time was, as universally respected, admired, and beloved. He had a fine sense of humor and was quite a raconteur in lighter moments, and strove to relieve the distress of his loved ones by gentle jests, with his physician, in his day. He was a man to be loved by all generations of Americans is Madison.

"Jeoffrey!" Jefferson's opinion of him somehow given ...


The tradition of electing men of long and distinguished service to the Presidency was preserved in the selection of Colonel James Monroe. He was of our great Presidents, and he accomplished great things with so much apparent ease, with so little show and outcry and fuss and feathers, that posterity has not the greatness of his own generation in his own country and abroad so generously appreciated. He, only, accomplished what every great President has aspired to—he united the nation politically. He broke the "Solid South." He destroyed faction and abolished sectionalism for a time. His administration was one of tremendous accomplishment. Both he and it are worth careful study.

Born in 1758 and educated at William and Mary he left that college in 1776 to enter the army as lieutenant. Wounded desperately in a hand-to-hand conflict at Trenton he carried the bullet in his shoulder to the grave. Complimented by Washington for his courage, he was made aide to General Lord Sterling, and later Military Commissioner of Virginia to the Southern army by Governor Jefferson.

In 1782 he was elected to the Virginia Assembly and by that body made a member of the Executive Council, and in 1783 was sent as delegate to the Continental Congress, where he moved for, and was made chairman of, a committee giving Congress power to regulate interstate commerce. It was this that led to the Annapolis Convention. In the Continental Congress and everywhere and at all times, Monroe insisted on our rights in the navigation of the Mississippi River.

In 1787 he was again in the Virginia Assembly and also
member of Virginia’s Constitutional Convention. The Federal Constitution he opposed as conferring too much power on the general government. In 1790 he was United States Senator until, in 1794, Washington sent him as Minister Plenipotentiary to France. Recalled in 1796 he served as Governor of Virginia from 1797 to 1802, and then Jefferson sent him to France where he aided in the Louisiana Purchase. While there he was dispatched to London and to Madrid to aid our regular Ministers.

Declining in 1808 to oppose Madison for the Presidency he served again as Senator in Virginia and in 1811 as Governor until April when he became Secretary of State, acting part of the time as Secretary of War also, until inaugurated President. With a few short intermissions his service covered a period of forty-one years.

Monroe believed free government could exist without parties, that the division into parties in England and in ancient republics was due to defects in the governments rather than in its nature, and that America had happily avoided those defects in her system. His administration for a time seemed to prove him right.

Soon after inauguration he toured the North; DeWitt Clinton, Tappam, and Rufus King in New York combined to welcome him; in New England John Adams, Otis, Gore, Quincy and other Federalists including Pickering joined to do him honor. It was in Boston the phrase was coined “Era of Good- feeling.”

John Quincy Adams was appointed Secretary of State, Crawford of the Treasury, Gen. Isaac Shelby of War, Wirt Attorney General, and Smith Thompson of the Navy. Shelby soon resigned and Clay, who had first been offered the place, again declined and Calhoun was appointed. This left the West unrepresented in the cabinet.

Adams was technically a Republican but inborn and by training and principle a Federalist, a moderate, broad-minded man far removed from the extreme views of the late leaders of the party whom he hated both on his father’s and his own account. Wirt was a Virginian, which partly defines his politics; he might be called a moderate Federalist, somewhere between Patrick Henry and John Marshall, but not so militant as either. His appointment was approved by Jefferson and Madison, but later was bitterly attacked by the Republican press. The other cabinet members were strong Republicans, and all had been loyal during the late war.

Few changes were made among office holders. Of the old

NATION UNIFIED UNDER MONROE

Federalists many were dead, others politically so, only Otis of the Hartford Convention element ever getting back to Washington, and a new set of men headed by Webster now represented New England at the nation’s capital.

Monroe’s appointment of his rival, Crawford, to his cabinet was not attended with the same results as Madison’s appointment of Monroe. Crawford is charged with thinking more of his own elevation than the success of the administration, and hampering it by intrigues. Adams and Clay, hoping to be President some day, were loyal to their chief.

America at peace and possessing an army and navy of proven strength commanded the respect of the world, and immigration set thetherward, at the rate at times of one thousand a week. We were looked on as the asylum of the oppressed of all nations. Our relations with Spain were unsullied, her South American colonies in revolt, and Ferdinand, receiving no support from the Allied Kings, was forced to make concessions. Monroe continued Madison’s and his own policy of neutrality between Spain and her colonies, but our sympathies were strong and Monroe sent commissioners to the South to gather information. Clay wanted immediate intervention—“I would not deliberate, I would act,” he exclaimed in Congress. His speech contained phrases strikingly like those of later Democrats on the Philippine question. “I shall redeem these people from the calamitous reproaches of ignorance, superstition and unfitness for self-government which are made against them.” Adams termed this “Clay’s rascorous benevolent stand.”

Debt reduction began in 1816, by 1818 amounted to $25,000,000, and the whole debt was prospering. Excise and direct taxes were discontinued. The bank and its branches prospering were proving a great financial convenience to government and people. Foreign commerce, however, had fallen off; no longer could our exporters get war prices, and European tariffs had been set up, which we partially avoided by reciprocal discriminating duties.

Protection heretofore had been only incidental, but the embargo and non-intercourse laws had greatly stimulated manufactures, notably in the Middle States and New England. The American System, championed by Clay, received strong support from the Middle States and was strongly opposed by the South; in New England commerce and shipping, old and established in power, gave only varying support to anything that restricted trade. The tariff was reduced gradually. The first high tariff
association was the American Society for the Encouragement of American Manufactures, organized in New York by the woolen and cotton manufacturers. Vice-President Tecumseh was president, and Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Adams members. But tariff was not yet a partisan political issue, only an economic one under discussion.

The Republican Party, comprising four-fifths of the people, under Monroe took over in modified form some of the best principles of Federalism, yet Jefferson was still the party’s prophet and was constantly consulted. Contemporaneous with the death of ultra-Federalism was the birth of a more démocrat républican; quiescent under Monroe, it began to assert itself in 1824.

Laboring men, congregated in large bodies in large manufacturing plants, began to think more in concert and to question, and to assert rights as citizens; the growing West was assertive, too, and disinclined to be in leading strings to the men of the East, wise or otherwise.

The spirit of Federalism survived in greatest vigor in the North and East among colleges and the learned professions, especially those who wrote history. Old families, rich merchants and manufacturers looking to government for class legislation, the old “governing class” still called themselves the “best citizens,” made up the remnant.

In state politics the disappearance of the Federalist Party was succeeded by factions. With the one-party condition existing, legislative caucus nominations amounted to pure bossism and the convention system came to prevail, Pennsylvania leading in the innovation. New York was divided into Clintonians and Anti-Clintonians, Van Buren with Tappeny and the Albany Regency opposing the Clintonians with varying success. In Connecticut Wolcott, a liberal, triumphed over John Cotton Smith and a revolution, breaking down the religious oligarchy before, followed under a new constitution. In nearly every state the liberal men controlled.

Internal improvements became a live issue. Madison had vetoed on constitutional grounds an internal improvement bill. Jefferson wrote in 1817 that the sole tenet dividing the Republicans and the Federalists was that Congress had not unlimited power to provide for the general welfare. He favored internal improvements, provided a constitutional amendment was adopted. John Q. Adams apostrophises the internal improvement policy, as one might write an ode to dawn and laments a narrow construction admitting the Louisiana Purchase but deny-
was to have a potent hand in the making and unmaking of Presidents. He visited New York and Philadelphia and was enthusiastically received. He toasted DeWitt Clinton at a Tammany dinner, but was forgiven. Whatever he did or his enemies did seemed to give him publicity and gain him favor. Though he now laughed at the idea of so unfit a man as himself being made President, there were Northern and Western Democrats who were looking for just such a popular hero who could crush the Congressional caucus and be the people’s candidate and the people’s President. Clay, Crawford and other others had served Jackson well.

For $5,000,000 Spain sold us the Floridas, and the western Louisiana boundary was fixed at the Sabine, Red and Arkansas Rivers to the 42 degree N and along that line to the Pacific, an unsatisfactory boundary to many since it cut off our settlers west of the Sabine. Monroe did not press this point for two reasons. It was only a question of time, he regarded it, when Spanish dominion over that country would disappear and natural consequences follow; and Eastern and Northern jealousy of enlargement to the South and West could barely swallow Florida right at this juncture, much less a large slice of Western possible slave territory. The slave question made annexation a burning issue.

From his earliest public life Monroe had taken a vigorous interest in the West and had been, in the Virginia Assembly, in the Continental Congress and in the Senate, the chief assertor and defender of the right of navigation of the Mississippi when the West had no representatives. The extension of our boundaries to the Pacific in the Northwest gave him as much pleasure as the acquisition of the 60,000,000 acres of the Floridas.

Monroe’s first message was one of general felicitation. Cropped good, public and private credit good, foreign relations good; local jealousies ended, national income increasing, tax reduction possible, land values rising, army and navy in excellent condition, Indian troubles small, manufacturing growing and to be encouraged, our relations with Spain peaceful despite our kindly interest in her revolted colonies.

His message to the second session was similar, but more moderate in cheerfulness. We had troubles in Florida which General Jackson had settled well though a little irregularly. We would adhere to our kindly neutrality toward Southern Republics. The increase in number of states would increase confidence in our government.
NATION UNIFIED UNDER MONROE

the bank was not sectional, Easterners, Northerners, Southerners and Westerners voting no, Harrison among them.

Supported though it was by Congress, the bank was becoming unpopular. Much of the paper money issued by state banks during the war was held by the bank and the redemption of it drained the country of specie and broke many small banks. Then the bank declared a rule that notes issued by its branches were redeemable only at the issuing branch. A merchant in New Orleans receiving Boston branch notes would have to pay exchange in New Orleans, or in New York if he paid a New York bill with them. The Boston branch refused to receive the Baltimore branch notes at all, unless to redeem the notes of any branch other than its own. A panic occurred in Baltimore and runs commenced on state banks in the Middle, Western and Southern States. Pennsylvania led in attempts to tax the bank out of existence, but Marshall held such laws unconstitutional.

1819-1820 was a period of depression and many men were ruined.

Our foreign relations were indeed in excellent shape. England now began to sour our interest, and to favor Anglo-Saxon cooperation in world politics and commerce. Richard Rush, our Minister in London, was a capable man suited to the post, and compensation was obtained at last for the slaves seized during the War of 1812 when Spain supported the British. Spain delayed payment until the Treaty of Ghent, fearing that we would then recognize her colonies, and Monroe asked for authority to take possession pending ratification.

Spain was the subject of the President's message to the Sixteenth Congress, but Congress devoted its attention to the West, to Missouri and the slavery question.

Between the extremes, those who would call the roll of their slaves on Bank Hill and those who thought the Constitution a slave code, it was generally conceded that the thirteen original states could be free or slave just as they chose. Opinion was divided whether a state admitted under a clause prohibiting slavery was bound by that or had the same sovereign rights of the original states, including the right to be free or slave. The great question was Congress' power to exclude slavery from a territory, whether a slaveholder could take his human property there just as his other possessions, and whether the citizens of forming a state could form a slave state if they chose. There were many finer points involved capable of infinite debate.

With more than half the Southern people repudiating slavery, including such men as Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe, and with a large minority of Southern men politically
opposed to it, and the great majority of Northern and Eastern men against it, slavery having been abolished or in process of abolition in all those states, it seems that the question could have been easily settled.

But the race question was the larger half of the negro problem. Tens of thousands of Southerners, themselves slave-holders, would have voted slavery out if by so doing they could have been rid of the colored inhabitants. This was boldly stated in debate later by Senator Underwood, Whig, of Kentucky, grandfather of O. W. Underwood, the great Democrat of later days. Northern and Western States, some of them, had stringent laws prohibiting the presence of men of color. Years later when John Randolph's executors took his freed slaves to settle them on land in Illinois bought for the purpose, men met them with guns and drove them back. If Illinois would not allow a few free negroes in its borders, who could expect Mississippi to have hundreds of thousands of them free citizens? What just man would impose such an intolerable curse, as it was then regarded, on his Southern brethren? Since the two races must live together slavery was deemed the best condition for the negro. Thus a certain sense of justice in the North preserved the great unjust institution in the South.

Another grave consideration gave thoughtful men pause. Thousands of men living in free states and opposed to slavery saw insalubrious danger in unlimited Congressional control of the question. If Congress could prohibit slavery in a territory, it could by the same power impose it. Pinkney's gorgeous statement of this view was made in the Senate in reply to King:

"Slavery: a pestilent disease—Be it so. Yet if you have power to medicine it is the way proposed and in virtue of the diploma which you claim, you have also power in the distribution of your political aether for to present the healthful drugs in every territory that would become a state and bid it drink: or remain a colony forever."

However constitutional it might be, this was too dangerous a power to entrust to a shifting body like Congress. Between the horns of this dilemma the country hung until 1860.

Liberia was established, with government aid by donations, and captured slaves sent there. The American Society for Promoting Abolition of Slavery—Benjamin Franklin had been its first president—convened for the first time in years, and anti-slavery agitation began in the North and East. Old line Federalists like King and young Federalists like Webster took leading parts in the new movement. They drew to them many Republicans who agreed with them on this issue. Thus began that alignment which later separated the Republican (Democratic), and formed the Whig Party.

There was a great battle over the admission of Missouri. Since the last session of Congress Massachusetts had agreed to the Maine district being made a separate state provided it was accepted by Congress before March 4, 1820. The admission of both would preserve the balance, and Maine's admission as a separate state was the price of Missouri's admission without restriction, with the famous Missouri Compromise as a rider—Slavery prohibited forever in all the rest of the Louisiana Purchase north of the parallel 36° 30'.

Monroe, who had hoped for and foreseen a compromise and had consulted John Adams, Jefferson and Madison, before signing the compromise bill, questioned his cabinet as to its constitutionality. Could Congress prohibit slavery in a territory, and did the word "forever" apply only to a territorial condition or to states when formed? All answered the first question in the affirmative, but on the second there was difference of opinion. Monroe signed the bill. The written opinions of the cabinet members disappeared from the files of the State Department, the envelope only remaining. It is known, however, that Adams stood at one end and Calhoun at the other.

The first session of the Sixteenth Congress, December, 1819, debated long the admission of Missouri, the Senate debate using three hundred and fifty pages of the Annals, the House more than six hundred. Clay was elected Speaker by a vote of 147 to 8 scattering. The anti-slavery element controlled the House, the pro-slavery the Senate. The Senate joined the Maine and Missouri bills with no restriction as to slavery. Rufus King led for the North, in a speech not reported, and Pinkney for the South in a speech heretofore quoted from, before a crowded Senate chamber, galleries and corridors, the most notable debate for many years. The Missouri Compromise was proposed by Senator Thomas of Illinois and provided the way out of the difficulty. The resolution uniting the bills passed 23 to 21, the compromise proviso 34 to 10 and the joint bill admitting the states and carrying the compromise passed 24 to 20, Delaware and Illinois voting with the South.

The House had meanwhile been debating its own Missouri bill. It rejected the Senate bill 93 to 72 and the compromise 159 to 18, passing the Maine bill by a vote of 20. A conference between the two houses resulted, Clay as Speaker appointing
the New England states, and Clay and the more restrained aspirations of Adams seemed the only way of opposing him. A compromise was held, but it directed no prohibitions were necessary. The 6th Congress, elected in 1818, was the last of the Adams administration. Clay's main aim was to prevent the secession of the southern states, and the compromise was a significant victory for him. However, Clay's career was marked by setbacks, and he did not resume his political activities until 1823, when he was appointed as the second secretary of state in the Adams administration. Clay's resignation as Secretary of State in 1823 was a significant event in his career. He then became the Democratic candidate for the presidency in the 1824 election, but he lost to Jackson. Clay's career as a statesman and politician continued to be marked by his political acumen and his dedication to the principles of the Democratic-Republican Party. Clay was a key figure in the politics of the early 19th century, and his influence on American politics was significant. The story of Clay's political life is a testament to the importance of his role in American history.