CHAPTER XV

DEMOCRATIC EFFICIENCY UNDER POLK
1845-1849


Who is James K. Polk? This question was asked all over the United States in May, 1844, seemingly by the Whigs, but in honest inquiry by many Americans who did not keep up with the times. Their own nominee being the best-known American citizen, save the superannuated Jackson, it was Whig politics to belittle his opponent. Polk had friends who thought him a second Andrew Jackson, and higher praise they could not give. And many of Polk's successors have not had at the time of their nominations half so long and distinguished a record as he had when he was nominated by the Democrats.

Fourteen active years in the lower house of Congress, a leader of the opposition during Adams' administration, the administration leader during Jackson's eight years when he defeated time and time again the cohorts of the United States Bank, twice a candidate for the speakership and twice elected—this would seem to constitute a record, aside from his having been Governor of Tennessee when that state was dominant in Democratic politics. As a Congressional leader and gladiator he ranks with Thad Stevens and McKinley, John Sharp Williams and Oscar Underwood; but Calhoun, Clay and Webster kept the Senate in the public eye while Polk's arena was the House.

Born in North Carolina, where his forefathers had prominently participated in the adoption of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, he had, when a boy, moved with his parents to middle Tennessee. He was a graduate of the University of North Carolina. In 1823, at the age of twenty-eight, he was elected to the Tennessee legislature; two years later he was sent to Congress, was conspicuous in opposition until Jackson was
Democratic Experience Under Polk

The Story of the Democratic Party

209
project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project

proposed

the

project
THE STORY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

THE STORY OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Democratic Reform Under Pool

Dr. Pool, the Democratic politician and a prominent figure in the party, once said in one of his speeches...

..."Democratic reform was the key to our success. It was about more than just changing policies; it was about changing the way we thought about democracy..."
and the workmanship. The finished product is a printed page that can be read.