assembled, and when the house roll was called,

82 Baton Rouge Gazette, December 11, 1847; Alexandria Red River Republican, December 18, 1847.
83 New Orleans Bee, November 22, 1847.
84 Ibid., November 9, 1847; Alexandria Red River Republican, December 14, 1847.
85 New Orleans Weekly Delta, January 26, 1848.
it was ascertained that ninety-seven members were present and one was absent. The absentee was Isaac A. Myles, of Washington parish. There were 129 legislators in the hall. To win, Kenner needed sixty-five votes.

Before the first ballot, Brashear, senator of St. Mary, protested that John M. Bell, senator of Orleans, was not legally eligible to vote, for Bell was holding two public offices simultaneously, which was unconstitutional. Debate immediately ensued, which added to the excitement of the spectators, and to the tenseness of the legislators. The Whigs were desperately trying to forestall the vote, and frantically trying to find Myles, but Myles was not to be found. The presiding officer brought the discussion to a close by ruling Brashear's protest out of order.

On the first ballot the vote stood: Kenner, sixty-four; Slidell, sixty-four. A member of each of the parties had bolted. Mansuel White, Democratic senator of the first senatorial district, wasted his vote on R. C. Nichols. K. A. Baldwin, Whig representative of Sabine parish, voted for Slidell. The current belief was that Baldwin had pledged himself to so vote even before his election.

A second ballot was then taken, and the result was identical with the first. Thereupon, the senate withdrew for consultation. A motion was made in the house for adjournment until five o'clock the same afternoon, but it was lost by ruling of the presiding officer. There was much confusion among the house members while waiting for the senate's return.

Upon the re-assembling of the senate, Bell placed the name of Soule in nomination. On the third and last trial, Soule received sixty-eight votes, and Kenner received sixty-one. Four Whigs had voted for Soule. They were

86 Louisiana Senate Journal, 18, Leg., 2 Sess., 36-37.
Garcia and Parham, of the senate; and Bienvenue and Watkins, of the house.

The Democratic New Orleans Courier "freely confessed its astonishment" over the election of Soule, and especially surprised was it that he should win by a majority of seven votes. The New Orleans Bee shamed the Whig deserters, and also regaled Baldwin for having voted for Slidell.

In the senatorial session of the following day, angry accusations flew back and forth. Tempers were lost, and Parham struck Robert C. Martin, senator of Lafourche, full in the face. Martin staggered back and drew a Bowie knife, "which he was about to plunge in his assailant's breast, when bystanders fortunately arrested him."

Parham vehemently protested his loyalty to the party. He stated that it was his conviction that Kenner could not win. His object in voting for a Democrat had been to defeat Slidell.

Garcia defended his course with the same justification offered by Parham. It appeared, said he, that the Whig candidate could not be elected, and he chose the candidate of the opposition who was least offensive.

Garcia stated:

"When the first unsuccessful vote in the General Assembly had been given, I went up to the Hon. D. F. Kenner and told him that it was evident that he was beaten. He requested me to give him another trial. I did so; when a like result took place. On the third vote, when Mr. Soule was put in nomination, I perceived that, if the Whigs voted as they did before, Mr. Soule would not be elected, and Mr. Slidell would be again put in nomination and would be elected. Of this I was morally certain. The issue, then being between Mr. Slidell

87 New Orleans Bee, January 25, 1848.
88 New Orleans Courier, January 25, 1848.
89 New Orleans Bee, January 27, 1848.
90 New Orleans Courier, January 26, 1848.
92 New Orleans Courier, January 26, 1848; New Orleans Bee, January 26, 1848.
and Mr. Soule, I preferred the latter—more for political than personal reasons, though I know Mr. Slidell to be an honorable gentleman and a distinguished citizen. It is true that between Mr. Soule and myself there have always existed relations of the warmest friendship and esteem. Indeed, friendship is too cold a word to designate the character of our intimacy. He is a man who has rendered me favors and kindnesses which it would indeed be base in me to forget; but, still, I would never have voted for him against my party. My party first before all private friendships and feelings. I am proud to say that I am one of the Whigs who voted for Mr. Soule for the reasons stated. And now, for gentlemen who have long, and I trust honorably, served their country in important public trusts, to be styled "traitors" by so mean, miserable, and corrupt a being as William L. Hodge is enough to arouse the indignation of any man.\(^\text{93}\)

The plot thickened when James Jones, representative of Jefferson parish, charged that Myles had been offered four negroes to remain away from the election. Jones suggested the expediency of an investigating committee. Such a committee was appointed, and given broad powers. Jones was brought before this committee for interrogation, and the evidence produced by witnesses was extremely damaging to the character of the accuser. The committee heard the evidence to the effect that Myles had made anterior commitment not to obstruct the election of a Democratic Senator; also, Myles had tried to find a way of bribing the investigating committee.

The committee concluded its investigation without any definite action. Balie Peyton, prominent Louisiana Whig, wrote to Crittenden of Kentucky, "Slidell is disgusted at the election of Soule, when he was at the expense of bribing two whig members of the Legislature to elect him." The most

\(^{93}\) Mitchell, "Kenner," 49.

\(^{94}\) Alexandria Red River Republican, January 29, 1848.

\(^{95}\) New Orleans Daily Delta, March 5, 1848.

\(^{96}\) J. K. Greer, "Louisiana Politics, 1845-61," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, XII, 558; Arthur Freeman, "The Early Career of Pierre Soule," 205-07. This is a Masters thesis in History, Louisiana State University, 1936; typescript in the University library.

\(^{97}\) Balie Peyton to J. J. Crittenden, Station Camp, near Gallatin (Tennessee) October 21, 1848; Crittenden Papers.
interesting result of the whole episode was that bitter enmity was engendered between Soule and Slidell. The two capable and ambitious Democrats, their stars very much in the ascendant, were henceforward to fight for the control of their party in Louisiana.

The senatorial confusion was quickly forgotten by the tireless politicians, who were too deeply engrossed in the presidential problem to be long diverted. The "Independent Taylor Party" of East Feliciana parish issued a call for a state convention to meet in New Orleans on February 22, 1848. This call was in temper with the popular demand, for numerous such local meetings were being held. Pursuant to call, "thousands" assembled. On the day of the convention, the New Orleans Bee warned that independent action on the part of the Louisiana Whigs might militate to the disadvantage of the candidate, and of party solidarity. A national Whig nominating convention was strongly advised. Disregarding this advice, the New Orleans convention placed Taylor before the country.

Jacques Toutant, Judah P. Benjamin, Robert C. Nicholas, Christopher Adams, John Moore, and J. D. Cambell were chosen as Louisiana Taylor electors.

Meanwhile, the Democrats were chiding Taylor for not openly avowing his principles and his party. It was useless, stated the New Orleans Courier, to pretend that the delegates to the "Taylor State Convention" represented the people of Louisiana, "irrespective of party distinctions." The whole electoral ticket, plus substitutes, were "Whigs of the deepest dye."

98 New Orleans Bee, January 6, 1848.
99 Ibid., February 22, 1848.
100 Ibid., February 24, 1848. Nicholas has been previously identified as a Democrat. He is so cited in the Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1,357. He resigned as secretary of state in 1846, during the Democratic Johnson administration. After this, he evidently became a Whig.
101 New Orleans Courier, February 3, 1848.
102 Ibid., February 29, 1848.
The "Taylorites" issued a call for a second state convention to determine whether or not they should continue to act independently or to send delegates to a national nominating convention. The convention assembled on March 14, in New Orleans. The most seasoned of the Whig politicians had no objection to an independent Taylor nomination for the purpose of "keeping the pot boiling," but they had far too much practical judgment to allow the convention, in its enthusiasm, to declare a non-co-operative policy toward the national Whig organization.

Prentiss, in one of his great orations, declared:

Had I the choice of a President,—did it rest with me to indicate the successor of the present occupant of the Chief Magistracy, I should not be much puzzled to select—I should cling to my first love—I should shout aloud the name of that veteran statesman, who has attained the very highest eminence on the pedestal of fame,—under whose banner I have so often been proud to fight—whose white plume I have so often followed in battle, when, like that of the gallant Harry V, it tossed to and fro in the conflict, but never bowed to power nor was stained by cowardice—I would give my choice for CLAY!

There was a great outburst of applause. The incomparable orator, master of mass psychology, had laid the background for his case:

If General Taylor should be the choice of that (national) convention, I consider his election beyond all doubt. I for one, whatever may have been and now may be my personal preference, should be proud to fight under the banner of that gallant old chief, the prestige of whose victories over a foreign enemy would give him irresistible strength before the people in a civil contest. I speak of General Taylor as a Whig, a good Whig, whose principles and views are those of the great Whig party...General Taylor, though for forty years engaged in the duties of a soldier—though devoted to the life and profession which are said to unfit men for civil life, has given a striking proof of fitness for civil duties...He would call around him a cabinet of first Whigs—the soundest, wisest, and safest counsellors of the Union—such a cabinet as has not been seen since the days of Washington...But should the choice of the party fall upon another distinguished Whig—should it once more unfold that battle-stained standard under which we have fought so many gallant
fights (immense applause, cries of Clay, Clay, Old Harry*), should Henry Clay be the candidate, I should, scarred and worn soldier that I am, seize my crutch and go forth to battle.103

Randall Hunt also spoke, and such a combination of persuasive eloquence could not be withstood. It was decided to co-operate with the national Whig party. Accordingly, delegates were appointed to attend the Philadelphia convention.

Taylor remained as detached as possible. He was writing numerous voluminous epistles defining his position without giving definitions, being a Whig without being an ultra Whig, and hungering for the presidency without hungering at all. A Reverend Doctor Wightman, whose fame has been obscured by the passing of yesterday, had occasion, while journeying on steamboat to New Orleans, to meet the General. He left to posterity this portrait:

There was the veritable "Rough and Ready," sitting opposite me, sipping his coffee; the most remarkable man, in many respects, in the Western hemisphere. I had missed the gorgeous spectacle of his New Orleans reception—the most magnificent affair which has ever shaken that city with excitement; but vastly better, I had him now where I could see and study the man—a man whose name belongs to history, and whose achievements place him side by side with the great captains of the world. The first thing that struck me was his simplicity, an unfailing attribute of true greatness. He ate, and talked, and carried himself with the unstudied ease of a little child. You would have supposed him some plain country gentleman, who dreamed not of attracting a look, or calling out a remark. All right in that line—thought I, but how different looking and better looking than the million of lithograph likenesses which stare you in the face at the shop windows and everywhere else!

Reverend Wightman goes on to observe that the living Taylor had none of that extreme breadth between the chin and the back of the head, and

104 Franklin Planter's Banner, March 23, 1848.
very little of the protrusion of the lower lip, which was to be found in
the lithographs. He was of rather short stature, had a sprinkling of gray
hairs, was sixty-two years of age, was erect and firm when on his feet,
and possessed one of the kindliest expressions of face that one ever
beheld. Taylor was wearing a common blue frock coat, with flat buttons,
the covering of which were badly worn, showing that it belonged to a
fashion of apparel that had passed away some two or three years before.
Still his dress, as a whole, had been sufficiently becoming, and it
exhibited no trace whatever of the military. The Reverend Wightman
concluded:

As we rose from the breakfast table I was introduced to the old
hero. I told him I was from South Carolina, and rejoiced in the
good fortune which had allowed me to see him and tell him how much
the people of my native State honored and loved him. His eyes filled
with tears as he shook my hand warmly—and I saw that the simple
assurance of love could affect profoundly a man who faced the storm
of battle with a nerve that never moved. His conversation exhibited
fine, clear, common sense, without the slightest tinge of any sort
of affectations or personal vanity. In the course of the day, he
gave me the details of the great battle of Buena Vista, the key to
all the success of the American arms in Mexico.106

It is apparent from Taylor's correspondence that he was dreadful
that Clay would receive the Whig nomination. He might well have been,
for to the Whigs there was a certain magic in the very suggestion of such
a potentiality. A rumor was afloat in Louisiana that Clay would not
allow his name to be presented to the convention. As great as was the
Taylor boom, deep regrets were expressed. Allen Pearse, who had been
appointed as a Louisiana Whig delegate to the Philadelphia convention,

wrote to Clay:

I see it stated as probable, that you will withdraw your name
from before the country as a candidate for the presidency….1

106 Baton Rouge Gazette, February 5, 1848.
107 Ibid., May 6, 1848.
merely take the liberty to suggest for your consideration whether
you have the right, considering your position in the Whig party &
your duty to your country... The Whigs have sustained defeats with
you. To vindicate you against the gross slanders and denunciations
of the democratic party is a duty the Whigs owe themselves & to their
principles. Success with another would not be complete. We would
gain nothing by it. It would be said that we had been compelled to
give up our old leader, & thereby acquiesce in the public judgment
against him... I am a delegate to the national convention for one of
the country districts in this State, & shall probably be there....

The rumor of Clay's retirement was ill-founded. Ambition was yet
aflame in the heart of the man who "would rather be right than President."
Taylor was disturbed, and wrote to one of his relatives that Clay was making
great exertions to secure the Whig nomination, and that he, Taylor, had
no intentions of withdrawing in favor of Clay—although if the convention
nominated Clay, he, Taylor, would not be mortified, for he had no great
desire to be President.

A majority of the practical politicians, however much they revered
Clay, were not at all inclined to allow their sentiment for their Whig
founder to sway their more profound judgment. The Whig presses, without
exception, paid Clay compliment, but boomed for the hero of Buena Vista.
Taylor clubs were prompt in paying tribute to "Harry of the West," but
their songs declared that

    Old Rough and Ready is the man;
    Now beat him locos if you can.
    Hurrah! Hurrah! come boys be steady,
    Hurrah for Rough and Ready!

The Whig national nominating convention met in Philadelphia, June 7,
1848. It was a numerous and distinguished body, with nine former governors
in attendance. John K. Morehead, of North Carolina, was made permanent

108 A. Pearse to Henry Clay, New Orleans, March 24, 1848; Clay Papers.
109 Baton Rouge Gazette, April 22, 29, 1848.
110 Zachary Taylor to Col. J. P. Taylor, Cypress Grove Plantation, near
    Rodney, Mississippi, March 10, 1848; Taylor Papers.
president, and Walter Brashear served as Louisiana's vice president.

After the preliminaries, nominations were in order.

Lafayette Saunders, of the Louisiana delegation, begged leave to read a communication from Taylor. Leave being granted, Saunders said that in his opinion, Zachary Taylor had been much misunderstood; and knowing him to be a pure and unadulterated Whig....

A question of order was here raised, and Saunders was by the chair requested to read his document without making any formal speech. The document had been written by the Louisiana delegation, and had been predicated upon the expressions and sentiments of Taylor himself. It stated that Taylor had taken no part in bringing his name before the American people. His friends throughout the Union had placed him prominently before the country. General Taylor considered himself in the hands of his friends, and under the circumstances in which he had been brought forward, he did not think it proper to withdraw himself. He wished it to be understood, that in his opinion, his friends were bound to abide by the decision and will of the convention. He was impressed with the necessity of a change in the national administration, for otherwise there was no salvation of the country. Yet, his friends would withdraw his name from the canvass, unless he should be a nominee of the convention.

The first nomination was that of Winfield Scott, made by Lewis D. Campbell, of Pennsylvania. Then Governor Edward Kent, in a spirited address, placed the name of Zachary Taylor, of Louisiana, before the convention, and the people of the United States. Henry Clay was nominated by N. B. Blunt of New York. Courtesy nominations were tendered to Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts, John M. Clayton, of Delaware, and John McLean, of Ohio.
The balloting began, and when the state of Texas was called, Conrad, of Louisiana, informed the chair that the delegates from Louisiana had been instructed and authorized by the Whigs of Texas to act for them in case no Texas delegation was present. No Texans were present, and the chair agreed that James M. Wray, of the Louisiana delegation, might represent them.

On the first ballot, Taylor led the field with one-hundred and eleven votes; Clay was second, with ninety-seven; and Scott was third, having received forty-three. On the first ballot, one Louisianian, presumably Pease, voted for Clay. Taylor won the nomination on the fourth ballot.

In the final ballot, the delegation of Louisiana was undivided.

Anticipating the count of the last trial, Henry Wilson, of Massachusetts, passionate in his hatred of slavery, jumped to his feet and cried that he had never omitted voting the Whig ticket, but, "So help me God, I will do all I can to defeat that nomination!" Wilson's objections were conscientiously voiced. To his great distress, the convention had voted down anti-slavery resolutions. To add to his distress, the convention had nominated a Southerner, and a slaveholder. He withdrew from the party.

Samuel Galloway, of the Ohio delegation, declared that he was a Whig, and ever had been. He now felt himself in a strange position. He had come to the convention pledged to oppose any extension of slavery. In formulating its principles, the convention had made no such pledge to the country. Galloway was uncertain whether or not his Ohio constituency would support Taylor. Indeed, they had grave doubts regarding Taylor's whiggery. He would support Taylor if they did. In opposing the extension
of slavery, Galloway stated that he meant to treat the South with no
disrespect, but as Whittier had expressed it:

   By all above, around, below,
   Be our indignant answer—No!

Millard Fillmore, of New York, received the vice presidential
nomination on the second ballot. On the first trial, the Louisianians
did not vote for Fillmore, but on the second they shifted to him.

Then the chairman officially announced that Taylor had been nominated
as the Whig candidate for the President of the United States,

   The shout which instantly filled the Hall...was enough to rend
   the very walls and shake the solid building to its foundations
   [Upper saloon of the Museum building, Ninth street, below Chestnut].

   A vast concourse of persons had assembled around the Hall, and by
   these a thundering response was given to the cheers and applause
   within. Nor did the enthusiasm stop there; but people were seen
   running in all directions, spreading the glad tidings—and the
   emotions of joy were kindled with electric speed, from the center
   to the extremest boundaries of the city and suburbs, as announced
   for more than an hour, by renewed and distant shouts, extending
   further and further still—and it was long before the last inspiring
   shout died joyously upon the distant air.

   The evening after the nominations had been made, Philadelphia was
host to a great ratification meeting, which many thousands attended. A
number of speeches were made. G. B. Duncan, of the Louisiana delegation,
was called upon, and he amused the crowd with humorous remarks. Becoming
serious, Duncan contended that Taylor was a good, loyal Whig. Had he not
been nominated by the convention, he would have withdrawn his name from
the canvass. At this point, there was immense applause. Duncan pledged
himself to support the nominees of the convention with all his ability.

111 The Philadelphia Pennsylvania Inquirer and National Gazette, June 8, 9,
10, 1848; Baton Rouge Gazette, June 17, 1848; New Orleans Bee, June 19, 1848.
The news of Taylor's nomination was received in Louisiana with every demonstration of approbation. Ratification meetings were held throughout the state. In New Orleans, "upwards toward ten thousand persons" were at such a meeting that gathered on the neutral grounds of Canal and Carondolet streets. Speeches were made by Farrar, Peyton, Hunt, Prentiss, and others.

Taylor wrote that he had received the news while on his plantation. He said that he appreciated the honor of the nomination, yet he was free to say that the announcement caused him neither joy nor exultation, which he presumed was owing to apprehensions and fear that accompanied the prospect of having to assume the burdens and responsibilities of the presidency. To Crittenden, Taylor wrote that he felt nothing like immodest pride over having received the nomination; he fully realized the gravity of his new station. Among the reasons he was not overjoyed was "on account of Mr. Clay's feelings disappointment & even mortification at the course matters and things took at the Convention, which from his age & temperament I fear he will not bear with the greatest philosophy & even with that resignation & magnanimity which should be displayed on such occasions; but I hope for the best."

The national Democratic convention met in Baltimore on May 22. As temporary chairman, J. S. Bryce, of Louisiana, was called to the chair. Much confusion ensued before permanent organization was accomplished. Rival New York delegations, the Hunkers, or "stand-patters," and the

112 New Orleans Bee, June 26, 1848; Baton Rouge Gazette, July 1, 1848.
113 Taylor to Taylor, New Orleans, July 7, 1848; Taylor Papers.
114 Zachary Taylor to Crittenden, New Orleans, July 1, 1848; Crittenden Papers.
115 Franklin Planter's Banner, June 8, 1848.
Barnburners, or "reformers," contested for seats. Andrew Stephens, of Virginia, was made permanent president. After much lively disagreement, Lewis Cass, of Michigan, was nominated for the presidency, and William O. Butler, of Kentucky, as vice president.

The Abolitionists were again in the field for the campaign of 1848. The old Liberty organization had been dissolved, and a new one, the Free Soil Party, had been called into existence to carry on the fight against slavery, and the extension of slavery into the territories. As a startling anomaly, an abortive attempt was made to organize this party in Louisiana.

The burning issue about which the presidential election of 1848 revolved was the Wilmot Proviso. In its simplest terms, this measure would by Federal action prohibit slavery in any of the territory gained from Mexico. Since its introduction into Congress in 1846, it had distracted the United States, setting North against South, and playing havoc with party solidarities. The organization of an aggressive anti-slavery party, had shaken the always unstable Whig edifice to its very foundations. Thousands of Northern Whigs, as illustrated in the narrative of the Whig national nominating convention, were conscientious objectors to slavery, and adamant in their opposition to its extension. The loyalty of this class was sorely tempted. They had no faith in the southern-dominated Democracy, and but little faith in their own group, as long as it embraced a powerful pro-slavery element.

Southern Whigs found themselves in just as awkward a position. They hungered for Mexican territory, and for the extension of slavery into that

117 New Orleans Weekly Delta, August 21, 1848; Franklin Planter's Banner, September 14, 1848.
territory. Louisiana Whigs, in spite of their appeasement, found it more and more difficult to reconcile their interests with the antithetical ones of their northern brethren, for the leaders of the Louisiana Whigs were representatives of the Louisiana aristocracy, and therefore holders of slaves. In order that the national party be effectively coordinated, it was necessary that every conciliatory gesture be made, and every cunning subterfuge employed by the local group. As an illustration, the Shreveport Journal declares that the Whig party of Louisiana was not opposed to the annexation of Texas; in fact, annexation was heartily approved, but, alas, a joint-ballot resolution was unconstitutional.

Speaking of the state of parties, and the futility of continuing to patch the old party machines, a New Orleans editor with the greatest objectivity, states that the rift in the New York Democracy was undisputable evidence that in distant future the parties would be founded on the basis of geography, and the single issue would be slavery. He candidly observed:

That this open break in a party so perfectly organized and well-disciplined as the democrats have been reputed to be, is only an indication of the feelings at work in all the northern states and among all parties, and which may make the present one the most singular and important presidential election that has ever taken place. The same element of discord exists in the Whig party, except that the anti-slavery faction in its ranks is much stronger and more determined than it has proven itself among the democrats.

It is important that the people, who do the work and the voting, should know that there are real and irreconcilable divisions of sentiment on the extension (of slavery) to new territory, between the Northern and Southern Whigs, and between the Northern and Southern Democrats. The question is soon to be decided, so far as Congress can decide it. Any attempt to conceal the rupture or to gloss it over, will lead to fatal mistakes. There will be, and in the nature of things can be, no compromise. Let us look the facts in the face, and prepare with prudence, energy and effect. The old party machinery

118 Shreveport Journal, April 24, 1848.
is nearly worn out—it is fast giving way before this slavery question, and the South must prepare quietly to submit, or to seek safety in new combinations and modes of action. If anybody does not like this plain talk he had better think twice before he condemns us.\footnote{119}

The Democrats of Louisiana took as their model the fire-eaters and flayed away at their Whig opponents. The Democratic state convention which had met to select delegates for the Baltimore convention had without equivocation stated its position:

\begin{quote}
Resolved, That we regard the Wilmot Proviso as an attack upon the constitutional rights of the slaveholding States, and its discussion in Congress as dangerous to the Union.

Resolved, That while we review with surprise the astonishing fact that not one whig member from the non-slaveholding States voted with us on that question, those Democrats of the North who stood by us on that occasion, are entitled and shall ever receive our heartfelt gratitude.

Resolved, That the war with Mexico was the consequence of the repeated wrongs and injuries of her government and was brought on by her own act, and should be vigorously prosecuted until a peace, honorable to us and consistent with the rights of nations, has been effectively secured; and among those rights none have been more universally recognized and constantly enforced than retaining territory conquered by military power.\footnote{120}

Robert Rhett or William L. Yancey could not have spoken with more boldness. Even though the Whig party in conclave had made no stand on this delicate matter, the Whig presses replied that Taylor himself had conquered the territory, and he had made himself clear upon the retention of a portion of it. Had he not made himself clear upon the right of Congress to control slavery. Cass, now, was a man of a different stripe. Cass\footnote{121}

was "an abolitionist of the deepest dye," and the proofs of his abhorrence of the South and his determination to oppose the extension of her institutions

\footnote{119} Franklin Planter's Banner, June 22, 1848; quoted from the New Orleans Crescent.
\footnote{120} New Orleans Courier, March 16, 1848.
\footnote{121} New Orleans Daily Orleanian, October 12, 1848.
are so various and powerful as to defy contradiction. How could southern
Democrats willingly support a man who had been represented to them upon
the strongest assurances and the most incontrovertible evidence, to have
either sympathy, association, nor connection with slaveholders?" Cass
retended to be a northern man with southern principles, and so did Martin
in Buron, when he was a candidate. Cass had defined himself to A. O. P.
icholson, of Tennesse, when he wrote that congressional action
should be limited to the creation of proper government for new countries,
aquired or settled, and to the necessary provision for their eventual
admission into the Union; leaving, in the meanwhile, to the people
inhabiting them to regulate their internal concerns in their own way.
They are just as capable of doing so as the people of the States,
and they can do so, at any rate, as soon as their political independence
is recognized into the Union. 124

The Courier, "the only democratic journal in the city of New Orleans,
least openly so, and of course the accredited organ of Cass and Butler
Louisiana," blazed back:

And yet the gentlemen of the southern States receive Fillmore
as their candidate for Vice President; although they are aware that
for virulence and fanaticism of hatred toward the Southern institution
of slavery, he is not exceeded by anyone of the abolition gang...They
accept Fillmore, the abolitionist as their candidate for the Vice
President of the Republic, President of the Senate, and successor
of the President in case of his demise or disability. 126

The Courier "kept it before the people," that while in Congress,
 Fillmore joined Adams, Giddings, and the rest of the black gang in their
malignant insults upon the South, and was known to be in favor of the
Wilmot Proviso. No man could vote for Taylor without voting for

122 New Orleans Des, August 30, 1848.
123 Baton Rouge Gazette, November 4, 1848.
124 Alexandria Red River Republican, August 5, 1848.
125 Baton Rouge Gazette, November 4, 1848.
126 New Orleans Courier, June 15, 1848.
127 Ibid., June 26, 1848.
WILLARD FILLMORE, THE ABOLITIONIST. If both were true to their past records, Taylor could not vote for Fillmore, and Fillmore could not vote for Taylor:

What a pretty stew—what a nice kettle of fish—what a lovely hodge-podge—our own whig brothron are reduced to! They abandon their policies, they desert Clay—they have found Taylor and Fillmore, Old Whity, and a broad-brimmed hat!

Allez-vous, lui dit il, sans bruit chez vos parens, Ou vous avez laisse votre honnour et vos gants.129

The Courier berated Taylor as the "No-Party Candidate" and warned Democrats to be wary of such bait. To say that Taylor was the "Peoples'" candidate was a dishonest absurdity.

The Bee answered by citing Taylor's well-publicized letter to Captain J. S. Allison. Taylor, while not an ultra Whig, need not necessarily be so, for his sound American principles were sound enough for the Whig party.

Both Whigs and Democrats sent out speakers to canvass the state.

Balio Peyton wrote to Crittenden:

I am here stumping it for "Old Zack" and shall leave tomorrow for various appointments on the cost [sic] & in the other country Parishes. We have a good deal of hard work to do here running as we are against a well organized party who are sustained by the patronage of both Govts--State & National--But we will carry the State if our party keep [sic] up the fire hot and heavy until Nov--But the majority will be small. I have a string of appointments running through Sept. in the Pine woods. Prentiss who is spending his summer over (on) the Lake, will go to the two first meetings on the river at Plaquemine, and Baton Rouge at the later [sic] of which we have a triangular duel of both sides--a sort of shakshag fight of three cocks on a side. If they do not hack we will have some fun at this meeting on the 2nd September.132

129 Ibid., July 17, 1848.
130 Ibid., March 23, July 28, August 11, 1848.
131 New Orleans Bee, April 26, 1848.
132 Balio Peyton to Crittenden, New Orleans, August 29, 1848; Crittenden Papers.
About the time that Peyton was writing the foregoing letter, Benjamin was addressing audiences in the central part of the state. "For purity of thought, propriety of action, clearness of expression, aptness of illustration and suavity of address" Benjamin had no superior in Louisiana. He opened his address in Alexandria by reviewing the current political situation. Most of the great issues, declaimed Benjamin, that had divided the Whig and Democratic parties—the Bank, the Tariff, the War—had either been abandoned, or settled. The question of slavery was not the one that engrossed the nation. Taylor's position on slavery was sound beyond question. Being born in the South, reared in the South, having spent his life in the South, having all his property situated in the South, rendered assurance doubly sure, that the rights of Southern people were safe in his hands. On the other hand, charged Benjamin, Lewis Cass was the zealous advocate of the Wilmot Proviso in 1846 and 1847. It was not until the name of Cass had been mentioned for the presidency, not until it became manifest that southern votes were necessary to secure his nomination, that the mind of Cass became impressed with the conviction that a great change was going on in his own and other people's thoughts in reference to that vicious proposal. It was then that he had equivocated, it was then that he had written the "Nicholson letter" against the Proviso, declaring himself most emphatically to be in favor of leaving the settlement of the question—whether southern men should or should not be permitted to enter their own territories with their property—to the Negro and Indian population of these same territories. These views of General Cass were sanctioned by his followers, and sustained by his electors in Louisiana. The decision of this question was of vast and vital importance to the South; it was a

133 Alexandria Red River Republican, August 19, 1848.
question beyond the petty differences of Whigs and Democrats; for in it was involved the question of SOUTHERN POLITICAL EQUALITY OR SOUTHERN POLITICAL SLAVERY. Benjamin contended that the territories, acquired no less by the blood and treasure of the South than that of the North, were the common property of the thirty states of the Union. So sensible, said Mr. Benjamin, were the Louisiana supporters of Cass of his weakness in the South, that they would lead the electorate of the state from an examination of his fitness into doubts regarding the purity of Millard Fillmore. No northern man could present a more unblemished record on the slavery issue than could the Whig vice-presidential candidate. His every public utterance, his every published expression, could be examined without damaging his stainless reputation.

The tenor of Benjamin was the daily tenor of the party newspapers. They combed the columns of the presses of the North and East in search of damaging evidence. The final proof was "Out at Last!" practically every day. The gallons of printer's ink poured out by the Democrats might have been reduced to:

KEEP IT BEFORE THE PEOPLE--That no man can vote for Gen. Taylor, without at the same time, voting for MILLARD FILLMORE the Abolitionist.135

Likewise, the gallons of printer's ink that was poured out by the Whigs might have been reduced to:

KEEP IT BEFORE THE PEOPLE--That Lewis Cass was a Wilmot Provisoist, and is now a disguised enemy of the institutions of the South--That you cannot vote for Lewis Cass without voting for and giving your sanction to the principle, that the imbeciles and ignorant Mexicans

134 Ibid.
135 New Orleans Courier, August 18, 1848.
therein, can stop you from going with your property, into the new territories, which you conquered from them with your blood and treasure.136

During the final days of the campaign, there were "sensational" demonstrations by "Rough and Ready" clubs, "Cass and Butler" clubs, "Fillmore Rangers," and "Chalmette Invincibles." One torchlight procession of the Democracy of New Orleans was "the most magnificent spectacle of the kind ever exhibited in this or any other city of the Union...one of the most grand, beautiful, and magnificent processions ever witnessed in any part of the world."

"Thousands on thousands" marched in a great Whig torchlight procession, which "was over a mile long." They were wild with joyous enthusiasm, sang Taylor songs, and shouted for old "Zach" and Fillmore. It passed without disturbance, thanks to the moderation of the Taylor men, "who when it reached the outskirts of the town and in the quarters where locofocoism preponderates, had to endure every conceivable species of taunt and gibe and insult from their infuriated opponents."

There was a meeting of "over 15,000" present at the Place d'Armes, New Orleans, to hear Roselius, Mazureau, and Hunt. Thousands of Whigs also gathered at the Pontchartrain railroad, at Congo square, and in every popular place of congregation.

The executive committees of each of the parties met nightly. Announcements were made in the morning papers of the results of the midnight gas.

On the eve of election, Democrats and Whigs staged elaborate torchlight parades. Rivalry flared into violence, heads were broken and noses

136 Alexandria Red River Republican, September 16, 1848.
137 New Orleans Courier, October 30, 1848.
138 New Orleans Bee, October 10, 1848.
139 Ibid., October 10, 17, 1848.
"dripped of clarot." The "Rough and Ready" club of the sixth ward, 140
second municipality, was burned to the ground. When the Boo flayed
the Democrat hoodlums, the Courier scathingly replied that the Democratic
procession had been outraged by gangers known as "Chris Lilly's gang," 141
and these were in the pay of the New Orleans Whigs.

Though the election was tense, it passed quietly enough. Taylor
won the state by a majority of 2,847 votes. He carried twenty-four
parishes, and Cass had a majority in twenty-three. Taylor's heaviest
vote came from Orleans and those parishes that usually were staunchly
Whig. "Old Rough and Ready" also won the majority of the national
electoral vote, and a President had been drawn from the Whig party in
Louisiana.

140 Ibid., October 30, 1848.
141 New Orleans Courier, October 30, 1848.
142 New Orleans Bee, November 29, 1848.
143 New Orleans Weekly Delta, December 4, 1848.
DECLINE AND FALL

OF

THE WHIG PARTY IN LOUISIANA
Though capable of vigorous action until its collapse, the Whig party in Louisiana, following the presidential election of 1848, was in a state of decline. Each passing month made it more and more difficult for the Louisiana Whigs to co-operate with the northern and eastern wings of the party. Under the dominant leadership of such southern Democrats as Calhoun, Yancey, Rhett, and Soule, the South was rapidly being welded into a defensive solidarity. Calhoun, addressing the southern members of Congress, had expressed a temper that was increasing in the slaveholding states:

We are in the midst of events scarcely of less import than those of our revolutionary era. The question is, are we to hold our position in this confederacy upon the ground of equals, or are we to content ourselves with the condition of colonial dependence.

Sir, it will be worse than colonial dependence; for who would not prefer to be taxed and governed, without pretense of representation than, under forms of representation be grievously oppressed by measures over which we have no control, and against which our remonstrances are unavailing. It is undeniable that the encroachments upon our rights have been rapid and alarming. They must be met.

I conceive that no Southern man can entertain, for one moment, the idea of tame submission. The action of the South should be united, temperate, but decided—our position must be taken deliberately, but held at every hazard. We wage no war of aggression. We ask only for the constitution and Union and Government of our fathers. We ask of our Northern brethren to leave us those rights and privileges which our fathers held, and without securing which for their children, all know that they would not have entered into this Union. These we must maintain.

It appears to me proper that we, who are here on the theatre of action, should address our constituents of the slaveholding States, briefly and accurately portray the progress of usurpation and aggression, vividly exhibit the dangers which threaten, and leave it in their hands to mark out the proper line of action....I am, above all, for Union, harmony and decision on the part of the South.¹

¹ New Orleans Daily Picayune, January 2, 1849.
The Democratic editor of the Alexandria Red River Republican came to the "deliberate conclusion" that Cass, as an advocate of the Wilmot Proviso, was opposed to southern interests. The editor stated that he could not, as a man of honor, who felt a responsibility to the community, support a candidate who would so break down the constitution and destroy his beloved South.

The New Orleans Bee, "Whig to the core," detaching itself from partisan considerations, observed:

The Slave-holding States of the confederacy are not sunk in utter supineness, and willing to see wrested from them their dearest privileges as well as their inherent rights in their own property. The passage of the Wilmot proviso, by a vote irrespective of party distinctions will start them from their dream of security. The result of the recent struggle in the House of Representatives at Washington, proves too palpably that the North, the East, and the West are united in opposition to the South. We, therefore, of the proscribed section have no resource save in the strictest and closest concert of opinion and action. To brawl and bicker now upon partisan differences would be fatal; if we would maintain our rights, and induce the North to recede, or at least to pause, ere the smoldering embers of sectional discord are kindled, we must present a serried front, and show before a question ultimately involving our institutions, our prosperity, our position and standing in the Union and our very political existence, all minor topics of dissension give way, and that we stand up in defense of our claims to equal consideration with other members of the Confederacy, not as Whigs or Democrats, but as Southerners and Slaveholders.

The rupture in the national Whig organization created by the Wilmot Proviso vividly portended the subsequent tragedy that was to befall the great conservative party of the United States. Not a Whig of the non-slaveholding states had voted against the Proviso. The Whig congressional delegation of Louisiana was unanimous in its opposition.

2 Alexandria Red River Republican, July 29, 1848.
3 New Orleans Bee, March 4, 1847.
The course pursued by Taylor did not strengthen the Louisiana Whig organization. Taylor established the Washington Republic as an "independent" organ. In this sheet, it was announced that the course to be pursued by his administration would substantially conform to the principles of the first "Allison Letter." Taylor would sparingly use the veto, favor a moderate protective tariff, endorse internal improvements, and maintain friendly relations with foreign powers; but the broad implication was left that he would be the President of the country, and not the President of the party. Such lofty idealism in the abstract might be very admirable, but to "hungry Whigs who wanted to feed at the public trough," it was far from satisfying. A correspondent wrote to John H. Clayton that he had travelled over a thousand miles in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia under circumstances that offered him a fair opportunity of ascertaining the sentiments of the Whigs in these states. He reported a general discontent, for Taylor had not rewarded those who had so energetically and faithfully served the party. Those who were complaining said with some justice that they had been discarded and the Democrats, the common enemy, had in too many instances been retained. Those who were being disparaged were those who had produced the Whig revolution, and they must be regarded if Whig ascendancy were to continue. Taylor's magnanimity would shortly bring to the Whigs defeat and disgrace, for any attempt to propitiate the Democrats would be of no avail.

Taylor took the position that pressure would not in any way influence him in removals and appointments. He stated:

I never desired to hold the office of President of the United States; nor will the time ever come when from any wishes or motives

4 Washington Republic, April 14, June 13, 1849.
5 James S. Harvey to John H. Clayton, Dalton, Georgia, May 5, 1849; Clayton Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
of my own, I can desire to have it again. If I thought that an appointment to be made by me, were improper in itself, not all the voters of all New York could induce me to make it.

I must consider the subject of appointments and then decide for myself. In this case, my sense of propriety, controls my private feelings and wishes. I have a duty to perform to the whole country, and that must be discharged with a sole reference to its obligations. The people expect it and I must not disappoint them.  

William L. Hodge, editor of the New Orleans Bulletin, and according to the Courier, "the acknowledged head of the Whig party in Louisiana," wrote to Clayton in estimation of the Louisiana situation that

we have a good deal to contend with, and among other things I must say there is much dissatisfaction among our friends at the want of decision and promptness of action of removals throughout the country. They complain that violent opponents of General T. are retained whilst Whigs who bore the heat and burden of the day are neglected and enemies fed at their expense. I hope however this is not to be so much longer.

The Louisiana Whig leaders did have just reason to complain. Able men could not be found in the United States, yet they had received but scant recognition. None were extended important portfolios. Two were given insignificant foreign posts. Thomas W. Chinn was appointed charge d'affaires of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Balice Peyton was made minister to the Republic of Chile.

An additional reason for local degeneration was that the older leaders were rapidly losing control of the Louisiana Whig party. With the passage of the traditional issues, they found it increasingly difficult to adjust themselves to an entirely new order of things. The younger Whigs were

6 A memorandum of a conversation held on the evening of May 31, 1849, between the President of the United States and F. A. Talmadge, Simeon Draper, and J. Prescott Hall. The memorandum is not in the handwriting of the President. Clayton Papers.
7 New Orleans Courier, November 29, 1848.
8 W. L. Hodge to John M. Clayton, New Orleans, June 22, 1849; Clayton Papers.
inclined toward flexibility, and were exceedingly political in their approach. Their great principles were "Opposition," and the winning and retention of offices. The older conservatism was being shoved into the background. Throughout the campaign of 1849, these characteristics become evident.

In preparation for the general state elections, the Whig members of the legislature met in the senate chamber, and after due deliberation, issued a call for a state convention to assemble at Baton Rouge on the second Monday of May, 1849. In answer to the call, about three hundred delegates responded. The convention was somewhat divided between the conservatives, or "setfasts," and the progressives, or "liberals." An older conservative, General Alexander DeClouet, received the gubernatorial nomination. Having received a large majority on the first ballot, he was on motion unanimously acclaimed. Duncan F. Kenner, liberal in propensities, won the candidacy for lieutenant governor. The conservatives received the jolt of their lives when Joel G. Sever proposed that the Whigs advocate an amendment to the constitution which would place the state judiciary on an elective basis. Democratic judges appointed by Isaac Johnson had, according to Sever, been utterly incompetent. The proposed amendment, if identified with the Whig party, would of certainty lend strength to the party's bid for popular support. Kenner spoke in opposition, not because he did not favor such an amendment, but because he did not care to make enemies of the entire judiciary. The proposition was ultimately defeated.

The Democrats nominated Joseph Walker for governor, and General J. P. 12 Plauche for lieutenant governor. Walker was apparently chosen because he enjoyed the favor of many Whigs.

11 New Orleans Weekly Delta, May 21, 1849.
12 Covington Louisiana Advocate, October 6, 1849.
In the congressional elections, the Whigs, after some casting about, finally settled upon Judge O. P. Jackson for the first district, Charles M. Conrad for the second, R. A. Stewart for the third, and Octavius N. Ogden for the fourth. The Democrats supported Emile Le Sore, J. C. Beatty, John H. Harmonson, and Isaac E. Morse for the first, second, third, and fourth districts, respectively.

Whigs and Democrats of Louisiana wore each vitriolic in their hatred of the Wilmot Proviso, and so the ensuing campaign was one devoid of issues. It resolved itself into a mad scramble for office and for patronage. With the nobler considerations relegated to the dead past, the younger Whigs went to work in earnest. The extravagance of their canvass eclipsed any that the party had ever conducted, the election of Taylor notwithstanding. The very pretentiousness of it was not a sign of a renaissance, but a certain evidence of decay.

A great barbecue "to be held" at the estate of Judge J. Bermudez, near New Orleans, was thus advertised daily:

RALLY! RALLY! RALLY!
FOR DECOULT AND KENNER!

A GRAND WHIG BARBECUE will be given on MONDAY, 29th OCTOBER, on Judge BERMUDEZ'S Plantation, Gentilly Road. All Whigs and Whig clubs are invited to meet on Canal street, at 10 o'clock, A.M. 29th. inst., to march to the Pontchartrain Railroad in procession, by which conveyance arrangements have been made to transport five thousand persons!

There will be slaughtered in honor of this occasion

FIFTEEN OXEN
TWENTY-FIVE SHEEP
TWENTY-FIVE CALVES

Accomodations for 10,000 persons.
General Declouet, Hon. D. F. Konner, Louis Bordelon and other distinguished Whigs will be present. Hon. S. S. Prentiss, J. P. Benjamin, Randall Hunt, and others will address the multitude in English, French, Spanish, and German.

RALLY! RALLY!! RALLY!!!
YOUR COUNTRY CALLS.13

The barbecue fell a little short of the contemplated 10,000, for only 6,000 hungry and thirsty Whigs showed up. Despite this paucity of attendance, it was a wonderful occasion. After listening several hours to the orators, the "vast concourse" were allowed to give attention to the edibles. "The tables which radiated to all points of the compass, groaned under the weight of roast meats and other creature comforts; casks of claret, ale, &c., were plentifully distributed about, to all of which the crowd did full justice." The utmost hilarity and good feelings prevailed. Bands of music played inspiring airs. It was waggishly remarked that the only group that could be in harmony with the candidacy of Joseph Walker was the Glee Club of the Fillmore Rangers when, "led by Pope Oldham," they disparagingly sang:

There was an old horse and they called him Uncle Joe;
He was owned by the Hunkers of the State;
His limbs were gouty, and his pace a leetle slow;
As a racer, he was only second rate.

Take off the saddle from his back
Pull down the fodder from the rack;
There is no more run in poor old Joe--
Turn him out to grass and let him go.

In his young days Joe had won a quarter-race,
So the old Hunkers thought they'd make a bet,
In a four-mile heat he would keep his pace,
And lick the Ranger colt, Declouet.

Take off the saddle from his back
Pull down the fodder from the rack;
There is no more run in poor old Joe--
Turn him out to grass and let him go.

13 New Orleans Daily Picayune, October 24, 25, 1849.
After the festivities, there was some confusion, but the different clubs found their places in the line of march, and "the rest dispersed in all directions."

The several candidates betook themselves to the country, where they spoke in French or English, as the occasion demanded. Every section of the state was visited by both Declouet and Walker. As the election approached, partisans waxed warmer, and became more excited. The New Orleans Daily Picayune complained that no items of interest, other than those of a political nature, could be found in the country papers. In the city, politics became so engrossing that the ordinary course of business was interrupted, or neglected. Scarcely anything could be heard but the arguments of excited partisans, the shouts of enthusiastic followers, and the bands of music which traversed the streets in all directions, leading captive their respective multitudes.

Turn which way you would, the eye by day was sure to rest on a flaming handbill, bearing in mammoth characters the name of some aspiring candidate; while at night transparencies in every conceivable color set off each with its special biting joke or patriotic sentiment, were to be seen moving about in every thoroughfare, giving to the city an appearance very much like what one would imagine of Peking during the feast of lanterns. Had some stray member of the Fanqui race wandered hither during the last fortnight, he might for a moment imagine himself, on witnessing our nocturnal processions, in another central flowery land in the Far West, and bent in silent homage before the emblems of Confucius and his tinsel and tissue paper faith.

In New Orleans, the Whigs, toward the conclusion of the campaign, met in every place that would afford congregation. Meetings were reported held at the St. Louis Exchange, Davis Coffee House, Bank's Arcade, St. Louis Ball Room, Hewlett's Exchange, Terpsichore Hall, Lafayette Square, Depot

14 New Orleans Daily Picayune, October 30, 1849.
15 Ibid., November 3, 1849.
16 Ibid., November 8, 1849.
of the Pontchartrain Railroad, Congo Square, Washington Square, Tivoli Circle, "on the levee," "in Nueva street," and "on the corner of Circus and Poydras streets." There was a multitude of Whig orators. Whig meetings were at one time or another addressed by Randall Hunt, John E. Frost, Judah P. Benjamin, Cyrion Dufour, Edward Sparrow, J. L. Mathewson, H. F. Hayes, J. G. Sever, Charles M. Conrad, Samuel Flower, R. H. Chilton, and of course by the candidates, Alexander Declouet and Duncan F. Konnor.

The campaign ended on November 3, and, in New Orleans,

As the bright day faded away into evening, the roar of artillery, and the blue blaze of rockets announced that Whigs and Democrats were gathering in their might, as if to strike dismay into the ranks of each other by an overwhelming show of numbers, and the darkness of night was soon made brilliant by myriads of torches, transparencies, &c., and the streets resounded with strains of martial music.

At seven o'clock the Whigs began assembling on the neutral grounds in front of the State House, and soon this large area was crowded. A spacious stand had been erected, and from this, John E. Caldwell called the concourse to order. Caldwell announced that R. M. McAlpin had been designated as the presiding officer. Each of the municipalities was represented by numerous vice presidents and by secretaries. The popular orators were called for, and "straight-forward, practical, and stirring" speeches were made.

The whole of Canal street was brilliantly lighted. The cheering of the Democrats, who were assembling in the vicinity of Camp street, attracted general attention. The Democratic clubs marched in from all parts of the city, and when all had arrived, they united to parade up Canal street, presenting an arresting spectacle.

Following the Democratic parade, the Whigs staged "a fine exhibition of their strength and enthusiasm." They marched to bands of music, and displayed Chinese lanterns, transparencies, devices, and numerous banners.

Notwithstanding all the excitement, there were no riots in New Orleans on the election day. About the polls, there was "a ceaseless hubbub, trampling, pushing, struggling, shouting, swearing, and gesticulating." There were tremendous warnings on blue paper to Whigs, the awful admonitions on red to the Democrats. The feverish partisans were puffing and red in the face, and many had peculiarly hazy and indefinite expressions about their eyes.

The official tabulation revealed that the Democrats had won the governorship and lieutenant governorship. Walker received 17,585 votes. Decloquet received 16,587. Plauche received 17,234 votes, while Kenner received 16,802. In the legislative elections, it was reported that the new senate would be composed of fourteen Whigs and eighteen Democrats, and the new house would consist of fifty-four Whigs and forty-three Democrats. This would give the Whigs a joint-ballot majority of seven.

In the second congressional district, which was composed largely of the

18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., November 5, 6, 1849.
20 New Orleans Bee, February 11, 1850.
21 Ibid., November 22, 1849; January 21, 1850.
sugar parishes, Conrad won in a landslide over Doatty. In the other congressional elections, the Whig candidates were uniformly defeated.

It has been stated that the Wilmot Proviso was not a campaign issue in the general state elections. The presses of each of the parties were intemperate in their denunciation of the "accursed measure." When the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo became an established fact, and when by that treaty the United States gained an indemnity of a vast territory, the South became frantically alarmed lest the potentialities of the Wilmot Proviso be realized. The discovery of gold in California had caused a phenomenal influx of population into that region. The Californians were quick to perceive the necessity of efficient local government, and because their population was large enough to warrant such a course of action, they began to clamor for statehood. No enabling act was immediately forthcoming. Oregon had been given territorial status in 1848, but slavery therein, by a congressional application of the principles of the Northwest Ordinance, had been prohibited. The Oregon territorial bill did not create a profound sensation in Louisiana, but it did evoke considerable press comment, and was regarded as a victory for the Provisionists. In Congress, the Oregon fight had tempered the minds of northern and southern members for the fight over slavery in California, New Mexico, and Utah.

A bitter battle was waged during the short session of 1849-49. Most of the northern members were arrayed in an adamant solidarity of opposition to the extension of slavery in the proposed territories. Those southern members who were disciples of Calhoun were just as adamant that there would be no further congressional restriction on slavery in the territories. A

22 Ibid., November 12, 1849; Washington Republic, November 21, 1849.
bill was introduced and passed in the House which would give territorial status to California, and which would exclude slavery from it. This bill was defeated in the Senate. President Polk, desiring the speedy admission of California, proposed that the slavery issue be settled by an extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific. This proposal did not meet with enough approval to be seriously tested. The prevailing hostility was intensified when the northern members introduced a bill to prohibit the slave trade in the District of Columbia. The southerners, blazing with wrath, countered by asking for the appointment of a committee which would be authorized to prepare a more stringent fugitive slave law. This request was not granted, and the southern members of Congress issued an address "to their constituents," in which they proposed united southern action.

During these California debates, there was an abandonment of decorum on the floors of Congress. The ultra southerners had boldly threatened a dissolution of the Union. The Louisiana delegation, composed entirely of Democrats, acted with their southern colleagues in opposing "northern aggression," and several of them, notably Morse and Soule, were ultras.

During this particular period, the Louisiana press was universal in its condemnation of disunion. The New Orleans Crescent summarized the contemporary editorial opinion by disparaging the idea of dissolving the Union, but counseled resistance to northern aggression. This paper averred that the question of slavery in California was purposefully brought up on the eve of Taylor's administration to create a division between the northern and southern members of Congress. Such a division would give northern leaders an advantage not only in opposing the administration of Taylor,
but also of further curtailing southern rights. All parties of the south were advised to be united, firm, vigilant, and active; but at the same time they should remain cool, collected, and prudent; they must lose no vantage of ground by hasty movement, and endanger no position by rashness. The sentiment of a majority of the electorate of Louisiana was that of profound attachment to the Union.

The Louisiana moderates were given an additional cause for alarm by a proposal which had been made for the assembling of a southern convention at Nashville. A Mississippi state convention, which had met to consider the state of the Union, had issued the call. The date had been set for June 3, 1850.

The uproarous deadlock in Congress during the early weeks of 1850, was giving the southern radicals every chance of winning a dangerous influence in the Nashville Convention. Even those who were more or less inclined to moderation, viewed the Washington scene with feelings of fearful apprehension. Governor Isaac Johnson, in his final message to the Louisiana legislature, expressed his conviction that Congress could not prohibit slavery in the territories. Seeing little hope for a congressional settlement of the matter, he advised the general assembly to authorize the election of delegates to attend the Nashville meeting. Governor Walker agreed with his predecessor, and in conformity with the Governor's recommendation, a bill calling for an especial election was passed in the senate, but in the Whig controlled house it was obstructed and defeated. The Whigs of Louisiana were nearly unanimous in their condemnation of the Nashville Convention,

23 New Orleans Daily Crescent, December 27, 1848.
for they feared that it would be destructive to the interests of the South
and of the Union.

The return of Henry Clay to the United States Senate was hailed by
the Whig press as the remedy needed to cure the nation of its dreadful
malady. Leslie Combs, noted legislator and barrister of Kentucky, wrote
to John M. Clayton: "It gives me the greatest pleasure to enclose you the
telegraphic dispatch from Ft. (Frankfort) announcing the unanimous nomination—
save one—of Mr. Clay as Senator from the fourth of next March. He will
stand by, to the death, the Southern Sensibles against the Southern Lunatics—
the Southern Patriots against the Southern Traitors."

Hostility between North and South was immediately manifest when the
Thirty-First Congress assembled. The vital issue, which at the last
session had been left unsettled, soon became the major consideration.
Northern and southern ultra's became ensnared in a tempestuous wrangle.
 Threats of disunion were becoming more vehement, and with greater frequency.

Taylor was not supplying the caliber of leadership which would calm
the angry spirits. His utterances and actions had alienated southern ultra's,
and had made it somewhat difficult for southern moderates to defend him.
After he assumed office, he was inclined to rely upon the counsel of William
H. Seward, Senator of New York, who was a leader of the anti-slavery Whigs.
The President, while travelling through New England, became convinced that
the South, far from being on the defensive, was actually the aggressor.
He assured the northern people that "they need have no apprehension of the
further extension of slavery." It was thus made apparent that if Congress

24 Mary E. Welborne Prichard, "Louisiana and the Compromise of 1850,"
50-62. This is a master's thesis in history, Louisiana State University,
1928; typescript in the University library.
25 Leslie Combs to Clayton, Frankfort, January 22, 1849; Clayton Papers.
passed the Wilmot Proviso, he would not veto it. This was an alarming
departure from his earlier attitude. Furthermore, he had clandestinely
dispatched an emissary, Thomas Butler King, to advise the Californians and
New Mexicans to adopt constitutions and to apply for statehood. The tacit
understanding was that the citizens of the territories were to solve the
matter of slavery to suit themselves. He had, in his several messages
to Congress, strongly recommended the unconditional admission of California
and New Mexico. Replying to a committee of seventeen southern congressmen,
he had taken the emphatic position that he was determined to maintain the
Union at any costs; that in case of armed resistance he would blockade
every southern port; that he would call for volunteers from northern and
western states; and finally, that he would pour out his blood, if necessary,
in defense of the Union. The President added that he believed the people
of the southern states would themselves put down the disunionists. If the
southern ultras carried out their threat and withdrew from Congress, he would
not be distressed, for better men would be selected to take their places.

During this period of the California controversy, the Whig editors of
Louisiana remained loyal to Taylor. Their opinion is well summarized in
the following quotation:

We believe it will be conceded that there are but four possible
methods of settling the question. Congress must apply the Wilmot
Proviso, thereby excluding slavery; it must of its own authority
establish slavery in the new territories; it must leave the whole
subject to the people, or it must adopt a compromise line, dividing
the territory into free and slave States. Of these four methods,
our section of the Union has, with much unanimity, proclaimed its
preference for the doctrine of non-intervention. In that course
it saw no violation of constitutional guarantees—no yielding to

27 Alexandria Red River Republican, March 9, 1850.
the full spirit of Northern fanaticism, and no danger to her peculiar institutions. It was, in fact, the only safe doctrine for the South to assert. Our opposition to the Wilmot Proviso was based on its alleged unconstitutionality. It was unconstitutional because no power is granted to Congress to legislate on the subject.28

The aged Clay had come forward on January 29, 1850, to offer eight resolutions, which he hoped would secure "the peace, concord, and harmony of the Union." These resolutions provided that: (1) California should be admitted to the Union under the constitution which had been submitted to Congress, a constitution which excluded slavery; (2) territorial government would be created for the remainder of the Mexican cession, but there should be no congressional restrictions in regard to slavery; (3) the boundary between Texas and New Mexico would be adjusted to the satisfaction of the disputants; (4) the public debt of Texas which had been acquired prior to 1845 would be assumed by the United States, and Texas in return would relinquish territory to New Mexico, which each was claiming; (5) only with the consent of Maryland and of the people of the District of Columbia might slavery be abolished in the District of Columbia; (6) the slave trade would be prohibited in the District of Columbia; (7) a more effective law would be passed for the rendition of fugitive slaves; and (8) Congress would have no power to interfere with interstate slave trade.

Clay, old and fast fading with tuberculosis, for a brief moment regained the spirited vigor of his youthful years, and he put the last vestige of his ebbing strength into a defence of his resolutions. He was appalled and grieved by the rancor exhibited in all quarters. The state legislatures were as "twenty-odd furnaces in full blast, emitting heat and passion and intemperance, and diffusing them throughout the whole extent of this broad land." The great orator proclaimed to the southerners

that California had the right to enter the Union a free state. To the northerners he admonished the surrender of the Wilmot Proviso, for in these territories they had what was worth more than a thousand Wilmot Provisos, for nature had ordained that slavery could not exist in those regions. Secession, warned Clay, would be the signal for civil war--war "ferocious and bloody, implacable and exterminating." With a heart crushed by sadness, and with the gaunt shadow of death upon him, Clay closed his appeal for compromise and union by imploring his countrymen to hesitate...

...at the edge of the precipice, before the fearful and disastrous leap is taken in the yawning abyss below, which will inevitably lead to certain and inevitable destruction....

And finally, Mr. President, I implore, as the best blessing which heaven can bestow upon me upon earth, that if the direful and sad event of the dissolution of the Union shall happen, I shall not survive to behold the sad and heart-rending spectacle.29

Conrad, being the only Louisiana Whig in Congress, had the sole responsibility of defending the stand which had been taken by his party at home. In his major speech on the Compromise, he followed the logic of Clay. Speaking of slavery in the territories, he, for the benefit of the southerners, said:

Anyone who would witness the heat and excitement that pervades this assembly whenever this subject is before it, would naturally conclude that the question whether slavery should or should not exist throughout all time in that vast region of country which we acquired from Mexico, would depend upon the result of our deliberations. But such is not the fact. Sir, there is a law-maker whose power is supreme--whose decrees cannot be controlled by human enactments. That law-maker is Nature. If, from the nature of this country, its climate, its soil, its position, its productions, it is adapted to slavery, slavery will assuredly find its way there--anything we may say or do to the contrary notwithstanding. If, on the contrary, it is not adapted to slavery--if slaves would be unprofitable there, then no legislation could permanently establish it....Now, sir, I must candidly confess that I have come long since reluctantly to the conclusion, that nature has decided this question against the South.

For the benefit of the northerners who asserted the right of the
Congressional majority to legislate upon slavery in the territories, he
said:

Suppose you have the constitutional power to prohibit slavery
in a territory; have you in the present instance, the moral power?
In other words, is it right, is it fair, is it honest, that you should
exercise the power? A generous and high-spirited people may forgive
and forget an injury, but an insult they cannot overlook.

Men of the North, is there any principle that requires of you
to inflict upon us this injury or to offer us this insult? No, there
is none. There cannot be none! What is the true principle? What is the
principle that you ought to contend for? It is, that the people of
these territories be left to determine the question of slavery and
all other questions of purely domestic policy according to their own
views of their interest. This is not a southern or a northern principle.
It is an American principle. It is the principle of the right of man
to self-government—a principle proclaimed in the Declaration of
Independence and consecrated in every line of the Constitution.

For the benefit of those passionate ones of the North and the South
who would dissolve the Union, he said:

Is there no value in national greatness and national glory?—
in the proud recollections of the past, in the bright hope of the
future? Is there no value in the proud attitude which this republic
holds in the civilized world; in respect and admiration abroad—in
peace, tranquility, and repose at home? And have those gentlemen
who are so fond of calculating the value of the Union reversed the
picture? Have they calculated the countless calamities that would
follow in the train of disunion—the dissension and discord—the
evil brawls—the attacks and reprisals—the border warfare—the
petty hostilities—terminating at last in wars surpassing in duration
and fierceness all that is recorded in the annals of civilized warfare—
wars that would impoverish the North and desolate the fields of the
South. To avert calamities like these, I would sacrifice everything
but honor. If honor cannot be preserved without such a sacrifice, I
am prepared to make it....If this Union should be dissolved—if that
bright cluster of stars whose mild effulgence illuminates the darkest
corners of the earth, guiding the persecuted and oppressed throughout
the world of freedom, should ever sink to rise no more, let those by
whose efforts such a catastrophe is produced be prepared to vindicate
their course....

Calhoun, decrepit beyond physical self-sufficiency, with palsied hands
painfully wrote out a reply to the speeches of Clay. Austere and remorseless
to the end, he dragged his feeble body into the Senate chamber and fell exhausted into his chair. "Thoro, on March 4, wrapped in shroud-like flannels and with half-closed eyes, he sat like the prophet of doom, while his colleague, James Murray Mason, read to Senators the final philosophy of the great Nestor of southern ultras. The South, declared Calhoun, had nothing to compromise. It was southern constitutional rights that were being attacked; it was southern institutions and southerners themselves who were being made objects of discrimination; it was southern political power which was threatened with destruction; and it was southern economy that was in fair way of becoming completely dislocated. Calhoun asserted that already there was in evidence sufficient indications to prove that the fanatical course of the North was dissolving the nation. Having nothing to concede, and being subjected to continued abuse, the South was being driven from the Union. If there were to be peace, it would be realized when, and only when, the North conceded southern rights, and accorded to the South her just political equality.

On March 7, Webster, the "god-like," rose to speak "not as a Massachusetts man nor a Northern man, but as an American." He spoke for the preservation of the Union, and begged that his cause might be heard. In one of the greatest orations of all times, he endorsed and plead for every resolution which Clay had presented. Because of this speech, Webster was ostracized by the Abolitionists.

After a month of violent debate, the resolutions of Clay, and others of a similar nature, were referred to a senatorial committee of thirteen.

30 Ibid., 451.
Clay was appointed chairman of this committee. One of the thrirtoom was Downs, Democrat of Louisiana. Downs was strong in his attachment for the Union. He willingly followed and eloquently substantiated the leadership of Clay.

The committee of thirteen, on May 8, reported a series of compromise measures, which closely paralleled the earlier resolutions. These measures were incorporated in a single bill, which was to be accepted or rejected as a whole. They were made public throughout the country and were most favorably received in Louisiana.

In commenting on the Compromise, the New Orleans Bee declared:

In New Orleans, every Whig, every Democratic and every neutral paper, with one exception, favors the project. As for Louisiana, we have absolutely heard no opposition, save that of a single print. From our own State nothing less was to have been expected. She has ever been patriotic, zealous in her attachment to the Union, foremost in appreciating its inestimable value and in resolving to maintain its integrity, and swayed by moderate and judicious counsels. She numbers few reckless agitators among her citizens, and eschews all identity with the mischievous little knot who would be willing to dissolve the Union, rather than give up the finest and flimsiest of their abstractions.

It was the opinion of the New Orleans Daily Delta that

If the Compromise bill is adopted in both houses, the whole difficulty is then settled—the country will be pacified, and the Union no longer in danger. The angel of peace, with healing on his wings, will hover over a nation, while distracted, distressed, estranged. All causes of ill-feeling between the different sections of the country will be removed. Ourselves and our posterity, to the last syllable of recorded time, will rejoice at a consummation so devoutly to be wished. The great mass of the people will be content. The ultras, at both ends of the Union, will alone be dissatisfied, because they are determined not to be satisfied, and it would be cruel to thwart their amiable desires.

From the beginning, Taylor exerted his influence against the adoption of the Compromise. Three reasons account for Taylor's attitude. The

31 New Orleans Bee, May 30, 1850.
32 New Orleans Daily Delta, May 20, 1850.
first has been suggested; the President, under the influence of his new
environment, had become convinced that the prevalent irritation was of
southern origin. In the second place, the President had made his own
recommendation to Congress, which had advised that the territories be
allowed without interference to make the initial moves toward statehood.
This recommendation was not in strict conformity with Clay's proposals.
Thirdly, Taylor had no intention of following the leadership of Clay, and
Clay despised the political acumen of Taylor. This being the state of
affairs, the President mocked the "Omnibus Bill," and lent encouragement
to those who made attacks upon it. Even if Clay had no political respect
for the Chief Executive, he was wise enough to realize the great value
of administration support. He made overtures for peace, but, in the
words of Clay, the response had been: "War, open war, undisguised war,
was made by the administration and its partisans against the plan of the
committee."

The raging political typhoon was momentarily calmed by the sudden
death of Zachary Taylor. The President died on June 9. Following the
state funeral, the old warrior was laid to rest in the Congressional
Cemetery. In New Orleans, on proclamation of the mayor, the shipping
in port, the hotels, the residences of foreign consuls, and private
dwellings displayed the tokens of mourning. During the day set aside
for public mourning, minute guns were fired from the public squares, and
nothing was omitted by the citizens in expressing their sorrow and their
respect. "It was a gloomy day withal, the rain fell in torrents, and the
heavens were hung in black, as if sympathizing with a nation's woe."

33 James Ford Rhodes, History of the United States From the Compromise
of 1850 to the McKinley-Bryan Campaign of 1896 (New York, 1920) 8 vols., I, 175.
34 New Orleans Bee, July 15, 1850.
These manifestations of grief were sincere, for the Whigs of Louisiana, even when they were obviously disturbed, had stoutly defended the administration of their President.

Millard Fillmore succeeded to the presidency, and in the reorganization of the Cabinet, "he recognized his obligation toward Louisiana by selecting a Creole as his Secretary of War." Charles M. Conrad, the "Creole" selected, upon resigning from Congress, addressed to his constituents of the second congressional district a long letter in which he reviewed his stewardship. He re-defined the position which he had advanced in his speeches on the Compromise: he was a Union man; the slavery question should be excluded from congressional consideration; and the inhabitants of the territories should be entitled to the right of self-determination on the question of slavery.

The Whigs of Louisiana had every confidence in the integrity of Fillmore. The new President himself had been more or less enigmatic, but the public shared the opinion of Clay and Webster, which was that of optimism. Regardless of Fillmore's disposition, the obstructionists were yet for a season to prevail.

During the subsequent weeks of debate, the "Omnibus Bill" was stripped of its every important and valuable feature until nothing remained save the clauses touching upon the comparatively uninteresting topic of the organization of the Utah territory. Seven months of protracted deliberations had for the Compromisers produced nothing but defeat, and the status of slavery, as the gloomy and uncertain problem, remained undefined.

35 Ibid., August 12, 1850.
36 Ibid., September 2, 1850.
The editor of the Democratic New Orleans Courier somewhat morosely reported:

For some weeks past we anticipated this most unfortunate, most sinister, we trust not ominous, result of the patriotic exertions of the great and good men who brought forward the measure and advocated it with an energy, ability, and eloquence never excelled by members of any deliberative assembly on the face of the globe. To the leading Senators on both sides of the question that has hitherto divided the American people—to Cass, Dickinson, and Foote—to Webster and Clay, the American people owe a debt of gratitude, the remembrance of which will never be effaced from their bosoms until they become indifferent to what is honorable and manly; till they are willing to sell their birthright and to scoff at the memory of their brave fathers. This is the triumph of abolitionism, said Mr. Clay, of incendiarism, of nullification, of treason, of ultraism of every grade and shape, of scoundrelism of the blackest hue, wherever it may be found, North and South.

What is to be done in this crisis? Is the reign of anarchy about to commence? Is civil war on the point of raising his horrid head? Is the confederacy going to be dismembered and the Union dissolved? We think not... These great men will yet save the country. The heartless, cold-blooded abolitionists may conspire with the treason-hatching, union-hating blusterers of the South to break down the Constitution—but their strength is not equal to the attempt—they will fail and the failure will overwhelm them with eternal disgrace and ignominy.37

Pierre Soule, the Democratic senatorial colleague of Solomon Downs, evinced his hostility to the Omnibus Bill from its very introduction. In fact, he delivered the first speech of opposition on the measure. Commenting on this "violent distribute" the New Orleans Bee asserted that Soule had grossly misrepresented the wishes and feelings of the people of Louisiana. If Soule were not wilfully blind, he could not have failed to perceive that Louisianians were fully and warmly committed to the Compromise.

Soule had accepted the ultimatum of the Nashville Convention, and he had presented to the Senate, in lieu of the Omnibus Bill, a proposal to

37 New Orleans Courier, August 2, 1850.
38 New Orleans Daily Picayune, May 23, 1850.
extend the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific. This had been rejected by a vote of thirty-six to seven. Soule attempted to gain the leadership of the southern ultras, and did become thoroughly identified with that group. It was almost daily complained that

The course pursued by Mr. Soule is highly distasteful to the State which he represents....For all practical purposes, Mr. Soule might far more properly have represented South Carolina than Louisiana....He has deceived both friends and foes. He has acted as if he were unthankful for the honor conferred on him, or careless whether his course gave pleasure or offense. He has evinced a radicalism and ultraism, altogether unexpected and wholly unapproved....No public man can with impunity disregard and defy the deliberate convictions, not only of his own party, but of his entire State.41

Soule's support in Louisiana was indeed negligible. The Democratic press, with one exception—the New Orleans Delta—disapproved of his course.

On the other hand, the consistent course pursued by Downs brought to that Senator an unstinted amount of commendation. He had rendered yeoman service toward attaining adjustment, and had never associated his efforts with those of the southern ultras. As an indication of how in Louisiana the old party lines were becoming obliterated, there is the startling anomaly of newspapers daily pouring out unrestrained adulations upon a Democratic Senator. The Bee so lauded Downs:

The attitude assumed and consistently maintained by Senator Downs on the prominent question of the day, has been such as to gratify the great mass of his constituents of Louisiana. We take peculiar pleasure, as a thorough-going political opponent of General Downs, in paying him a well-merited tribute of encomium for his manly and consistent course. He has stood up for the South and the Union, pursuing a safe, steadfast, and conservative policy—neither alarmed by the fanatical menaces of Southern ultras, nor driven from his path by the insolent denunciations of Northern fanatics. He has proved himself on this question eminently worthy of the confidence of his State, and has admirably and faithfully represented the opinions and convictions of her people. His manly and vigorous support of the Compromise bill is in strong and striking contrast to the shifting, feeble, and uncertain policy of his colleague.42

40 Ibid., July 3, 1850.
41 Ibid., August 12, 1850.
42 Ibid., August 10, 1850.
The ugly temper that was becoming manifest throughout the Union, impressed the warring congressional factions that some positive action on their part was mandatory. Accordingly, the component parts of the Omnibus Bill were separately considered, and between August 10 and September 17, they were enacted into law.

Receiving this news, the editor of the New Orleans Bee joyfully exclaimed:

As friends of the Union, as lovers of the South, we hail it with gladness and exultation. It justifies our abiding and unaltering faith in the wisdom and patriotism of the Federal Congress. We felt almost instinctively that the magnitude of the crisis would overbear and annihilate faction, with its meanness, its desperation, its infamy, its mousing schemes of disgrace and dishonor. We knew that the Union-hating, treason-hatching, mischief-mongers of the South, backed by the scoundrelly abolitionist of the North, would be unable to overthrow the supremacy of wise and moderate counsels— that the efforts of this silent coalition would be baffled, and that though clouds and darkness might temporarily obscure the fair face of day, the day was not distant when the refulgent beams of the Sun of truth would dissipate the one and illumine the other. The honest patriots of the North and South are not disappointed. Congress after long and laborious travail, has completed its good work—has preserved and perpetuated the Union, and has rendered innocuous and contemptible the intrigues of those who would subvert and dismember it.

Then Downs returned to Louisiana, he came to New Orleans, where he was received by a salute of one hundred guns. On the evening of November 27, 1850, he was the guest of honor at a great Union demonstration, which assembled at the St. Charles theatre.

The sterling sense of both political parties, Whig and democrat, assembled beneath the lofty dome; not to hurl at one another war cries of defiance; not to exult over political triumphs and the puny and ephemeral contests of party— but to exchange greetings with each other, to pledge mutually, their determination to stand by the Union, to protect and defend it, from insidious warfare and open assault and to welcome all the friends of the Union, of all parties, as banded together in the holiest of causes, and actuated by the noblest impulses that can evoke the sympathies of freemen.
The St. Charles was crowded beyond comfort. Thousands on the streets were unable to gain admittance. Shortly before seven o'clock, a fine band struck up "Hail Columbia." The effect was electrical, and a shout went up such as the walls of the theatre had never before echoed. Other patriotic numbers, such as Yankee Doodle, The Star Spangled Banner, and the Marseilles were followed in rapid succession.

As the vice presidents took their places on the stage, those in the audience, keenly alert, recognized many a well known favorite. Bernard Marigny, Christian Rosolius, Donis Priour, and D. F. Burtho were among those who received spontaneous ovations.

At five minutes past seven, Governor Walker made his appearance and was received with three times three cheers. Separate cheers were then given for Henry Clay, Lewis Cass, Daniel Webster, and H. S. Foote. Three cheers were given for the UNION and the great building trembled at the mighty and prolonged shout that went up. Dr. Isadore Labatut was called to the chair, and "was most rapturously received." He briefly stated the object of the meeting by saying, "Fellow-citizens, this meeting is composed of Whigs and Democrats, who will always form an invincible rampart against the enemies of the Union." These words were received with thunderous cheering. Judah P. Benjamin stepped forward, and when it became quiet enough to speak, he announced that he had been honored with the task of presenting resolutions which had been prepared for the occasion. The resolutions charged loyal citizens to lend the weight of their names against those of the enemies of the Union, pledged the citizens of Louisiana to abide by the Compromise, declared an unconquerable devotion to the Union,
expressed faith in the North and in the South to abide by the adjustment, and pointed out that the Union was founded on the spirit of concession, and could endure only when compromises were made to the demands of inexorable necessity. The final resolution was one of gratitude for the two sturdy champions of adjustment, Downs, of Louisiana, and Henry S. Foote, Unionist, of Mississippi.

Both Downs and Foote, at the urgent entreaties of the multitude, delivered addresses. Each explained his course, and plead for sustained loyalty to the common country in that hour of her greatest need.

Thousands who had been unable to gain entrance at the St. Charles, remained in the streets. The weather, it being the eve of winter, was unpleasantly inclement, but did not prevent them from remaining to pay tribute to the spirit of Compromise and of Union.

Soule keenly smarted from the all but universal censure he had received in Louisiana. He was further embarrassed when, on his return to New Orleans, he was greeted by a very meager crowd of friends and idle spectators. In his first speech, he passionately denounced the Compromise as being contrary to the security of Louisiana and to the South. Subsequently, he addressed a "Great Southern Constitutional Mass Meeting," at the St. Louis Ball Room, which from point of numbers, according to the New Orleans Crescent, was barely a respectable meeting. At this last meeting, he continued his attack upon the Compromise. He declared that the majority of Compromise measures were in as far as the South was concerned, unjust and extortionate wrongs. "If you wish to bring dishonor, disgrace, and ruin to the South,"

43 Ibid., November 28, 1850.
44 New Orleans Daily Delta, October 15, 1850.
he declaimed, "then submit to these oppressions, and sink to the level of your slaves, and take their places in the social and political scale."  

During the decade following 1850, the Compromise and the preservation of the Union were the chief political considerations of conservatives, in both North and South. In Louisiana, little remained by way of actual issues to distinguish Whigs from Democrats. Each of the parties had accepted the "finality of the Compromise," but there is a discernible difference in their attitude of acceptance. The Democrats as a group acquiesced with sincerity, but at the same time maintained a "watchful-waiting" passivity, and critically appraised reactions beyond the Mason-Dixon line. As time wore on, it became apparent that Soule and Morse were not without a following in both city and country. 

The following resolutions adopted in 1851, at the congressional nominating convention of the fourth district, and adopted unanimously, reflect a smoldering Democratic spirit, which was even more rampant in certain sections of the South:

Resolved, That while forbearing to take, ourselves, or to prompt others to take any measures of violence or active resistance to the laws of 1850, called the "Compromise," we are neither content with their provisions, nor satisfied with the spirit in which they were enacted. We think that the concessions ought to be mutual, and do not consider that a compromise in which all the concessions are wrested from one of the parties.

Resolved, That while we regard it as inexpedient for any Southern State, in view of her past grievances, separately to secede from this Union, we are nevertheless constrained to believe that any Southern State which may adopt that extreme measure, will do so in good faith and under honest conviction of its necessity, and in that event, we are too nearly kindred in interests and blood to our sister States of the South, to consent to the coercion of such seceding States by arms of the Federal Government.46

45 New Orleans Crescent, December 2, 1850; New Orleans Bee, December 2, 1850.  
46 Alexandria Red River Republican, September 20, 1851.
The Louisiana Whigs, as a group, were the active champions of the Compromise, but their fine show of optimism was somewhat tinctured with dread and uncertainty. In 1851, in a congressional nominating convention, also of the fourth district, these resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That the Union of these States, as established by Washington and the fathers of the Revolution, is the only sure ark of our political safety—the only certain palladium of our liberties.

Resolved, That we consider the Compromise measures as adopted by Congress in 1850, as a settlement of the dangerous and exciting subjects which are embraced by them.

Resolved, That the most important feature of the Compromise is the Fugitive Slave Law; that it is the ligament that binds the North and South together as one nation, and we insist upon its full and faithful execution.

Resolved, That we are opposed to political fanaticism in every form, whether it proceeds from abolitionists of the North, or from disunionists of the South, and that acting with the great conservative Whig party of the Union, we stand where we ever did, by the Constitution and Laws of our country.47

These resolutions are indicative that in the congressional elections of 1851, the Compromise loomed large. It is to be noted, however, that the Democrats generally were not to be classed as the universal and inflexible enemies of the adjustment acts, for it has been shown that such had not been their record. The resolutions of the fourth district, previously cited, were extreme.

Two congressional elections preceded the general state elections of 1851. Conrad, it will be recalled, created a vacancy in the second district by entering Fillmore's cabinet. John M. Harmanson, Representative of the third district, died in office, and he was replaced by Alexander G. Penn, a Democrat.

47 Ibid., July 19, 1851.
The Whigs of the second district met in convention at Donaldsonville on September 10, 1850, to nominate a successor to Conrad. The delegates had some difficulty in determining a ratio for voting.

The city and Jefferson parish delegations contended that the ratio established should be on the number of Whig votes cast in the last presidential election; that one vote be allowed for every one hundred presidential votes, and one additional for every fraction over fifty. Such an arrangement would give the city control of the convention.

D. F. Kenner, speaking for the country delegation, maintained the justness of allowing to each parish the number of votes which would correspond to its legislative membership. This plan, if adopted, would give the country every advantage. There were acrimonious debates on this subject. The city delegation had come prepared to nominate Doctor Theodore G. Hunt, brother of Randall Hunt. Inasmuch as the country delegates outnumbered those of the city, they were able to secure the ratio for which they contended.

Henry A. Bullard won the Whig candidacy over Hunt, much to the mortification of the city delegates, for they had been given the understanding that the country would support their nominee.

The Democrats of the second district officially endorsed no candidate to oppose Bullard. The party in this district was rather badly demoralized. There were old-line Democrats, and "Independent Taylor" Democrats, "Compromise" Democrats, and "anti-Compromise" Democrats. Many of the Democrats were disposed to support Henry Johnson. Johnson, long identified with the Whig party, had lost the favor of some of the influential leaders in the second 48

48 New Orleans Weekly Delta, September 15, 1850.
district because of his course on the annexation of Texas. Johnson refused the Democratic candidacy, but nevertheless he obtained a lukewarm support. Bullard was the easy victor at the polls.

In preparation for the congressional elections of 1851, the Whigs held conventions in their respective districts and nominated candidates. In all except the second district, harmony prevailed. In the first, third, and fourth districts, the nominations were Richard Hagan, R. A. Upton, and John Moore. In each of these districts, Union and Compromise resolutions were passed.

In the second district, T. G. Hunt again offered himself for candidacy. I. N. Marks, former alderman of New Orleans, and chairman of the Whig central executive committee, had also expressed his desire for the nomination. Hunt was supported by the New Orleans Delta and the New Orleans Bulletin. Marks was chiefly supported by the New Orleans Crescent. The district convention met at the Shades Coffee House. John W. Frost, editor of the Crescent, and one of the most popular of Whig orators, led the Marks faction. In a most intemperate speech, Frost ridiculed the talents and record of Theodore Hunt, and accused the Hunt family of trying to dictate Whig affairs in the second district. Frost further accused Hunt of having packed the Shades convention with Democrats in order to insure his, Hunt's, nomination. The rival factions then turned the meeting into a bedlam. The Marks-Frost element withdrew and assembled about the steps of the Commercial Exchange. Marks spoke, and so did Frost. The editor declared that the proceedings at the Shades had been patently unfair, and he reiterated his charges against

49 Ibid., September 16, 1850.
50 New Orleans Bee, October 7, 1850.
51 Ibid., August 13, 23, 1851; Alexandria Red River Republican, June 21, 1851.
52 New Orleans Crescent, July 1, 1851.
the Hunts, who had attempted to carry their point with complete disregard to decency. On the following day, Frost, in the columns of the Crescent, 53 continued his attack upon the Hunts. The Daily Delta came to the rescue:

The Crescent of yesterday has the most bitter and violent personal attack on Col. T. G. Hunt, the candidate for the Whig nomination for the Second District, which we have ever read in a paper in this city.... So far from indecently pushing their claims, we think the Hunts have been too slow and modest in advancing their interests. 54

After exchanges of personalities between Frost and Hunt, there was an exchange of cartels. The parties repaired to the Bayou Road, but were intercepted by the police, for dueling was a capital crime under the Constitution of 1845. Each of the principles was placed under heavy peace bond, but immediately after making bond they repaired with their seconds to the Barracks, below the city. There they exchanged shots with double-barreled guns, loaded with ball. The first fire proved ineffectual, and after some fruitless efforts to arrange matters, the guns were again loaded, and the parties placed in position. On the second fire Hunt was uninjured, but Frost was struck in the chest, and died in less than half an hour. 55

Harks, "holding that harmony and success of the Whig party was paramount to all other considerations," withdrew his name. The Whigs of the second district, convening at Donaldsonville on August 11, tendered the nomination to J. Aristide Landry. 56

In the third and fourth districts there was fairly an issue between the parties over the Compromise. The Democrats would risk no such debates

53 New Orleans Crescent, July 7, 1851.
54 New Orleans Daily Delta, July 8, 1851.
55 Alexandria Red River Republican, July 19, 1851; New Orleans Bee, July 11, 1851; New Orleans Crescent, July 11, 1851; New Orleans Daily Delta, July 11, 1851.
56 New Orleans Bee, August 13, 1851.
in the first and second districts, for in the first, the Whigs' strength was to be respected, and in the second, the Whigs had been traditionally preponderant.

The congressional canvass was considerably enlivened by the race for sheriff in Orleans parish. James P. Freret was contesting with Manderville Marigny, Democrat. There were party meetings, parades, and "outrages by ruffians." Freret won the office, much to the jubilation of the local Whigs.

In the congressional elections, Louis St. Martin, Democrat, defeated Hagan, in the first district. In the second district, Landry proved an acceptable candidate, and the Whigs, regaining peace and harmony, elected him. In the third district, Penn, Democratic incumbent, defeated Upton. In the fourth district, Moore was victorious—"Morse, the Locofoco Secessionist was beaten. Even his crawfishing at the eleventh hour, and Gen. Downs' efforts in his behalf, could not save him."

In the very important legislative elections, the Whigs returned majorities to both houses. Their joint-ballot majority was seventeen.

When the legislature assembled at Baton Rouge, one of its important duties was to elect a United States Senator, for the term of Downs would expire March 3, 1853. Among the Whigs who had been prominently mentioned to succeed Downs, were Randall Hunt, Judah P. Benjamin, Duncan Kenner, Samuel J. Peters, Christopher Adams, and Alexander Declouet. The Whig legislators held a caucus, and on the second ballot, Benjamin won the nomination. In the ensuing legislative election, Benjamin obtained sixty-eight votes, and Downs received fifty-six.

57 New Orleans Bee, October 20, 21, 24, 25; November 5, 1851; New Orleans Daily Delta, November 5, 1851.  
58 New Orleans Bee, November 12, 13, 1851.
Bonjomin, at this state of his career, was so estimated:

...the Senator elect is comparatively a young man, hardly exceeding the Constitutional age, but his reputation as a jurist and an orator is very high. He possesses talents of rare excellence, a quick, ready comprehension, a most fascinating style of elocution, admirable tact and address, and a mind that grasps with facility and masters without an effort the most complicated subjects. We predict for him a brilliant career in the arena of statesmanship.59.

There were three important political events in the year 1852, and all three fraught with disaster for the Whig party in Louisiana. Those were the writing of a new state constitution, the presidential election, and the general state elections.

Since its adoption, the Constitution of 1845 had been severely criticized by each of the parties. As time passed, the Whigs became the aggressive advocates for the calling of a constitutional convention, and for a complete over-hauling of the prevailing fundamental law. In 1850, the Bee so described the Constitution of 1845:

It was born lame and halting, and has ever been a rickety and unhealthy bantling. It was the offspring of men who stood paralyzed between the stationary policy of the past and the advancing zeal of the present. It is an anomaly that belongs distinctly to neither period, but assimilates in some respects to both. It needs extensive modification, and the Legislature is now bored with the number and the diversity of the amendments proposed.60

When, in 1851, the Whigs gained control of the legislature, it was a foregone conclusion that a bill would be introduced which would authorize an election to determine the will of the people on calling a constitutional convention. Such had been the understanding during the parochial campaigns. In accordance with general expectancy, Sever, Whig, introduced a bill in the legislature which was entitled "An act to take the sense of the people

59 Ibid., January 27, 1852.
60 Ibid., February 11, 1850.
on the expediency of calling a Convention to change the Constitution, and
to provide for the election of Delegates and the holding of the Convention."
Governor Johnson had advised against the convention, but he did not withhold
his signature to the act quoted.

The electorate signified its desire for a constitutional convention
by a vote of 11,154 to 3,149. The Governor, by proclamation, announced
June 14, 1852, as the date for the election of delegates.

The Whigs campaigned on an active party basis, claiming that progressive
revision was their own idea and advocacy. They proposed the broadening
of the Constitution of 1845, in order that free banking might be permitted,
that railroads and other internal improvements would be encouraged; that
the currency be improved, that the judiciary be placed on an elective basis,
and that other "absurd restrictions in the powers of the State" be removed.

The ensuing election, the Whigs gained an incontestable control of the
convention, by capturing seventy-four of the one-hundred and thirteen seats.
In other words, the Whigs outnumbered their rivals by nearly two to one.
The Democrats could not remotely hope to influence, or even obstruct the
Whig proposals.

On organization, Duncan F. Kenner was elected president. John C. Layet
was chosen secretary. Joseph Waddox, editor of the New Orleans Daily
Crescent, was selected as the printer. All three of these gentlemen were
Whigs. It is fitting to observe here, that beyond the organization, the
convention ceased to be a party affair. To be sure it was a "Whig" consti-
tution, but it was also a subscription to ancient Democratic doctrines--

61 Journal of the Convention to Form a New Constitution for the State
of Louisiana (New Orleans, 1852), 13.
62 New Orleans Bee, May 14, 1852.
63 Baton Rouge Gazette, April 24, 1852; New Orleans Bee, June 14, 1852.
64 Journal of the Convention, 4; Baton Rouge Gazette, July 10, 1852.
doctrines that the Democracy by experience knew best how to use, as the
first election under the new constitution so amazingly proved.

The convention was in session less than one month. A number of
sweeping changes were made. The right to vote was given to all white males
who were citizens of the United States, and who had resided in the state for
one year and in the parish for six months. The distinction between naturalized
and native citizens was removed. Absence from the state no longer was
penalized by the loss, or suspension, of the suffrage. A citizen moving
from one parish to another was at liberty to vote in that parish wherein
he had last resided for six months. The governor was required to be only
twenty-eight years of age, and to have been a resident of the state for only
four years. State senators and representatives had merely to be qualified
66
electors of their particular unit of representation. The total population
of the state, including negroes, was made the basis of representation in
the general assembly. New Orleans was represented in the lower house on
the basis of population but the city's senatorial delegation was limited to
five. Elections to the general assembly were to be held biennially, but
the general assembly would convene in regular session annually. The entire
judiciary was placed on an elective basis; this included judges of the
supreme and inferior courts, the attorney general, district attorneys, and
justices of the peace. Provision was made to easily amend the new consti-
tution. If two-thirds of the general assembly favored an amendment, and if

65 Ibid., 91; Constitution of 1852, Title II, art. 10.
66 Ibid., 93; Title III, art. 36.
67 Ibid., Title III, passim.
68 Ibid., 91; Title II, art. 8.
69 Ibid., 92; Title II, art. 15.
70 Ibid., 91; Title II, art. 5.
71 Ibid., 94-5; Title IV, arts. 64, 65, 78, 79, 80, 83.
a majority of the electorate also favored it, such an amendment became effective. A liberal provision was made for the organization of banks and corporations, which was calculated to encourage the investment of outside capital. A special section dealt with the creation of a board of public works, which was empowered to make needful and progressive internal improvements.

Judah P. Benjamin had been floor leader for the Whig majority in the convention. Witnessing the general disintegration of his party, he sought to save it by whipping through such constitutional provisions as would give the Whigs in subsequent years every legitimate advantage. The "total population" clause was seemingly at the time a great victory for Benjamin. This section (Title IX, art. 8) had been reported early in the session, by the committee on the legislative department, under the chairmanship of George S. Guion, Whig. Opposition was immediately apparent. A minority report was within a few days submitted. The minority report, signed by James G. Taliaferro and George M. Sandridge, protested that such a basis of representation was unfair—if property were to be represented, then it should not be confined to negroes; and if negroes were to be counted in making the legislative apportionment, it would most unfairly penalize those parishes wherein there were few slaves. On the adoption of the clause, the vote, which did not strictly adhere to party lines, was seventy-four yeas to forty-two nays.

Some of the more opulent Whig parishes, where slaves were numerous, shared Benjamin's optimism regarding the "total population" basis of

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72 Ibid., 98; Title IX, art. 141.
73 Ibid., 96; Title VI, arts. 109, 110, 119, 120, 121.
74 Ibid., 97-8; Title VII, passim; Baton Rouge Gazette, August 14, 1852.
75 Journal of the Convention, 45-6.
76 Ibid., 53-4.
77 Ibid., 66.
representation. Up-state parishes, where slaves were few, vigorously opposed this part of the constitution as it would decrease their representation. They argued with some justification that one Whig master and his one thousand slaves would possess representation in the general assembly equal to one thousand and one free, white Democrats. In a few interior parishes, meetings were held to condemn the "negro-good-as-white-man-constitution."

New Orleans acceptance of the total population clause is explained by the statement made for record by Robert Preaux:

I voted for the basis of total population, because I believe there is among the members from the country a strong feeling of opposition toward the City of New Orleans, and that in the presence of this feeling, I have been compelled to choose between the basis of total population on the one hand, and a permanent and never to be removed restriction to one-fourth of the representation on the other.78

As the opposition to the "total basis" clause grew, the country Whigs, as well as those of the city, were compelled to abandon defense of it. The Baton Rouge Gazette, in the closing days before the plebiscite was to be held, made this declaration:

79 For the enlightenment of the Advocate we will speak upon this subject, which we thought to be fully understood to be denounced by the whig party throughout the State. In no section has it met favor to any extent; this the Advocate knows. The whigs are in favor of a repeal of this measure, and if they have the power, will repeal it.

The candidates on the whig state ticket are known to be opposed to this measure. They are opposed to it upon principle, and will do all in their power to repeal it. They are not doubtful.80

A second strong objection to the constitution arose over the generous provisions made for the creation of corporations and banks. There lingered the sad remembrance in the minds of many of the panic years following 1837.

78 Ibid., 66.  
79 The Baton Rouge Advocate was a Democratic paper, and the rivalry between the Advocate and the Gazette was very spirited.  
80 Baton Rouge Gazette, December 18, 1852.
Those objections, however substantial, did not defeat the new constitution. It was adopted by a vote of 18,235 to 15,463. Orleans and the second congressional district voted heavily in favor of adoption; a slight majority for adoption was given in the third district; but in the fourth district the opposition polled 5,380 votes to the 4,469 polled by the proponents of adoption. This analysis indicates that in the third and fourth districts, strongholds of the Democracy, the Whigs were unable to create any marked enthusiasm for the new fundamental law.

It had been agreed that if the constitution were adopted, the election of state officers would be held on the fourth Monday of December, 1853. This date coincided with the day set by the Constitution of 1845 for voting for President and Vice President.

Before the convention adjourned, the presidential canvass had gotten under way. The Whigs of Louisiana seemingly realized that the contest of 1852 would be a supreme test for their national organization. Their championship of the Compromise and the Union was their only excuse for national existence. All other issues had been swept into oblivion—dead, with Henry Clay.

Millard Fillmore was easily the party's choice for President. His service had been satisfactory, and more especially satisfying had been his endorsement of the adjustment acts. Webster was occasionally the subject of presidential speculation, and he was easily the second choice of the Louisiana Whigs. Regardless of the expressed admiration, the

81 Ibid., November 27, 1852.
82 Journal of the Convention, 99; Title XI, art. 152.
83 New Orleans Bee, February 20, March 5, 1852; New Orleans Daily Picayune, July 2, 1852.
availability of Webster was depreciated. As for Scott, the New Orleans Bee declared that the idea of his popularity in Louisiana was the veriest humbug and delusion. Scott had an unimpressive following in the city, but in the country a Scott man could not be found "through a five hundred magnifying microscope."

"Whether Gen. Scott, if nominated under satisfactory auspices, can secure the Whig vote of Louisiana, is an altogether different question. We believe he can. But we speak of him as he now stands—uncommitted to the Compromise, and injured in the estimation of the South, by his presumed association with Free Soilers."

The Louisiana Whigs took an uncompromising stand upon the Compromise. They sent forth the warning that they, in the national convention, would present resolutions pledging the nominees to support the Compromise, and especially the Fugitive Slave law. Any hedging, or modification, of these principles would be the signal for the withdrawal of the Louisiana delegation, and because of the temper of all Southern Whigs on these matters, the other southern delegations would follow Louisiana's example. The position of the Whig party of Louisiana, and of the South was this:

They have sustained the "Adjustment" from its introduction into Congress to its passage. They regard it as a full and final settlement of the Slavery question--to be left untouched, unaltered, and immutable on the statute book. It must so remain. The Southern Whigs insist that its perpetuation shall be secured by the formal adhesion of their political associates.

In preparation for the national convention, the Whigs of Louisiana met on March 19, 1852 in a state convention at Baton Rouge. Walter Brashear, of St. Mary, was selected as permanent president. He made a short address, and urged a toleration for the differences of opinion that were being

84 New Orleans Bee, June 10, 1852.
85 Ibid., November 6, 1851.
expressed regarding the proper candidate for the presidency. At the evening session, these important resolutions were passed:

5. Resolved, That we regard the series of measures known as the Compromise Measures as a final settlement in principle and substance of the exciting subjects to which they refer, and that as such they should be faithfully adhered to and executed.

6. Resolved, That Millard Fillmore is the decided choice of the Whigs of Louisiana, for the next Presidency.

7. Resolved, That we hereby recommend the Hon. John J. Crittenden, of Kentucky, for the office of Vice President of the United States.

8. Resolved, That we have an abiding confidence that the Whig National Convention will nominate to the Presidency and Vice Presidency, candidates who are sound on the Union and Compromise measures, and in maintaining their fidelity in principle and substance, we therefore appoint delegates to said convention, to aid in making said nominations in accordance with the above resolutions.

Erectors were then appointed, they being Jacques Toutant, Christian Roselius, Duncan F. Kenner, G. W. Watterston, Alexander Declouet, and Isaiah Garrett. A state central committee, under the presidency of Brashear, and consisting of one member from each parish, was appointed, and was instructed to meet monthly in New Orleans. The convention was then addressed "in a most impassioned and elegant manner" by Benjamin, Kenner, and Watterston.

A Whig congressional caucus met to set a day and determine a place of meeting for the national nominating convention. The day fixed was June 16, and the city named was Baltimore.

The southern delegations were in Baltimore two days prior to the opening of the convention. They held a caucus on the evening of the fourteenth, and John G. Chapman, of Maryland, was called to the chair.

86 Baton Rouge Gazette, March 20, 1852; New Orleans Bee, March 20, 21, 1852. 87 New Orleans Bee, April 23, 1852.
Eloquent addresses were made in favor of the candidacy of Fillmore.

Distinguished gentlemen advised the writing of a platform, which should be presented to the convention for adoption prior to making the nominations, and this advice was cordially endorsed. A committee was appointed and authorized to report resolutions. The caucus then adjourned to re-convene the following morning.

On re-assembling, R. A. Upton, of Louisiana, in his capacity as secretary, presented a series of principles. The truly significant declaration was:

That the series of measures commonly known as the Compromise, including the Fugitive Slave Law, are received and acquiesced in by the Whig party in the United States as a settlement in principle and substance—a final settlement of the dangerous and exciting questions which they embrace, and so far as the Fugitive Slave Law is concerned, we will maintain the same and insist on its strict enforcement until time and experience shall demonstrate the necessity of future legislation to guard against evasion or abuse, but not impairing its present efficiency; and we depreciate all future agitation on the slavery question as dangerous to our peace and we will discontinue all efforts at the revival or continuance of such agitation in Congress or out of it, whenever, wherever, and however the attempt may be made, and we will maintain this system of measures as the policy essential to the Nationality of the Whig party and the interests of the Union.

The resolutions were received by cheers, speeches, and unanimous approval. Felix K. Zollikoffer, of Tennessee, made a formal proposal that after the permanent organization of the Convention, a resolution be offered calling for the appointment of a committee on resolutions, consisting of one delegate from each state, and that to this committee the southern resolutions be referred. His proposal was adopted without dissension.

The committee on permanent organization, upon which Joseph Bernard of Louisiana served, reported as permanent president the southern choice,
Chapman, of Maryland. J. C. Van Winkle served as Louisiana's Vice President. R. A. Upton served as one of the thirteen secretaries. In his address to the convention, General Chapman said:

"We meet here as brothers, from the North, East, South, and West....I do pray and invoke you as the great Conservative party of the country, to meet and unite here in our deliberations, entertaining the same feelings as I do—those feelings of harmony and kindness which I think hitherto have characterized the action of the Whig party. I invoke you, gentlemen, to look to the great interests involved....I invoke you to meet here...and discharge our duties as becomes Whigs and brethren having but one common purpose to subserve....If we have any sectional feelings, let us bury them, and like patriots look to the interests of the entire country, from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific."

G. B. Duncan, of Louisiana, offered resolutions that a committee consisting of one member from each state represented in the convention be appointed, whose duty it would be to draft a series of resolutions expressive of the sentiments of the Whigs of the Union on the great doctrines cherished by them; that the members of said committee be selected by the delegation from each state, each state represented appointing its own member, and the committee to appoint its own chairman; and that the convention would not nominate a candidate for President or Vice President until said committee should have reported and the convention should have taken final action on the report.

Philadelph Van Trump, of Ohio, protested the resolutions, stating that there was some confusion in the convention, as all the delegations had not been accredited. Further, he doubted the propriety of voting on a party platform at the time suggested, for one plank of that platform would be of the most important character, embracing as it doubtless would,
a question of great delicacy, upon which, unfortunately, there were varying opinions in the Whig party. Duncan replied:

"Gentlemen, we want to know in all honor and candor where we are. We want you to show your hands, and we are prepared to show you ours. We want to know who we are, and whether we are all of one party or not. We want to know if our principles are your principles, and your principles ours. If they are not, and your principles and doctrines are different from ours, it is better we should all know it now at once. I cannot suppose there will be a single voice in the convention that will demand that the resolutions that I have presented be dropped; but if there is a determination to reject them, then I desire the bitter cup to be presented to my lips now, that I may drink it to the dregs. But I expect no such course by the Convention. We desire to know from gentlemen whether or not we cannot agree upon a platform broad enough and strong enough to insure the Union and the success of the principles of the Whig party of the whole Union."

Following Duncan's speech, there was much sparring, and several efforts were made to insert substitute clauses. In their final passage, the Duncan resolutions without significant changes were passed.

"The committee on resolutions, of which Duncan was a member, accepted the southern stand on the Compromise, with its emphasis on the Fugitive Slave law. When the platform was offered to the convention, it was adopted by a vote of 227 to 66. "Loud, long, and startling were the expressions of applause." Upton, the chief secretary of the convention, announced the vote very loudly, and in a peculiar strain of voice. A delegate from Indiana objected to the manner in which the vote had been announced, and moved that Upton be censured. Upton gained recognition and said that the confusion was so great that he had to use his lungs to their utmost extent, and that under this strain his voice had taken on an unnatural quality. He received loud cheers for his explanation."

"Fillmore, Scott, and Webster were the principal contenders for the presidential nomination. Fillmore was supported by the Louisiana delegation"
from the first through the fifty-third ballot. Scott won the candidacy in the fifty-third trial. The Louisianians endorsed the nominee only when it was moved that the nomination be made unanimous.

When Scott was declared the party's nominee, W. L. Dayton, of New Jersey, spoke upon the reliable character of the General, and urged the South to support him. A telegram was received by J. C. Jones, of Tennessee, from Scott, which signified acceptance of the nomination and the platform. The Whigs completed their labors by nominating William A. Graham, of North Carolina, for Vice President. All the closing scenes of the convention gave indication that the National Whig party was harmoniously and firmly united.

The news of Scott's nomination was received by the Louisiana Whigs with "unfeigned chagrin." The Baton Rouge Gazette frankly remarked:

"We will not say we are gratified beyond measure at this result, or that it has met our most sanguine hopes and desires. We, in common with ninety-nine hundredths of the Whigs of Louisiana, have time and again declared our most unyielding preference for the distinguished citizen who now holds the most exalted position to which the suffrage of a free people could call him. Such was the voice of Louisiana.... We believe that Millard Fillmore, by the great ability and the unswerving patriotic devotion to the true interests of the country without reference to particular sections of citizens, which have characterized his administration, most richly does deserve the thanks of the Whig party, and their united efforts to place him in that position which he has so highly honored, and in which he has so nobly vindicated himself against the assaults of his enemies. Under these circumstances we cannot but confess most freely, and frankly, that we are disappointed in the result.

Regardless of their disappointment the Whig presses started their burdensome duty of cheerful acquiescence, and started drumming up the stock of "Old Chapultepec." Then "Old Chapultepec" broke down, "Old Fuss and 90 Ibid., 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 1852.
91 Baton Rouge Gazette, June 26, 1852.
Feathers, that peerless soldier and eminent citizen," was brought forth, 92
but with no better results.

In New Orleans, a ratification meeting was held on the neutral grounds
of Canal street. The speakers stand, decorated with colored lights, was
partially covered by a dome, over which "to the breezes waved the glorious
flag of our country." Within the dome was the goddess of Liberty, standing
on a pedestal, on which was inscribed the words "The Compromise." On the
other side was the names of the Whig candidates for the presidency and
vice presidency, and around was placards bearing the inscriptions "Louisiana,"
"Constitution," "Internal Improvements," "Liberty and Union, Now and Forever,
One and Inseparable." From the upper wings of the dome, looking down
encouragingly on the crowd below, were two heroic and ambitious specimens
of "that same old coon." Speeches were made by Benjamin, Price, Roselius,
and Hunt. Resolutions ratified the national Whig nominations, pledged
loyalty to the Constitution and the Compromise, praised Fillmore and
Webster, and expressed the deepest sorrow for "the Greatest Whig of them
all."

The Democratic national convention had unanimously accepted the
Compromise, and had nominated Franklin Pierce, of New Hampshire, and William
R. King, of Alabama, for President and Vice President. The Whig presses of
Louisiana were derisive of the nomination of Pierce. The Baton Rouge
Gazette elaborately identified him as a "Polk general" of the Mexican war,
who was severely wounded, when his horse fell upon him—many miles from any
battle. In estimating his talents, it was stated that there was not a

92 New Orleans Bee, June 23, July 21, 1852.
93 Ibid., July 2, 1852; New Orleans Daily Picayune, July 2, 1852.
county or parish in the Union which could not have furnished one or more
men who wore equal to Pierce in mental caliber, and who would not have had
a better claim upon the people for the presidency. As for King, he was
well known and admired, but his position was that of the horse behind the
94
cart.

The presidential campaign in Louisiana had but few features which
would impart to it a unique interest. With both national parties pledged
to accept and support the Compromise, there was no other major tangible
issue at stake. The campaign turned upon the records of the candidates.

The Democratic attacks upon Scott were thus summarized by the New
Orleans Bee: (1) They say Gen. Scott is a Native; (2) They say he is a
Catholic; (3) They say Seward and Greeley support him; (4) They say Seward
will govern him; (5) They say he is obstinate and will be governed by
nobody; (6) They say he is no Compromise man; (7) They say he is committed
to the finality of the Compromise; (8) They say he refused to accept a
challenge from Gen. Jackson; (9) They say he is a brandy-bloated drunkard;
(10) They say that he was never present in his battles until victory was
won; (11) They say he is nothing but a soldier.

Needless to say, these charges, if such they might be called, were
elaborately refuted. For weeks the Bee carried at the head of its chief
editorial column "The Contrast," which were contrasting declarations made
by Pierce and Scott "revealing" their attitudes on slavery,—Gen. Scott:
"Sir, I am dead for the Constitution—dead for the Union—dead for the
Compromise—and dead against any man who is opposed to them!"—Gen. Pierce:

94 Baton Rouge Gazette, June 12, 1852.
95 New Orleans Weekly Delta, September 26, 1852; New Orleans Daily
Picayune, October 14, 1852.
"I have been asked if I liked this Fugitive Slave Law. I answered no, I loathed it. I have the most revolting feelings at the giving up of a slave; the law is opposed to humanity. It is contrary to moral right."

The foregoing is a fair sample of the game of tag played by the opposing presses. This single issue, which locally was not an issue, this empty hypocritical chant, repeated with mechanical frequency, did not create hysteria, neither did it compel the conviction that a Whig victory would save the Union.

In order to stimulate enthusiasm for Scott, the Whigs of New Orleans, on September 14, held a demonstration for their candidate. Some hundreds participated in the parade, and addresses were made by John K. Price, E. J. Carroll, and George C. McWhorter. Yet, no especial enthusiasm was created.

It was reported that on the interior, there was considerable political activity, that in Union, Ouachita, Feliciana, St. Mary, St. Landry, East Baton Rouge, and other country parishes, Scott and Graham Clubs had been organized. Randall Hunt, Christian Roselius, Harry Hays, J. P. Benjamin, Robert Preaux, and other Whig orators carried the literature and the soundness of Scott to the country clubs.

Relatively late in the campaign, the Whig congressmen, Moore and Landry, issued a lengthy refutation of the charge that they were not supporting Scott, and that they would not support him. In their letter "To the People of Louisiana" they stated frankly, but definitely impoliticly, that they

96 New Orleans Bee, passim, 1852.
97 New Orleans Daily Picayune, September 15, 1852.
98 New Orleans Bee, July 30, 1852; Baton Rouge Gazette, August 21, September 4, 21, 1852.
99 New Orleans Bee, September 25, October 2, 26, 1852.
would have preferred Fillmore, but nevertheless, were sustaining "the choice of the national Whig convention."

In the sixteenth congressional district, there was an alarming defection. Isaiah Garret and William S. Parham, elector and substitute elector, refused to support Scott. Parham was the first to resign, and he was severely taken to task by the Baton Rouge Gazette, for Parham had announced his support of Pierce. The Gazette caustically observed: "The only rational, reasonable conclusion is that he has wilfully, knowingly, deliberately, and intentionally gone over body and soul to locofocoism, we cannot say Democracy, and we firmly believe the mass of the Democratic party will spurn him as a traitor willing to sacrifice them upon the first showing." His apostasy was doubly damning, said the Gazette, for he had pledged himself to the candidate, whoever he might be, so long as that candidate endorsed the Compromise. John Hay and D. F. Roysden replaced the bolters on the Whig electoral ticket.

About the only country demonstration of note, other than the usual barbecues, was a rather impressive torchlight procession in Baton Rouge. According to the report, the number participating exceeded that of any since 1844.

The election was orderly and quiet, so quiet in New Orleans that the Daily Picayune stated that there were very few manipulations evident to indicate that an election was being held. The total vote was 35,474.

The majority for Pierce was 1,406. Scott won the old Whig stronghold,

100 Ibid., September 6, 1852.
101 Baton Rouge Gazette, July 10, 1852.
102 Ibid., October 30, 1852; New Orleans Daily Picayune, October 30, 1852.
103 New Orleans Daily Picayune, November 3, 1852.
the second congressional district. Pierce won the electoral vote by carrying
the first district, with a majority of one hundred and ten votes; by winning
nine of the thirteen parishes of the third district; and swooping seventeen
of the nineteen parishes in the fourth district.

On December 9, the parties of New Orleans united to observe obsequies
for the passing of three of America's greatest statesmen. Calhoun had
died on March 31, 1850, less than one month after his last great senatorial
effort. In the real sense, Henry Clay outlived his party's usefulness.
He passed away in Washington, on June 29, 1852. Webster, the last of the
Eldy Three, lingered until October 24, 1852. A vast cortege, nearly two
miles long—and here one may well believe the account—passed through the
streets. Business was suspended throughout the city. All the indications of
mourning were observable. In Lafayette Square, there were speeches by the
popular orators, who lauded the departed in terms that could be characterized
as truly being "without distinction to party." From sunrise to sunset,
"the bells of the churches were tolled and the dark insignia of woe waved
mournfully in the breeze...and thousands said, 'We shall never look upon
their like again.'"

Every Whig paper in Louisiana naturally gave much attention to the
demise of Clay. Columns were bordered in heavy black, as was the custom
of the times, and every Louisiana editor, be he Whig or Democrat, agreed
that a great man had fallen in Israel, and all enjoined upon the nation
to mourn for the nation's loss.

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104 New Orleans Weekly Delta, December 5, 1852; Baton Rouge Gazette,
November 27, 1852.
105 New Orleans Bee, December 11, 1852.
106 Baton Rouge Gazette, December 18, 1852; quoted from the New Orleans
Bulletin.
107 Baton Rouge Gazette, July 3, 1852.
Shortly after the adoption of the new constitution, Whig delegates pursuant to a previous call, met in Baton Rouge to nominate an entire state slate. There is significance in the fact that seventeen parishes were not represented. Colonel S. W. D. Clark, of West Baton Rouge, was made permanent chairman, and in his brief address he urged the Whigs to preserve harmony and unity, and not to be "dampened in their ardor by the ephemeral triumph of their opponents."

The following were nominated for the governorship: George C. McWhorter, of Concordia; Louis Bordelon, of St. Landry; John Moore, of St. Mary; John Ray, of Ouachita; and Joseph Bernard, of East Baton Rouge. Louis Bordelon secured the candidacy on the second ballot. John Moore had been his closest competitor. The remainder of the ticket agreed upon was: lieutenant governor, John Ray; attorney general, R. N. Ogden; secretary of state, D. D. Avery; treasurer, George C. McWhorter; and superintendent of public education, T. B. Thorpe. Of the six candidates nominated, only Ray was from the northern part of the state.

The Democrats drew their candidates from every section of the state. Their nominations were as follows: governor, Paul O. Hebert, of Iberville; lieutenant governor, W. W. Farmer, of Union; attorney general, Isaac E. Morse, of Orleans; secretary of state, A. S. Herron, of East Baton Rouge; treasurer, C. E. Greneaux, of Natchitoches; and superintendent of public education, J. N. Carrigan, of East Baton Rouge.

The campaign, coming as an anti-climax to the presidential canvass, was apathetic and without especial interest. "Putting the constitution

108 Ibid., December 4, 1852; New Orleans Bee, November 30, 1852.
109 New Orleans Weekly Delta, December 5, 1852; New Orleans Bee, December 3, 1852.
"into effect" was the chief bait for votes. The Whigs maintained that it was their constitution, and consequently their candidates were better qualified to inaugurate the "progressive reform."

In the elections, the Whig party was all but annihilated. Herbert and Farmer decisively defeated Bordelon and Ray. The other Democratic candidates were correspondingly successful. In the legislative elections, the Democrats obtained a majority of four in the senate, and twenty-six in the house, making their joint-ballot majority thirty.

There is little of the Whig spirit of 1844 in the following complacent acceptance of the party catastrophe:

Under the issues which have hitherto divided the two parties in this State, we should have sincerely and deeply regretted this result, indeed we should have confidently expected one quite different, but the platform erected by the Democratic State Convention, with some exceptions, meets our hearty approval, and if faithfully carried out, we shall have little cause to regret the result. We bow with cheerfulness to the will of the majority, and since the great and important measures of our party are recognized as the true policy of our State, we are content.

Those great measures of internal improvements and a system of free banking are now recognized by our opponents as essential to the welfare and prosperity of our State, and so long as they will support that portion of their platform, we are not only contented, but shall vie with our Democratic friends in support of those elected by the popular will. We opposed them in the canvass just ended, because we thought it right that the party which commenced, and which has thus far nobly carried on the good work of progress and improvement should complete it, but since the people have determined to transfer it to other hands and to call it democratic instead of whig we are satisfied, believing as we do that a rose will smell as sweet by another name, and that however estimable and talented our candidates may have been, they are defeated by gentlemen in every respect "worthy their steel" and worthy of the confidence of the good people of Louisiana.

110 Baton Rouge Gazette, December 18, 1852.
111 Louisiana Senate Journal, 1 Sess., 1 Leg., 9, 15; Opelousas Courier, January 15, 1853.
112 Baton Rouge Gazette, January 22, 1853.
113 Ibid., January 1, 1863.
Prior to the opening of the legislative session of 1853, a movement was begun by a few vindictive Democrats to contest the United States senatorial seat of Judah P. Benjamin. It will be recalled that Benjamin had been elected by a Whig legislature in 1851 to succeed Solomon W. Downs. The contesting Democrats held that Benjamin had been elected under authority of the Constitution of 1845, and inasmuch as that Constitution had been superseded by the Constitution of 1852, the election of Benjamin had thereby been rendered null and void.

The Whig papers set up a screech of protest, holding that even if Benjamin had not taken his seat, his election had been valid, and no provision of the Constitution of 1852 legally warranted the setting aside an act of the legislature of 1851.

When the legislature convened in 1853, the anti-Benjamin faction tested their case in the senate. W. F. Griffin, of Rapides and Avoyelles, presented the following resolution:

Resolved, That the General Assembly will meet in the hall of the House of Representatives, on Friday next, 11th inst., 12 o'clock P.M., for the purpose of electing a Senator to Congress of the United States, to fill a vacancy that will be occasioned on the 4th March, by the expiration of the term of the Hon. Solomon W. Downs.

The resolution was referred to the judiciary committee, which rendered a majority and minority report. The majority report recommended that Benjamin's election be considered valid. The majority report was sustained, and the controversy came to a close.

Throughout the year 1853, the Whig party in Louisiana continued its death struggle. Admitting that the fall elections of 1852 had left them

114 Louisiana Senate Journal, 1 Leg., 1 Sess., 28.
115 Ibid., 33-5.
116 Ibid., 39.
badly demoralized, the Whigs made efforts to re-organize. The first defeat of the new year was one to be attributed to the debacle of 1852. Pierre Soule resigned from the United States Senate to accept a foreign appointment. He was assigned by President Pierce to the Court of Spain as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary. To fill the unexpired term, the two houses met in joint session on April 28. The Democrats nominated John Slidell. Victor Burthe, Whig, nominated Theodore G. Hunt. Slidell won on the first ballot by a vote of seventy to thirty-seven.

As fall approached, the Whigs struggled feebly. A state convention met in Baton Rouge to nominate candidates for three state offices, those of auditor, treasurer, and superintendent of public education. These particular elections were under the new order held biennially. Those selected were: for auditor, John E. King, of St. Landry; for treasurer, Harry T. Hays, of New Orleans; and for superintendent of public education, Rev. A. H. Lamon, of West Baton Rouge.

During October, congressional nominations were made. These were accomplished without difficulty in the third and fourth districts. In the third district, Preston Pond, of East Feliciana, was nominated. In the fourth district, John Blair Smith of Natchitoches, was the Whig choice.

In the first district, the Whig convention nominated Thomas J. McKay, at the time serving Orleans parish in the state senate. The Democrats nominated William Dunbar. McKay declined the nomination, thereby leaving Dunbar without opposition. In their desperation, the Whigs brought out Charles Gayarre, a Democrat.

117 Ibid., 184; New Orleans Bee, April 22, 1853.
118 Louisiana Senate Journal, 1 Leg., 1 Sess., 185.
119 Ibid., 1.
120 New Orleans Bee, October 20, 1853.
In the second district, a Whig convention was held at Donaldsonville, which nominated Theodore G. Hunt. Again there was opposition to Hunt's nomination. An influential Whig paper of Ascension parish refused to endorse the nomination, and placed the name of Louis Bush at the head of its columns. Bush declined the honor, and Hunt remained the candidate.

In the fall elections, the Whig rout was complete and final. They could boast of but a single victory. Hunt was successful in the second district. In addition to sweeping all state and national offices, the Democrats won complete control of the municipal government of New Orleans. In the parochial elections, the Democrats returned a joint-ballot majority of thirty-eight to the legislature.

After his defeat, Charles Gayarre issued a pamphlet, aimed as a broadside at John Slidell, which set forth the contention that the congressional election in the first district had been carried by fraudulent voting.

The Bee indignantly declared:

It is concluded on all sides that the election on Monday was carried by sheer corruption. No rotten borough in Great Britain, in the worst period of Parliamentary degradation, was ever made to turn a supple supporter of a minister by a more flagitious and unsparing use of bribery. This is the most pernicious feature of our city elections. To some extent, it has for years polluted the canvass—but nothing equal to it in shamelessness, avowed and exulting fraud, and audacious infamy was ever before witnessed among us.

With the coming of the new year, the Whigs of New Orleans began the organization of a new municipal party. Local corruption gave them the "burning" issue.

121 Ibid., August 4, 9, 1853.
122 Louisiana House Journal, 1 Leg., 2 Sess., 9-10.
123 New Orleans Bee, November 10, 1852.
124 Opelousas Courier, November 26, 1853.
125 New Orleans Bee, November 9, 1853.
The city Democracy, under the domination of Slidell, were realists, to say the least. Not at all distressed by the organization of a new brand of opposition, they nominated a full ticket, from mayor to alderman, and spurned the idea of reformation.

Seven hundred citizens of New Orleans, Whigs, and many Democrats of the Gayarre stamp, in a written statement, pledged their support to the Reform party. Upon organization, the Reform party put candidates in the field for every municipal office.

The New Orleans Bee, actively sponsoring the Reform party, was chided by its contemporaries, the Courier and the Daily Delta, which papers declared that the Reform, or "Independent," nominees were simply Know Nothings—Native Americans—in disguise. This, retorted the Bee, was not the case, for the Reform party was composed of both Whigs and Democrats, who disgusted with the prevailing depravity, had in desperation abandoned their old party affiliations. To prove this statement, the Bee listed the candidates for the Reform party, and identified twenty-five of the forty-three as Democrats. J. M. Breedlove, Reform candidate for mayor, was established without peradventure as a Democrat. If the Reform party won the municipal elections, argued the Bee, the city government would yet be retained by the Democracy, but those empowered would be Democrats that could be trusted to give an honest administration.

By April, 1854, the Reform party was organized throughout the city. Meetings were being regularly attended, and membership was steadily increasing. As the movement grew, it began to assume all the characteristics of Native

126 Ibid., March 15, 1854.
127 Ibid., 18, 20, 21, 23.
Americanism. Foreigners and Catholics became aroused, and a dangerous tension settled upon New Orleans.

The municipal elections were attended with "deplorable excesses."

The Bee gives this description:

The scenes which occurred at some of the precincts in the First District during the election on Monday (March 27), exceed in brutality, iniquity, and reckless defiance of law anything we have before witnessed. For the first time in the history of our country we behold American citizens at two different precincts, driven from the polls, beaten and maltreated, for the single reason that they had dared to challenge the votes of rowdies and ruffians whom they knew to be destitute of the right of suffrage. This course was systematically pursued for some hours, until information having reached the respectable and intelligent classes, a universal movement of indignation was aroused, and prompt measures were adopted to sustain and protect the challengers of the Reform party.128

In the seventh precinct, ruffians charged the polls. The Americans resisted, the leader of the rowdies was stabbed to death, and his followers were precipitantly dispersed. When the polls closed, the ruffians gained possession of the ballot box. They locked themselves in a rendezvous to "count" the votes. The Reformers broke down the doors, seized the box, and scattered the votes to the four winds.

The Reformers charged that the police, rather than conducting themselves as custodians of the peace, had been the foremost in the violation of it. They had encouraged rowdyism, tumult, and disorder; they had intimidated and driven Reform challengers from the polls.

The city election of March 27, in spite of the irregularities, gave the Reform party control of the city. The party had elected their entire general ticket of comptroller, treasurer, surveyor, and street commissioner.

128 Ibid., March 29, 1854.
129 New Orleans Crescent, March 31, 1854.
All of those were old lino Whigs. Of the forty aldermen, the Reformers gained a majority. The mayorality contest was won by the regular Democrats, but the Reformers were satisfied with this result for John L. Lewis, the victorious candidate, was a man of "great popularity, liberality, and sterling qualities."

Bloody riots broke out afresh in September. By that time, the Reformers were discarding their disguise, and Native American lodges were being established in all quarters of the state.

Meanwhile it was being asked:

Will any person skilled in finding clues to mysterious disappearances tell us what has become of the Whig party? We are well aware that upon the election of Franklin Pierce, the Whig party suddenly lost its previously respectable dimensions and dwarfed down to an exceedingly small size; but still there was something of it left. Nay, it even continued to preserve the debris of its former strength, and astonished "all the world and the rest of mankind," by a wonderful, though alas! temporary resuscitation in New York, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. But from the time that the Nebraska Bill got fairly before Congress, the Whig party seemed to collapse—it grew thinner and more flaccid, "fine by degrees, and beautiful less," until now we may say of it as of the author of Junius, "Stat nominis umbra."

We hear indeed the term "Whig" occasionally used, but it is the mere empty echo of something that has lost its substantive existence—a word—a memory of the past—employing in lieu of a more appropriate term, but clearly not conveying the idea embodied in that expression in the days of bluff Harry Clay and Daniel Webster. The Whigs of the present period are in a transitional state, and hardly yet know what is in store for them.—Confusion worse confounded prevails in their ranks. Some have turned filibusters—others preserve an armed neutrality, living in the hope of one day seeing the good old party revive—others again call themselves Reformers, and for aught we can say to the contrary, "Know-nothings." In brief, the party is disintegrated and disorganized. It has no cohesion, for it has no distinctive principles to bind its members together in all sections of the country.—Whiggery no longer means the same thing North, South, East, and West, and hence the Whig party of former days no longer exists.133

130 New Orleans Bee, March 29, 1854.
131 Ibid.
133 New Orleans Bee, June 10, 1854.
Indeed, what had become of the Whigs? In 1855, one of them, Charles Derbigny, was the candidate for governor on the American ticket. On the same ticket were J. V. Duraldo, candidate for state treasurer, and Randall Hunt, candidate for attorney general. Former prominent Whigs who actively aided in the American campaign of 1855 were William Christy, John Ray, Charles M. Waterman, J. Bermudez, J. M. Elam, W. Waddill, J. O. Nixon, Preston Pond, William L. Hodge, Cyprien Dupre, Hanson Kelly, William C. McShorler, and Theodore G. Hunt.

During the presidential campaign of 1856, the Whig party gave a final gasp before giving up the ghost. Twelve Louisiana delegates went to the Whig national nominating convention at Baltimore. There seems to be but little doubt that their sole mission was to support the nomination of Fillmore and Donelson, the candidates of the national Native American party.

In May, 1856, Benjamin gave out an announcement that from thenceforth he would be a Democrat. The Whiggish Americans of Louisiana called down shame upon him, and charged that he had been bought. Myles Taylor also joined the Democracy, and was in 1856 elected from the second district as a Douglas Democrat. Associate Justice P. A. Rost, "always known as a true conservative Whig," explained his transfer to the Democracy by declaring that he had not left his party, but his party had left him, for he could never subscribe to the intolerances of Americanism.

Whigs of Louisiana who joined the banners of the Democracy were comparatively few. A cursory glance at the presidential election returns of 1856 will tell nearly the full story of where the rank and file of the Whig party of Louisiana found a new alignment, for the Native American party of Louisiana cast a total of 20,709 votes for Fillmore and Donelson. In this election, the Natives carried the first and second congressional districts by handsome majorities, but lost the third and fourth to lose the state. It was a repetition of the old, old story.

Thereafter, the Whig party in Louisiana gave forth no tokens of life, no evidence of vitality, or no sign of resurrection. It had gone glimmering through the dream of things that were. But the beloved, the thrilling, and the glorious associations would live on, for these were never to be forgotten as long as the aged could recall a remembrance of youth.

Thereafter, the Democrats went up the river alone, but the "going up was not like that of olden times. There was no music; no boisterous merriment; no political disputation; and indeed, the quietness on board might not inaptly be compared to that of a sabbath afternoon in a New England meeting-house."

Thereafter, the fanatics would win their fiendish victory, and the guns of Charleston would hoarsely mock the "glorious emblem of our Union." Then blood, much blood would flow, brother would slaughter brother, and sober men with battle-stained faces would turn searchingly toward one another, and the same question would burn in their eyes: "What has become of Harry—Old Harry of the West?"

135 Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet, November 2, 9, 1856.
136 New Orleans Daily Delta, June 20, 1855.
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VITA

Leslie Murry Norton was born in Shubuta, Mississippi, February 25, 1905. He completed elementary school in Meridian, Mississippi and high school at Pearl River College. He attended Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi, from 1923 to 1925. He left college at the end of the 1924-1925 session to become athletic director at Port Gibson College. In September, 1926, he entered Southwestern Louisiana Institute, and graduated from that institution in 1928 with the Bachelor of Arts degree. In 1928-29, he was principal of LaGrange Grammar School, and from 1929 to 1931 he was principal of the LaGrange High School at Lake Charles, Louisiana. He went to Louisiana State University in 1931 in the capacity of director of athletics of the University High School. He received in 1933 a Master of Arts degree from the Department of History, Louisiana State University. In 1935, he became special lecturer to freshmen and remained in that capacity until 1937. In 1937, he was transferred from the University proper to Northeast Junior College. He has served as Registrar of Northeast Junior College since his transfer.
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Date of Examination: May 10, 1940