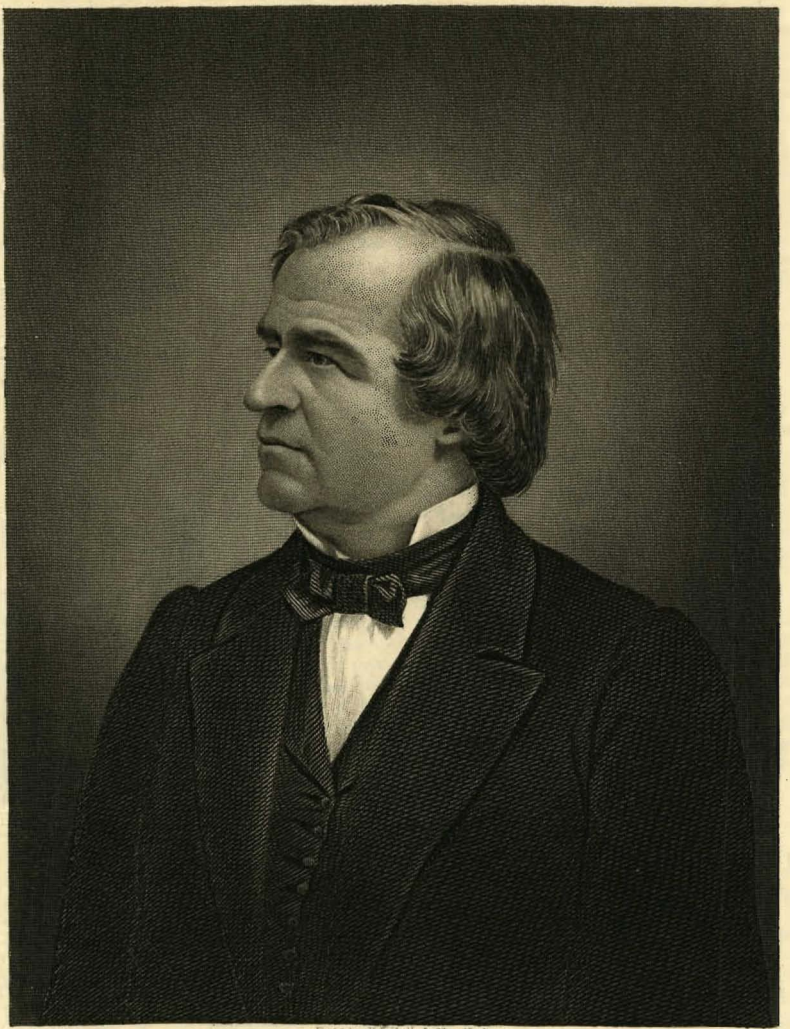
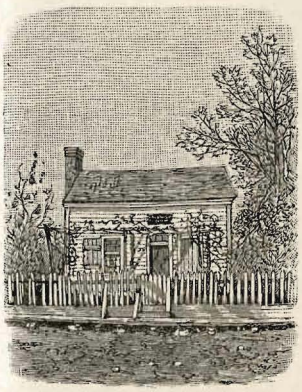


Engd by H.B.Hall, Jr. New York.

JOHNSON, Andrew, seventeenth president of the United States, b. in Raleigh, N. C., 29 Dec., 1808; d. near Carter's Station, Tenn., 31 July, 1875. His parents were very poor, and when he was four years old his father died of injuries received in saving another from drowning. At the age of ten Andrew was apprenticed to a tailor. A natural craving to learn was fostered by hearing a gentleman read from "The American Speaker." The boy was taught the alphabet by fellow-workmen, borrowed the book and learned to read. In 1824 he removed to Laurens Court-House, S. C., where he worked as a journeyman tailor. The illustration on page 437 represents the small shop in which he pursued the calling that is announced on the sign over the door. In May, 1826, he returned to Raleigh, and in September, with his mother and step-father, he set out in a two-wheeled cart, drawn by a blind pony, for Greenville, Tenn. Here he married Eliza McCardle, a woman of refinement, who taught him to write, and read to him while he was at work during the day. It was not until he had been in congress that he learned to write with ease. From Greenville he went to the west, but returned after the lapse of a year. In those days Tennessee was controlled by landholders, whose interests were fostered by the state constitution, and Greenville was ruled by what was called an "aristocratic coterie of the quality." Johnson resisted their supremacy, and made himself a leader of the opposition. In 1828 he was elected alderman, in 1829 and 1830 was re-elected, and in 1830 was advanced to the mayoralty, which office he held for three years. In 1831 the county court appointed him a trustee of Rhea academy, and about this time he took part in the debates of a society at Greenville college. In 1834 he advocated the adoption of the new state constitution, by which the influence of the large landholders was abridged. In 1835 he represented Greene and Washington counties in the legislature. He resisted the popular mania for internal improvements, which caused his defeat in 1837, but the reaction justified his foresight, strengthened his influence, and restored his popularity. In 1839 he was returned. In 1836 he supported Hugh L. White for the presidency, and was a Bell man in the warm personal and political altercations between John Bell and James K. Polk, which distracted Tennessee at this time. Johnson was the only ardent follower of Bell that failed to go over to the Whig party. In 1840 he was an elector for the state-at-large on Van Buren's ticket, and made a state reputation by the force of his oratory. In 1841 he was elected

to the state senate from Greene and Hawkins counties, and while in that body he was one of the "immortal 13" Democrats who, having it in their power to prevent the election of a Whig senator, did so by refusing to meet the house in joint convention. He also proposed that the basis of representation should rest upon the white votes, without regard to the ownership of slaves.

In 1843 he was elected to congress over John A. Asken, a U. S. bank Democrat, who was supported by the Whigs. His first speech was in support of the resolution to restore to Gen. Jackson the fine imposed upon him at New Orleans. He supported the annexation of Texas. In 1845 he was re-elected, and sustained Polk's administration. He opposed all expenditures for internal improvements that were not general, and resisted and defeated the proposed contingent tax of ten per cent. on tea and coffee. He was regularly re-elected until 1853. During this period he made his celebrated defence of the veto power, and urged the adoption of the homestead law, which was obnoxious to the slave-holding power of the south. He supported the compromise measures of 1850 as a matter of expediency, but opposed compromises in general as a sacrifice of principle. In 1853 the district lines were so "gerrymandered" as to throw him into a district in which the Whigs had an overwhelming majority. Johnson at once announced himself a candidate for the governorship, and was elected by a fair majority. In his message to the legislature he dwelt upon the homestead law and other measures for the benefit of the working-classes, and earned the title of the "mechanic governor." He opposed the Know-nothing movement with characteristic vehemence. In 1855 he was opposed by Meredith P. Gentry, the Whig candidate, and defeated him after a canvass remarkable for the feeling displayed. Mr. Johnson earnestly supported the Kansas-Nebraska bill.



In 1857 he was elected to the U. S. senate, where he urged the passage of the homestead bill, and on 20 May, 1858, made his greatest speech on this subject. Finally, in 1860, he had the momentary gratification of seeing his favorite bill pass both houses of congress, but President Buchanan vetoed it, and the veto was sustained. Johnson revived it at the next session, and also introduced a resolution looking to a retrenchment in the expenditures of the government, and on constitutional grounds opposed the grant of aid for the construction of a Pacific railroad. He was prominent in debate, and frequently clashed with southern supporters of the administration. His pronounced Unionism estranged him from the slave-holders on the one side, while his acceptance of slavery as an institution guaranteed by the constitution caused him to hold aloof from the Republicans on the other. This intermediate position suggested his availability as a popular candidate for the presidency; but in the Democratic convention he received only the vote of Tennessee, and when the convention reassembled in Baltimore he withdrew his name. In the canvass that followed, he supported the extreme pro-slavery candidate, Breckinridge. Johnson had never believed it possible that any organized attempt to dissolve the Union could be made; but the events preceding the session of congress beginning in December, 1860, convinced him of his error. When congress met, he took decided and unequivocal grounds in opposition to secession, and on 13 Dec. introduced a joint resolution, proposing to amend the constitution so as to elect the president and vice-president by district votes, to elect senators by a direct popular vote, and to limit the terms of Federal judges to twelve years, half of them to be from slave-holding and half from non-slave-holding states. In his speech on this resolution, 18 and 19 Dec., he declared his unyielding opposition to secession, and announced his intention to stand by and act in and under the constitution. The southern states were then in the act of seceding, and every word uttered in congress was read and discussed with eagerness by thirty millions of people. Johnson's speech, coming from a southern man, thrilled the popular heart; but his popularity in the north was offset by the virulence with which he was assailed in the south. In a speech delivered 2 March, 1861, he said, referring to the secessionists: "I would have them arrested and tried for treason, and, if convicted, by the eternal God, they should suffer the penalty of the law at the hands of the executioner." Returning to Tennessee from Washington, he was attacked at Liberty, Va., by a mob, but drove them back with his pistol. At Lynchburg he was hooted and hissed, and at various places burned in effigy. He attended the East Tennessee union convention, in Cincinnati, 30 May, and again on 19 June he visited the same place and was received with enthusiasm. Here he declared for a vigorous prosecution of the war.

He retained his seat in the senate until appointed by President Lincoln military governor of Tennessee, 4 March, 1862. On 12 March he reached Nashville, and organized a provisional government for the state. On 18 March he issued a proclamation, in which he appealed to the people to return to their allegiance, to uphold the law, and to accept "a full and competent amnesty for all past acts and declarations." He required the city council to take the oath of allegiance to the United States. They refused, and he removed them and appointed others. He urged the holding of Union meetings throughout the state, and frequently attended them in person. It was chiefly due to his courage that Nashville was held against a Confederate force. He completed the railroad from Nashville to Tennessee river, and raised 25 regiments for service in the state. On 8 Dec., 1862, he issued a proclamation ordering congressional elections, and on the 15th levied an assessment upon the richer southern sympathizers, "in behalf of the many helpless widows, wives, and children in the city of Nashville who have been reduced to poverty and wretchedness in consequence of their husbands, sons, and fathers having been forced into the armies of this unholy and nefarious rebellion." On 20 Feb., 1863, Gov. Johnson issued a proclamation warning the agents of all "traitors" to retain their collections until some person should be appointed to receive them for the United States. During the term of his service, Gov. Johnson exercised absolute and autocratic powers, but with singular moderation and discretion, and his course strengthened the Union cause in Tennessee. The Republican convention assembled in Baltimore, 6 June,

1864, and renominated Mr. Lincoln for the presidency by acclamation. There was a strong sentiment in favor of recognizing the political sacrifices made for the cause of the Union by the war Democrats, and it was generally conceded that New York should decide who was to be the individual. Daniel S. Dickinson, of that state, was most prominent in this connection; but internal factional divisions made it impossible for him to obtain the solid vote of that state, and Sec. Seward's friends feared this nomination would force him from the cabinet. Henry J. Raymond urged the name of Andrew Johnson, and he was accordingly selected. Johnson, in his letter of acceptance, virtually disclaimed any departure from his principles as a Democrat, but placed his acceptance upon the ground of "the higher duty of first preserving the government." He accepted the emancipation proclamation as a war measure, to be subsequently ratified by constitutional amendment. In his inaugural address as vice-president, 4 March, 1865, a lack of dignity in his bearing and an incoherency in his speech were attributed to the influence of strong drink. As a matter of fact, he was much worn by disease, and had taken a little stimulant to aid him in the ordeal of inauguration, and in his weakened condition the effect was more decided than he anticipated. This explanation was generally accepted by the country.

On 14 April, 1865, President Lincoln was assassinated, and Mr. Johnson was at once sworn in as president, at his rooms in the Kirkwood house, by Chief-Justice Chase. In his remarks to those present Mr. Johnson said: "As to an indication of any policy which may be pursued by me in the administration of the government, I have to say that that must be left for development as the administration progresses. The message or declaration must be made by the acts as they transpire. The only assurance I can now give of the future is reference to the past." In his addresses to various delegations that called upon him, he emphasized the fact that he advocated a course of forbearance toward the mass of the southern people, but demanded punishment for those who had been leaders. "Treason is a crime," he said to the Illinois delegation, "and must be punished." At the time it was generally supposed that Johnson, who was known to be personally embittered against the dominant classes in the south, would inaugurate a reign of terror and decimate those who had taken up arms against the national authority. His protest against the terms of surrender granted to Gen. Lee by Gen. Grant, and utterances in private conversation, strengthened the fear that he would be too bloody and vindictive. He was supposed not to have been in accord with the humane policy that Lincoln had foreshadowed, and his silence in reference to Lincoln's policy, which amounted to ignoring it, was accepted as a proof that he did not intend to follow this course. On one occasion he said: "In regard to my future course, I will now make no professions, no pledges." And again: "My past life, especially my course during the present unholy rebellion, is before you. I have no principles to retract. I defy any one to point to any of my public acts at variance with the fixed principles which have guided me through life." It was evident that the difference in views of public policy, which were kept in abeyance during the war, would now come to the surface. The surrender of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's army, 26 April, 1865, was practically the end of the war (although 20 Aug., 1866, was officially fixed as the close of the civil war by the second section of the act of 2 March, 1867), and on 29 April President Johnson issued a proclamation for the removal of trade restrictions in most of the insurrectionary states, which, being in contravention of an act of congress, was subsequently modified. On 9 May, 1865, he issued a proclamation restoring Virginia to the Union, and on 22 May all ports except four in Texas were opened to foreign commerce. On 29 May a general amnesty was declared to all except fourteen specified classes of citizens. Among the number excepted were "all participants in the rebellion the estimated value of whose taxable property is over twenty thousand dollars." This exception was undoubtedly the result of personal feeling on the part of the president. It began to be perceived that a change was taking place in his sentiments, and this was attributed to the influence of Sec. Seward, who was popularly supposed to perpetuate the humane spirit of the dead president. Those who had fears of too great severity now anticipated too great leniency. After the amnesty proclamation, the fundamental and irreconcilable difference between President Johnson and the party that had elevated him to power became more apparent. The constitution made no provision for the readmission of a state that had withdrawn from the Union, and Mr. Johnson, as a state-rights Democrat, held that the southern states had never been out of the Union; that the leaders were solely responsible; that as soon as the seceded states applied for readmission under such a form of government as complied with the requirements of the constitution, the Federal government had no power to refuse them admission, or to make any conditions upon subjects over which the constitution had not expressly given congress jurisdiction. The Republican leaders held that the action of the seceded states had deprived them of their rights as members of the Union; that in any event they were conquered, and as such at the mercy of the conqueror; and that, at best, they stood in the category of territories seeking admission to the Union, in which case congress could admit or reject them at will. The particular question that brought on a clash between these principles was the civil status of the negro. The 13th amendment became a law, 18 Dec., 1865, with Johnson's concurrence. The Republicans held that slavery had been the cause of the war; that only by giving the freedman the right to vote could he be protected, and the results of the war secured; and that no state should be admitted until it had granted the right of suffrage to the negroes within its borders. Johnson held this to be a matter of internal regulation, beyond the control of congress. From 9 May till 13 July he appointed provisional governors for seven states, whose duties were to reorganize the governments. The state governments were organized, but passed such stringent laws in reference to the negroes that the Republicans declared it was a worse form of slavery than the old. When congress met in December, 1865, it was overwhelmingly Republican and firmly determined to protect the negro against outrage and oppression. The first breach between the president and the party in power was the veto of the freedman's bureau bill in February, 1866, which was designed to protect the negroes. One of the grounds of the veto was, that it had been passed by a congress in which the southern states had no representatives. On 27 March the president vetoed the civil rights bill, which made freedmen citizens without the right of suffrage. The chief ground of objection was the interference

with the rights of the states. This bill was passed over the veto. On 16 June the 14th amendment to the constitution, which contained the principle of the civil rights bill, was proposed, disapproved by the president, but ratified and declared in force, 28 July, 1868. Both houses of congress passed a joint resolution that the delegation from a state lately in rebellion should not be received by either the senate or the house until both united in declaring said state a member of the Union. In July the second freedman's bureau bill was passed, vetoed, and passed over the veto. In June, 1866, the Republicans in congress brought forward their plan of reconstruction, which was called the "congressional plan," in contradistinction to the president's plan, of which he spoke as "my policy." The chief features of the congressional plan were, to give the negroes the right to vote, to protect them in this right, and to prevent the Confederate leaders from voting. Congress met on 3 Dec., 1866. The bill giving negroes the right of suffrage in the District of Columbia was passed over a veto. An attempt was made to impeach the president, but it failed. In January, 1867, a bill was passed to deprive the president of the power to proclaim general amnesty, which he disregarded. Measures were adopted looking to the meeting of the 40th and all subsequent congresses immediately upon the adjournment of the predecessor. The president was deprived of the command of the army by a "rider" to the army appropriation bill, which provided that his orders should only be given through the general, who was not to be removed without the previous consent of the senate. The bill admitting Nebraska provided that no law should ever be passed in that state denying the right of suffrage to any person because of his color or race. This was vetoed, and passed over the veto. On 2 March, 1867, the "bill to provide efficient governments for the insurrectionary states," which embodied the congressional plan of reconstruction, was passed, vetoed, and passed over the veto. This divided the southern states into military districts, each under a brigadier-general, who was to preserve order and exercise all the functions of government until the citizens had formed a state government, ratified the amendments, and been admitted to the Union. On 2 March, 1867, the tenure-of-office bill was passed over the veto. This provided that civil officers should remain in office until the confirmation of their successors; that the members of the cabinet should be removed only with the consent of the senate; and that when congress was not in session, the president could suspend, but not remove, any official, and in case the senate at the next session should not ratify the suspension, the suspended official should be reinducted into his office. The elections of 1866 were uniformly favorable to the Republicans, and gave them a two-third majority in both house and senate. On 5 Aug., 1867, the president requested Edwin M. Stanton to resign his office as secretary of war. Mr. Stanton refused, was suspended, and Gen. Grant was appointed in his place. When congress met, it refused to ratify the suspension. Gen. Grant then resigned, and Mr. Stanton again entered upon the duties of his office. The president removed him, and appointed Lorenzo Thomas, adjutant-general, U. S. army. The senate declared this act illegal, and Mr. Stanton refused to comply, and notified the speaker of the house. On 24 Feb., 1868, the house passed a resolution for the impeachment of the president. The trial began on 5 March. The main articles of impeachment were for violating the provisions of the tenure-of-office act, which it was claimed he had done in order to test its constitutionality. After the trial began, the president made a tour through the northwest, which was called "swinging round the circle," because in his speeches he declared that he had swung around the entire circle of offices, from alderman to president. He made many violent and intemperate speeches to the crowds that assembled to meet him, and denounced the congress then sitting as "no congress," because of its refusal to admit the representatives and senators from the south, and on these speeches were based additional articles of impeachment. On 16 May the test vote was had. Thirty-five senators were for conviction and nineteen for acquittal. A change of one vote would have carried conviction. The senate adjourned *sine die*, and a verdict of acquittal was entered. After the expiration of his term the president returned to Tennessee. He was a candidate for the U. S. senate, but was defeated. In 1872 he was a candidate for congressman from the state-at-large, and, though defeated, he regained his hold upon the people of the state, and in January, 1875, was elected to the senate, taking his seat at the extra session of 1875. Two weeks after the session began he made a speech which was a skilful but bitter attack upon Gen. Grant. He returned home at the end of the session, and in July visited his daughter, who lived near Carter's station in east Tennessee. There he was stricken with paralysis, 29 July, and died the next day. He was buried at Greenville. His "Speeches" were published with a biographical introduction by Frank Moore (Boston, 1865), and his "Life and Times" were written by the late John Savage (New York, 1866). See also "The Tailor Boy" (Boston, 1865), and "The Trial of Andrew Johnson on Impeachment" (3 vols., Washington, 1868).—His wife, **Eliza McCardle**, b. in Leesburg, Washington co., Tenn., 4 Oct., 1810; d. in Home, Greene co., Tenn., 15 Jan., 1876, was the only daughter of a widow in Greenville, Tenn. On 27 May, 1826, she married Andrew Johnson, and devoted herself to his interests and education, contributing effectually toward his future career. She remained in Greenville while he served in the legislature, and in 1861 spent two months in Washington while Mr. Johnson was in the senate. Owing to impaired health she returned to Greenville, and while there received an order, dated 24 April, 1862, requiring her to pass beyond the Confederate lines through Nashville in thirty-six hours. This was impossible, owing to her illness, and she therefore remained in Greenville all summer, hearing constantly rumors of Mr. Johnson's murder. In September she applied for permission to cross the line, and, accompanied by her children and Mr. Daniel Stover, she began her journey to Nashville. At Murfreesboro they were met by Gen. Forrest, who detained them until Isham G. Harris and Andrew Ewing obtained permission from the authorities at Richmond for them to pass. Mrs. Johnson joined her husband at Nashville. During her residence

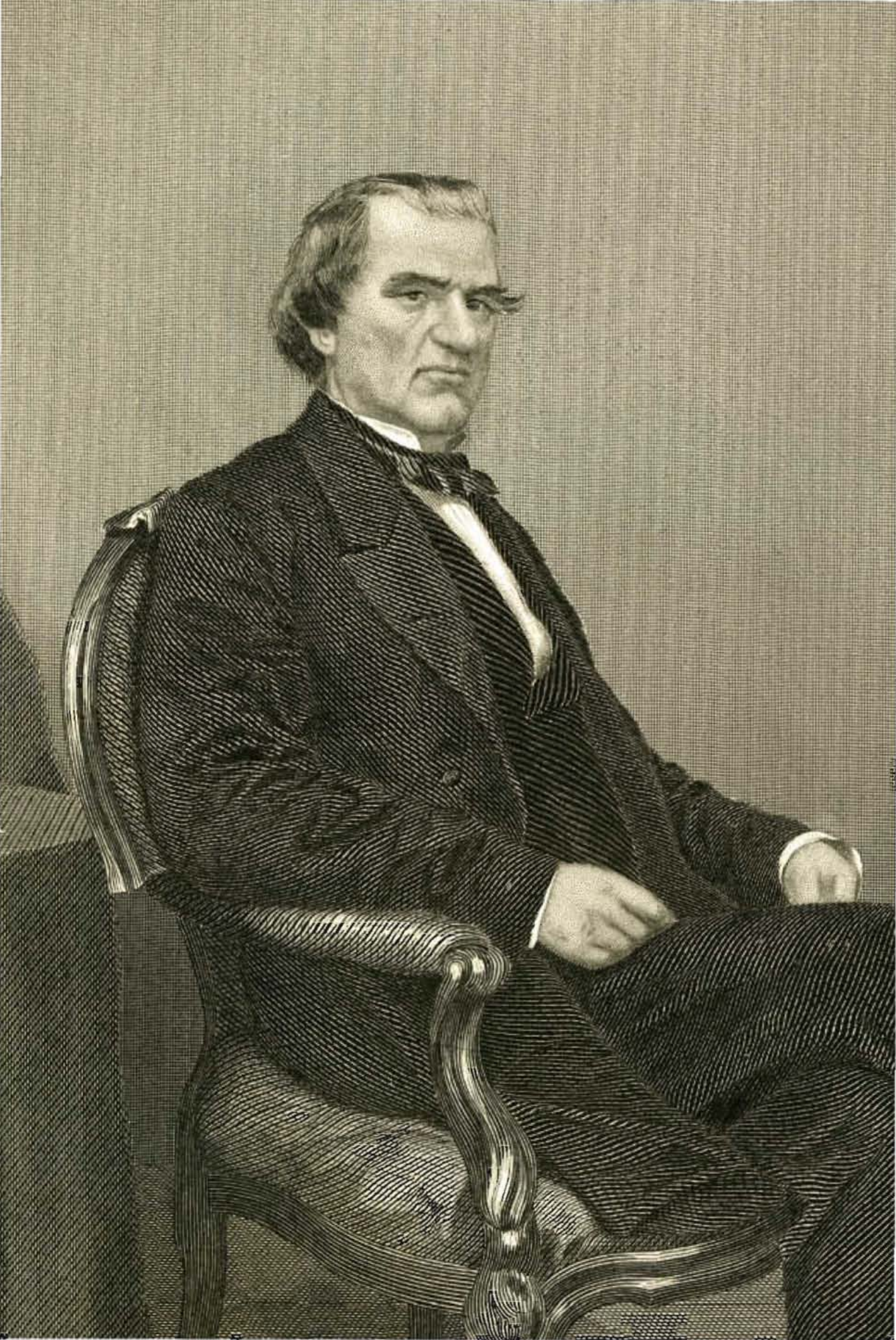
Eliza Johnson

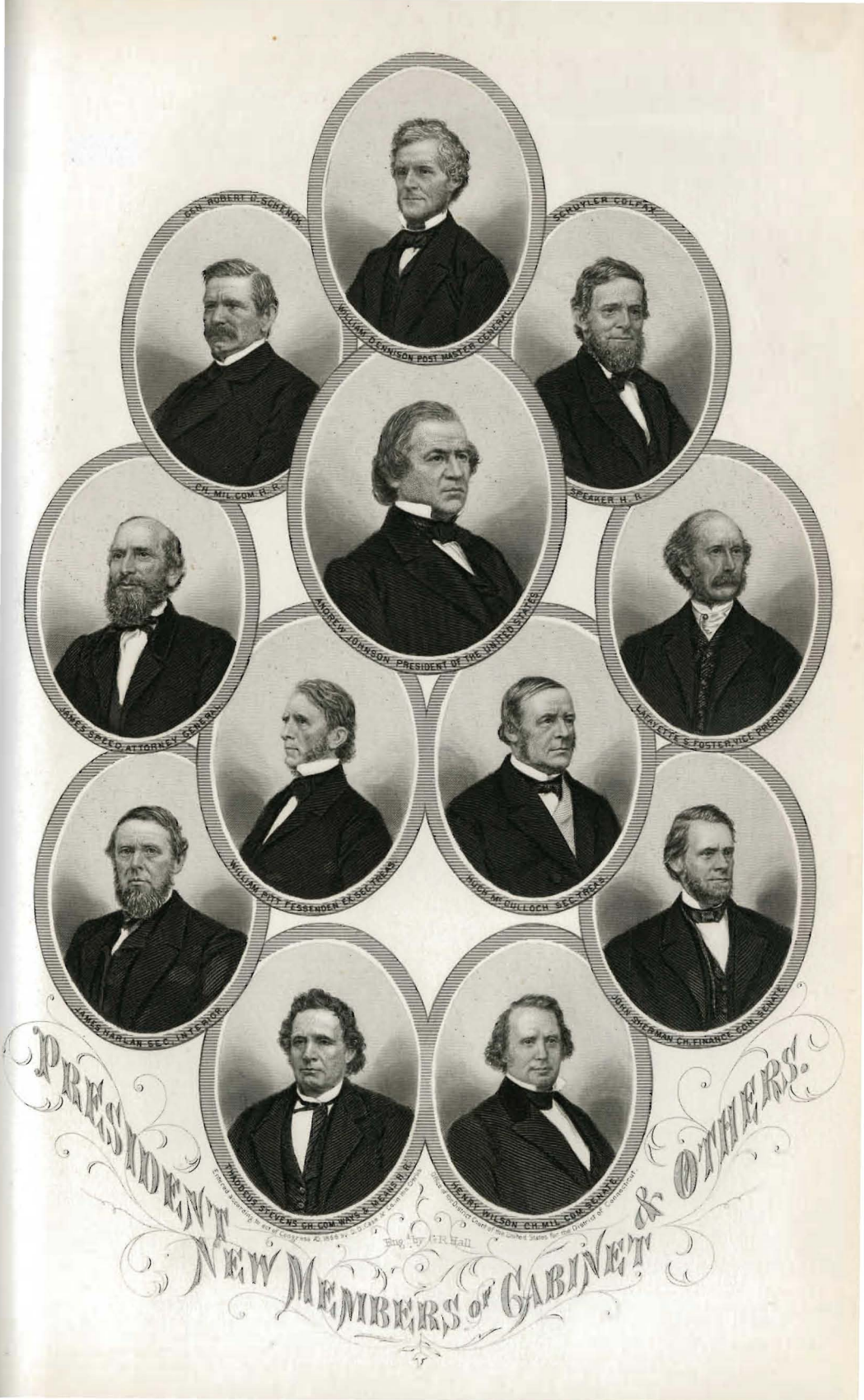
in Washington Mrs. Johnson appeared in society as little as possible.—Their daughter, **Martha,** b. in Greenville, Tenn., 25 Oct., 1828, was educated in Georgetown, D. C., and during her school-life was a frequent guest in the White House in President Polk's administration. She returned to east Tennessee in 1851, and on 13 Dec., 1857, married Judge David T. Patterson. She presided at the White House in place of her invalid mother, and, with her sister, assisted in the first reception that was held by President Johnson, 1 Jan., 1866. During the early spring an appropriation of $30,000 was made by congress to refurnish the executive mansion, and Mrs. Patterson superintended the purchases. —Another daughter, **Mary,** b. in Greenville, Tenn., 8 May, 1832; d. in Bluff City, Tenn., 19 April, 1883, married Daniel Stover, of Carter county, who died in 1862, and in 1869 she married William R. Brown, of Greenville, Tenn. The president had three sons, Charles (1830–'63), Robert (1834–'69), who was his secretary, and Andrew (1852–'79).

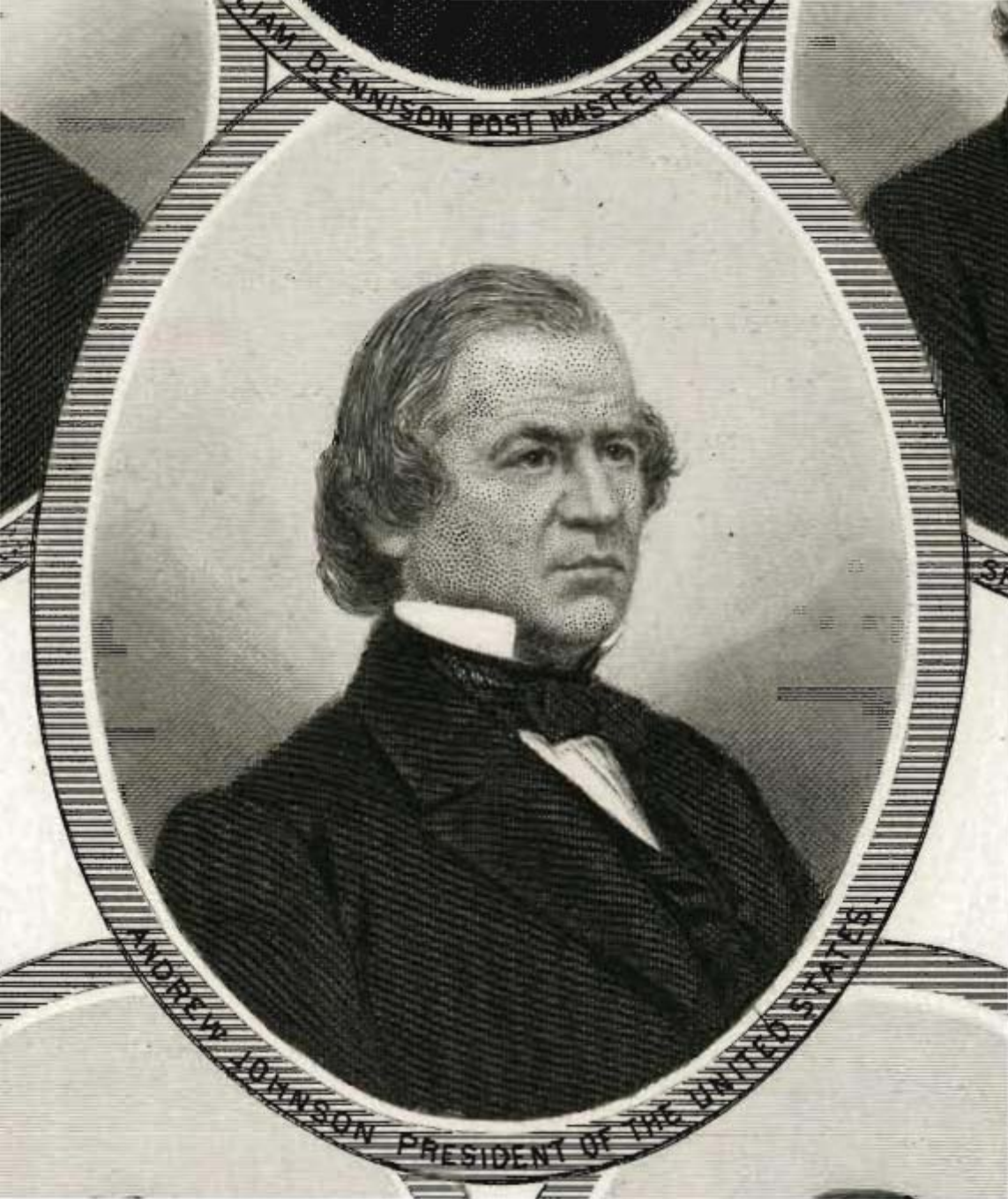
Painted by Alonzo Chappel

Andrew Johnson

Likeness from a recent Photograph from life.




GEN. ROBERT H. SCHENCK
SCHUYLER COLFAX
WILLIAM DENNISON POST MASTER GENERAL
CH. MIL. COM. H. R.
SPEAKER H. R.
ANDREW JOHNSON PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
JAMES SPEED ATTORNEY GENERAL
LAFAYETTE S. FOSTER VICE PRESIDENT
WILLIAM PITT FESSENDEN EX SEC. TREAS.
HUGH MCCULLOCH SEC. TREAS.
JAMES HARLAN SEC. OF INTERIOR
JOHN SHERMAN CH. FINANCE COM. SENATE
THADDEUS STEVENS CH. COM. WAYS & MEANS H. R.
HENRY WILSON CH. MIL. COM. SENATE
PRESIDENT & OTHERS.
NEW MEMBERS OF CABINET
Engd. by J. R. Hall


ANDREW JOHNSON PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

XXXV.

DEATH OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN—PEACE.

JOHNSTON—DAVIS—TAYLOR—KIRBY SMITH.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN had gone [1] down to the front in anticipation of Grant's final movement against Lee's right south of Petersburg, and was thenceforward in constant communication with the Lieutenant-General commanding in the field, while Lee made his assault on our lines, Sheridan crossed the James, moving from our farthest right to our extreme left, and Grant impelled the advance of that left with such memorable results. He was mainly at City Point, receiving reports from Grant and telegraphing their substance to the War Department for dissemination over the country till the day after Richmond fell; when [2] he accompanied Admiral Porter in a gunboat up to Rockett's, a mile below the city, and thence was rowed up to the wharf, and walked thence, attended by Admiral Porter and by a few sailors armed with carbines, to Gen. Weitzel's headquarters, in the house so recently and suddenly abandoned by Jefferson Davis. Recognized and stared at by all, his hearty greetings, aside from those of our soldiers, were all but confined to the Blacks, who crowded in thousands to welcome and bless their emancipator; so that it became necessary to summon a military force to clear a way for him through the streets. After holding a hasty levee, the President took a rapid drive through the principal streets, and, at 6½ P. M., left on his return to City Point; whence he repeated his visit to Richmond two days later—this time attended by Mrs. Lincoln, by Vice-President Johnson, several U. S. Senators, &c. He was now waited on by several leading Confederates, who, seeing that their cause was hopelessly lost, were naturally anxious to make the best terms possible; and to whom, in a spirit of kindness and magnanimity that had never been shaken, he lent a favorable ear. In deference to a suggestion by some of their number, he wrote the following:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES, CITY POINT, April 6, 1865.

"Major-Gen. WEITZEL, Richmond, Va.:

"It has been intimated to me that the gentlemen who have acted as the Legislature of Virginia, in support of the Rebellion, may now desire to assemble at Richmond and take measures to withdraw the Virginia troops and other support from resistance to the General Government. If they attempt it, give them permission and protection, until, if at all, they attempt some action hostile to the United States; in which case, you will notify them, giving them reasonable time to leave, and at the end of which time arrest any who remain. Allow Judge Campbell to see this, but do not make it public. Yours, etc., A. LINCOLN."

The President returned, on the day of Lee's surrender, to Washington; whence he dispatched [3] to Gen. Weitzel a recall of the permission above given—the object contemplated by it having been otherwise fully attained. He had, the day before, issued two Proclamations: one of them closing, till further orders, in accordance with law, certain ports in the Rebel States whereof the blockade had been raised by their capture respectively; the other, de-

[1] March 24. [2] April 4. [3] April 12.

manding henceforth for our National vessels in foreign ports, on penalty of retaliation, those privileges and immunities which had hitherto been denied them on the plea of according equal belligerent rights to the Republic and its internal foes. He made, next evening,[4] to a vast crowd assembled before the Executive Mansion expressly to hear it, an address on Reconstruction, whereof it is only pertinent here to say that—while carefully remitting to Congress all questions connected with the representation of the revolted States in either House, and avowing his desire that a qualified Right of Suffrage be accorded to the Blacks of those States—he evinced an utter absence of resentment or bitterness toward the late Rebels, and an anxious wish that the Confederate States should be restored to all the functions of self-government and equal power in the Union at the earliest day consistent with the National integrity, tranquillity, and safety.

On the following day, an order issued from the War Department, previously approved by Gen. Grant, which appeared throughout the land in the journals of next morning,[5] putting a stop to all drafting and recruiting for our armies, with the purchase of arms, munitions, provisions, &c.; and it was announced that the number of our general and staff officers would be reduced, and all military restrictions on trade and commerce removed forthwith.

That day was the fourth anniversary of the surrender of Fort Sumter to the Rebels by Maj. Anderson; and a large number of loyal citizens, who rejoiced the more heartily in the downfall of the Rebellion because it involved the overthrow of Slavery, had gone down to Port Royal and Charleston to raise, with fitting observances, over the ruins of the historic fortress, the identical flag which had waved over it during its first bombardment, and which had been thoughtfully preserved for this purpose. The whole country was aglow with loyal rejoicings and congratulations; and the President, after attending a meeting of his Cabinet to receive a personal report from Gen. Grant, just arrived from Appomattox, listening to the story of Lee's surrender from his son, Capt. Robert Lincoln, who, being on Grant's staff, had been an eye-witness of the scene, and giving audience to several public men—among them John P. Hale, just appointed Minister to Madrid, and Speaker Colfax, who was taking leave for an overland journey to California and Oregon—concluded to seek relaxation from his many and weighty cares by spending the evening at Ford's Theater, where Gen. Grant and he had been publicly announced as probable visitors that night, while the former had been compelled by inexorable duties to disappoint the expectation thus excited. At 8 P. M., the President and his wife, with two others, rode to the theater, and were ushered into the private box previously secured by him; where, at 10½ P. M., while all were intent on the play, an actor of Baltimore birth—John Wilkes Booth by name, son of the more eminent English-born tragedian, Junius Brutus Booth—availing himself of that freedom of the house usually accorded at theaters to actors, entered at the

[4] April 12.

[5] April 14.

front door, stood for a few moments, after presenting a card to the President's messenger, in the passage-way behind the dress-circle, surveying the spectacle before him; then entered the vestibule of the President's private box, shut the door behind him, fastened it from the inside by placing a short plank (previously provided) against it, with its foot against the opposite wall, and then, holding a pistol and a dagger in either hand, stepped through the inner door into the box just behind the President, who was leaning forward with his eyes fixed on the stage, and fired his pistol, while holding it close to the back of the President's head, piercing his skull behind the left ear, and lodging the ball, after traversing the brain, just behind the right eye. Mr. Lincoln's head fell slightly forward, his eyes closed, but he uttered no word or cry; and, though life was not extinct for nine hours thereafter, he gave, thenceforth to his death in a neighboring house, at 7:22 next morning, no sign of intelligence; and it is probable that he never on earth knew that he had been shot, or was conscious even of suffering, much less of malice and murder. Hating and wishing ill to none, he had never comprehended the hell of demoniac passion which seethed and surged around him, and which the utter collapse of the Rebellion had only intensified; hence, he had ever treated lightly the anonymous threats which men placed as he was receive as matters of course, and had disregarded all entreaties that he should take precautions against assassination.

The report of Booth's pistol startled the house, but especially the President's companions in the box; of whom, Maj. H. R. Rathbone—the only man there beside the President—turning his eyes, saw, through the sulphurous smoke, a stranger standing behind him, whom he instantly clutched; but Booth, tearing away from his grasp, and dropping his pistol, made a pass at him with the dagger, inflicting a serious wound on his left arm. Rushing now to the front of the box, theatrically flourishing his weapon, and exclaiming '*Sic semper tyrannis!*' Booth put his hand on the railing in front of the box, and leaped over, alighting on a corner of the stage; but, catching with one of his spurred heels in the American flag draped across the front of the box, he fell; spraining his ankle so as to cripple his flight and afford a clue to the detectives who were soon on his trail. Recovering immediately from his fall, he faced the audience, brandished his dagger, exclaimed "*The South is avenged!*" and ran across the stage to and out of the back door, which he shut, and, mounting his horse—which a half-witted, stage-struck youth was there holding for him—rode off and across the Anacosta bridge out of Washington; seeking refuge in the adjacent region of southern Maryland; whose Whites, being intensely pro-Slavery, were mainly Rebel sympathizers, and were therefore counted on to conceal him and aid his escape.

That President Lincoln was the victim of a conspiracy of partisans of the Rebellion is established by undeniable proof; not so the charge that the chiefs and master-spirits of the Confederacy were implicated in the crime. Booth himself was, so far as has been shown, the projector and animating soul of the monstrous

plot; which at first contemplated primarily the capture and forcible abduction of the President—a scheme which of course involved a probability, but not a certainty, of felonious bloodshed. Booth was simply one of the many badly educated, loose-living young men infesting the purlieus of our great cities, who, regarding Slavery as the chief bulwark of their own claim to birthright in a superior caste, and the Federal Constitution as established expressly and mainly to sustain and buttress Slavery, could never comprehend that any political action adverse to whatever exactions and pretensions of the Slave Power could possibly be other than unjustly aggressive and treasonable. Few of this class were radically Disunionists; they sympathized with the Rebellion, not because it aimed at a division of the Republic, but because it was impelled by devotion to Slavery; and was thus hallowed, in their view, as a laudable effort, however irregular, to achieve and firmly secure the chief end of both the Constitution and the Union. There is no particle of evidence that Booth, or any of his fellow conspirators, had been in any wise offended by, or that they cherished any feeling of aversion to, the President, save as the 'head center' of resistance to the Slaveholders' Rebellion.

Almost at the identical moment of Booth's entry into the theater, a stranger, afterward identified as Lewis Payne Powell, son of a Florida clergyman, but generally known to his intimates as Payne, presented himself at the door of Secretary Seward's house on President Square, where he claimed to be charged with an errand from his physician, Dr. Verdi, to the Secretary; then confined to his bed by very serious injuries received when recently thrown from his carriage—his horses having taken fright and run away. The colored porter declined to let him go unasked up to the Secretary's sick room; but the stranger rushed by him and up stairs to the third story: making his way readily to the door of the sufferer's chamber, where he was confronted by Gov. S.'s son Frederick, who barred his way; when he drew and presented a pistol, which snapped; whereupon he struck Frederick twice over the head with it, fracturing his skull and felling him to the floor in utter insensibility. The noise of this encounter brought from the sick room Miss Fannie Seward, the Secretary's only daughter, by whom the villain instantly rushed, and, throwing himself on the bed, inflicted, with a bowie-knife, three heavy stabs aimed at the throat of his intended victim; who, instinctively divining the assassin's purpose, had raised himself on his left elbow, and offered all the resistance compatible with his slender frame and crippled condition—he having had his right arm broken and his lower jaw fractured when thrown from his carriage. The wounds thus inflicted on his face and neck were terrible, but, because of his resistance, not fatal; and, before a fourth blow could take effect, the assassin was grasped by an invalid soldier named Robinson, who was in attendance as a nurse; whom he savagely assaulted and wounded with his bloody weapon, but did not succeed in mastering. Gov. Seward, meanwhile, exerting his remaining strength, succeeded in rolling off the farther side of the bed; while Miss

Seward shrieked 'murder' from the window and the porter ran into the street crying for help. The assassin, aware that another moment's delay must seal his doom, now broke from the soldier's grasp, and rushed to escape; meeting at the head of the first flight of stairs Maj. Augustus Seward, another son of the Secretary, whom he struck with his dagger; being next confronted, just below, by Mr. Hansell, one of the Secretary's attendants, whom he stabbed in the back; thus clearing his way to the street, where he mounted a horse he had left there, and rode rapidly off unheeded.

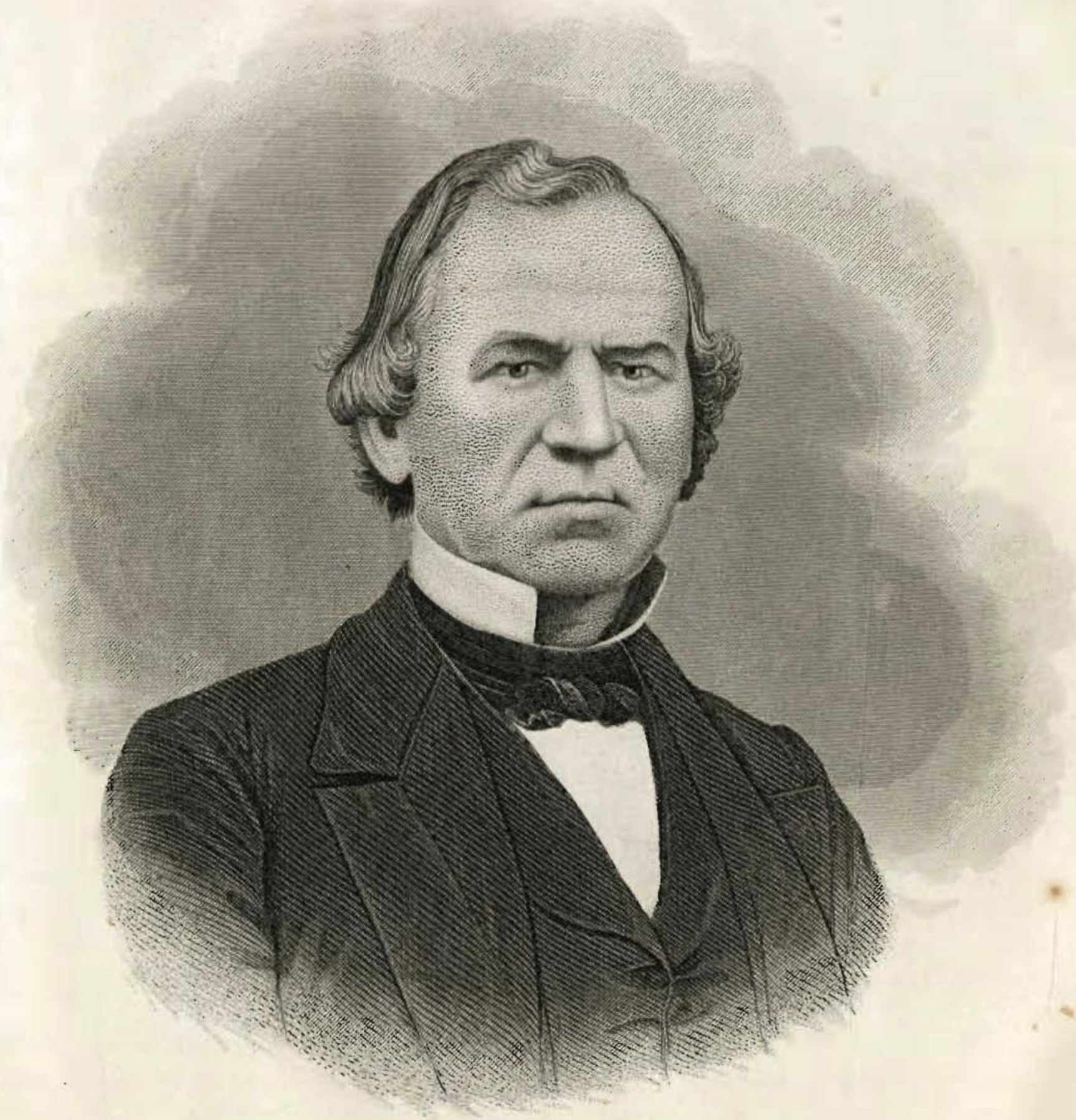
The quiet accession to the Presidency of Vice-President Johnson—the funeral honors to the good, beloved President, so suddenly snatched away at the moment when long years of trial and disaster had at length been crowned by a fullness of triumph and gladness rarely paralleled—the slow and long dubious recovery of the stricken Secretary and his self-devoted son—the flight, pursuit, and capture of Booth, so severely wounded by his captors that he died a few hours afterward—the arraignment, trial, and conviction before a military court of Payne and several of their fellow-conspirators or accomplices—may here be hurriedly passed over, as non-essential to this history. Not so the burst of unmeasured, indignant wrath, the passionate grief, the fierce cry for vengeance, which the crime of the assassins very generally incited. Mr. Lincoln was widely known as radically, immovably averse to aught that savored of severity in dealing with the defeated insurgents. No 'railing accusations,' no incitements to severity or bitterness on the part of the loyal, had ever found utterance through his lips. Inflexibly resolved that the Rebellion should be put down, he was equally determined that its upholders, having submitted to the Nation's authority, should experience to the utmost the Nation's magnanimity. Such was the palpable drift of his speech, delivered two nights prior to his death, as of all his prior inculcations. And now, the butchery of this gentle, forbearing spirit, by the hand, hardly less blundering than bloody, of a pro-Rebel assassin, incited a fierce, agonized, frantic yell for retaliation, that, for the moment, could only be braved at the cost of great personal obloquy and sacrifice; and the appearance of an official proclamation,[6] signed by the new President, and countersigned by William Hunter, as acting Secretary of State, charging that the appalling crime of Booth and his associates had been

"incited, concerted, and procured by and between Jefferson Davis, late of Richmond, Va., and Jacob Thompson, Clement C. Clay, Beverly Tucker, George N. Sanders, W. C. Cleary, and other Rebels and traitors against the Government of the United States, harbored in Canada,"

and offering a reward of $100,000 for the arrest of Davis, and of $25,000 to $10,000 each for the other persons thus denounced, was widely hailed as justifying the suspicions already current, and rendering the Confederates as a body morally guilty of the murder of Mr. Lincoln, and justly liable therefor to condign punishment.

Gen. Lee had only assumed to surrender the army under his immediate command; though he manifestly realized that this capitulation was

[6] May 2.



ANDREW JOHNSON.