legalistic meaning were the same, but every day that the Union had existed had made it a greater folly, a greater wrong, a greater crime to breach it. The states had lost or lesemed some original rights by non-user for forty years. The excessive states rights position of the Calhoun Democrats brought about a revulsion and a new aspect of the question. Yet Jackson stood unqualified for the rights of states within their province and for a limited but powerful federal government within its proper province.

Jackson in complete control of his party named his successor. He turned over to him a thoroughly organized, loyal and enthusiastic party strong in numbers and in faith.

CHAPTER XIII

VAN BUREN, STATESMAN AND POLITICAL STRATEGIST
1837-1841


Martin Van Buren was in many respects the antithesis of his predecessor and sponsor. His views and general principles, his political tenets and policies closely approximated Jackson's. But whereas Jackson was gaunt he was rounded; Jackson rugged, he smooth; Jackson vehement, he diplomatic; Jackson raw, he done to a turn. Jackson had no more the courage of his convictions, but Van Buren had a keener appreciation of opposing opinions, and a disposition to outflank rather than run over, to convince rather than demolish, his opponents. Jackson's natural qualities were toned down and held in restraint; Van Buren's natural talents were carefully built up and added to, and trained. The two acting together on sound principles were invincible; Jackson made Van Buren President; Van Buren helped to make Jackson a great President—and Jackson never failed to feel the obligation.

Born at Kinderhook, New York, in December, 1782, the son of a small farmer, an innkeeper some say, little is known of Martin Van Buren's early days. The curse of politics still pursues him in that practically all writings about him begin with, and are restricted to, his political career. He must have had some good schooling for he knew a little Latin and all his letters, speeches and papers betoken more than average culture, though his campaign biographer in 1835 rather stresses his humble beginnings. He studied law under W. P. Van Ness, a leading attorney in New York, and was himself a lawyer of unusual ability and success.

Delegate to a Republican (Democratic) convention at eighteen, in 1806 he was Surrogate of Columbia County, and in 1812 State Senator. From 1815 to 1819 he filled the office of Attorney General of the state, being State Senator part of the time, and
Van Buren took the floor and attacked the Democratic Party that year and again in 1830. He was a strong supporter of the Union, and his speeches helped to strengthen the party's position. In his 1830 speech, he declared that the Union was the foundation of the country, and that it must be preserved at all costs. He warned against the dangers of sectionalism and the dangers of a divided country.

In 1834, Van Buren was nominated for the presidency by the Democratic Party. He faced a strong challenge from the Whig Party, led by William Henry Harrison. Despite the challenges, Van Buren was able to win a narrow victory, securing 170 electoral votes to Harrison's 166. His victory was a significant triumph for the Democratic Party, and it helped to solidify its position as the leading party of the time.

Van Buren served two terms as president, from 1837 to 1841. During his presidency, he faced numerous challenges, including the nullification crisis and the Mexican War. Despite these challenges, Van Buren was able to maintain the Union and to strengthen the Democratic Party's position.

In 1844, Van Buren was nominated for a third term, but he was defeated by the Whig Party candidate, James K. Polk. Van Buren's defeat was a significant setback for the Democratic Party, and it helped to pave the way for the Whig Party's victory in the 1840s. Despite his loss, Van Buren remained a strong and influential figure in American politics, and his legacy continued to shape the Democratic Party for many years to come.
The story of the Democratic Party
VAN BUREN, VISARSAN AND POLITICAL TRAFFIC

189

THE STORY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY