The Century Magazine
Vol LXXVI No 6
October, 1908

ANDREW JOHNSON IN THE WHITE HOUSE

BEING THE REMINISCENCES OF WILLIAM H. CROOK

WRITTEN BY MARGARITA SPALDING GERRY

SECOND PAPER

CONGRESS convened on the first of September, 1867. Every one awaited its action with a good deal of excitement, for it was generally understood that when the President submitted the question of the removal of Secretary Stanton from the War Department the final struggle between Congress and Mr. Johnson would begin. It was a foregone conclusion that the President's action would not be indorsed. It was, with those of us who knew the President, equally certain that he would persist in his determination not to allow Mr. Stanton to remain in his cabinet. Of course my sympathies were with Mr. Johnson. Even if I had not felt that Mr. Stanton was a harsh and arrogant man, I could not have failed to see how he had thwarted the President at every turn. One surely did not have to know about constitutional questions to understand that a President has a right to be surrounded by a cabinet who are in sympathy with him, and that if one member consistently opposes him and all the other members, and refuses to resign, the President should have a right to dismiss him.

At this time particularly, when, since the Southern States had been again placed under military governors, the retention of Mr. Stanton meant that Mr. Johnson could not have the slightest control over the administration of the unfortunate eleven States, it was necessary to remove Mr. Stanton. The President naturally desired to do the little that was left in his power to make their condition more bearable.

Within the time prescribed by the Tenure of Office Act, the President reported the removal of Secretary Stanton, with his reasons. On the 14th of January, Congress refused to acquiesce, and ordered his restoration to office. At this point General Grant yielded his portfolio of office to Secretary Stanton, and retired from the position. General Grant's action made of President Johnson a bitter enemy. Together with Stanton, he became the object of the President's hatred. In fact, General Grant seemed to stand, in Mr. Johnson's eyes, as the type of all the opposition the President had undergone. It is useless to discuss whether General Grant was right or wrong. He acted as he thought right. He was a modest man, and it was distasteful to him to seem to usurp a position claimed by another man. I believe that he was honestly convinced that, until the constitutionality of the removal of Secretary Stanton was decided, his was the proper course. But to President Johnson, General Grant's action was that of a traitor.

One week after the action of Congress, the President removed Mr. Stanton and appointed General Lorenzo Thomas in his place. The struggle between Stanton and Thomas had a humorous side. General Thomas made a daily visit to the War Department to demand possession of the office and the records, and Secretary Stanton as regularly refused to

yield his position. In order to prevent a night attack upon his fortress, Stanton had a bed in his private office.

On the twenty-first, General Thomas called and made his demand. There was parleying, but Secretary Stanton reserved his decision. On the twenty-second, early in the morning, by the orders of Secretary Stanton, General Thomas was arrested. He was taken to the station-house, but was immediately released on bail. This was done with the intention of having a court verdict on the matter. General Thomas then repaired to the office of the Secretary of War, and made his second demand. Mr. Stanton refused to yield, and General Thomas refused to depart.

Immediately after this the Secretary of War *ad interim* was tried, and released. He continued to attend cabinet meetings and to make demands upon the Secretary of War. He became generally known as "Ad Interim Thomas."

On the third day after the removal of Secretary Stanton, the House of Representatives decided that "the President be impeached" before the Senate "for high crimes and misdemeanors."

The managers of the prosecution were: John A. Bingham, George S. Boutwell, James F. Wilson, Thomas Williams, Benjamin F. Butler, John A. Logan, and Thaddeus Stevens. The most bitter against the President were Butler, Stevens, and Wilson. Butler opened the prosecution. There were eleven articles of impeachment, but the only actual charge—that of having disregarded the Tenure of Office Act—was contained in the eleventh.

All over the country men wished to take a part in choosing the President's counsel. Suggestions poured in, and people flocked to the White House, each one with a candidate to put forward. Country lawyers sent in briefs, with the very evident hope that they might be chosen. Others, not so modest, directly offered their services. However much difference



From a photograph by Brady. Half-tone plate engraved by G. M. Lewis

MANAGERS FOR THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE IMPEACHMENT OF ANDREW JOHNSON



Drawn by Jacques Reich, from photographs

THE COUNSEL FOR THE PRESIDENT

of opinion there might be as to other men, the country was virtually unanimous in putting forward the claim of Benjamin R. Curtis, who needed no advocacy, for the President appointed him immediately. The other members of the counsel were William M. Evarts, Thomas A. R. Nelson, and Judge Jeremiah S. Black. Judge Black had hardly agreed to undertake the case before he resigned. This occasioned a great deal of discussion. It was said that Judge Black had given up the case because of its hopelessness, and this gossip injured Mr. Johnson's cause. That the President did not announce the real reason was to his credit.

The true story of the transaction is this: Judge Black was one of the attorneys for the Vela Alta claim. Vela Alta was an island near San Domingo which was rich in guano. The President was asked to interfere in the contest as to its possession by pronouncing it the property of a United States company. Whether the contention was a just one or not it is of course impossible to discuss here. Secretary Seward was opposed to United States interference. But the unfortunate thing was that just at this time Judge Black pressed the case, sending in as indorsers four out of the seven managers of the case against the President, Mr. Butler among them. The inference that Mr. Johnson's consent to act as these gentlemen desired might possibly influence their attitude toward the President is an ob-

vious one. It was obvious enough to cause Mr. Johnson to refuse to interfere. Thereupon Judge Black promptly resigned from the counsel, feeling, in all probability, that his participation in the trial would prevent success of the private enterprise. William S. Groesbeck was appointed in his place.

Another matter for debate was whether it was stated that he had already selected his cabinet. I happened to be present when Mr. Johnson was told this. He chuckled and said:

"Old Wade is counting his chickens before they are hatched."

The formal opening of the trial was on the thirteenth of March. The President's counsel asked for forty days in which to prepare the arguments. They were rather ungraciously refused, and were allowed ten days instead. The court then adjourned until the twenty-third.



Half-tone plate engraved by H. Davidson

SENATOR EDMUND GIBSON ROSS OF KANSAS

This photograph is from an original negative made by Brady during the time Mr. Ross was in the Senate, and has been verified by comparison with the portrait in Mr. L. C. Handy's "History of Kansas" in the Congressional Library.

Senator Wade, who was acting-President of the Senate since Mr. Johnson had become President, should have a vote. In the event of the President's being convicted of the charge against him, Mr. Wade would of course become President. It would seem hardly decorous for him to cast a vote; but it was decided, after much discussion, that his vote should count. Mr. Wade was jubilant. In fact,

During this preliminary time and during the trial, the spiritualists all over the country tried to gain a proselyte by playing upon the President's natural anxiety as to the outcome. A Mrs. Colby sent him marvelous messages from Lincoln

and other statesmen. The messages were, like most of their kind, illiterate, impudent, and absurd. The "Davenport Brothers" also tried to gain his interest. It was even reported that President Johnson was a spiritualist. Although he was a member of no church, the President was as definite in his orthodox religious views as he was in his political policy. There was nothing of the mystic in his nature, and he was too clear-sighted for mere superstition.

On the 23d of March, when the actual trial began, the President took leave of three of his counsel,—Mr. Evarts, Mr. Curtis, and Mr. Nelson,—who had come to the White House for a final discussion. I was near them as they stood together in the portico. Mr. Johnson's manner was entirely calm and unconcerned. He shook hands with each of them in turn and said:

"Gentlemen, my case is in your hands; I feel sure that you will protect my interests." Then he returned to his office. I went off with the gentlemen. By the desire of the President, I accompanied them to the Capitol every day.

When, from my seat in the gallery, I looked down on the Senate chamber, I had a moment of almost terror. It was not because of the great assemblage; it was rather in the thought that one could feel in the mind of every man and woman there that for the first time in the history of the United States a President was on trial for more than his life—his place in the judgment of his countrymen and of history.

There was a painful silence when the counsel for the President filed in and took their places. They were seated under the desk of the presiding officer,—in this case, Chief-Justice Chase,—on the right-hand side of the Senate chamber. The managers for the prosecution were already in their seats. Every seat in the gallery was occupied.

The dignity with which the proceedings opened served to heighten the sense of awe. It persevered during the routine business of reading the journal and while the President's reply was being read; but when Manager Butler arose to make the opening address for the prosecution, there was a change.

His speech was a violent attack upon the President. It was clever. Actually blameless incidents were made to seem traitorous. The address was so bitter, and yet so almost theatrical, that it seemed unreal. I wondered at the time why it impressed me. In Butler's later action—to which I shall hereafter refer—came a possible explanation of this impression.

The trial lasted three weeks. The President, of course, never appeared. In that particular the proceedings lacked a spectacular interest they might have had. Every day the President had a consultation with his lawyers. For the rest, he attended to the routine work of his position. He was absolutely calm through it all. The very night of the 23d he gave a reception to as many of the members of Congress as would come. I was fully prepared to have the White House deserted, but, instead of that, it was crowded. I wondered why men who hated the President so bitterly could accept his hospitality until I came to a group of about fifteen Radicals gathered together in the East Room, where they had proceeded after paying their respects to the President. They were laughing together and teasing one another like boys.

"What are you here for?" I heard.

"And you—what are you doing here yourself?"

"Why, I wanted to see how Andy takes it," was the answer. I thought to myself as I passed them that they were getting small satisfaction out of that, for no one could have seen the slightest difference in Mr. Johnson's manner. He greeted every one as pleasantly as though it were a surprise party come to congratulate him on his statesmanship.

It was the same with the affairs of his personal life. If he had any doubt as to the outcome of the trial, he did not allow it to affect his interest in those who had any claim on him. It was in the midst of the excitement following the impeachment that Slade, the steward, fell ill. Slade was a mulatto, a very intelligent man, and the President had a great deal of confidence in him. I remember very well when, on the 2d of March, I went with Mr. Johnson to see Slade in his home.

The poor fellow was suffering when we entered. He had asthma, and it was piti-

ful to hear him struggle for breath. Mr. Johnson went up to the bed, and took the sick man's hand in his.

"How are you to-day, Slade?" he asked kindly, and when the dying man shook his head, the President tried to cheer him up.

His death followed soon. It is easy to understand how hard it was for Mr. Johnson to spare the time just then, but he went to the funeral. I was there with him. The family of the dead man were greatly pleased because the President honored them and their father, and the daughter thanked him touchingly.

As the trial proceeded, the conviction grew with me—I think it did with every one—that the weight of evidence and of constitutional principle lay with the defense. There were several clever lawyers on the prosecution, and Butler had his legal precedents skilfully marshaled, but the greater part of the proceedings showed personal feeling and prejudice rather than proof. Every appeal that could be made to the passions of the time was utilized. "Warren Hastings," "Charles I," "Irresponsible tyranny," were always on the lips of the prosecution.

In comparison, the calm, ordered, masterly reasoning of the defense must have inspired every one with a conviction of the truth of their cause. Their efforts were of varying ability and character, of course. The minds of these men were as diverse as their faces. Mr. Nelson was a short, stout man with a ruddy face. Mr. Evarts, who was then laying the foundation for his future unquestioned eminence, was a very tall, thin man. Mr. Groesbeck, who was ill during the trial, and was forced to have his clerk read his argument, had, with appropriateness, considering his name, a prominent, curved nose. Mr. Nelson's address was the most emotional of them all. His appeal was largely for sympathy, for admiration of the man Andrew Johnson; it was personal. Mr. Groesbeck was the surprise of the trial. He had been able to take very little part in the proceedings, but his argument was remarkably fine. Mr. Evarts's address was clearly reasoned. Mr. Curtis's argument, in my opinion, was the finest of them all.

But the legal struggle, after all, with that assemblage of violent passions was hardly the contest that counted. The debate was for the benefit of the country at large; while the legal lights argued, the enemies of the President were working in other ways. The Senate was thoroughly canvassed, personal argument and influence were in constant use. Every motive, good or bad, was played upon. Long before the final ballot, it became known how each man would probably vote. Toward the end the doubtful ones had narrowed down to one man, Senator Ross of Kansas. Kansas, which had been the fighting ground of rebel guerrilla and Northern abolitionist, was to have, in all probability, the determining vote in this contest.

Kansas was, from inception and history, abolitionist, radical. It would have been supposed that Senator Ross would vote with the Radicals. He had taken the place of James Lane, who had shot himself. Lane was a friend of the President, and, had he lived, in all probability would have supported him. But Ross had no such motive. It became known that he was doubtful; it was charged that he had been subject to personal influence—feminine influence.

Then the cohorts of the Senate and the House bore down upon the Senator from Kansas. Party discipline was brought to bear, and then ridicule. Either from uncertainty, or policy, or a desire to keep his associates in uncertainty, Ross refused to make an announcement of his policy. In all probability he was honestly trying to convince himself.

The last days before the test vote was to be taken were breathless ones. The country was paralyzed. Business in the departments was almost at a standstill. Still, the President was the calmest man in the country, with interest to spare from his own affairs for those of other men. On the 14th, he was visited by an enthusiast, Sergeant Bates, who had taken the Federal flag on a tour through the South to see whether he could prove that the South was loyal, and had walked to Washington from Vicksburg. The President gave him an interview. The man's enterprise evidently appealed to him. With a good deal of feeling and a clasp of his hand, he said when Bates entered:

"I just want to welcome you to Washington."

Bates wanted to wave the flag from the top of the Capitol, but Congress refused. The President gave him permission to take the Stars and Stripes to the top of the unfinished Monument. At the last, Mr. Johnson put a purse into his hand, for all of Bates's expenses had been defrayed by the Southern cities through which he had passed.

On May 15, a rainy, dismal day, the Lincoln Monument in front of the city hall was dedicated. Either the anxiety of Congress to have the impeachment over, or, more probably, a desire to show contempt for Andrew Johnson, who was to preside, caused both houses to refuse to adjourn to honor the memory of the dead President. I accompanied Mr. Johnson, and saw the exercises, which were finished without the recognition of our legislators.

On May 16 the vote was taken.

Every one who by any possible means could get a ticket of admission to the Senate chamber produced it early that morning at the Capitol. The floor and galleries were crowded.

The journal was read; the House of Representatives was notified that the Senate, "sitting for the trial of the President upon the articles of impeachment," was ready to receive the other house in the Senate chamber. The question of voting first upon the eleventh article was decided.

While the clerk was reading the legal statement of those crimes of which, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, the President was guilty, some people fidgeted and some sat with their hands tensely clasped together. At the end, the Chief-Justice directed that the roll be called. The clerk called out:

"Mr. Anthony." Mr. Anthony rose.

"Mr. Anthony,"—the Chief-Justice fastened his eyes upon the Senator,—"how say you? Is the respondent, Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, guilty or not guilty of a high misdemeanor as charged in this article?"

"Guilty," answered Mr. Anthony.

A sigh went round the assemblage. Yet Mr. Anthony's vote was not in doubt. A two-thirds vote of thirty-six to eighteen was necessary to convict. Thirty-four of the Senators were pledged to vote against the President. Mr. Fowler of Tennessee, it was known, would probably vote for acquittal, although there was some doubt. Senator Ross was the sphinx: no one knew his position.

The same form was maintained with each senator in turn. When Fowler's name was reached, every one leaned forward to catch the word.

"Not guilty," said Senator Fowler.

The tension grew. There was a weary number of names before that of Ross was reached. When the clerk called it, and Ross stood forth, the crowd held its breath.

"Not guilty," called the Senator from Kansas.

It was like the bubbling over of a caldron. The Radical Senators, who had been laboring with Ross only a short time before, turned to him in rage; all over the house people began to stir. The rest of the roll-call was listened to with lessened interest, although there was still the chance for a surprise. When it was over, and the result—thirty-five to nineteen—was announced, there was a wild outburst, chiefly groans of anger and disappointment, for the friends of the President were in the minority.[1]

I did not wait to hear it, for, barely waiting for the verdict to be read,—it was no surprise to me, as I had been keeping tally on a slip of paper,—I ran downstairs at the top of my speed. In the corridor of the Senate I came across a curious group. In it was Thad Stevens, who was a helpless cripple, with his two attendants carrying him high on their shoulders. All about the crowd, unable to get into the court-room, was calling out, "What was the verdict?" Thad Stevens's face was black with rage and disappointment. He brandished his arms in the air and shouted in answer:

"The country is going to the devil!"

I ran all the way from the Capitol to the White House. I was young and strong in those days, and I made good

[1] I find in my diary mention of a dream that I had on the night of the 26th of March. I thought that the vote on the impeachment had been taken and that the numbers were thirty-five for the prosecution to fifteen for the defense, with four absent. It is odd to notice that it was almost the actual vote. With the four who in my dream were absent added to the fifteen, it would have been the exact division of votes. I suppose it meant that I had been canvassing the probable disposition of the votes, and had repeated my guessing in my dream.

time. When I burst into the library, where the President sat with Secretary Welles and two other men whom I cannot remember, they were quietly talking. Mr. Johnson was seated at a little table on which luncheon had been spread in the rounding southern end of the room. There were no signs of excitement.

"Mr. President," I shouted, too crazy with delight to restrain myself, "you are acquitted!"

All rose. I made my way to the President and got hold of his hand. The other men surrounded him, and began to shake his hand. The President responded to their congratulations calmly enough for a moment, and then I saw that tears were rolling down his face. I stared at him; and yet I felt I ought to turn my eyes away.

It was all over in a moment, and Mr. Johnson was ordering some whisky from the cellar. When it came, he himself poured it into glasses for us, and we all stood up and drank a silent toast. There were some sandwiches on the table; we ate some, and then we felt better. In a few minutes came a message of congratulation from Secretary Seward to "my dear friend." By that time the room was full of people, and I slipped away.

Now I want to tell a very curious thing, which I did not understand at the time, and still can explain only by conjecture.

During the latter part of the trial, while Ben Butler was still apparently the President's bitterest enemy, and was making fierce attacks on him in the Senate chamber, many messages passed between the President and him of which nothing was known to any one but themselves and me. I was the messenger, and the letters were always sent at night. Mr. Johnson would call me to him and say:

"Crook, here is a letter for General Butler. I wish you would take it to him and wait for an answer." Although I can remember no positive direction from the President, my recollection is that these messages were not to be talked about. Sometimes the President would say:

"There is no answer."

General Butler lived on I Street, near 15th. It was a short walk from the White House to his home. When I rang the bell, the butler answered it. He was a curious old chap, cross-eyed like his master. When there was an answer, I always gave it into the President's own hands. He always tore up the notes; I saw him do it.

It used to puzzle me a good deal. Why should Mr. Johnson and a man who was pleading so bitterly a case against him have this correspondence? Why should President Johnson, who always kept every scrap of correspondence, even his bills, tear up these notes?

Another thing: Not long after the trial was over, it began to be a matter of comment that Ben Butler had become a friend of the President. Mrs. Ann S. Stevens, a popular novelist of the day, who knew the President well, laughed about Mr. Johnson's "sudden and ardent friend Gen. Butler." I don't pretend to explain these things, but questions will suggest themselves.

Was General Butler sincere when he denounced the President so fiercely, or did he think that the side of the Radicals was the popular one? Since he changed front so completely, as there is evidence that he did, at what time did he change, and what was his motive? Is it possible that he felt that impeachment was going to fail and thought that it would be well to make friends with the winner?

After the excitement of the trial was over, we settled down into what seemed like quiet, although there were always things enough happening. Among others, it was discovered that William P. Wood, who was chief of the Secret Service in the Treasury, had offered $10,000 to N. M. Young, who had been Jefferson Davis's private secretary, for any letters he might furnish showing complicity between President Johnson and Davis.

Another echo of tragic things was the request made by Booth's noble brother, Edwin Booth, for the possession of the body of the murderer, lying all this time in an unmarked grave at the Arsenal. He asked with no spirit of bitterness, but with the deepest sadness, for permission to remove the body of the "poor misguided boy." The request was granted, and the family buried the body again.

Although the verdict had been with the President, the nation was by no means convinced. It must be remembered that almost two thirds of the Senate had voted to impeach him. The Radical leaders

were unremitting in their opposition. In a speech delivered on the 7th of July, 1868, Thad Stevens, after having stated that he had decided it was impossible to remove an executive by peaceful means, said that the only recourse from tyranny would be "Brutus's dagger."

In spite of his outward stoicism, the long strain of his position was beginning to tell on the President. He had had for three years a continued struggle, almost alone, to maintain his position. He was strong, but he felt his isolation. I believe the nearest approach to discouragement in Andrew Johnson's life came immediately after the verdict was rendered which acquitted him. Even he had not the slightest hope of reëlection, and reëlection alone could mean full vindication. A telegram which he sent to a friend who had written to him with encouragement shows plainly his depression:

The will of the people, if truly reflected, would not be doubtful. I have experienced ingratitude so often that any result will not surprise me. I thank you most sincerely for the part you have taken in my behalf; it is appreciated the higher because unsolicited. You have no doubt read in the morning paper Stevens' articles of impeachment, together with his speech thereon, in which he states: "The block must be brought out and the ax sharpened; the only recourse from intolerable tyranny is Brutus' dagger," which he hopes may not be used. How is it possible for me to maintain my position against a vindictive and powerful majority, if abandoned by those who profess to agree with me and be supporters of the administration? Such an abandonment at this moment, when the heaviest assaults are being made, would seem an admission that the administration was wrong in its opposition to the series of despotic measures which have been and are being proposed to be forced upon the country.

Mr. Stevens did not live long to fight for the cause which, in his own fierce way, he was convinced was the righteous one. He died in Washington two weeks after Congress adjourned. Mr. Johnson lived to fight longer.

As the summer burned itself out to autumn, the President remained in the country a longer time on our daily drives. Except when the children were with us, he was more somber than ever. One afternoon when we were at the Soldiers' Home he strolled into a little vine-covered summer-house which stood at the summit of a gentle slope. I entered and stood with him. Below us lay, line upon line, almost as far in both directions as our eyes could reach, plain little white tombstones marking the graves of the Federal soldiers. We were both silent. At last the President said under his breath:

"It 's a city, Crook—a city of the dead."

That afternoon, when we were almost home, Mr. Johnson said to me suddenly:

"Everybody misunderstands me, Crook. I am not trying to introduce anything new. I am only trying to carry out the measures toward the South that Mr. Lincoln would have done had he lived."

The last autumn that he was in the White House, Mr. Johnson secured my appointment as a third-class clerk, detailed to the Executive Office. I received the notification on the 21st of November, 1869. From this time promotion would depend wholly upon my own efficiency and faithfulness. My family thought that a great deal had been gained with that third-class clerkship. My case was a type of the President's attitude toward his subordinates: he always looked out for their interests. I went to him and thanked him for his efforts in my behalf. He said he was glad I had the place.

Somehow I had expected that there would be a change in Mr. Johnson's position after his victory over the Radicals. If I had thought of it, I might have realized that the two-thirds majority was still against him. The only difference was that when they passed measures over the President's veto it was without debate. There was no longer need for discussion. It does seem unfortunate that none of them took the trouble to read his message protesting against the reconstruction measures. To me it seemed fine.

There was one difficulty, growing out of the division between the President and Congress, which I believe no other chief executive has ever had to contend against. It was virtually impossible for Mr. Johnson to have his appointments to office confirmed, unless the men happened to be in high favor with Congress. It was a peculiarly irritating situation. The President, however, robbed it of its most humiliating features by the frankness with

which he accepted it. He announced that he could not recommend any man for position who could not place on file, together with the usual credentials, proofs that he could command enough votes to be confirmed by the Senate. One of the President's self-appointed advisers was in a great state of indignation over this.

"You ought not to make such a statement," he said. "It is an indignity for the President of the United States."

In answer, Mr. Johnson smiled slightly. He was one of the men who see nothing humiliating in looking a situation in the face. He was practical about this, as about everything else. Since Senatorial pledges must be had to secure the confirmation of appointments, he would give the men he wished to appoint an opportunity to secure the names. Therefore part of the regular office routine was the consideration of the number of senators whom a would-be collector or postmaster could marshal to his support.

Mr. Ross of Kansas, the senator whose vote had saved the President from impeachment, was at the White House a good deal during the last months of Mr. Johnson's administration. I knew Mr. Ross well. He was a well-looking man of medium height, slightly stooped. He always wore a frock-coat. He was concerned over some appointments in Kansas which he considered necessary for the welfare of his party. It was natural that he should expect help from the man he had saved, and for whom he was suffering. For no one to-day can understand the effect in Kansas of Senator Ross's action. It was hardly safe for any one to speak in favor of him or of the President. One lady, whom I still know, was in Lawrence, Kansas, at the time. Her husband happened to be in Washington on business during the whole period. This gentleman was in favor of Johnson, and therefore approved of Senator Ross's vote. His wife did not dare let any of her friends and neighbors know of the opinions of the family.

The President could do little to help Mr. Ross. The Senator had to rely, like every one else, upon what congressional support he could muster, and he was naturally in bad odor in both houses. As it happened, nothing could have saved Ross's political position in Kansas. I have been told that when he went home old neighbors would not speak to him. He found life in Kansas impossible. When he had entered the Senate he apparently had a great career before him. He was now made governor of New Mexico. I believe he afterward published a newspaper in Texas. But so far as I can understand, his life never fulfilled all it had seemed to promise. His vote for Andrew Johnson marked the end of his national career.

As Mr. Johnson's administration wore to its close, the daily mail brought to light many contrasting sides of human nature. A few men wrote to him, assuring him of their approval. Amos Kendall, the ex-Postmaster-General, who gave the land for Gallaudet College, was one of these, as was "Sunset" Cox. A fine address of the latter in which he said that Mr. Johnson's career was an example of "moral courage against party discipline" was forwarded to the President, and I pasted it in the scrap-book.

A great many men made suggestions for the President's future guidance. Soon after General Grant was elected, one correspondent had the happy thought that if Mr. Johnson would only refuse to accept General Grant's resignation from the army, it would then be impossible for the coming President to be inaugurated, and Mr. Johnson would have things all his own way! Another guileless being sent a supposedly counterfeit bill by means of which he was convinced a gang of outlaws were endeavoring to seduce his honesty. He was willing to furnish further proof for the sum of ten thousand dollars. This communication was labeled a "confidence game," and the dollar was appropriated for charitable purposes. At intervals amateur detectives furnished information as to meetings of conspirators with schemes inimical to the President.

But by far the greater part of the letters were personal appeals for help. Helpless citizens of the Southern States, men and women, pleaded with their only champion for aid. One woman, the last of a great line, begged the President to save her from being despoiled of the land on which her family had lived for generations. A widow, who said that he had before this furnished her transportation out of his own pocket, asked for further

assistance. An old journeyman tailor who had once worked for Mr. Johnson sought for help, with an evident confidence that it would be granted: part of both feet had been carried off by a shell, and he wanted ten or fifteen dollars to take him back to his friends.

Simple pleas of this nature the President could and did answer; but to the great cry for help that went up from the whole South he was able to give only slight response. His hope had been, as he often told me, to "build up" the South. The accounts of riots, of violence, the insolence of negro agitators, like Hunnicutt of Richmond, the wholesale pilfering of the land by carpet-baggers, were agonizing to those of us who had lived among the Southern people and knew what they were suffering. The only power that was left to the President was the appointment and removal of the military governors. In some cases Mr. Johnson answered the cry for justice by removing the men who seemed to the people of several States responsible for the condition of affairs. It was of course the system of reconstruction that was to answer, not the governors; but the appointment of new men gave the sufferers a gleam of hope.

It is not wonderful that, with all these things to harass him, the President had to turn somewhere for recreation. It was to the children he went. It is a pleasing thought that Andrew Johnson celebrated his sixtieth birthday, in the closing months of the bitterest struggle ever waged from the White House, with a great holiday party for children.

It was on the 30th of December, and there were almost four hundred children present. Almost as many households had been in a state of excitement since the arrival of the truly magnificent cards of invitation. "The President of the United States" it was who desired their presence: no mere child was the host! Every child whose father had any share in the public life of the time and was not the President's bitter enemy, was there. All of Marini's dancing academy were invited, for there was to be wonderful fancy dancing in the great East Room. In the years that I have been at the White House,—and almost every White House family has had its petted children,—there has never been a children's party so wonderful.

Mr. Johnson received, with Mrs. Patterson and his grandchildren about him, and Mrs. Johnson came down-stairs for a glimpse of the pretty scene. This was, unless I am mistaken, the second appearance she made during her White House life.

The dancing was in the East Room. There were a great many square dances, and a few waltzes and polkas; but the fancy dances were the best. Marini's picked pupils showed their prettiest steps. There was the "Highland fling" of course, and the "sailors' hornpipe." There was a Spanish dance, danced by small Miss Gaburri in a Spanish dress flashing with sequins. Then there was a very sentimental affair—which all the children liked best because there was a "story" in it where one little girl postured with every evidence of languishing devotion, and another little girl circled coquettishly and tantalizingly around her. Pretty Belle Patterson danced prettily, but the stars were the Spanish dancer and little Miss Keen, who were particular friends of the Patterson and Stover children. At the end, the whole company, tots and big girls and boys, were lined up for the "Virginia Reel." After that came "refreshments," the real "party," most of the children thought.

After his frolic with the children, there was little that was not unpleasant before the President. Early in 1869, Hugh McCulloch resigned his position as Secretary of the Treasury. There was a large clique which was violently opposed to McCulloch. He was suspected of Southern sympathies—his home was in Maryland. There had been constant attacks upon him and endless appeals to the President to remove him. But Johnson was loyal to the man who, with Secretary Welles and Secretary Seward, had been faithful to him through the whole of his troubled administration. He sustained McCulloch, as he sustained his own reconstruction policy. I do not understand the secret of the opposition to McCulloch. He was an absolutely honest man; perhaps that is the reason he had so many enemies.

During the last two months Mr. Johnson sat at the White House waiting for

the man whom he hated to take his place. Whatever personal resentment he may have had against his enemies was swallowed up at this time, I am convinced, by his sympathy for the struggling masses in the South. He has told me how he felt for them and talked of his own frustrated plans. His hatred of the Southern leaders—the "brigadiers"—was for the moment lost sight of, though it was by no means assuaged. He was calm, however, and, as usual, there was nothing in his manner to reveal his feeling. I could not trace a single line in his face to testify to his four years' fight. He went about his preparations for departure in his orderly, methodical fashion. All his bills were called for and settled long before he left the White House. The steamship companies evidently thought he would be in need of rest and recreation, for they vied with one another in offering him free transportation to any European port he might desire to visit. He might well have wished to accept their offer, for he stood high in the opinion of European nations, and his trip would have been an ovation. But flight was not in his mind.

While the President was so unmoved, the rest of us were beginning to understand what it was that Congress had been doing. Whether public opinion had begun to change to any marked degree I cannot state, but the last public reception that Mr. Johnson gave was marked by a good deal of enthusiasm. Still, he was with the mass of people a very unpopular man.

During all the long contest, as far as I know, neither Thad Stevens nor Charles Sumner ever came to the White House. No one would have expected Stevens to do it; he was too bitter, too passionate. But with most people Sumner stood for calm and unprejudiced principle. One would have thought that he, at least, would have endeavored to have a consultation with the President, to have found out just where he stood, and why he believed as he did, before making him a target for daily denunciation. Of course it is possible that there may have been interviews of which I knew nothing, but I do not think it likely.

Perhaps I was prejudiced against Sumner, knowing how he had opposed President Lincoln, and having seen how Mr. Lincoln felt toward him. In my opinion, Sumner made most of the trouble. Stevens did not have much weight. Every one knew that he was prejudiced and fierce, and they made allowances for that. But Sumner gave the impression of calm. He was a gentleman, he had correct manners, he was well-groomed, he had learning. To a large element in the country he was a sort of god. Of course there were a few men, like some one in the New York "Herald," who called him a monomaniac on the subject of the negro; and he did irritate the other members of his party by delaying legislation while he quibbled as to whether negroes should be so far distinguished from other men as to be called "negroes"—he himself referring to them as "unionists."

It was to the party of Sumner and Stevens that Andrew Johnson yielded on the 4th of March, 1869, when, a little before noon, he left the White House, and it was to a man by whom he considered that he had been betrayed. Mr. Johnson had refused to ride in the carriage with President Grant, as has always been the custom for the outgoing President. I have heard it said that General Grant refused to ride with him. I do not know whether that is true or not; it does not seem like President Grant, who was kindliness itself. But I do know that Mr. Johnson refused to ride with the new President. I heard him say that he would not do it.

So Mr. Johnson remained quietly in the White House while the inauguration ceremonies were in progress, gathering up his papers and making final preparations. He took away with him all the records of the office and the scrap-books which I had compiled. He said:

"I found nothing here when I came, and I am going to leave nothing here when I go."

When he left all the employees of the White House gathered on the portico to say good-by to him. No one else was there. His friends and enemies alike had flocked to see the installation of the new President. The family had preceded him. With all the others, I shook his hand and said:

"Good-by, Mr. President."

"Good-by, Crook," he said. "And God bless you!"

He went down to the carriage which

was waiting to take him to the home of Mr. John F. Coyle, who was one of the two owners and editors of the "National Intelligencer," one of the papers which had constantly supported the administration. Coyle was a brilliant man and a warm friend; he was perhaps the best friend whom the President had in Washington, and Mr. Johnson was very fond of him and of his family. Some one once laughingly asked him when he was going to "shake off this mortal Coyle?" He had no desire to shake him off. Mr. Johnson was a good friend.



Drawn by Jacques Reich, from a photograph
CHIEF-JUSTICE SALMON P. CHASE

SOMEHOW, when Andrew Johnson left the White House I did not feel that that was the end of him. Yet, in a nation where the retiring executive is usually the only man in the country without a future, there apparently never was so dead a President. During the few days he spent with Mr. Coyle he was almost deserted. He had realized long before the end that his election to the Presidency, which was the only thing that would have meant vindication, was an impossibility. But he was too vital a man to stop fighting.

Therefore I followed with eagerness his career during the years that followed. Every one knows that when he returned to Tennessee he found himself hopelessly unpopular. Brownlow had seen to that. It did not seem to daunt Mr. Johnson in the least. He went to work to win back lost ground. Soon after his return to Greenville there was a United States senator to be chosen. He ran for the position. He was defeated in that. It was too soon. Again he went patiently to work. The same method of personal talk with the "plain people" which had brought him to the front before served him now. Little by little he regained his ascendancy over his State. In 1872 he was announced as candidate for congressman at large from his State. He conducted a campaign of public speaking and again he was defeated, but by a smaller margin. When, in 1875, he came forward to claim the United States senatorship, he was victorious. That was not a bad record for a man who, at sixty, had retired from the White House unpopular and discredited.

It was not seven years after he had been on trial before the Senate that Andrew Johnson took his place as a member of the body that had judged him. Public opinion had traveled a farther journey than the years had done, for his entrance was the scene of a great demonstration. It was the opening day of the special session of 1875. The Senate chamber and the galleries were crowded. His desk was piled high with flowers. Possibly some of the children to whom he used to give nosegays from the White House conservatories were old enough to remember and to return the gifts in kind. Senator Wilson of Massachusetts, then Vice-President was, as President of the Senate, to administer the oath. As Charles Sumner's colleague, he had been Johnson's persistent enemy.

There were three new senators to be sworn in, one of them Hannibal Hamlin. As Andrew Johnson's rival for the Vice-Presidency, he had also been an opponent. He took the oath before Johnson; but the name of the ex-President was called before Hamlin had gone to his seat.

The square, sturdy figure of Andrew Johnson advanced to the desk. The three men stood together before the multitude, who had only one thought: "How would he meet these men who had been his enemies? Would he take their hands?"

There was no pause, although to us who



Half-tone plate engraved by H. Davidson

ANDREW JOHNSON

This portrait is from a photograph said to have been taken not long before his death.

were looking on there seemed to be. Johnson put out his hand without hesitation or embarrassment, without apparent realization that there was anything unusual in the situation. He shook hands first with Hamlin, then, turning, with Wilson, who stood before them both. From floor and galleries went up a thunder of applause. Both Wilson and Hamlin were tall men, and Andrew Johnson was short, but to every one present there was no taller man in the Senate that day.

The oath taken, he went into the cloakroom to avoid publicity. But there he was surrounded by senators, every man eager to take his hand.

There was one man of those whom he considered his enemies, whom Mr. Johnson had not forgiven. It was only a day or two after he took his seat in the Senate that he sent for me to come to his hotel, the old Willard on Pennsylvania Avenue. I found him, on a nearer view, looking very little changed. He was older, of course; there was more gray in his hair; his whole face looked bleached. He seemed finer to me; not less strong, but more delicate. There were no more lines in his face: those that had been there were deeper graven; that was all.

I asked for all the family, and he told me what there was to tell. Mrs. Johnson I knew was still living, but poor Robert Johnson had died soon after his father returned to Tennessee. He spoke to me of them both. The grandchildren were growing up. He told me of his fight for election.

"And now," he said, "I want you to tell me where I can find notices about Grant in my scrap-book. You remember where you pasted them in. I don't." He got the scrap-books, and I put slips of paper in to mark the references he wanted. As I rose to go he said.

"Crook, I have come back to the Senate with two purposes. One is to do what I can to punish the Southern brigadiers. They led the South into secession, and they have never had their deserts. The other—" He paused, and his face darkened.

"What is the other, Mr. Johnson?" I asked.

"The other is to make a speech against Grant. And I am going to make it this session."

He made the speech in less than two weeks from that evening. It was a clever one, too, and bitter. Every point of General Grant's career which might be considered vulnerable was very skilfully attacked. The fact that he had taken gifts and that it was suspected he desired a third term, were played upon. Yes; Mr. Johnson did what he had intended to do, had been intending to do ever since he left the White House. He was the best hater I ever knew.

He went back home at the end of the session, and then to visit his daughter, Mrs. Stover, in eastern Tennessee. There, given up to the family associations he clung to, and with the grandchildren he loved, he was stricken suddenly with paralysis and July 31, 1875, he died. It seemed as if, with his speech against President Grant, some spring of action which had kept him fighting broke. The rest was peace.

QUATRAIN

BY SANBORN GOVE TENNEY

THESE lichens pressed to fence and rock and tree
Mayhap have meaning that we do not see;
Perchance are seals on old Time's wrinkled deeds
By which he holds the forests, hills, and meads.