

*** A Distributed Proofreaders Canada Ebook ***

This eBook is made available at no cost and with very few restrictions. These restrictions apply only if (1) you make a change in the eBook (other than alteration for different display devices), or (2) you are making commercial use of the eBook. If either of these conditions applies, please check with an FP administrator before proceeding.

This work is in the Canadian public domain, but may be under copyright in some countries. If you live outside Canada, check your country's copyright laws. **If the book is under copyright in your country, do not download or redistribute this file.**

Title: Alexander Hamilton

Date of first publication: 1952

Author: Nathan Schachner (1895-1955)

Date first posted: June 1 2012

Date last updated: June 1 2012

Faded Page eBook #20120605

This ebook was produced by: David T. Jones, Ross Cooling, Greg Weeks & the Online Distributed Proofreading Canada Team at <http://www.pgdpCanada.net>

Alexander Hamilton

THEY MADE AMERICA

A series of biographies under the editorship of

Cecile Hulse Matschat Allan Nevins

Carl Carmer Lewis Paul Todd

Stephen F. Austin: Father of Texas by CARLETON BEALS

Charles Willson Peale: Artist and Patriot by BERTA N. BRIGGS

George Rogers Clark: Soldier in the West by WALTER HAVIGHURST

Red Jacket: Last of the Seneca by ARTHUR C. PARKER

Alexander Hamilton: Nation Builder by NATHAN SCHACHNER

(Additional books in this series are being prepared.)

Alexander Hamilton

NATION BUILDER

NATHAN SCHACHNER

Drawings by Gillett Griffin

McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

NEW YORK TORONTO LONDON

ALEXANDER HAMILTON: *NATION BUILDER*

Copyright, 1952, by the McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. Printed in the United States of America. All rights reserved. This book, or parts thereof, may not be reproduced in any form without permission of the publishers.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 52-9765

Preface

Alexander Hamilton is universally regarded as one of the greatest men our country has produced. The United States would have been a different nation had he never lived. What better reasons can there be for telling afresh the story of his life and achievements?

The stamp of Alexander Hamilton is still unmistakably visible on our form of government, our institutions, our finances, and our way of life. For better or worse, it is part of our heritage and can no more be eradicated than the traits we inherit from our parents. If we wish, therefore, to understand our country as it is today, it is essential to study the careers of Hamilton and his contemporaries, those more general parents of ours.

For their story is not dead or outmoded; it is as vital to us as the latest income tax bill or the most recent atomic explosion. The problems with which Hamilton and his fellows wrestled are still with us; the solutions they worked out are again under discussion; and the controversies are as bitter as ever they were in the days of Hamilton.

The issues that Hamilton, Jefferson, Adams, and Madison argued and fought over are eternal ones: what form of government, what framework of society, what ethical philosophy of life best suit mankind and tend most to gain for it those rights which the Declaration of Independence proclaimed.

The debate still rages on these great questions which, perhaps, can never be answered conclusively. But the answers proposed by the founders were clear-cut and were backed by able reasoning. Hamilton gave one; Jefferson another. Each thought himself wholly right and the other wholly wrong.

Today we are not so sure. We feel that each had something vital and important to say, that the proper answer may be found in a combination of their ideas. To simplify is always dangerous; but it may well be said that the house of America in which we live follows essentially the structure blueprinted by Hamilton, while the spirit which breathes through it and pervades it is that of Jefferson.

The author is indebted to Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., the publisher of his larger study of Alexander Hamilton, for permission to incorporate here some of the material and conclusions reached in that book.

NATHAN SCHACHNER

Contents

1	<u>Dreams of Glory</u>	1
2	<u>Student Patriot</u>	17
3	<u>Call Colonel Hamilton</u>	36
4	<u>Benedict Arnold—Traitor</u>	51
5	<u>From Soldier to Lawyer</u>	66
6	<u>The Constitution Is Written</u>	80
7	<u>Ratification</u>	94
8	<u>Secretary of the Treasury</u>	105
9	<u>The Bank at Home and Convulsions Abroad</u>	123
10	<u>A World Aflame</u>	141
11	<u>Whisky Rebellion and Private Scandal</u>	159
12	<u>Downfall of the Federalists</u>	175
13	<u>Public Defeat and Private Tragedy</u>	194
14	<u>Duel and Death</u>	207
	<u>For Further Reading</u>	223
	<u>Index</u>	225

1 Dreams of Glory

The little town of Christiansted, capital and metropolis of the island of St. Croix in the Danish West Indies, dozed in the noonday sun. Though it was mid-November, the heat shimmered on the sandy shore and on the white-painted buildings that straggled along King Street. Not a vehicle, not a human being disturbed the dusty silence. Even the blue Caribbean lay breathless under the sun, and the tall masts of the sloop tied up at the wharf did not move against the burnished sky.

On King Street stood the long, rambling building that housed the trading ventures of Nicholas Cruger, perhaps the wealthiest merchant on St. Croix. He dealt in everything—flour, apples, wheat, lumber, mules, sugar, rum, clothing, fish, candles, cheese, tea—everything in fact that the island planters had to sell and everything they needed to buy. His sloops and brigantines were familiar visitors in the mainland ports of Charleston, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, and ranged as far south as the Guianas on the coast of South America.

But at the moment his countinghouse seemed as slumberous as the rest of the town. Its windows were shuttered against the sun, and the door was tightly closed. Not a sound issued from within. Yet a small boy occupied the cavernous interior. He sat before a sloping desk, his feet barely reaching the upper rungs of the high stool on which he was perched. His slender frame hunched over an enormous ledger, and his quill pen moved steadily across the page. A vagrant sunbeam illuminated the reddish brown of his hair.

Suddenly the outer door swung open and a hearty voice boomed through the room and sent reverberations flying among the stored barrels and bales.

"Mr. Cruger! Mr. Cruger!" it bellowed. "Where are ye? It's old Cap Newton, back from Philadelphia with a fine cargo o' mules."

The boy stuck his quill into the inkhorn, dismounted from his stool, and faced the burly, pea-jacketed intruder. "Mr. Cruger," he said in a clear, precise voice, "has gone to Frederiksted to visit our branch store and left me in charge. You say you brought mules from the mainland, Captain Newton? Let me see the manifest."

The captain stared down at the little boy. Descended from his high perch, he seemed even smaller than before; thin, frail, with a fair, reddish skin. The captain stared—then burst into laughter. "So Nick Cruger left ye in charge, sonny? Ye're a mite young to fill his breeches, ain't ye?"

The lad flushed. He drew himself erect, his taut frame quivered. "I am not your sonny," he burst out passionately. "I am not young; I am twelve years old and a grown man. Now let me have the ship manifest, if you please."

His small hand extended with an imperious gesture. The sea captain squinted sharply at the outstretched hand, the tense erectness of the body, the snapping gray eyes. The grin disappeared from his own weather-beaten features. He reached into the pocket of his jacket, pulled out a sheaf of documents, and turned them over without another word.

The grown man of twelve glanced rapidly through them. "Hmm!" he said. "Forty-one mules. I trust they are sound of wind and body. The last shipment we received were spavined, and nigh on a third of them died. You have also, I notice, 40 barrels of flour. If the quality proves good, I can get twelve pounds a barrel for them. There's a scarcity on the island and the planters will bid high. How soon can you sail for the mainland again, Captain Newton?"

"Day after tomorrow."

"Good! You will load on board sugar, rum, and molasses for Curaçao, pick up a cargo of mahogany there for Philadelphia, and return here with as much flour as you can stow on board. But remember, the quality must be superfine. I want no mold or worms. And watch out for pirates. I understand they're lurking off the Guarda Costas. That is all, sir."

The captain gulped. "Y——yes, sonny——I mean, mister," he stammered. At the door, he turned. "What might your name be?"

"Mr. Hamilton——Mr. Alexander Hamilton."

A knowing look spread over the captain's face. "Ah yes, now I remember ye. Ye're Rachel Levine's boy, from the island of Nevis."

The gray eyes blazed, the small hands clenched. A fury shook the lad. "My mother's name was Rachel Hamilton," he cried, "and our private affairs do not concern you. Good day, sir."

As the door shut on the startled captain, young Alexander Hamilton marched back to his desk, mounted his stool again. But he did not pick up his quill. Instead, hands still clenched, chest heaving, he stared blindly at the ledger. Would people never stop smirking over that ancient story? True, the people of Nevis and St. Christopher, where it all had happened, and here on St. Croix, had been wonderful to both his mother and himself. But every so often someone, like this old sea captain, would rake it up and the wound would ache again.

His beautiful, warmhearted, passionately devoted mother! Divorced by her first husband, the elderly John Michael Levine, the wealthy Danish planter whom she had lovelessly married, she then was deserted by the dashing young Scot cadet, James Hamilton, with whom she had eloped when the marriage grew unbearable. Broken by her misfortunes, Rachel had gone to her grave.

It went back to 1685, when a French Huguenot named John Faucette fled his country to escape the savage persecutions directed against the Protestants of France. Glowing tales of the new life, the social and religious freedom to be had across the sea, determined him, as it did many another, to seek his fortune in the New World. The islands in the Caribbean Sea particularly beckoned. For there could be found a warm, soft climate, a fertile soil, strange and wonderful fruits, an ample supply of slaves, and an abundance of plantations from which came the sugar, molasses, and rum that all the world desired.

John Faucette—or Fawcett, as he later spelled his name—landed on the English island of Nevis. He soon discovered that the travelers' tales had not been exaggerated. After some medical study—a simple matter in those days—he set up his shingle and proved almost immediately successful. Within a few years he was able to purchase an extensive plantation in the interior and maintain a town house in the capital city of Charlestown. And there were sufficient excess funds to invest a substantial sum in London ventures.

Thus amply endowed with worldly goods, and by now well into middle age, he married a girl twenty years younger than himself. We know practically nothing of her except that her first name was Mary. She bore him three daughters; the first also named Mary, the second Ann, while the third, born in 1736, was called Rachel.

Shortly after Rachel's birth, however, Dr. Fawcett and his wife quarreled. Mary packed up her belongings and moved over to the neighboring island of St. Christopher or, as it was more familiarly known, St. Kitts. There little Rachel grew to young womanhood. By the time she was sixteen, her beauty and accomplishments had become the toast of the islands, and an elderly planter named John Michael Levine, from the nearby Danish island of St. Croix, proposed marriage.

There was no question of love on the part of the high-spirited and rather willful young beauty; but Rachel was poor and Levine was rich. The wedding took place in 1752 and, after a honeymoon voyage to Copenhagen, Levine's birthplace, the couple settled down in St. Croix. In due time a son, Peter, was born.

But the marriage between the old man and the girl bride proved no more successful than the one between Rachel's father and mother. One day in 1756 Rachel followed in her mother's footsteps: she packed her clothes, quit her husband and infant son, and went back to mother and St. Kitts. Eventually the deserted husband obtained a divorce.

One of her mother's friends on the island was a doctor named Will Hamilton. His family in Scotland boasted a proud lineage but, like so many ancient Scottish families, it had fallen on evil times. When reports reached them of Dr. Hamilton's prosperity in the West Indies, they shipped another of their number—a young man named James Hamilton—to his elder relative to gain a like fortune.

James probably landed in St. Kitts in 1756, where he was introduced by the doctor to his friends on the island—including Rachel Levine. The inevitable happened. Rachel was twenty now and her beauty had fully matured. James was in his twenties, handsome, easygoing, and—what was not yet evident—decidedly shiftless.

Almost immediately, however, after they had set up house together, James Hamilton ran into financial difficulties. He and Rachel moved to Nevis, an English island, where Rachel had inherited a house from her father. James tried his hand at trading, but he was not cut out for a merchant or indeed for anything else. All his ventures failed, and the aid which he received from Dr. Will Hamilton and Mary Fawcett eventually ceased.

In the midst of these troubles, a boy was born to them on January 11, 1757, who later became known to fame as Alexander Hamilton. In 1762 another son was born, named James after his father.

By this time the elder James had had enough. There had been financial and other quarrels with Rachel. One day he took a boat from St. Croix, to which the couple had gone after the birth of Alexander, and left Rachel and the two little boys behind. History was repeating itself.

Thereafter he vanished into obscurity, dragging out a shadowy existence in the Caribbean islands and emerging only many years later to seek aid from his son Alexander, when the latter had become famous. Alexander promptly furnished the aid and even invited his long-lost father to the United States to finish his life in comfort. But the old man refused to quit the islands, where he died in 1799, helped to the end by the son he had deserted so many years before.

Poor Rachel did not long survive this great blow. In spite of the shelter and kindly attention of her relatives, her health rapidly failed and, on February 26, 1768, at the age of thirty-two, she died. Thus, for all practical purposes, were left orphaned Alexander, aged eleven, and James, aged six.

Young Alexander's boyhood had not been unhappy, in spite of his mother's misfortunes. His maternal aunts and their families—the Mitchells and the Lyttons—did their best for him. So did Dr. Will Hamilton, no doubt humiliated by James's irresponsible conduct.

Among young Alexander's closest boyhood companions was a cousin on his mother's side, Edward Stevens, with whom he played and went to school. At first they received private instruction; then, as they grew older, it was decided to send them to Christiansted, the island capital, for more formal schooling.

There Alexander displayed that quickness of intelligence and keenness of mind which was to mark him throughout life. He learned rapidly and easily, and absorbed Latin, French, arithmetic, and even, it seems, a little Hebrew. He was a voracious reader, devouring every book on which he could lay hands—history, government, sermons. It did not matter as long as it was print.

At the time of his mother's death, Alexander's father had long ago disappeared, and no help could be expected from him. His mother's small estate was seized in behalf of her first son, young Peter Levine. Her family, too, had met with misfortunes and were unable to be of much assistance. There was, therefore, only one thing left for the two orphans—to go to work and make their own way in life.

At the age of twelve, Alexander accordingly found himself an apprentice clerk in the trading house of Nicholas Cruger, located in Christiansted on St. Croix. He entered upon his duties in the fall of 1769 and was given correspondence to copy into the huge copybooks, ledger entries to make, and orders to fill out.

It was confining work, to perch all day on his stool in the dim, stuffy warehouse, hardly knowing whether the sun shone outside or that nature was clad in warm, tropical beauty. Occasionally the sound of children at play would penetrate his cloistered retreat; but far more exciting—and more infuriating—came the news of the great world outside from the weathered sea captains and rough sailors whose business brought them at intervals into the Cruger store and whose talk breathed of far-off places, of teeming cities, and distant wars.

War! The word clanged like a great bell in the boy's mind. He had read in history of the great conquerors—Alexander of Macedon, Julius Caesar, Hannibal, Frederick the Great—and of the battles like Marathon that had changed the face of the world. Only a few years before, the world-wide war of England, France, and Spain—known in America as the French and Indian War—had come to an end. Many of the sailors who came into the warehouse had been privateersmen during the long struggle, and their tales of chases, sea fights, and rich booty were calculated to quicken the pulse of an ardent, ambitious youngster discontented with pushing a pen eternally over dreary books.

All these thoughts raced through the lad's mind as he sat on his high stool. The little thrill of his victory over Captain

Newton faded, and a distaste took its place as he stared at the pile of letters that required copying. If only his playmate Ned Stevens were here now to share his private griefs and ambitions. But Ned had gone away to New York and King's College (later known as Columbia) to study medicine.

The thoughts swelled and almost burst in the boy's mind. Abruptly he seized a sheet of paper, dipped quill in the ink-horn, and raced the pen in bold, clear script across the white expanse.

"To confess my weakness, Ned," he wrote, "my ambition is prevalent, so that I condemn the grovelling condition of a clerk or the like, to which my fortune, etc., condemns me, and would willingly risk my life, though not my character, to exalt my station. I am confident, Ned, that my youth excludes me from any hopes of immediate preferment; nor do I desire it; but I mean to prepare the way for futurity. . . . I shall conclude by saying, I wish there was a war."

What a strange, precocious letter for a boy of twelve to write! Like many another small boy in those times (though perhaps not today), he panted for war and dreamed of glory; unlike most others, however, his ambition eventually found fulfillment.

In the meantime, the world was at peace; and no signs as yet appeared on the horizon of war or glamorous deeds of derring-do. With a sigh he picked up his pen again, and copied from Captain Newton's manifest into the ledger: "40 bbls. of flour at 11½. . . ."

War did not come, but the boy Alexander began to find compensations in his work. He was a strange mixture of two contradictory principles that continued to clash within him all through life. On the one hand, he was a romantic visionary, thirsting for glory and honor; on the other, a clearheaded, practical businessman, filled with contempt for all idealists who thought that human nature could be bettered. But perhaps it was this curious combination that sparked his genius and enabled him later to make such a tremendous contribution to America.

In any event, he sensibly thrust these longings into the background and devoted himself wholly to the business of his employer. So well did he labor that Cruger put him in full charge of the branch at Frederiksted. Then opportunity knocked loudly. Cruger became seriously ill and was compelled to voyage to New York for adequate medical treatment. Alexander was fourteen now, and such was Cruger's confidence in his business ability and judgment that he turned over to him complete control of all his affairs during his absence.

It was a heavy responsibility; for Nicholas Cruger's business extended over the Caribbean islands and the mainlands of North and South America and reached even to England and the continent of Europe. Ships sailed into port and departed, their crews had to be handled properly, and cargoes had to be loaded and unloaded. The proud and touchy planters of the islands required special attention. Foreign merchants must be dealt with. Cruger's partners in specific business ventures must be placated. Then, too, it was essential to be familiar with the needs of the market, the quality and prices of merchandise, and where it could best be obtained.

Young Hamilton had no assistants. He wrote each letter himself and made a clear copy for the files. He computed all bills, interviewed planters, sailors, and merchants, bargained, and sold—all on his own. And he had to keep his ailing employer on the mainland informed of every move he made.

The staggering load would have daunted a much older and more experienced man. But the boy of fourteen, going on fifteen, plunged into the mass of details with energy. "Your flour," he would write to a Philadelphia merchant, "is really very bad—being of a most swarthy complexion—& withal very untractable; the Bakers complain that they cannot by any means get it to rise." Or, Captain Gibbs had sailed with his cargo "stowed very Hicheldy-picheldy" and left behind him a mass of debts so complicated that young Hamilton was at his wit's end how to straighten them out. Then Cruger's new sloop, the *Thunderbolt*, came into the harbor with a cargo of mules and news of pirates roaming the high seas. The boy's military ardor kindled at once. "Arm yourselves," he commanded, "place cannon on board, and defend yourselves against the cutthroats."

So well did he attend to business that Cruger, returning in health again in March, 1772, found his affairs in a most flourishing condition. He could not have done better himself.

That August young Hamilton was sent on a business trip through the islands. He returned to Christiansted by the end of the month. It was late afternoon of the thirty-first when he finished his last report, entered the final order, locked up the countinghouse, closed the shutters, and retired to his tiny bedroom for a frugal meal and some reading in his beloved history books. Actual life in Christiansted might be dull; but on the printed page he found excitement galore: battles and sudden death, the tramp of armies, convulsions of nature, world-shaking events.

Night came with the usual swiftness of the tropics. He lit his candle and continued reading. It was almost midnight when he finally closed his book, blew out the candle, and went to bed. For a while he tossed restlessly. The night was hot and sticky. Not a breath stirred and there was a strange, leaden weight to the air. But at last the tired boy fell asleep.

Just how long he slept he never knew; but he awoke suddenly to the sound of a tremendous crash and a world of howling fury. His room was a shambles; a solid wall of water gushed through the open window; outside, the wind shrieked like a thousand devils; lightning flashed in continuous dazzlement and huge thunderbolts ripped the heavens.

As the drenched and frightened boy started up from his cot, new and more ominous sounds pierced the screaming din: the roar of the sea, the crash of collapsing houses, and the cries of the wounded and dying. It seemed to the startled lad as though the elements of nature itself were in their final dissolution and that the end of the world had come.

Gathering all his strength, Alec struggled against the wall of wind and water to the window, pulled the shutters tight. Then, for the remainder of that awful night, he crouched at the farther end of the room, whispering the prayers his new friend, the Reverend Dr. Hugh Knox, a recent arrival on the island, had taught him. Each moment he expected to hear the timbers rending underneath his feet and find himself precipitated to oblivion.

Fortunately, the solidly built structure remained intact. In the morning the wind died down, the sun came out, and the hurricane, the most disastrous in the island's history, had roared out to sea.

When Alec ventured out, it was to look upon a scene of unutterable destruction. King Street, Queen Street, Strand Street—the three main thoroughfares—were masses of twisted wreckage. The sea was still a foaming fury, and the beach was thick with debris. Not a ship of those that had been anchored in the harbor the evening before was visible. All trees were uprooted, houses were down, and white-faced people hauled frantically at the fallen timbers in search of the missing and the dead.

The sights and sounds, the memory of that dreadful night, moved young Hamilton to the depths. There was a strain of religious feeling in him that Dr. Knox had helped draw to the surface. That enthusiastic and devoted Presbyterian minister, a graduate of the College of New Jersey (later renamed Princeton), had taken a liking to the lad. He encouraged him in his reading, gave him books, and tutored him in the classics. He also prophesied great things for his protégé.

Alec's fingers had always itched for the pen; but so far he had written only business letters. Now, he felt, he had a subject worthy of his talents.

"I take up my pen," he commenced that night, "just to give you an imperfect account of the most dreadful hurricane that memory or any records whatever can trace, which happened here on the 31st ultimo last night."

In graphic phrases he described the horrors of that night. Then, remembering Dr. Knox, he launched into a series of religious apostrophes: "Where now, Oh vile worm, is all thy boasted fortitude and resolution? What is become of thy arrogance and self-sufficiency? Why dost thou tremble and stand aghast?"

When the composition was finished, he sent it to the *Royal Danish-American Gazette*, the leading English-language newspaper in the Danish islands. To his infinite joy it was accepted, and the "Hurricane Letter" appeared in the issue of October 3, 1772.

It made an immediate sensation. Actually, it was no great shakes as a literary effort, although the Danish governor thought it a masterpiece. Dr. Knox delightedly agreed, and so did the citizenry of the islands. Obviously, such talents should not be allowed to go to waste; the author must be given an opportunity to prepare himself for the splendid career that seemed to lie ahead.

That meant going for an education either to the American colonies on the mainland or to England. But the latter would have entailed considerable expense; and the merchants of the West Indies were accustomed to sending their sons to places like King's College in New York, Yale College at New Haven, and the College of New Jersey at Princeton.

Once the matter was broached, it was swiftly settled. Dr. Knox, the boy's aunts, and a public subscription provided the funds, and within a week, before the dazed youngster quite knew what had happened, he found himself on board a ship and land already out of sight. All his worldly goods were in an ironbound trunk, and in his pocket were letters of introduction from Dr. Knox and Cruger to important people in New York.

New York was his final destination. However, since no ship was clearing for there within the near future, it had been decided not to waste time in getting the budding genius directly to New York but to take advantage of a boat heading for Boston. From that New England port he could journey by stagecoach to New York.

As the vessel sailed slowly to the north, Alec had to pinch himself to make certain that he was actually awake. Because of a single literary effort all his hopes, his dreams, and ambitions were on the verge of realization. The great world lay before him, an oyster to be opened. Behind him, forever cast aside, was the dreary drudgery of the countinghouse—the endless details of boxes and bales, butter and flour, lumber and mules, pounds and shillings and pence. Adventure loomed ahead, adventure limited only by his capacity to dare and to master. Yet he had no fears or qualms as to the future. Alexander Hamilton was always to be blessed with an abounding confidence in his own powers and in his star.

The journey provided its own adventures. Midway to the mainland, fire broke out in the hold. All on board turned out to battle the flames and, with great effort, managed to put them out before they ate below the water line. Blackened and half-burned, the disabled vessel limped into Boston Harbor. It was near the end of October, 1772.

2 *Student Patriot*

Boston did not detain the fifteen-year-old immigrant long. He was eager to meet his future as soon as possible. With barely a glance at the busy port he mounted the stagecoach and jolted over the old Post Road to the city on the Hudson.

New York could, however, be hardly called a city in the sense that we know it today. Even for its own time it was surpassed by Philadelphia and Boston both in number of inhabitants and volume of trade. It stretched only a short distance up the island of Manhattan from the Battery on the water front, and Canal Street, a scant mile and a half to the north, represented the dividing line where the farms began. The streets were narrow and crooked, the houses small and unpretentious, and water had to be carried by cart from a few insufficient wells. Filth lay uncollected in the streets, and cows and even pigs could occasionally be seen sauntering unconcernedly along Broadway. No wonder that epidemics made their appearance with deplorable frequency.

But to young Hamilton it was a shining metropolis, to which the towns in the West Indies were mere backwater villages. Here lay opportunity—the opportunity to mingle with learned men and make his mark in the great world of ideas.

Nicholas Cruger had given him letters to the mercantile firm of Kartwright & Company, which was to take care of the financial details of the boy's board and schooling. Here he met Hercules Mulligan, brother of one of the partners. This Irishman with the classical first name was a fantastic character. He ran a fashionable tailor shop with a strictly upper-class clientele. When the Revolution came, these customers took the Tory side and hobnobbed with the British when General Howe captured the town and Sir Henry Clinton ruled it. Mulligan, a fiery though secret patriot, bridled his sometimes too ready tongue, listened attentively to the casual conversation of his highly placed customers, and smuggled valuable information to General Washington on impending British military movements. Like everyone else who came in contact with him, Mulligan took an immediate liking to the attractive West Indian youth.

Dr. Knox's letters of introduction were addressed to prominent figures like William Livingston, the Governor of New Jersey, Elias Boudinot of the same state, and several ministers who had been his classmates during his college years at Princeton. These influential people promptly took the young stranger under their wing and helped him with advice as well as more substantial aid.

The boy was headed for college, but his formal schooling had been so sketchy that it was decided to have him first attend a good preparatory school. Such a one, presided over by Francis Barber at Elizabethtown in New Jersey, was chosen.

He spent a year at this school—an impatient year; for he seemed only to be marking time. But he applied himself to his studies with a fierce concentration, stuffing himself with knowledge at a rapid rate, anxious to get through as fast as possible. Governor Livingston and Boudinot, however, did not permit their protégé to become a mere bookworm. They invited him regularly to their homes, and readily succumbed to the charm and brilliance of the precocious youth.

At the end of the year he considered himself ready for college. His first choice naturally was Princeton, where Dr. Knox had studied. Hercules Mulligan went with him to an interview with the president of the college, Dr. Witherspoon.

That learned, if somewhat crusty, Scot put the young applicant through his paces in the simple manner of examinations in those days. He gave him a few passages in Latin to translate, asked him to read several paragraphs from the English classics, and questioned him somewhat more thoroughly on religion and morals. That was all.

"I believe, Master Hamilton," declared Dr. Witherspoon finally, "we can enroll you in the College of New Jersey."

If he expected effusive thanks from the small, erect figure before him, he was soon to be disappointed.

"Very good, sir," replied the lad with the utmost calm. "In which class do I enter?"

The president was taken aback. "Why, as a freshman, of course."

"I'm sorry, sir; that won't do. I am sufficiently ahead in my studies to attend the junior, or at least the sophomore, class. Furthermore, I do not wish to be bound by the usual regulations governing promotions. I must be advanced as rapidly as my abilities and knowledge admit."

The startled doctor peered down at this amazing youngster who thus boldly set forth his conditions for entry into his institution. "Hmm!" he said after a pause. "This is a most unusual request, Master——er——Mister Hamilton."

"I won't enter under any other conditions," declared the youth firmly.

"We've never done it before. However, I shall submit your——er——request to the trustees."

Dr. Witherspoon might have been impressed, having seen the applicant face to face; but the trustees, considering the matter at a distance, decided against any such revolutionary procedure.

"Good!" exclaimed Hercules Mulligan when the sad news arrived. "I think you'll do much better at King's College. Besides," he added affectionately, clapping the downcast lad on the shoulder, "I'll be able to see more of you."

Mulligan was correct in his prediction. The New York college, under the presidency of Dr. Myles Cooper, was willing to take the student on his own terms, and Hamilton promptly matriculated.

King's (now Columbia) was a small college in downtown New York. Aside from its president, the entire faculty consisted of three professors who assumed to cover the entire domain of learning.

The new—and unclassified—student threw himself into his studies with purposeful ardor. These were but the tools for the business of life, and that business beckoned to him night and day. He concentrated largely on anatomy, having some thoughts of becoming a physician; but the swift tide of events soon banished the idea.

A friendly, likable boy, he rapidly became popular with his fellow students. There were youngsters of ability and talent among them, including Ned Stevens, his cousin and childhood playmate who had preceded him to the mainland. But almost immediately they recognized the outstanding qualities of this intense young West Indian in their midst and gladly submitted to his leadership. One in particular, Robert Troup, was to become his lifelong friend and worshipful follower.

The students organized a debating club, and Hamilton, the youngest, outshone all the rest in the cogency of his arguments and the forcefulness of his speech.

The students did not have to look far for topics to debate. Ever since the ending of the French and Indian War in 1763 the colonists had been engaged in a mounting quarrel with the mother country, England. There were two chief points of dispute. First, the English considered that the colonies existed for their personal benefit; therefore, the American trade must be so regulated as to bring maximum profit to England. Second, the colonies ought to help pay the cost of the French and Indian War and contribute toward the expenses of the government of the Empire, of which they were a part.

The second item was reasonable enough. But the British also insisted that their Parliament had the right and power to levy taxes directly on the Americans to cover these costs. To this claim the Americans objected violently. They insisted in turn that only their own legislatures, elected by themselves, had the authority to levy taxes on them. To bolster their argument, they coined the famous slogan "No taxation without representation."

There had been trouble aplenty in 1765 when the British Parliament had sought to levy certain taxes on America—the most notorious of these being the stamp tax. So violent had been the resistance and so tremendous the clamor that the tax was withdrawn. Now, in 1773, Parliament gave the East India Company what the colonists considered a monopoly of the sale of tea in the colonies. This, combined with a tax on the tea, infuriated Americans. No longer content to protest, they acted. In Boston a band of men painted like Indians boarded a vessel loaded with tea, dumped the boxes into the bay, and vanished exultantly into the night.

The British government retaliated swiftly. Troops were moved into the defiant town, the port was closed to all trade and shipping, and the city was placed under severe penalties until compensation was forthcoming for the damage and the outrage. But the other colonies rallied to the defense of the people of Massachusetts and declared that they would stand or fall together. The Revolution, in effect, had begun.

The students of King's College were intensely patriotic, and none more so than the young West Indian. As a boy

Hamilton had listened attentively to the complaints of the British merchants and planters of the islands against the restrictive regulations of the mother country and had shared with them an equal indignation against the stamp tax.

When Hamilton heard of the Boston Tea Party and its consequences, he reached for his pen. Once before, when nature had burst her bounds and poured destruction on the islands, he had written a composition that furnished him with his first great opportunity. Now, when it was man that was in a state of ferment, another product of his pen might well open a second path for him. He considered the mainland as his permanent home, and it was here that fame and fortune beckoned. The islands of the West Indies were forever left behind.

In the intervals between classes and studies, therefore, he composed a "Defence of the Destruction of the Tea" and sent it without signature to *Holt's Journal*, a patriot newspaper. When, to his joy, the article was published, he hastened to write more articles on the same theme and these, too, duly appeared in print.

The series made a deep impression on the important men of New York and the neighboring colonies, and there was much speculation as to the author. But John Jay, who was later to become governor of New York and Chief Justice of the United States, knew his identity. "I hope," he wrote warmly to a friend, "Mr. Hamilton continues busy."

It is extremely doubtful that Mr. Hamilton knew of Jay's favorable comment, but he followed the advice just the same. It was in his nature to keep eternally busy. When the news came to New York that the British had shut the port of Boston, the angry patriots called an open-air protest meeting. It was only natural that students should cut classes to attend. A number of speakers addressed the milling crowd and, it must be confessed, were a trifle dull. A disappointed student cried out to Hamilton, "Give 'em a speech, Alec. You're good at it!" The crowd took up the cry with enthusiasm and turned it into a roar. Before he knew what was happening, he found himself heaved bodily onto the platform.

At first, as he stared out upon the sea of upturned faces, his nerve failed him. His voice squeaked and his limbs trembled. Then both steadied and he swung into an extemporaneous harangue full of fire and passion, ending with a ringing peroration. "Resist this tyranny!" he cried. "Let us act together and with such determination that a mighty tidal wave will sweep from our shores clear across to the headlands of England and shatter her arrogant power and glory."

His oratory stirred the huge assemblage and they shouted approval as he stepped down, flushed and triumphant. "Who is he?" they demanded. "A college boy," came the answer. "A young fellow from the West Indies, name of Hamilton."

By nightfall everyone in New York was talking about him; within several days Boston was buzzing with his name. At one bound Alexander Hamilton had become famous.

But the boy refused to have his head turned. He went quietly back to his books, lost himself in the mysteries of mathematics, and read diligently in history, politics, government, economics, and oratory. As he read, he took careful, precise notes, excerpting appropriate quotations from the authors for use in the controversial pamphlets that continued to issue from his pen.

Meanwhile, events were marching with giant strides toward the final breach with England and the outburst of armed rebellion. At this time, however, and in fact for a considerable period to come, few Americans thought in terms of independence or even of actual revolt. All they wished was to compel the British government to see things their way—that is, to remove the restrictions on trade and to permit the colonial legislatures to handle their domestic affairs, particularly in the realm of taxation.

The First Continental Congress, attended by delegates from the thirteen colonies, met in Philadelphia to consider ways and means for obtaining these concessions from England. The quickest and surest way, they finally agreed, was to aim directly at the pocketbook of the mother country. Boycott her goods, they argued, and the loss of our trade and money will quickly bring her to her senses.

But there were many Americans who shrank from a boycott as treasonable and tending toward eventual rebellion. These were the Loyalists—or Tories, as the patriots derisively named them—who wished to cling to England, come what may. One of them was Dr. Samuel Seabury, a prominent minister. To counteract the patriot propaganda, he wrote two pamphlets and signed them "A Westchester Farmer." Written in plain, simple language, they were calculated to appeal to the common sense and pockets of farmers everywhere, pointing out to them how they would stand to lose in dollars and cents by the proposed boycott. So effective were these pamphlets that the alarmed patriots searched desperately for someone who could answer his arguments.

But while they sought seemingly in vain, the job had already been done. On December 15, 1774, a long pamphlet with a formidable title came out in print. It was called "A Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress from the Calumnies of Their Enemies, in Answer to a Letter under the Signature of a Westchester Farmer." No name was signed to it, and only a small group of friends knew that Alexander Hamilton was its author.

If Seabury's initial pamphlet was powerfully written, this was even more so. Hamilton's pen dripped biting sarcasms, convincing arguments, and appeals to historical precedents as well as the passions of men. His sentences marched in serried ranks and whipped up the emotions. No one, with the exception of Tom Paine, wielded a readier or more effective pen. Americans knew that a mighty champion had arisen to take their part.

Stung by this invisible wasp, Seabury sought to retort with his second article, and Hamilton rushed another flaming denunciation into print.

"The sacred rights of mankind," he thundered, "are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of the divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power."

Again the colonies buzzed with admiration. Who was this anonymous pamphleteer? John Jay? "I am not the man," Jay modestly replied. "I wish I were."

When it leaked out finally that it was Hamilton, the student who had created such a sensation with his speech at the protest meeting, admiration turned to amazement. No one was more dumfounded than Dr. Myles Cooper, president of the college. "I refuse to believe it," he cried. "I know young Hamilton. He is a mere stripling." Cooper was a staunch Tory, an adherent of England, and he could not conceive that any student of his would have either the inclination to become a rebel or the ability to write such prose.

But Hamilton was not through. When England sought to lure the provinces of Canada to the British side by granting the majority Catholics equal rights with the Protestants and by offering them special privileges in the vast unsettled territory north of the Ohio River, the youthful pamphleteer sprang to the attack with another long and vehement argument. Unfortunately, one of his chief points was an appeal to the prevailing prejudice against Catholics.

It was now becoming obvious that words would not be enough; it might be necessary to defend their rights with arms. Little groups of men began to drill and to gather stores of guns and ammunition. Among these were the students of King's College, with Hamilton as their leader. They went in for grand effects. They called themselves the "Corsicans," and wore short green coats and rakish hats that bore the slogan "Liberty or Death." They pinned red tin hearts on their jackets, inscribed "God and our Right." It was all very theatrical, and very patriotic.

But the romantic element was shortly to be submerged in the deadly serious. In distant Lexington and Concord shots were fired. The Revolution had begun.

When the news reached New York by express riders, the populace rose in furious demonstrations against the British power and the native Tories in their midst. Particularly was their wrath directed against Dr. Cooper, who had minced no words in displaying his contempt for what he called "the rabble."

On the night of May 10, 1775, Hamilton lay asleep in the room he shared with his fellow student Robert Troup. A great clamor of voices, the rush of many feet, a blaze of light, and the smell of smoke brought him bolt upright. He sprang out of bed, rushed to the window.

In the narrow street below he saw men running. Some brandished sputtering torches; others carried buckets of bubbling tar and bags of feathers.

"What's up?" he cried.

A running man, face sooty and excited, swung his bucket and yelled up, "We're after that blasted Tory, Myles Cooper. We're gonna give him a taste o' tar and feathers." Then with a screech, he raced after his fellows.

Aghast, the young student rushed back to the bed and shook his sleeping friend. "Quick, Bob!" he whispered. "We've got to head those fools off. If anything happens to Dr. Cooper, we'll never live it down."

Within seconds they were in their clothes and out into the by now deserted street. "There's a short cut down the back lane," said Hamilton. "It's our only chance."

Down the dark, winding path sped the young men, panting up the porch steps of the president's house just as the mob surged toward it from the main street.

"Stop!" commanded Hamilton in a loud voice, arm out-thrust. The rioters slowed their forward rush, came to an indecisive halt. They recognized the slight, slim figure who blocked their way. This was the student who had roused them to patriotic fervor down in the fields, who had written those stirring pamphlets.

Hamilton quickly availed himself of the respite. "Think of the shame of what you meant to do," he shouted. "Think of the disgrace you will bring by your conduct on the patriot cause, and on the cause of liberty you claim to hold so dear."

The mob stirred under the tongue-lashing. A mutter ran through their ranks, rose in volume. They were in no mood to be balked of their prey. A few of the bolder spirits began to edge forward.

Overhead, a window was thrust open. Dr. Cooper, clad only in nightcap and shirt, peered out. He saw the torches, the inflamed upturned countenances—and young Hamilton gesticulating on his doorstep. "Aha!" he muttered. "That rebellious young rascal is rousing the populace to do me harm."

Trembling with fear, he shrieked, "Don't listen to him, men. He is crazy, crazy!" Down slammed the window. Pulling a cloak over his nightshirt, the elderly president rushed down the backstairs for flight.

Outside, a roar of laughter burst from the mob at his mistake. While they shouted with glee, Hamilton slipped around the house, caught up with the terror-stricken man, and hurriedly explained the situation.

"If you'll come with me, Dr. Cooper," he ended, "I'll guide you to safety."

The old Tory was only too happy to commit himself to the hands of his rescuer. Together they hurried by side roads down to the water front, where next morning Cooper found protection on board a British man-of-war. Eventually he went to England, never to return. There, in gratitude to his young protector, he wrote some verses about his terrifying experience. It is not a good poem, but a magazine published it.

*Meanwhile, along the sounding shore,
Where Hudson's waves incessant roar,
I take my weary way;
And skirt the windings of the tide,
My faithful pupil by my side
Nor wish the approach of day.*

Several months after Cooper's melodramatic escape, a rumor spread that sailors from the British warships in the harbor intended to seize some cannons on the shore. The alarm bells rang out, the drums beat, and the militia hastened to the Battery to save the threatened guns. Hamilton, musket on shoulder, was in the forefront. The ships fired on the swarming men as they toiled feverishly to haul the great guns away. Hamilton, with the greatest unconcern, tugged at one of the ropes.

The cannons were being dragged up Broadway and out of range when he suddenly uttered an exclamation.

"What's wrong, Alec?" inquired Troup.

"My musket! I left it down at the Battery. I'm going back."

"You can't," Troup protested. "They're shooting like mad down there."

But Hamilton was already gone. The shells fell all around him, but he scooped up the musket and, waving it in triumph, ran back to join his company.

With Dr. Cooper's flight, King's College closed its doors. Hamilton was free now to join the army that was rapidly being formed. He was nineteen, and his exploits had made him a public figure. With that supreme self-confidence which he exhibited all through life he demanded—and received—a commission as captain of artillery from the New York authorities.

But he was a captain without a company. The guns he had helped rescue were available, but there was no one to man them. Men refused to enlist unless they received a substantial bonus and an assurance of regular pay. And the Provincial Congress of New York, newly formed, had no funds.

The fledgling captain did not hesitate. He used the last of his private funds from the West Indies to enroll and equip recruits, and was able to bring an initial installment of thirty volunteers to his banner. They were willing enough, but they knew nothing of guns or of soldiering.

It was not for nothing that Hamilton had employed every spare moment in studying the manual of arms and the lives and tactics of the great captains of the past. He drilled them himself, rigorously and remorselessly. He sternly punished every breach of regulations, and when the men rebelled, he crushed incipient mutiny and pursued deserters with the utmost severity.

But when he was through with them, they no longer were a band of slouching civilians. They looked and acted like disciplined soldiers. Officers of the regular Continental Army came to watch admiringly the formations of the little company under the brisk commands of its captain.

No one believed it would be an easy task to beat England, but few realized the long years of hardship and suffering that lay ahead. New York had a taste of things to come almost immediately. A British fleet blockaded the harbor, a British army under General Howe landed on Staten Island. George Washington, the new American Commander in Chief, hurried down from Boston to meet the formidable threat. But his men were few, ill-clad, ill-armed, and inexperienced. It looked as if the rebellion would be crushed before it got fully under way.

In an attempt to defend both Long Island and the City of New York, Washington divided his all too scanty troops. Hamilton thought this a mistake, and did not hesitate to tell the general so. Indeed, when his company of artillery was ferried across the East River to Brooklyn Heights, he sent a note to Washington advising that all the troops be returned to the city. It was fortunate that he did not sign his name to the note; the military career of the brash young captain might have ended then and there.

Washington did not take the anonymous advice, though events soon proved it to have been correct. A battle was fought on Long Island in which the Americans suffered a disastrous defeat and were saved from destruction only by Howe's sluggishness in pursuit.

That night the battered little army sought to retreat across the river. It was dark and stormy, and the rain fell in torrents. Boats capsized, and men and equipment were thrown into the churning waters. Only through superhuman exertions was Hamilton able to get his precious guns across.

Barely had he set them up on a fortified hill just outside the town when disaster struck again. Howe, recovered from his strange lethargy, had quietly landed an army farther up the river, and threatened the capture or destruction of all troops below him on the island.

Once again the signal for retreat was sounded. Hamilton's company managed to slip through the encompassing lines to rejoin the main army entrenched on Harlem Heights, but not without loss. One gun had to be left behind, and with it Hamilton's personal baggage.

From there on, the campaign resolved itself into a hunt of fox by hounds. For a while the wearied Americans held off a frontal assault on the Heights, then retreated with the British in hot pursuit. At White Plains the process was repeated. Each time that the British caught up with their elusive prey, Washington fought a delaying battle and slipped away again.

For days Hamilton and his men, now augmented to a company of a hundred, fought, marched, and fought again. The days were dark, and the nights gloomy. It was a time, as Paine immortally put it, to try men's souls; and the summer patriots and the sunshine soldiers fell by the wayside, convinced that all was lost.

But those who remained—and young Hamilton never had any thought of quitting—were turning into hardened veterans

who knew how to fight and how to retreat, when necessary, in good order.

The young captain fought bravely at Harlem Heights, poured deadly shot into the assaulting Hessians at White Plains, and held a bridge over the Raritan River in New Jersey until the main army could make good its escape. Then he marched his sadly depleted company after it into Princeton.

That company, however, stood out among the bedraggled Continentals for the precision with which it marched. Its captain, with his cocked hat pulled deep over his brow, evoked favorable comments from the spectators as he walked at its head beside one of the precious cannon, stroking it as though it were a fine horse.

Nor had his exploit at the bridge been overlooked. Washington, hastening his battered troops to safety, nevertheless found time to send an aide galloping back to discover the name of the gallant officer who was standing off the entire British force.

The youthful officer, face begrimed and sweaty, barely paused in his rapid-fire orders to his gunners. Without looking up, he replied, "Captain Alexander Hamilton."

The aide saluted. "His Excellency, General Washington, asks that you report to him at our first halt."

It was to be some time, however, before Hamilton had a chance to report. There was work to be done first at Trenton and Princeton. Everyone knows of the brilliant exploit that frozen Christmas Eve at Trenton, when the first faint ray of light illumined a hitherto uniform succession of defeats. Not so many know of the equally spectacular exploit at Princeton.

The British, caught unawares, had sought refuge in the college buildings. Hamilton unlimbered his guns, cupped his hands and shouted a demand for surrender. A derisive cheer was his only answer. His hand went up. "Fire!" he ordered. The gunners thrust flaming tinder to the touchholes; the guns recoiled under the thunder of the shot. A solid ball smashed in direct hit through the outer chapel wall, hurtled through the intervening interior to crush a portrait of George II on the farther wall to smithereens.

That was enough. The British came tumbling out on the green, hands high in surrender.

Winter now descended on the opposing armies. In those days, troops rarely fought when the weather grew cold and snow blanketed the ground. They went into winter quarters instead. Washington's little army took up a position at Morristown, New Jersey. With it went Hamilton's men. But only some twenty-five remained of the hundred that had constituted its full strength.

3 *Call Colonel Hamilton*

General Washington groaned as he stared at the huge pile of papers on his table. "How can I fight a war," he asked bitterly of a staff officer, "when all my time is taken up with correspondence? Letters to Congress, letters to the states, general orders, special orders—I'm at it all day long. If only I could get someone who could think for me as well as execute orders."

"There is just such a man, General," said the staff officer.

Washington had been pacing the narrow confines of his headquarters room at Morristown. He turned swiftly. "For God's sake," he said, "who is he?"

"Captain Hamilton, sir. His pen is the readiest I know. You remember those pamphlets in which he answered the Tory Seabury? He has a keen wit, a quick apprehension, and he's a gallant soldier, to boot."

"Hamilton? Hamilton? Isn't he the artillery officer who held up the British at the crossing of the Raritan?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then get him at once."

Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton was a most unhappy young man. His new rank of chief aide to the Commander in Chief had made him the most envied officer in the army. Nevertheless, he was unhappy. "I'm a soldier," he muttered morosely to himself, "not a letter writer, no matter how glorified."

But Washington beamed. He had found just the person he needed. All he had to do now was to go rapidly through the more important of his correspondence, discuss briefly with Hamilton the nature of the replies, and then dismiss the whole business from his mind with the comforting assurance that everything would be properly taken care of, and in language far more elegant and forcible than any in which he himself could have expressed it.

Most of his mail, however, did not require his personal attention. Hamilton would answer run-of-the-mill letters on his own and sign the general's name to them. "Now," thought Washington with a grim smile, "I can attend to my proper business—winning the war."

"Call Colonel Hamilton" became a sort of byword in the camp. Were there complaints to answer tactfully, reports to get ready, orders to issue? "Call Colonel Hamilton" and then forget about it. What a comfort to a harassed commander in his days of trial!

Nor was Washington the only one to discover the value of this new and very young colonel. The great men who piloted the State of New York also discovered that his information was most accurate, his discretion profound, and his advice weighty beyond his years. More and more they came to rely on him in their complicated relations with the Continental Army and the Continental Congress.

The war dragged wearily on. By the summer of 1777, the American cause looked gloomier than ever. Burgoyne, marching down from Canada, was threatening to cut the colonies in two. Howe moved out of New York to seize Philadelphia. Such was the clamor that Washington, against his better judgment, was forced to quit his strong position at Morristown and attempt to protect the chief American town. But Howe defeated him in the bloody battle of Brandywine, and Philadelphia was doomed.

The Americans retreated in such haste that they were compelled to abandon a huge store of supplies in some mills close to the Schuylkill River. To prevent their falling into enemy hands, Washington detached Hamilton and Captain Henry Lee with a small troop of cavalry to destroy them.

Hamilton was delighted. This was the kind of work he loved—filled with dangers, thrills, and a chance for daring exploits.

It was early morning as the little group spurred through the misty countryside, galloping their foam-flecked horses up hill and down, fording streams, and hearing the nipping wind of autumn whistle past. Then they moved out upon the brow of a long hill at the foot of which lay the mills, with the Schuylkill glinting beyond.

Not a living thing was in sight, yet Hamilton prudently posted two sentries on the top of the hill before galloping with the rest of his troop down to the mills. Here again he divided his forces. He sent one small group under Lee to seize a flat-bottomed boat on the shore of the river against any emergency; the other, under himself, went to burn the mills.

Hamilton was inside, thrusting a blazing torch into the mass of combustible flour, watching with satisfaction the swift tongues of flame and the upward plume of smoke when he heard guns bang sharply outside. Hurling his torch into the bin, he dashed into the open. Down the hill came his two sentries, riding at breakneck speed, and charging after them was a large body of red-coated cavalry.

The sentries did not pause as they hit the bottom but spurred over a bridge that crossed the tiny millstream, shouting their warning as they flashed by.

"Follow me for your lives!" cried Hamilton as his men emerged in bewilderment from the mills. It was too late to get to their horses. The only chance was the boat on the river, a bare hundred feet away. Lee's men had abandoned it at the alarm and, with the panicky sentries, were swimming their horses to the safety of the opposite bank.

It was touch and go. Hamilton with four troopers tumbled into the boat and moved it into the stream just as the British were upon them. Fortunately, the current was swift, and the ungainly craft spun and whirled crazily down the stream as the redcoats drew up and fired a volley after them. One man in the boat was killed outright; another was badly wounded; and then they were out of range.

Late that afternoon Hamilton, drenched to the skin, disheveled and reeling with fatigue, walked into Washington's tent just in time to hear his comrade, Captain Lee, reporting in tragic tones, "Sir, I am sorry to have to tell you that Colonel Hamilton and four men are lost and, I fear, dead."

The exhausted young soldier managed a grin. He saluted the startled general. "Colonel Hamilton reporting, sir, that the mission was successfully completed. He also begs to remark that he is not dead."

Once again the secretary, he sent an urgent express to Congress, then in session at Philadelphia, warning the members to get out fast—the British were coming. The congressmen did not delay; they snatched up their belongings, mounted their horses, and dashed off into the night.

They might just as well have taken their time. The British, as usual, did not push their victory. It was several days before they marched leisurely into town, red coats spick and span, boots and buttons smartly polished, and drums beating. But the interval required for such sprucing up was sufficient for Hamilton, working at top speed, to remove all public stores and supplies of food from the endangered city to places of safety.

But if things were going badly for the colonists around Philadelphia, wonderful news came out of the North. Burgoyne with a formidable army, aiming down from Canada toward Albany and the Hudson, had been surrounded at Saratoga and forced to surrender. It was the turning point of the war. The booty was vast; the prestige immense; and—most important of all—the French, who had been secretly aiding the Americans against their ancient enemy England, now decided to enter the war openly.

The great victory, however, posed certain problems. General Horatio Gates, to whom Burgoyne had surrendered, was a vain and ambitious man. For some time he had been connected with a group of discontented officers and members of Congress who resented Washington and plotted secretly to supersede him. Among the malcontents in the army were Generals Conway and Charles Lee.

Washington knew something of what was going on and that Gates was involved. He knew also that it was essential for Gates to transfer a substantial force of his troops to the outskirts of New York while he, Washington, came up from the South. Between the two armies New York might be recaptured.

A trustworthy messenger to Gates was needed, one who combined tact and knowledge, boldness and ability to handle men. Hamilton was chosen for the delicate mission.

The distance to Gates's headquarters in Albany was close to 250 miles; yet Hamilton, riding hard, completed the journey in four days, including a stopover with General Israel Putnam near Fishkill. Dusty, unshaven, near to dropping from fatigue and lack of sleep, he nevertheless hurried at once to Gates.

First he showed Washington's letter, with its final sentence, "From Colonel Hamilton you will have a clear and comprehensive view of things, and I persuade myself you will do all in your power to facilitate the objects I have in contemplation."

Then he rapidly sketched Washington's needs: three brigades from Gates's army and additional troops from Putnam's command at Fishkill.

Gates listened politely, though he had no intention of yielding so large a part of his army to Washington. After all, why should he strengthen the man whom he expected shortly to replace as Commander in Chief?

Aloud he said, "I'll send some troops, but not three brigades. I can't spare them."

"How many will you send?"

"Oh, I don't know. I'll see."

"But the whole plan of General Washington's campaign depends on your forces."

"Well, maybe I'll send one brigade."

"But——"

The pudgy general rose. "That is all I can spare, young man. Good day, sir."

Furious, Hamilton withdrew. Well, at least he would look at the brigade so grudgingly offered. One glance was enough. It was the weakest of the lot, with barely six hundred men fit for any sort of duty.

In a white heat of rage he sat down to compose a letter to the hero of Saratoga. It literally blistered the paper. "I insist," he wrote in effect, "that a good brigade at least be sent instead of the one you were pleased to pick. And you will be good enough to give instant orders for its embarkation down the river."

Gates backed down when he read the peremptory command of this youth. He greeted the angry aide later with a placating smile. "I'll tell you what I'll do," he said effusively. "I'll send two brigades, not just one."

With the victory two-thirds won, Hamilton mounted his horse and rode down to Fishkill to see what Putnam was doing. Putnam was supposed also to have two brigades already on the march. But, to Hamilton's astonishment and disgust, there was no sign of movement. Again he resorted to his pen. "I now, sir, in the most explicit terms," he told the veteran general, "by his Excellency's authority, give it as a positive order from him that all the Continental troops under your command may be immediately marched to King's Ferry, there to cross the river and hasten to reinforce the army under him."

Old Putnam, trembling with rage at such impudence, dispatched a loud complaint to Washington. In return came a stinging rebuke and a curt command to obey Hamilton. But that daring young man had already gone over Putnam's head and had ordered the troops to march. Again he had triumphed over vanity, calculation, and delay.

But the strain had been too much. He went down with a fever, and for almost a week his life was despaired of. It was December before Hamilton, wan and shaky, was able to rejoin the army, now in winter quarters at Valley Forge. The delays had been sufficient to ruin Washington's hopes of besieging New York before the snows came.

The long and bitter winter brought suffering and starvation to the ragged, almost naked troops at Valley Forge. Washington begged Congress in vain for food, clothing, and supplies. Hamilton, finally recovered from his illness, blazed with wrath. "Where are our great men?" he demanded. "Why aren't they in Congress, where they could best help the cause of the Revolution? No," he added bitterly, "they prefer to take office in their own states rather than in the

national Congress. It is time for them to rouse themselves and understand that their place is not at home, but with the nation."

He had put his finger on the great need of the times. Most men considered their own state as the all-important political entity; as a sovereign nation, in fact. True, they were joined with the other states in a common cause; but they expected, once independence had been achieved, to go their separate ways, each attending to its own business and each claiming the total allegiance of its citizens. At the most there might be a loose confederation of the states for purposes of common defense against a foreign foe. Very few men were wise and farseeing enough to have come as yet to the idea of a strong, united nation in which the states would be bound together permanently.

But Hamilton had already risen to that brilliant concept. Perhaps the fact that he was really an outsider, born on alien soil, enabled him to override the local politics and local patriotisms of the day. In his mind it was elementary that a great national compact was essential, in which sentiment and government were one. Only such a nation could survive among the powers of the earth and assume a position that would compel respect from all and yield to none in strength, prosperity, and grandeur.

More than anyone else, indeed, was Hamilton to bring about the realization of that vision.

The dreadful winter of 1777-1778 finally came to an end. In the spring Washington's ill-clad, ill-fed, ill-armed troops marched down from Valley Forge to meet the thrust of Sir Henry Clinton into New Jersey. The two armies met at Monmouth Court House.

The battle was indecisive, though a splendid chance had been offered the Americans to cut the British to pieces. The failure was due largely to the unaccountable actions of General Charles Lee, a member of the group that was plotting against Washington. He disobeyed orders, dallied while Lafayette was locked in desperate combat with the full British army, and when he finally did move, conducted himself so ineptly that his flank was turned and his troops fled in wild disorder.

Washington, with Hamilton at his side, dashed up in time to rally the fleeing men. Hamilton, galloping next with orders to one of the shattered brigades, ran headlong into a furious melee. Without a moment's hesitation he placed himself at the head of the leaderless Continentals and led them in a driving countercharge. A musket ball wounded his horse. Frantic with pain, the animal reared and threw Hamilton heavily to the ground. Men and horses charged over his prostrate body. Then the British broke and fled, and aid was rushed to the fallen officer. He was carried off the field, bruised, battered, and shaken; but he had helped save the day.

The army resounded with his praises and with denunciations of the folly, cowardice, or worse of General Lee. Hamilton plainly intimated that he was a traitor and that a court-martial would find him so. He testified at the trial and thereby made a mortal enemy of the discomfited general. For a while, in fact, it seemed as if a duel might result. But another aide challenged Lee first and wounded him slightly in an exchange of shots. Hamilton acted as second for the challenger.

The court-martial brought in a verdict of guilty on several of the charges, and Lee was suspended from his command for a year.

Now great news came. The French, encouraged by the American success at Saratoga, had entered the war against England. A formidable fleet sailed across the ocean to aid their new ally. Hamilton, the trusted right hand of Washington, was sent to establish liaison. He made such an impression on D'Estaing, the French admiral, that the latter wrote warmly to Washington, "His talents and his personal qualities have secured to him for ever my esteem, my confidence, and my friendship."

Washington did not have to be told these things about his brilliant aide. He had already extended his own friendship and confidence, and he listened carefully to Hamilton when he offered advice.

There was the time, for example, when he considered a plan for kidnaping the British commander, Sir Henry Clinton, in New York.

"No doubt it could be done," admitted Hamilton. "But have you examined the consequences of such an act?"

The general stared, surprised. "Consequences? What consequences?"

"We'd lose rather than gain by the capture," explained Hamilton. "We understand perfectly Sir Henry's character. We know exactly what he can be expected to do next. But should we take him prisoner, the British will appoint another general. Very likely he'll be an abler man, and we'd have to start all over again to figure what he would do in a given situation and how to counterbalance him."

Washington was so struck by the force of this reasoning that he canceled the kidnaping orders, and Sir Henry Clinton, unaware of the danger that had threatened him, continued to sleep peacefully by night and do nothing by day.

The great French fleet from which so much had been expected turned out to be singularly ineffective. Its solitary action was an unsuccessful assault on Savannah, Georgia, then in British hands. After that it sailed first to the West Indies and later ingloriously back to France.

In fact the entry of the French into the war, though ultimately decisive, had a bad effect in the beginning. The Americans, tired of this war which seemed to have no end, relaxed their own exertions. "Why should we continue to pour out our blood and money?" they queried. "Let the French handle the fighting and the matter of supplies from now on." Accordingly, every request to Congress and the states for men and money met with lethargy, indifference, and worse.

Washington's little army was in desperate straits. It had no clothing, little food, and practically no guns or ammunition. Nor could it buy these items with the Continental currency that Congress generously printed as fast as the presses could turn it out. The people were tired of seeing the flimsy paper. From day to day it dropped in value. The farmers flatly refused to accept anything but gold or silver for their produce, while the merchants raised the prices of their wares to astronomical figures to keep pace with its deterioration. By the end of 1779 a paper dollar was worth only two cents in hard cash, and still the value kept sliding. "It's not worth a Continental" has ever since become a contemptuous synonym for anything wholly worthless.

Everyone blamed Congress for the financial troubles. Actually it was not the fault of Congress; it was the fault of the states and of the men who controlled them. Fearful of a central government and believing that any further power granted to it would result in loss of power to themselves, they refused to grant Congress an independent right to raise money by taxation. They knew that he who controls the purse controls all. Were they not fighting a war with England on the very ground that no "foreign" legislature had the right to tax them?

As a result, whenever Congress needed money—and that was always—it had to go hat in hand to the state legislatures begging for it. And the states, having financial difficulties of their own, gave very little, and that grudgingly.

Hamilton knew the problem as well as any man. He was constantly writing letters, on Washington's orders, pleading for and demanding money with which to pay the soldiers and to buy supplies. The fault, he saw clearly, was with the entire setup of the national government under the current Articles of Confederation. Congress, supposedly representative of a nation engaged in a war for life and independence, simply had to have some means of raising money without depending on the promptness of the several states.

Filled with these ideas, he sat down to compose a long and carefully thought-out plan for remedying the situation. Signed with a pseudonym—for he feared a reaction against his chief if his right name were attached—the document was sent to John Sullivan, a member of Congress from New Hampshire, who was sympathetic.

The plan was a remarkable performance. Written by a young man of twenty-two, whose sole acquaintance with the complicated problems of finance, banking, taxation, and government came from books and his own reflections, it sprang full-blown as a great economic and political document.

The chief trouble with the country, he declared, was financial. No war could be fought without money. And the only way to obtain money—aside from the temporary expedient of foreign loans—was by taxation. But Congress had been given no power to tax; instead, it had to depend for funds on the whim of the constituent states. In addition the country was poor, so that in its present state even taxation could not raise sufficient sums to carry on the war.

What then was the answer? Hamilton had it ready, and it became famous in American history. The only way to raise money for every purpose, he insisted, was to make it "the immediate interest of the moneyed men to cooperate with

government in its support."

Hamilton was nothing if not realistic. He firmly believed that it was easier to get men to sacrifice their lives for a cause than to get them to part with their money. Therefore it was essential to offer attractive inducements to the "moneyed men" in the form of high interest rates, a chance for substantial profits on their principal, and an assurance of reasonable safety for both principal and interest.

The way to achieve this, said Hamilton, was to charter a national bank for a minimum of ten years, with a capital composed of a foreign loan in hard cash and an investment of Continental currency by the rich. The repayment of the latter would be guaranteed by the government in such fashion that the lucky stockholders would make almost 100 per cent on their original investment.

This bank would then lend real money both to the government and to private individuals at good rates of interest, and the ensuing profits would be divided equally between the government and the stockholders.

It was a clever scheme, modeled somewhat on the existing structure of the Bank of England, and much later Hamilton was to put into effect the Bank of the United States organized on similar lines. But the times were not yet ripe. The "moneyed men" certainly were interested; the majority of the people, however, who had no money to invest, and therefore could make no money from the bank, and who saw themselves being eventually taxed for the benefit of the rich, viewed the idea then and later with the utmost suspicion. Nor would the states, fiercely jealous of their local sovereignties, consider the project of a national bank which, they were well aware, must give large powers to the central government.

Congressman Sullivan, therefore, much as he might privately approve, decided it would not be wise to introduce the plan in Congress. But Hamilton then and there vowed that someday his idea of a national bank must go through.

4 *Benedict Arnold—Traitor*

The quarters in which Washington's little army finally settled for the winter of 1779-1780 were much more comfortable than the bleak tents of Valley Forge of the preceding winter. Civilian patriots from New York and Philadelphia, with their wives and pretty daughters, visited the officer corps regularly, and the gallant soldiers responded by organizing a round of entertainments and balls for their mutual pleasure.

Hamilton, young, slim, good-looking, with a pleasant manner, as well as a growing reputation, set many a female heart aflutter. As for himself, he had begun to think of marriage and, half in earnest, half in jest, outlined the qualities he required in a wife to his good friend and fellow officer Henry Laurens.

She must be young, handsome (I lay most stress upon a good shape), sensible (a little learning will do), well bred (but she must have an aversion to the word *ton*), chaste, and tender (I am an enthusiast in my notions of fidelity and fondness), of some good nature, a great deal of generosity (she must neither love money nor scolding, for I dislike equally a termagant and an economist). In politics I am indifferent what side she may be of. I think I have arguments that will easily convert her to mine. As to religion a moderate stock will satisfy me. She must believe in God and hate a saint. But as to fortune, the larger stock of that the better.

While he thus wrote in high spirits of the kind of young lady he would be willing to marry, he had already met the girl who filled all specifications except perhaps two: she was pretty but not handsome and she was sincerely and deeply religious.

She was the daughter of General Philip Schuyler, and accompanied her father in his frequent visits to the encampment. Schuyler came of an old Dutch New York family and owned huge tracts of land in the vicinity of Albany, where he lived in almost feudal splendor. He was a soldier of distinction, a power in New York politics, and a member of the Continental Congress.

Elizabeth Schuyler (Eliza or Betsy, as she was more familiarly known) was a good-natured, lively brunette, and the young officers on Washington's staff thronged eagerly around her, both for her own sake and for her father's. But the moment she met the dashing Alexander Hamilton, she knew that he was the one man in the world for her.

On the other hand, the young colonel, surrounded by a bevy of adoring young women, danced and flirted with her no more and no less than with a score of others.

As time passed, however, and he became better acquainted with Eliza and the old general, his thoughts and attentions turned with increasing seriousness in her direction. General Schuyler, on his part, was deeply impressed with the remarkable talents of the young man and found in conversation that they agreed on the great political and military questions of the day. Consequently, as the romance unfolded, he viewed it with the utmost approval.

By spring Hamilton had proposed to Eliza. Having been joyfully accepted, he sought her hand in marriage in a formal interview with the general.

Schuyler beamed. "My boy," he said fondly, "nothing will give Mrs. Schuyler and myself greater pleasure than to call you son-in-law. You have our consent."

"Thank you, sir. May I request then that the marriage take place immediately?"

The old general shook his head. "That, my boy, will have to wait until we can do it in proper style at our home in Albany. You see," and his face darkened a trifle, "our elder daughter, Angelica, ran off to marry some Englishman, and neither of us was present at the wedding. I need not tell you how pained Mrs. Schuyler was. I would not wish that to happen again."

The impetuous lover bowed. "I understand, sir, and shall possess myself in patience."

Thus formally engaged, yet with the wedding date indefinite, Hamilton threw himself into a dozen schemes for winning the war by making the government more efficient and powerful in its conduct.

To a good many thoughtful men, particularly among the more conservative, the Revolution was going badly. The spirits of the people were at a low ebb, money was not to be had, and the states were selfishly concerned only with themselves. Whenever Congress sought to make some positive move, the cry went up that it was seeking regal power and the states resorted to sabotage.

James Duane, a conservative delegate from New York, discussed the situation with Washington and Hamilton. So impressed was he by the latter's concrete remedies that he suggested they be put in writing. He wanted to show them to his fellow conservatives in Congress and elsewhere.

Hamilton wasted no time. He retired to his room and set down on paper his reflections on the state of the country. The pale light of morning came through the window as his pen finally ceased. His eyes were rimmed with fatigue, his fingers were cramped, and every muscle cried out for sleep. Nevertheless, as he snuffed out the candle, he was content. He knew he had written a masterpiece.

One of his first sentences drove to the heart of the problem. "The fundamental defect," he declared unequivocally, "is a want of power in Congress." Give Congress the necessary powers—the power to levy taxes, coin money, establish banks, regulate foreign affairs and trade, make treaties—and the nation would proceed to victory. But, he warned, if you don't, and you continue as thirteen separate sovereign states, each jealous of the others and of the central government, each unwilling to cooperate except on its own terms, all of you will find yourselves shortly back under the tyrannical rule of England.

It was necessary, therefore, to revise the Articles of Confederation. Congress must be given the right to levy a poll tax, taxes on land, and duties on imports. The revenues derived would be employed by Congress for the benefit of all. Only those matters should be left to the states which relate to the private lives and individual property of their own citizens.

In addition the structure of Congress itself must be changed to make it more efficient. It must stop trying to act simultaneously as a legislative and an executive body. Administrative departments with strong executives must be set up to handle war, navy, foreign affairs, and finance.

Hamilton had watched the state militias in action and had nothing but contempt for them. They served usually for a few months and quit the moment their terms expired. They were difficult to discipline, and on occasion refused to fight outside their own state. The only way to win a war, he insisted, was to organize a regular national army with enlistments for the duration. Suppose there were not enough volunteers? Then conscript them.

And, of course, there must be a national bank. This was the keystone of every system of government that Hamilton was ever to propose. Money was the motive power that made the wheels go round. And paper dollars, which in effect are merely governmental promises to pay, have no value unless the rich, the "moneyed men," are interested in supporting them. How obtain that interest and support? By giving them, Hamilton said frankly, a stake in the success of the paper money, that is, a share in the profits. That could be accomplished only through the agency of a national bank authorized to issue paper money—a bank in which government and private investors would be partners.

Hamilton was not interested in the ethics of the situation he described so cynically. It was a fact of human nature, he was convinced, and the wise statesman must take advantage of it for the public good. And that good consisted in the establishment of a prosperous and powerful nation, ready to meet the entire world on equal terms. If the only way to set up such a nation was to give the rich a financial stake in its success, then, so Hamilton believed, it was actually immoral not to give it to them.

But still the times were not ripe for startling proposals such as these, though every influential man to whom Duane showed the letter was deeply impressed with its contents. For they were conservatives and either "moneyed men" themselves or well disposed to them.

Duane did not show the letter to any radical. That would have caused an explosion. For the lines of cleavage were already clear. The conservatives were interested only in a political revolution. Once they gained independence, they were willing enough to continue the same type of institutions and government as England possessed, without the king, of course.

The radicals, on the other hand, demanded a social as well as a political revolution, though they differed among themselves as to its nature and extent. Sam Adams and Patrick Henry called for a leveling democracy; Thomas Jefferson sought to elevate the farmer over the city merchant and trader; while Governor George Clinton of New York clung jealously to the rights of the states against any outside interference.

Therefore Duane and his friends reluctantly agreed that it would be wiser to wait for a more propitious moment before submitting Hamilton's bold proposals to the public. But they also agreed that here was a young man who would decidedly bear watching.

Meanwhile the war went on its weary way, with the shock of disaster coming in the South through the defeat of General Gates—hero of Saratoga—at Camden, in South Carolina. And in the North, at West Point, a greater disaster seemed in the making; this time not by force of arms, but by treason! Hamilton found himself accidentally in the midst of it.

The mist lay heavy on the road that early September morning in 1780 as Hamilton and a fellow aide, James McHenry, of Maryland, jogged into Benedict Arnold's headquarters on the east bank of the Hudson. It was a peaceful scene, with only a sentry or two lounging around. Across the river loomed the strong fortress of West Point, key defense position that barred British progress to the North.

General Arnold met the two young staff officers. "This is an unexpected pleasure," he greeted. "Does it mean that General Washington is about to honor me with a visit?"

The aides dismounted stiffly. They had been in the saddle all the way from Newport, Rhode Island, where Washington had gone to confer with the French.

"His Excellency," replied Hamilton, "is following us. In fact he and his staff expect to breakfast with you later in the morning."

"I shall be delighted to see him," exclaimed Arnold. "Yes," he repeated, "most delighted."

As he said this, a sinister smile stole over his face. What a wonderful coincidence! At this very moment Major André of the British army was riding in disguise down the river with complete plans of the fortifications and dispositions of the American troops in and around West Point tucked in his boots, together with a message to Sir Henry Clinton outlining Arnold's traitorous scheme to deliver everything to him.

Now, not only could the important stronghold be turned over to the British, but also the Commander in Chief and his entire staff. Thus, in one swift blow the rebellion would be crushed, and he, Benedict Arnold, would collect a fantastic reward for his treason.

Meanwhile, completely unaware of what was passing through their host's mind, the young officers chatted easily with the smiling traitor and his lovely wife, the famous Peggy Shippen, of Philadelphia.

While they were engaged in conversation over the breakfast table, a travel-stained messenger strode hurriedly into the room. "A letter for General Arnold," he said.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," said Arnold and broke the seal. As his eye traveled swiftly down the sheets, his face grew pale as death and beads of perspiration started on his forehead. With an incoherent mutter he leaped up and quit the room. The young men stared, wondering what bad news could have affected Arnold so. But Peggy knew. With a quick excuse of her own, she rushed from the chamber to follow her husband.

Upstairs, in their bedroom, a terrible scene took place. For the ill-omened letter told that Major André had been captured and the incriminating documents on him discovered. The jig was up!

Leaving his wife in a faint, Arnold rushed out the back door, mounted his horse, and rode full gallop down the river to a British sloop, secretly at anchor, where it had been waiting for the plot to hatch. A rowboat came at his hail; within minutes Arnold was safe on board, the anchor was weighed, and the disappointed British and their haggard American accomplice were dropping down the river toward New York.

In the meantime Hamilton and McHenry, left abruptly alone, did not know what to make of it all. As they stared uneasily at one another, Washington and his staff rode up. By this time, however, Peggy Arnold had recovered sufficiently to send down excuses for their strange behavior: her husband, she said, had been called suddenly across the river to the fort, and she had been taken ill.

Suspecting nothing, Washington crossed the Hudson to meet Arnold, while Hamilton remained behind. It was fortunate he did, for another messenger clattered up, bearing the incredible news and the sheaf of damning documents found on André.

As Hamilton, stunned at the implications, was reading the report, Washington strode into the room. He had not found Arnold at West Point. Without a word, Hamilton handed him the papers.

It was only too plain. One of the bravest and most highly regarded officers in the American army had sought to sell out his country for gold. Only the hand of fate had intervened to save the Revolution.

A vein pumped on Washington's forehead; his face was like a thundercloud. He gave swift orders. "Colonel Hamilton, Major McHenry, ride at full speed to our post at Verplanck's Point. There may still be time to intercept the British ship and seize the traitor."

The young men saluted, swung into saddle, and galloped furiously down the road. But they arrived too late. The sloop had already passed the Point and was out of range of the American guns.

Hamilton issued the instruction to General Nathanael Greene to march a brigade to West Point to secure it against outside attack or inside treachery. Then he galloped back to find Peggy Arnold throwing a fit of hysterics, partly real and partly feigned. Always impressionable to beauty in distress, Hamilton was deeply moved. Like most Americans for a long time after, he believed her innocent of her husband's guilt and wrote Eliza about her.

Peggy, he said, was "an amiable woman, frantic with distress for the loss of a husband she tenderly loved; a traitor to his country and to his fame. . . . It was the most affecting scene I ever was witness to. She, for a considerable time, entirely lost herself. The General went up to see her, and she upbraided him with being in a plot to murder her child. One moment she raved, another she melted into tears. . . . We have every reason to believe that she was entirely unacquainted with the plan."

He might have saved his sympathy, for many years later the truth came out. Peggy Arnold not only knew every detail of her husband's treason, but in a sense had put him up to it.

In a different way, Hamilton also sympathized with the captured Major André. After all, the British officer had done only what any brave man would have done in the service of his country. Yet Washington was determined to execute him as a spy. Hamilton sought to intervene with his chief, but the commander was inflexible: technically André was a spy—he had gone through the American lines in disguise—and he must be hanged.

Hamilton watched the gruesome ceremony with bitterness in his heart and tears in his eyes. He resented his chief's stubborn obstinacy and lamented André's fate. It was the first rift between the general and his aide. It was not to be the last.

For some time previous, in fact, Hamilton had been discontented. Almost any other young man would have thought he had reached the heights: was he not a colonel, the great Washington's personal secretary and right hand, at the very center of events? But not Hamilton. He passionately wanted to be a fighting soldier, not a writing one. He panted for glory and the crash of battle; instead, he composed letters and dealt in bloodless ink. And he was inordinately sensitive and quick to take offense. He thought highly of his own dignity and fancied slights where none was intended. Sometimes, he thought, Washington treated him with abruptness and discourtesy.

He determined, therefore, to get out of his humiliating position. First he tried to get a commission in a line regiment. Washington would not hear of it; he was too valuable in his present post. Next he pulled wires to obtain a diplomatic mission to France. Congress chose John Laurens, of Maryland, instead. He then requested the command of a corps in

certain dangerous operations; and Generals Lafayette and Greene backed him up for the post of Adjutant General. Washington turned down both applications.

By now Hamilton was thoroughly exasperated. He blamed Washington for his lack of success and attributed it to ill will. Yet he controlled his temper, especially since his long delayed marriage to Eliza Schuyler was near. On December 14, 1780, Hamilton obtained a leave of absence and went to Albany. There, in the bride's home, the wedding took place with full pomp and ceremony.

Back in camp again, the newly married man redoubled his efforts to escape from Washington's official family. He was determined to seize the first opportunity to do so. The chance came shortly.

He was descending headquarters stairs with an order that required immediate delivery. He met Washington coming up. The general paused. "I would like to speak with you, Colonel Hamilton," he said.

"Right away, sir," replied the young man and continued downstairs. He delivered his order and met some friends, including Lafayette. They greeted him and he stopped to chat. It was ten minutes before he ascended the stairs again. At their head waited Washington, face dark with anger. "Colonel Hamilton," he exploded, "you have kept me waiting ten minutes. I must tell you, sir, you treat me with disrespect."

This was the opportunity for which Hamilton had waited so long and so impatiently. "I am not conscious of it, sir," he retorted coldly. "But since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part."

The startled general answered briefly, "Very well, sir; if it be your choice."

Then the two men parted, each going to his own room.

On reflection, however, Washington calmed down. He did need this most impudent young man. He sent another aide, Trench Tilghman, to act as intermediary. Why not talk it over, he suggested, and settle this unfortunate difference?

But Hamilton had no intention of talking things over. This was his chance to escape, and he was ready to make the most of it. He therefore refused to parley with the chastened general. He would continue temporarily in his position, he stated, until Washington could find a replacement. But he wished neither explanations nor a continuance in the official family.

That night he sent an account of the quarrel to his father-in-law, General Schuyler. "I always disliked the office of an aid-de-camp," he explained, "as having in it a kind of personal dependence." And he also accused Washington of being deficient in "delicacy" and "good temper."

It was an extraordinary situation: the great general cavalierly treated by a youthful aide. Yet Washington, wiser than the hotheaded young man, swallowed his pride and anger. In later years he was to raise his once insubordinate officer to the heights.

Now that Hamilton had resigned, he expected no difficulty in obtaining the active service he craved. Nevertheless, his repeated applications met with denials, since the posts he demanded would have pushed him ahead of the regular line officers, his seniors in years and length of service. He therefore found himself out of the army and out of the war.

He refused, however, to remain idle. He could still prove of service to his country; ironically, once again with the pen. To Robert Morris, newly appointed financier of the federal government, he sent a new essay on an old topic: how to place the shaky finances of the country on a sound basis.

Twice before—once to John Sullivan and once to James Duane—he had offered his solution. Now he tried it a third time. Hamilton never conceded defeat.

Again he proposed a bank as a means of raising money and enlisting the support of the wealthy. Again he called for a revision of the Articles of Confederation, to curtail the powers of the states and increase those of the federal government. There were indeed those, he acknowledged, who feared to burden the country with a load of debts. "Ridiculous!" he retorted. "A national debt, if it is not excessive, will be to us a national blessing. It will be a powerful cement of our

Union."

That last quotation became famous. His opponents at a later date were forever casting it back in his teeth. They sneered, "A national blessing, indeed! Your rich men may like the idea; but the poor—and there are many of them—hate it." When the matter came up again in later years, Jefferson wanted to know why the poor should be taxed. So that exorbitant interest might be paid to the rich? "No," said Jefferson. "A national debt is always a national curse, that grinds down the many and benefits only the few."

One wonders how both these great men would have viewed the enormous debt load of the United States today.

As was everyone else who had read Hamilton's previous proposals, Robert Morris was greatly impressed by the logic, the vision, and the practicality of his plan. But, like everyone else, Morris did not wish to stir up the radicals unduly. Instead of Hamilton's thoroughgoing scheme, therefore, he set up a much more modest and limited bank—the Bank of North America. It lasted until the war ended, when it bowed to the clamor of the states' righters and reorganized itself as a state bank with a Pennsylvania charter.

More than a decade was to elapse before Hamilton was in a position to put his own ideas into operation.

5 *From Soldier to Lawyer*

Now that Hamilton was out of the army, his father-in-law proposed to him that he employ his talents in politics, arguing rightly that his services in Congress would at this stage of the game be of more value to the country than any single military victory he might have been able to accomplish. In this plea General Schuyler was ardently joined by his daughter Eliza.

The young husband admitted the logic; but the vision of himself charging into the smoke of battle at the head of cheering troops could not be denied. He must, he vowed, at least once obtain that chance before settling down to the humdrum tasks of civilian life.

The chance came with dramatic suddenness. The war took an unexpected turn. Washington proposed to attack the British in New York; and Sir Henry Clinton, in alarm, stripped the army of Lord Cornwallis in the South in order to defend himself. Thereupon the French fleet under the Comte de Grasse sailed down to Chesapeake Bay to blockade Cornwallis by sea while Washington, hastily revising his plans, marched his men secretly and in haste into Virginia to beleague Cornwallis by land. The startled Englishman found himself caught in a trap at the tip of Yorktown peninsula, with the French fleet in victorious control of the sea and a superior French and American force shutting him off from the mainland.

In Washington's army was Hamilton. The moment he had heard of the proposed assault on New York, he had delivered a virtual ultimatum to his former chief—either give me a battle command or I tear up my old commission. This time the harassed general yielded and, on July 31, 1781, to his extreme joy Hamilton found himself in full command of a battalion.

The assault on New York did not materialize, and Hamilton sought to still his impatience on the long march down to Yorktown. But once there, opportunity beckoned.

On October 14 the combined Franco-American army prepared to storm the earthworks which Cornwallis had hastily erected. A French force was to storm those on the left, while an American battalion attacked the right. Once again, however, fate seemed to intervene between Hamilton and his thirst for glory. Lafayette assigned the command on the right to Colonel Barber. Hamilton then sent a furious complaint to Washington, and once again the commander obligingly yielded.

At six that evening the great moment came. As the French swept forward on their side, Hamilton's contingent crouched behind their protecting palisade, ready for the order to charge. Pulses pounding with excitement, Hamilton waited until he saw the French locked in hand-to-hand combat with the enemy; then he gave the signal. The palisade was too high for his five feet six inches; but a soldier presented his back, Hamilton leaped nimbly up to the top, brandished his sword, jumped down into the ditch, and raced forward, with his men after him.

Without a glance backward to see if his troops were following, Hamilton ran through the storm of shot and leaped unhesitatingly into the moat that protected the British front. For a moment it was thought that he had been hit, and his men rushed after him, only to find him waiting to form them in line for a bayonet charge.

Cheering, they swarmed into the fortification, while another troop attacked simultaneously on the flank. The outnumbered British hoisted the white flag, and the position had been taken. Nine Americans were dead and thirty-two wounded, but the reckless young commander had come through unharmed.

It was not a great affair, as battles go; but with the capture of the earthworks, the position of Cornwallis became so difficult that, five days later, he surrendered.

With the capture of Cornwallis, the war practically ended. Technically, it dragged on for two more years, but there was little further fighting. Both sides marked time until the diplomats in Paris worked out the terms of a peace treaty that ended forever British rule in the thirteen colonies and prepared the way for the United States of today.

Hamilton's exploit, small as it was, was sufficiently gallant to satisfy him and calm his thirst for military glory; and the American army generously applauded its brilliance. He was ready now to return to civilian life and attempt to make a living.

Back in Albany again, Hamilton considered his prospects. He had no money of his own, and he was too proud to live on his father-in-law's money. He therefore decided to go in for law, as both lucrative and honorable. At all times the practice of law had been a fertile field, but now it was particularly so. The solid, established lawyers had been largely Tory in sympathies, and the infuriated patriots, now that victory had perched on their banners, drove them out of the profession and thereby created a splendid opportunity for the new crop of patriot aspirants.

The study of law was a simple procedure. One read in the fundamental law books like Blackstone, diligently digested the reported cases as given in the English texts, and when one felt sufficiently prepared, went up before a group of examining lawyers to answer a barrage of questions. If the examiners certified to the sufficiency of the candidate's knowledge, he was admitted to practice at the next session of the court.

Hamilton's friend from student days, Robert Troup, was already in practice and agreed to assist him in his studies. For three months Hamilton pored over his books with his accustomed fierce energy and concentration, jotting down the main points and working them into an outline in order to fix them in his memory. So well did he prepare this outline that later students borrowed it, made copies, and used it as a basic practice manual in their own study of the law.

After such concentrated efforts for three months, Hamilton boldly applied for an examination, passed it with flying colors, and in July, 1782, was admitted to the bar.

But he was not permitted to start practice immediately. Robert Morris, in charge of the finances of the infant nation, was struggling with an almost insuperable problem—how to collect from the states their quotas of the Continental taxes so essential for the continued existence of the army and the war effort. New York's quota amounted to \$365,000, but everyone knew it would be impossible to extract anything like that. The question was how much could be obtained? And that, so Morris thought, depended on the energy and vigor of the state tax collector.

In his dilemma he remembered that brilliant financial plan he had received from Washington's former aide, Colonel Alexander Hamilton. He was the very man to browbeat a recalcitrant state legislature into voting the requisite sums. He therefore offered the thankless position to Hamilton who, after several refusals, reluctantly accepted the job.

It was, he knew in the beginning, a tough assignment; but exactly how tough, he did not realize until he came up against the tactics of Governor George Clinton. That gentleman was a thoroughgoing democrat, representing the small farmers and the city mechanics. He suspected every attempt to collect taxes by a power outside the state as a deep-laid plot by the rich merchants and landowners to create a strong national government, aristocratic in tone, which would eventually swallow up the independence of the states.

Fortunately, Hamilton had able assistants in the legislature itself, in the persons of his father-in-law and other friends who were then members of it. In spite of Clinton's bitter resistance, Hamilton made a personal plea to the joint committee of the two houses of the assembly. He was so impressive in his force and logic that two bills were passed. The first appropriated about \$40,000 to Morris's order, though Hamilton realized it would be hard, in spite of the legal appropriation, to collect half that amount. The second—and from the new collector's point of view, far more important—proposed that a convention of all the states be called to enlarge the powers of Congress and grant it the right to lay and collect taxes. Hamilton himself drafted this set of resolutions. And, so much did they think of the youthful orator, they elected him as a delegate to the Continental Congress.

But it was easier for the legislature to appropriate money for the benefit of Congress than for Hamilton to collect it. The amount was supposed to be turned over from the state's own tax collections by the various county treasurers, but the treasurers resented the allocations and preferred to keep the money for their local needs. They put every obstacle in the way. In vain Hamilton pleaded, exhorted, and threatened; he could get little or nothing from them. In the end he had to throw up the sponge and confess failure. New York's total assessment had amounted to \$365,000; Hamilton collected only \$6,250 or less than 2 per cent!

Nor were the other states any more generous. For all of them the assessment had amounted to \$8,000,000; the sum actually collected was a paltry \$422,161.63. No wonder Hamilton resigned in disgust and determined that a way must be found to have Congress lay and collect taxes, directly, without being helplessly dependent on the good will of the states.

Inspired by his experience, with a grim determination he once more resorted to his pen. In a series of public letters called "The Continentalist," he initiated a campaign addressed to the entire nation, hammering home with all the persuasiveness at his command a single point: Give more power to Congress!

In his peroration he conjured up a magnificent vision of what America might be if the people followed his advice, and a dreadful picture of the consequences if they failed to do so.

There is something noble and magnificent in the perspective of a great Federal Republic, closely linked in the pursuit of a common interest, tranquil and prosperous at home; respectable abroad; but there is something proportionably diminutive and contemptible in the prospect of a number of petty states, with the appearance only of union, jarring, jealous, and perverse, without any determined direction, fluctuating and unhappy at home, weak and insignificant by their dissensions in the eyes of other nations.

In further pursuit of the same mighty aim, Hamilton took his seat in the Continental Congress at Philadelphia on November 25, 1782. At first he was bitterly disappointed by what he saw. So few members were in attendance that there was no quorum, and they adjourned from day to day without doing any business. Elected delegates refused to attend a body whose decrees had no weight, preferring to stay home and participate in the work of the state legislatures that did possess power.

Finally, however, a sufficient number to constitute a quorum straggled in, and Congress got down to business. Hamilton had come prepared with concrete plans. Every resolution he proposed, every bill he sponsored, tended toward a single aim—to obtain for Congress the right to levy and collect taxes. He knew that, once that power was granted, all other powers of a true government must inevitably follow.

He made the case of Rhode Island his testing stone. That stubborn little state had refused to follow the reluctant assignment by the other states to Congress of a right to impose import duties. Since unanimity of all the states was required, it was essential to swing Rhode Island into line.

Hamilton did so with a powerful statement which finally convinced the stubborn legislature it would be prudent to agree. But, as victory thus seemed at hand, Hamilton's own state, under the influence of Governor Clinton, reversed its former stand and now revoked the grant. At one blow, Hamilton's triumph was ground in the dust.

Nevertheless, after the initial shock, he went back to work, using his pen in private and the floor of Congress in public to push on and on toward his goal. That vision of a united nation, strong at home and abroad, never let him rest until it was accomplished. And, in the process, his name came more and more before the leaders of the country as a young man to be watched and ticketed for future use.

In 1783 the Revolution legally ended. In Paris the commissioners of England, France, and America finally drafted a peace treaty whose terms were remarkably favorable to the colonies. It granted them complete independence, gave them vast, ill-defined territories in the western and northwestern areas, agreed to evacuate all British troops from cities, posts, and forts within the area, and forbade the British from taking with them any property belonging to the Americans—including in the definition of property, Negro slaves.

In return for these tremendous benefits, the Americans agreed to permit British merchants to collect debts owed by the former colonists and to recommend through Congress that the states restore to their former owners all confiscated British or Loyalist estates.

It was easier, however, to include these last two provisions in the peace treaty than to have them enforced. The debts to British merchants were chiefly owed by the planters of the South, and they had neither the money nor the will to pay up now that the war was over. And they saw to it that, by and large, their legislatures and courts backed them up, treaty or no treaty. The same held good for the confiscated estates, now held by true patriots, who saw no profit in giving up lands and property they had obtained for a song to owners who had been traitors to the cause.

But Hamilton was all for the enforcement of these clauses. It was a matter of good faith and national honor. Besides, the

Tories had been wealthy and conservative, and he foresaw that he would need their support in his own national program. For their security in any recaptured holdings would depend on a strong central government, able to keep down the radical clamor of the poorer classes who controlled the states.

In spite of his efforts, however, no resolutions enforcing the treaty clauses could be pushed through Congress in the face of the defiance of some of the states, and the whole business continued to plague British-American relations for many years to come.

Disgusted, Hamilton resigned from Congress, went back to Albany, packed up his wife and infant son, and moved down to the City of New York to open a law office. As the British army, so long comfortably established in that city, reluctantly departed, Hamilton and a group of other patriot lawyers moved in, eager to partake of the lucrative business of a busy port and a mercantile clientele. Among them were those whose names came into considerable prominence in the history of the nation—Aaron Burr, John Jay, Rufus King, Egbert Benson, Robert Troup, and many another.

Hamilton promptly forged to the head of his profession; only Aaron Burr, the brilliant grandson of Jonathan Edwards, presumed to meet him on equal terms. The national reputation which Hamilton had already gained, his proven eloquence and keen, analytical mind, as well as his close association with the Schuyler interests, now served him well. Cases and fees began to pour in.

In the beginning, the chief and most lucrative business came from claims resulting from the confiscation of Loyalist property. New York had been particularly bitter about those who had chosen to adhere to the mother country in the Revolution. For years the city, Long Island, and most of Westchester County had been in the hands of the British. Patriot dwellers had been compelled to flee, their property being confiscated, while resident Loyalists lived in ease and comfort.

Now, with the Revolution won, the victorious patriots exacted their revenge. Even before the end, Governor Clinton had sworn he would "rather roast in hell to all eternity than be dependent upon Great Britain or show mercy to a damned Tory"; while the legislature, in 1779, had passed a confiscation act, decreeing the forfeiture and sale of Loyalist possessions. After the war it became even worse, and the persecuted Tories fled the country rather than face the taunts and reprisals of the victors.

Hamilton sought in vain to moderate the revengeful spirit of the people. He had sufficiently shown his own patriotism on the battlefield; with the war over, he advocated wisdom and forbearance, a decent forgetfulness of past differences, and a common justice for the future. His arguments fell on deaf ears for the moment.

He soon had the opportunity, however, to translate them into dramatic action. In March, 1783, New York passed the so-called "Trespass Act." Any patriot citizen of the state whose property, during the British occupation, had been used by another without his permission might now collect damages from the unlawful user, even though the British had expressly authorized it.

A case under this act now came up. A widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Rutgers, and her son had owned a brewery and house in New York City. Being ardent patriots, they fled the town and abandoned their property when the British marched in early in the fall of 1776.

In 1778 the British gave a license to two British merchants, Benjamin Waddington and Evelyn Pierrepont, to use Mrs. Rutgers's premises at an annual rental. In 1783 the British quit New York in accordance with the terms of the peace treaty and Mrs. Rutgers took back her buildings. Pierrepont accompanied the British army to England, but Waddington was foolish enough to remain. Whereupon Mrs. Rutgers brought suit against him under the terms of the Trespass Act. She demanded the full rental value of the premises for the four and a half years of his possession.

She had seemingly an open-and-shut case. The law was clear; the possession was not denied. She was a patriot and a widow; the defendant a Britisher. Passions ran high, and suits involving millions of dollars only waited the inevitable outcome of this one. How dared any lawyer undertake Waddington's defense? In the face of popular clamor he might as well shut up his office afterward, if he were fortunate enough to escape a coat of tar and feathers.

Yet Hamilton did not hesitate an instant. He foresaw the dangerous consequences of such a gross violation of the express terms of the treaty of peace and of such continued opening of old wounds between patriots and former Loyalists. If it was within the power of the state legislature to pass the Trespass Act, and if damages could be collected under the act, the

states could defy Congress and consider as a mere scrap of paper any treaty Congress had made. How could any nation exist under such circumstances?

The treaty to which this country had solemnly pledged itself specifically stated that all claims for damage arising out of the war were mutually renounced between Great Britain and America and their respective subjects and citizens. Therefore, argued Hamilton, the act was void as inconsistent with the treaty. In so arguing, he laid down a most important principle, that a treaty ratified by Congress was the supreme law of the land and that Congress had full power to bind all the states by such a compact.

This was bold and novel doctrine then. When the case came up for trial in the Mayor's Court of New York City—with James Duane, the Mayor, presiding—the room was packed with hostile people who glared at Hamilton and muttered threats as he dauntlessly argued his points. It was less difficult, so Hamilton must have thought as he saw the flushed and angry faces, to stand up to bullets than the passions of one's fellow citizens. Yet a sense of the justice and future importance of his position sustained him throughout the proceedings.

On August 27, 1784, Duane read his decision. Once again the room was jammed with muttering people. Duane actually agreed with Hamilton, but did not dare say so outright. Therefore he straddled the issue. He agreed with Hamilton that a treaty ratified by Congress was the supreme law of the land, but, he added hastily, he had found a technicality to declare against Waddington. The license which Waddington received from the British had not been legally proper; therefore Mrs. Rutgers was entitled to damages.

Even though the widow had actually won, everyone was furious at the doctrine Hamilton and Duane had laid down. The legislature voted disapproval of the entire proceedings, and reaffirmed the Trespass Act in defiance of Congress and the treaty. It was not until 1788 that it was finally repealed. In the eyes of history, however, Hamilton had won a great victory, and the Constitution expressly declared with him that no state could contradict a treaty into which the nation had entered.

In the eyes of the radicals, Hamilton had by now definitely proved himself a conservative, on the side of the merchants and businessmen as well as the Tories. Party lines were beginning to be sharply drawn. In New York State Hamilton became the definite leader of the conservatives and Governor George Clinton, with the newcomer Aaron Burr, was in control of the radicals.

But for several years the struggle did not burst out into the open in all its fury. Hamilton busied himself with his law practice and his growing family, while the country as a whole continued a rather wavering course under the Articles of Confederation.

It was only an interlude, however. Both sides were getting ready for the final struggle, to decide what this nation would eventually be. Could it continue as a loosely bound group of sovereign states, each of which could bar action by the whole? Could trade and commerce flow smoothly and uninterruptedly under such a setup? These were questions that continued to raise their heads and could not be denied.

When battle was finally joined, Hamilton was in the center of it; and law yielded without a struggle to politics.

6 *The Constitution Is Written*

The merchants complained that trade was at a standstill and that they could not collect the monies that were owing to them. The farmers, on the other hand, who owed most of the debts, insisted that the load was too great for them to bear and that they could not get enough from their crops to meet their obligations.

The soldiers, now returned to civilian life, found themselves penniless and with little room for them in the economy of the country. Their war services had largely been paid for in Continental scrip—paper promises to pay. But Congress had no money with which to make those promises good, and the soldiers, faced with starvation, sold the scrip for whatever it would bring.

That was little enough, a mere fraction of the amount printed on the face of the scrip. For only speculators would buy—men willing to take a chance that someday Congress would be able to meet its obligations. At the moment, that day seemed far off.

The states, yielding to the pressure of their farmer and debtor classes, tried to alleviate the situation. Chiefly their method was to print paper money of their own and place it in the hands of their citizens. This money, without anything solid to back it up, was declared legal tender for the payment of debts.

But the merchant and banking creditors did not want it. They knew it had no real value and that it must soon drop in price when it came to buying commodities. Therefore, when their debtors tried to force it on them, they employed every method possible to avoid receiving it. Some, so the story goes, even went into hiding or fled the state, with their debtors in hot pursuit to make a legal offer of the discredited paper money.

Another source of trouble was the fact that there was no uniformity in the laws of the several states and that each state could and did erect trade barriers at its borders as though it were an independent nation. Each state also had its own currency, and the rate of exchange varied from state to state, so that it was a complicated matter to conduct ordinary trade among them.

The national government was a sorry joke, even to itself. Few delegates bothered to attend meetings of Congress, and when a law was passed, hardly anyone paid any attention to it. As Rufus King declared:

There is no money in the federal Treasury—the civil list is in arrear—the troops in service mutinous—the loans abroad exhausted—the foreign ministers destitute of funds to draw on for their daily support—and the payments made by the four Eastern & three Southern States for 15 months past not equal to 4 thousand dollars.

If the country was to be saved—at least so Hamilton and his friends believed—something drastic had to be done immediately. Hamilton thought he saw a weapon at hand. James Madison, of Virginia, at this time also advocated a strong national government. He had just put through his own state legislature a call for a national convention to be held at Annapolis, Maryland, to discuss the chaotic condition of trade and commerce and recommend a uniform system of commercial regulation.

Hamilton did not really believe the convention would initiate any positive action, but he saw in it a preliminary step toward proposing a fundamental revision of the entire federal structure. It was therefore essential to get New York to send delegates and to see to it that the delegates who were chosen would do as he suggested.

To accomplish this, it was necessary to control the New York legislature. An election was pending, and Hamilton campaigned vigorously to elect his friends as members from New York City. His efforts were successful, and the city representatives at the next session of the legislature were able to push through an acceptance of the Virginia invitation, even though Clinton managed to include certain reservations in the powers granted the delegates.

Hamilton now determined to enter politics openly. As a candidate for office of assemblyman, he won the seat after a bitter struggle and much maneuvering of votes. Once in, he had no difficulty in getting himself selected as a delegate to the Annapolis Convention.

Only five states attended the meeting. The others refused, suspecting that the apparent purpose cloaked something much more drastic than a mere trade agreement. Hamilton, however, was not discouraged. He had intended from the beginning to use this convention as a mere instrument for another call—for a convention of all the states with power to reconstruct and remodel the outworn Articles of Confederation.

Just as he expected, nothing was done about trade at the meeting. But he did manage to get the delegates to issue a report recommending another meeting of the states, this time not only for discussion of commercial matters but for "such other purposes as the situation of public affairs may be found to require."

Back again in New York, Hamilton found the whole country alarmed at an uprising that had taken place in Massachusetts. In that state the political control had gone into the hands of the eastern seaboard and the wealthier classes. They passed a tax system which, so the farmers of the western areas insisted, bore most heavily on them and very lightly on the eastern merchants. Steps were also taken to enforce collection of long outstanding debts through the courts, and here again the western farmers and poor debtors were hit. Judgments were taken, and when, as was most often the case, the defendant could not pay in cash, his farm, his house, and his personal possessions were put up at auction and sold.

A flame of revolt ran through the countryside. The farmers and debtors, headed by Daniel Shays, a former captain in the army, formed into great bands. Armed with muskets, flintlocks, and scythes, they forcibly closed the hated courts, burned the records, and stopped foreclosure sales. They even threatened to march directly on Boston to force the legislature to do their bidding.

"This is rebellion!" exclaimed the men of property in the state and elsewhere. "If it is not put down, it will end in chaos and bloody anarchy!" The militia was called out, young men organized themselves into companies, and an army marched against the rebels. Shays and his men were ruthlessly hunted down and scattered, dragged from their hiding places, and clapped into jail. For a while there was talk of hanging them, but cooler heads eventually prevailed and a general pardon was issued.

But the owners of property, the merchants and creditors, and all who stood for law and order had been badly frightened. The specter of a social revolution haunted their dreams; and the idea of a strong national government, possessed of a regular army that could be used to put down such uprisings in the future, began to loom before them as the only possible salvation.

It was in this atmosphere of excitement and alarm that the New York legislature opened another session on January 12, 1787. Hamilton was in his seat, the recognized leader of the forces that favored strengthening Congress. Taking advantage of the situation, he introduced his pet measure—to grant Congress the proceeds of the duties on certain imports into the state and the power to collect them.

There was little objection to the first section of the bill, but there was vehement opposition to the second. As both parties in the legislature were well aware, whoever controlled the collection of money possessed the power. Therefore, in spite of an eloquent speech by Hamilton, the Clintonites, holding a majority of the seats, decisively defeated that part of the resolution.

Undismayed, Hamilton now introduced his second pet measure—the recommendation that the states call a convention "for the purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation." Once again the Clintonites fought him tooth and nail. They knew quite well that this was even more dangerous than a right of Congress to collect the import duties. For there was only one direction in which the Articles could be revised—toward a tighter union and more power in all respects to the national government.

In spite of this knowledge, however, some of the weaker members of Clinton's following, who had become uneasy over the outcry directed against them for their voting down the collection, now deserted him. To Hamilton's incredulous amazement, the recommendation passed.

The move had been carefully concerted by the leaders in all the states and, after similar struggles everywhere, with the specter of Shays' Rebellion haunting them, the legislatures succumbed to the mounting pressure and voted resolutions like that of New York.

The earnestly desired Constitutional Convention had finally been achieved.

Three delegates were chosen by New York to attend. Hamilton was an obvious choice, and could not be defeated. But the Clintonites still thought to sabotage the workings of the new convention and were strong enough to force through two of their own men to accompany Hamilton—Robert Yates and John Lansing. Since the states voted under a unit rule, these two believers in state sovereignty could always outvote Hamilton in casting the ballot of New York in the coming convention.

Hamilton was decidedly not happy over the prospect of being thus thrust into an ineffectual minority; nevertheless, he could comfort himself that at least a constitutional convention had actually been called and that he would partake in its deliberations.

In May, 1787, the fifty-five delegates from the various states gathered in Philadelphia. Their instructions had been of the vaguest, and they had no specific powers of action. Whatever they decided on in the way of changing the unsatisfactory Articles of Confederation would have to be referred to the legislatures of their respective states for final decision.

Yet the fifty-five comprised some of the greatest men and keenest minds in America. They included George Washington, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Morris, John Dickinson, and others of almost equal caliber. Not the least of them was Alexander Hamilton.

It was largely a conservative group, in the sense that most of the delegates believed in the rights of property and in a government that would protect and foster them. It was weighted heavily with men who sympathized with the problems of the "respectable" classes—meaning the wealthy, the merchants, the professional men, and the possessors of landed estates. Few knew much about the problems of the small farmer and the mechanic and the struggling little man who was loaded down with debts that he saw no chance of ever paying.

Almost immediately, the delegates decided that a mere amendment of the Articles of Confederation would be useless. What was needed was a brand-new constitution that would create a true national union. Once this momentous decision had been made, several plans were put forward.

The Virginia plan proposed a national legislature with two houses, which would appoint the national executive, or president. The legislature would be empowered to veto any state law which it considered a violation of the federal constitution, while the president and a federal judiciary in turn would have the right to veto federal as well as state legislation. But such a veto could be overridden by a two-thirds vote. Each state would be given representation in the federal legislature in proportion to its population or the size of its financial contribution toward the government. In effect this would mean that the larger and wealthier states, of which Virginia was one, would run the government.

The smaller states naturally objected to any such plan and brought forward instead the New Jersey proposal. This called for a single-bodied legislature in which each state represented a unit and was entitled to an equal vote. The present Senate of the United States embodies this idea. Such a congress would be granted certain sources of income, the regulation of foreign and interstate commerce, and the right to enforce its own laws. In other words, under the New Jersey plan, the states as such would be the basis of the new government, and not the people as individuals.

Hamilton liked neither plan. They would not, he believed, make for a strong government or a true nation. Of the two, the Virginia plan was closer to his own ideas, and he therefore proposed that it be amended to give the president alone an absolute veto over all legislation, federal or state, that in his opinion was contrary to the constitution.

This power was close to the prerogative of the king of England, and several delegates pointed out the deadly similarity. Hamilton, however, was unperturbed. Such a veto, he insisted, would rarely be exercised; the mere threat of it would be enough. Nevertheless, when the votes on the amendment were counted, only two ballots besides Hamilton's were cast in its favor.

Hamilton now realized that his ultrastrong views would never be considered by the convention. Any constitution that came out of it would have to be a compromise between two extremes: an all-powerful central government and a group of essentially sovereign states.

In such a jockeying for position and bargaining in a give-and-take, Hamilton was temperamentally unfit. He could never

bring himself to compromise—with him it was all or nothing. Furthermore, under the unit rule of voting, the two other delegates from New York would consistently outvote him. Therefore, disgusted with the situation, he practically withdrew from further participation in the convention. In all the maneuvering that followed, in all the debates that helped hammer out the Constitution of the United States as we know it today, the man who had been most vigorous in its initiation took little or no part.

On one occasion only did he return to the debate, and that was to place himself on record as to the type of government he really wanted.

On June 18, 1788, he rose in the convention to speak. In his hand he held a sheaf of notes, and his gray eyes were grimly determined. The delegates leaned forward to listen; they had heard of his oratorical abilities, and the report had quickly spread that this would be his supreme effort.

For five solid hours Hamilton spoke uninterruptedly to a hushed convention. Occasionally he referred to his notes, but chiefly his eyes swept the assemblage of notables as he ticked off his points. This was no occasion for mere oratory; he knew that these men could be swayed only by cold logic and irrefutable facts. His tone was conversational, but every word was precise.

"This is a serious crisis," he said, "and therefore I must speak. I disapprove of both plans that have been laid before you. I am convinced that no mere amendment of the Confederation can answer the purposes of good government, so long as the state sovereignties do, in any shape, exist." His lip curled. "What good are the states anyway?" he demanded. "The loyalties they receive from their citizens ought rather to go to the nation. They are more selfishly concerned with their own interests than with the interests of the nation. They serve no useful function; they are not necessary for commerce, revenue or agriculture; they add vast and useless expenses to the cost of government. In short, the sooner they are reduced to purely local units or even abolished altogether, the better all of us will be."

"But," he continued, "you may ask what do I propose in exchange?" Hamilton paused a moment, drew a deep breath. He knew that what he was going to say would bring a torrent of angry abuse upon him, if not from the men who were there listening to him with the closest attention, then certainly from the great majority of the people from Massachusetts to Georgia. Yet he refused to palliate or evade, to say one thing when he meant another. No one would ever be able to say that he did not know just how Hamilton stood on any great issue.

"I propose," he began quietly, "a plan of government as closely approximating the English model as circumstances and the temper of the people will permit. I don't mind telling you," and his voice rose a trifle, "that I almost despair of the success of a republican form of government over so vast an area. I don't see how it can possibly work. Of course," he shrugged, "I realize that it wouldn't be wise for you gentlemen to propose a constitutional monarchy. It would be as much as your political lives were worth. Nevertheless, it is my personal opinion that the British form is the best in the world, and America would be infinitely better off to adopt it with such modifications as our peculiar circumstances demand."

As he made this astounding avowal, an audible gasp rose from the delegates. A slight smile played over the speaker's lips. "I have here," he continued, "a constitution of my own. Oh, I realize most of you won't like it and that there isn't a chance it will be adopted; but I want to give you a correct idea of the plan of government I would like to see in effect in this nation of ours."

The plan was carefully worked out to the last detail. It called for a two-chamber legislature, the lower house, surprisingly enough, to be elected by universal suffrage. To make up for this concession to democracy, however, Hamilton proposed a senate and an executive both elected for life and chosen indirectly; but the senators had to possess substantial landed estates to qualify. The executive would appoint the state governors, and hold an absolute veto over federal and state legislation.

As he looked around the stunned and silent convention, Hamilton realized that his plan was hopeless. Yet he sincerely believed that only such a scheme of government could control and weld a strong union from thirteen separate states. He was not then, nor ever, a believer in democracy—the rule of all the people. To him, people in the mass were nothing but a mob, with all the irrationality and cruelty of the mob. Later, when he was goaded into indiscreet utterance, he burst out passionately, "The people, sir; the people is a great beast!"

Today, before this assemblage of his peers, in secret session, he went almost as far.

"All communities," he asserted, "divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and well-born, the other the mass of the people. The voice of the people has been said to be the voice of God; and, however generally this maxim has been quoted and believed, it is not true in fact. The people are turbulent and changing; they seldom judge or determine right. Give, therefore, to the first class a distinct, permanent share in the government. They will check the unsteadiness of the second; and as they cannot receive any advantage by a change, they therefore will ever maintain a good government."

On this note Hamilton sat down. For a while there was a deathly silence; then a delegate rose to bring up another topic. No one said a word in the convention on Hamilton's astonishing proposals; by common consent it was as though the speech had never been made.

With a bitter smile, Hamilton sat silently through the rest of the day's session. He was, he thought, an outcast, a pariah, for having dared speak the truth. The moment the gavel in Washington's hand descended to announce adjournment, he stalked out alone.

But barely had he reached the outer hall when other delegates hurried after him. A group surrounded him, wrung his hand. "By God, Hamilton!" cried one, "that was a great speech." Another chimed in, "You expressed my sentiments exactly."

Hamilton stared. "Then why," he inquired sarcastically, "didn't you second my plan?"

The assenting delegate drew back in dismay. "I couldn't do that," he protested. "It would be as much as my life was worth in my home state."

"Cowards!" muttered Hamilton to himself as he strode solitary to his lodgings. "They're all afraid of their precious skins. They believe like me, but in public they mouth and rant about democracy."

The group of well-dressed men stared after him. One shook his head. "A brilliant fellow, Hamilton, and full of wonderful ideas. But he's too rash; he has no place in politics."

There was a general murmur of assent.

Shortly after this, Hamilton went home. He was, he felt, of no further use inside the convention. Outside, however, among "safe" men, there was missionary work to be done.

About the same time his fellow delegates from New York, Yates and Lansing, also stalked out. To their radical views, the constitution in the making was too authoritarian, too much in favor of the rich and powerful, and too subversive of the states. Someone has sagely remarked that, when both extremes denounce a measure, it very probably is a good one.

In spite of the continued absence of the New York delegation, the constitution making went on, slowly but surely. It was full of compromises and not wholly satisfactory to anyone. But only such an instrument stood a chance of success with the great majority of the people.

Hamilton did not remain altogether away. When the news filtered out that a final document had been shaped and that it was this or nothing, his patriotism came to the fore. Any scheme that sought to create a union was better than the present chaos. He had no illusions; he predicted—falsely, as events showed—that it would not last over ten years; but it was worth trying.

He never appeared to better advantage than at this time. Believing as he did that the Constitution was a "frail and worthless fabric," he nevertheless returned to the convention to advocate its final passage and to urge everyone to sign it. "I shall take any system," he dramatically declared, "which promises to save America from the dangers with which she is threatened."

So saying, with a bold flourish he signed the document. But some others, chiefly among the radicals, refused to sign and went back home to lead the fight against its ratification.

7 *Ratification*

If there were those who, like Hamilton, did not think the new Constitution went far enough in giving power to the federal government, the radicals were convinced it went entirely too far. Such states as New York, Rhode Island, Virginia, North Carolina, and even Massachusetts were up in arms. "We did not revolt from the tyranny of England," they cried, "to fasten on ourselves a new and greater tyranny."

To go into effect, the Constitution required the ratification through popularly elected conventions of three-fourths of all the thirteen states—nine in number. The prospect looked gloomy, however, as the clamor of the radicals and the states' righters rose in denunciation and wrath.

Hamilton returned to New York to find that state in an uproar. His fellow delegates were denouncing the Constitution to all and sundry, and Governor Clinton was beside himself with rage. At first it seemed as if it could never be ratified. Only the merchants and the rich were in favor of it; the farming sections, including even the large landowners, the poor, the settlers on the western frontier, the mechanics of the towns, were vehemently opposed.

But Hamilton, though himself disappointed in the proposed Constitution, threw himself with every ounce of energy into the fight. It was no longer for him all or nothing; it was this or nothing. All the northern forces for ratification, both in New England and the middle states, looked to him for leadership in the forthcoming struggle. Similarly, James Madison worked valiantly in Virginia and the neighboring states.

With pen and tongue, with facts and arguments, Hamilton strove to counteract the powerful influence of Governor Clinton and his cohorts. But time was fast running out before the state convention to decide on ratification was chosen. How best, meditated Hamilton, could he get the pertinent facts and arguments before the great mass of the people? For days he wrestled in vain with the problem.

One day—or night—a brilliant idea came to him. He would write a series of papers—fifty or more—in which he would take every clause of the new Constitution, examine it in detail, submit it to careful analysis, and prove by logic that it was the best possible solution for the problem under the special circumstances of America. His opponents were appealing to prejudice and emotion and employing invective. Very well, then, he would write coolly, judicially, and in good temper. Perhaps the people would appreciate sober logic after the heavy doses of passion and name calling.

Oddly enough, Hamilton, who said that the people were a "great beast" and were seldom able to "judge or determine right," was going to appeal to them as if they were just the intelligent citizenry he had said they were not.

But time was indeed running short; the job he had set for himself was too great for one man to handle. He therefore called on John Jay in New York and Madison in Virginia for help. Both consented; and as a result the *Federalist Papers* came into existence.

Hamilton wrote the first of the papers at top speed. Jay wrote the next four, but found the time element too much for him and dropped out. Thereafter, Hamilton and Madison shared the honors between them. Back and forth, between New York and Virginia, without time for discussion even by letter, the two great men steadily forged the links of argument and constructed a philosophy of government that has ever since been hailed as one of the masterpieces of all time in the science and art of government.

At the moment, however, neither man could stop to consider whether he was writing a masterpiece. Already the various states were holding elections for delegates to the ratifying conventions, and the impact on the voters must be now or never.

Hamilton wrote his *Federalist* articles at a white heat. Between interviews with clients and appearances in court he scribbled away furiously. He barely snatched at meals, and his lamp cast its glow out into the darkened street until the sun peeped over the eastern horizon and Eliza awoke to call him to bed.

"You'll kill yourself, Alec," she cried. "Haven't you done enough for your country?"

"One can never do too much for one's country, my dear," he retorted, without lifting his head from the sheets. "Besides, if I don't finish this paper immediately, it won't appear in the next issue of the *Independent Journal*."

As if to prove his point, a loud knock sounded. Wrapping a robe around her, Eliza hastened to open. An excited, troubled man appeared in the dawn light.

"Mr. Hamilton! Mr. Hamilton!" he cried. "My newspaper is already on the press, and there's a blank space for your next article. Where is it?"

Hamilton looked up, hollow-eyed from lack of sleep. "There," he nodded toward a mass of manuscript, "is part of it. I'll be finished with the rest in an hour."

"Too late!" wailed the printer. "My typesetter can't work that fast. I must have it at once."

"Simple!" smiled Hamilton, nodding toward the wide-eyed little boy who had accompanied the printer. "Send him back with the finished sheets, though I haven't had a chance to correct them. Then you can wait here for the rest."

Eliza threw up her hands and ran from the room. How could her husband keep up this terrible pace?

He could and did. And when he had finished, praise and wonderment over the *Federalist Papers* rose on every hand. Even his opponents gave them unwilling admiration. No greater argument for the formation of a strong and durable union, for the Constitution to cement and perpetuate that union has ever been written. To this day, the *Federalist Papers* are quoted by the Supreme Court and in Congress as the great authority on the subject.

Yet Hamilton knew that the Constitution he so valiantly defended was not a perfect document. From his point of view it had many flaws. But, as he wrote:

I never expect to see a perfect work from imperfect man. . . . The compacts which are to embrace thirteen distinct States in a common bond of amity and union, must as necessarily be a compromise of as many dissimilar interests and inclinations.

He built, however, better than he knew. In spite of flaws, the Constitution has since created a great nation and proved itself time and again sufficiently flexible to be adjusted to conditions far different from those in which its framers lived.

But more than the writing of theoretical papers was required to get the necessary number of states to ratify the Constitution. It was essential, of course, to prepare men's minds and sway those who were amenable to logic. But there were still many whose minds were closed by emotional blocks or who were honestly convinced that centralization was an evil and that too much power had been granted under it to a special class. To overcome such objections, hard, practical politics was essential in the state legislatures and among the delegates elected to the ratifying conventions.

Within a few months, five of the states had ratified; but their approval had been expected. The real struggle was to come in the large states of Massachusetts, Virginia, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and New York. There the opposing forces prepared for battle.

In New York particularly, the situation looked dark for the advocates of ratification. When the votes were counted in the election for delegates, it was discovered that the anticonstitutionalists had won an overwhelming victory—they had seated forty-six delegates as against nineteen who favored it. They had swept the entire state with the single exception of New York City, where the merchant class was in control.

An atmosphere of gloom pervaded the Federalist camp; but Hamilton, studying the returns, refused to despair. "All is not lost," he told John Jay. "Not every so-called anti is really as extreme in his opposition as Clinton would like to believe. Most of the delegates object only because the Constitution doesn't provide a bill of rights to safeguard personal liberties. If we'll agree to amendments to that effect after ratification—you know, freedom of speech, press, and religion, habeas corpus, and so on—they'll come in."

Jay was unconvinced. "I hope you're right, Hamilton. But our old friend Governor Clinton won't join us because of a bill of rights."

"That's true," admitted Hamilton. "He doesn't want any outside power to interfere with his control of this state. But I know how to get at him."

"How?"

"He doesn't dare put himself out on a limb. Suppose he forces through the convention a complete rejection of the Constitution, and nine other states do ratify, then New York becomes isolated from the rest of the nation. In fact, I'm going to use that argument as my trump card. They know we control at least the city. I'll hint to Clinton's followers that if they refuse to join the Union, the city will break away and join on its own. Without a port, without the industry and finance concentrated here, the rest of the state would soon find itself in terrible straits."

"It's a point," Jay acknowledged. "But would we——?"

Hamilton smiled. "We can say it, can't we?"

The convention opened at Poughkeepsie, a little town on the Hudson about midway between Albany and New York. The inhabitants of the place rubbed their eyes. They had never seen such a gathering of delegates, politicians, hangers-on, and curious spectators come to see the fireworks. Everyone knew it was going to be a battle to the death between Governor Clinton and Hamilton; not as many knew that the fate of a nation depended on the result.

The anticonstitutionalists were in high feather, swaggering down the dusty main street and bragging what they would do as soon as the first vote was taken. But the leaders on either side did not want an immediate vote. As Hamilton had justly observed, Clinton did not wish to put himself out on a limb; while Hamilton for himself knew that a quick ballot would spell defeat. So both sides were cautious, waiting for something to break while they jockeyed for position.

"Everything depends on the action taken in the conventions of the other states," Hamilton told his friend Robert Troup, who had been elected from the city.

"But it takes so long for news to travel," groaned Troup. "Already everyone's impatient to get through with the business and go home."

"I've arranged for that," grinned Hamilton. "I've got express riders stationed all along the way from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Virginia. The moment those states come to a decision, relays will be pounding the roads to bring me private information."

"You think of everything, Alec," Troup exclaimed admiringly.

"One has to if one wants results."

When the gavel banged to bring the convention to order, Hamilton rose to his feet to commence a long-winded speech. For days thereafter, he and his friends held the floor, arguing, attacking, pleading. They did not really expect to shift any votes; the strategy was to hold off balloting until those messengers would come galloping down the road with news. But the days passed, and the oratory became dry and monotonous as the long street betrayed no sign.

Jay was discouraged. "We can't hold off much longer, Hamilton," he said. "The antis are getting restless. I understand they intend to press for a vote tomorrow."

The next day dawned, and another session opened. Hamilton was on his feet; as usual, talking against time. In the chair Clinton glowered. He was ready to put an end to these interminable proceedings. His gavel was poised to cut off the orator and demand an immediate vote. Outside, in the drowsy street, the noise of hoofbeats suddenly swelled. There was a long slither, the pound of rapid feet. A messenger, spattered with mud and wearied with hard riding, dashed into the hall. He brandished a long envelope at Hamilton. "From General John Sullivan, of New Hampshire," he panted.

Hamilton opened the enclosure while the delegates gaped. As he read rapidly down the scrawled lines, a smile broke on his face. "Listen to this, gentlemen," he called out triumphantly. "On June 21st, in the year of our Lord, 1788, the state of New Hampshire ratified the Constitution. Since it was the ninth state to do so, I am happy to inform you that the United States of America has just been born."

A wild cheer burst from the Federalists; a mutter of dismay from the antis. Clinton was angry. "If New Hampshire wants to yield her sovereignty, that doesn't matter to us," he shouted above the tumult. "New York and Virginia are the two greatest states of all, and they will stand together. Have you by chance heard from Virginia, Mr. Hamilton?" he asked

sarcastically.

Hamilton was compelled to admit that he had not. He could see that Clinton's words had stiffened the wavering anti-federalists, that they were not yet ready to give in. Everything now depended on Virginia. Again the days passed, and still no word from that influential state. Down there, as a matter of fact, it was touch and go. Madison was fighting as valiantly and against almost as great odds as Hamilton in New York.

Then, one day, another express thundered into Poughkeepsie. Virginia had joined the Union! Now only New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island remained outside.

As Hamilton read the great news to the convention, everyone could notice the visible change that came over the faces of the delegates. It was all over. New York must join or be cut off from all her sister states. North Carolina and Rhode Island were small and uninfluential.

But Clinton was a stubborn man and could still crack the whip over his followers. He employed every trick in the political bag. No, he insisted, the Bill of Rights must first be passed. There must be safeguards against any tyrannizing by the federal government over the individual. Or, New York might enter on a conditional basis, with leave to withdraw if the amendments did not go through. Or, New York would enter the Union for a period of ten years only, to see how it worked. And so on and so on.

Hamilton was firm. No conditions, limits, or strings could be attached to entry into the Union.

Ah! thought Clinton. Now I have you. That flat assertion will scare any hesitant delegate back into line. Now is the time to take a vote.

Accordingly, the balloting commenced on July 25, 1788. John Lansing, an anti-federalist, first put a motion to join the Union conditionally for a term of years, with the right of withdrawal if, by that time, the amendments relating to a bill of rights had not been added to the Constitution. The motion was defeated by a vote of 28 to 31.

The exultant Federalists now took the offensive. They were willing, they said, to attach a recommendation for the future passage of a bill of rights to their entry into the new nation, but that entry must be wholly unconditional. On this basis the delegates voted again. Breathlessly the crowded hall listened to the slow counting of the ballots. Then a wild cheer burst forth. The motion had passed by 30 to 27. New York was in the Union. Almost singlehandedly, Hamilton had performed the impossible.

Down in New York City, the news was greeted with joy. The bells rang, the cannon thundered. A great parade moved slowly up Broadway. In the post of honor lumbered a huge float that represented a thirty-two-gun frigate in full sail. Complete with hull and rigging, manned by thirty-two sailors, and drawn by relays of horses, the craft drew shouts and applause as it moved along. For on the hull, painted in large black letters for all to read, was the name *Hamilton*.

Another ship, named the *New Constitution*, followed in its wake, with a wooden bust of Hamilton as its figurehead. Behind them marched the military companies in full regalia and long lines of people.

In this fashion did the New Yorkers honor their greatest citizen and testify their gratitude for his efforts to make the United States a reality.

8 *Secretary of the Treasury*

A nation had been born; but as yet it was a nation only in theory, not in fact. Nothing quite like it had ever been seen on the face of the earth. Thirteen sovereign states—North Carolina and Rhode Island eventually came in—were joined together in a federal compact; yet they had carefully kept for themselves every power that had not been specifically granted to the federal government in the Constitution.

What had been granted and what had been retained by the states were to become matters of hot dispute for many years to come. Parties came into being on the basis of that dispute, and great sections of the country divided, until the vital issue was resolved once for all in a bloody civil war.

Most of this was still in the future; but already many of the states had determined not to yield to the new federal government an inch of power more than the Constitution specifically granted. At the same time, there was an equal determination on the part of national-minded men to stretch the interpretation to the limit of those clauses in the Constitution which made the grants.

Much depended on the character and make-up of the new government. Strong, universally respected officials could cement its insecure foundations and build a solid structure and cooperation out of the loose bricks of the states. Weak, inefficient men at the helm, on the other hand, would become mere tools of the ambitious politicians who looked to the states for their prestige and power.

Everyone agreed that there was only one man in the country who could properly fill the presidency. That was George Washington. There was no such agreement on the vice-presidency; but after some debate, John Adams, of Massachusetts, was chosen for the post.

Washington did not want any office; all he wished, he told Hamilton, was "to live and die, in peace and retirement, on my own farm." But Hamilton and others pressed him to accept. "Without you in the presidency," insisted the former, "the ship of state is sunk before it has even quit the port."

On April 30, 1789, Washington was rowed in a resplendent barge across the Hudson to the temporary capital, New York City, mounted the steps of the Federal Building, and took the oath of office as President of the United States. An immense assembly of people shouted their approval, while guns fired a thunderous salute.

But once the tumult and the shouting had died, he found himself confronted with a host of difficulties. He had to commence a brand-new government from scratch and start the wheels moving. Every small administrative detail had to be worked out; even the number and types of departments to head executive functions had to be planned.

Certain departments, of course, were obviously essential and had already functioned in the Confederation. Such were Foreign Affairs, Treasury, and Army. To these was now added the office of Attorney General. It was some years before a separate Department of the Navy was organized, and many more before the other departments we now consider as part of the Cabinet came into being.

For Foreign Affairs (or the State Department, as it eventually was called), Washington chose Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, an active member of the Continental Congress, governor of Virginia during the war years, and just returned on leave from a five-year stay in France as American minister. No one doubted his capabilities or his brilliance.

For War, Washington chose General Henry Knox, of Massachusetts, a sound if not brilliant Revolutionary commander, who knew something about the problems of military organization and supplies. For Attorney General, he selected Edmund Randolph, of Virginia, who, like Jefferson, had served as governor of his state, knew the law, and had taken an important part in the politics of his native state.

The Department of the Treasury, however, presented difficulties. It was agreed that the new nation would stand or fall on the success or failure of its financial system. Without money to meet at least the interest payments on the staggering debts

contracted during the Revolution, without funds to pay the ordinary expenses of government, without the establishment of sound credit at home and abroad, the new government must soon go the way of the old and the nation break up.

It was logical to offer the post first to Robert Morris, who had been the treasurer in the time of the Confederation. But Morris refused it and suggested Hamilton instead. He still remembered that masterly scheme of reorganization which the then youthful officer had submitted to him.

Washington was secretly pleased. He had given the choice to Morris as a matter of political logic; actually, he preferred Hamilton. He was too wise and too great a man to hold a grudge against his former aide for his petulant treatment of years ago; and he knew firsthand his merits and his talents. Only a man with Hamilton's bold vision and ability to deal swiftly with problems could solve the tangled finances of the country.

For a while Hamilton hesitated. His salary as Secretary of the Treasury would be a mere \$3,000 a year. As a lawyer he could make far more. Nor did he have an independent private fortune on which to fall back. But a sense of public duty and responsibility, as well as Eliza's insistence, decided him to accept. She adored her brilliant husband and was certain that no task was beyond his powers.

There was some opposition in Congress to his appointment. Certain members feared his frankly expressed views on the necessity for a strong, vigorous government, but they subsided for the moment into mutterings and grumblings. On September 11, 1789, Hamilton began his duties as Secretary of the Treasury.

He was barely installed in office when Congress called on him to furnish it with a plan for the "adequate support of the public credit."

That such a plan was urgently needed, everyone agreed. Indeed, there was at the moment no such thing as "public credit," that is, the ability to obtain loans to the government of the United States from private individuals either here or abroad. But how to go about restoring or creating public credit was another matter.

The task of writing such a report might well have daunted a much older and more experienced man. It called for a thorough grasp of the entire theory and practice of finance, a knowledge of the nature and amount of the debts owed by the federal government and the various states, and an exploration of the means by which they could eventually be paid and confidence in the integrity of the government restored.

But Hamilton never permitted any problem to defeat him. The greater the difficulty, the keener and more clearly his mind moved to the attack. Within days he had assembled a vast array of pertinent facts and figures, received advice from his friends, and gone to work.

Within ten days he had completed his "First Report on the Public Credit." Like everything else he did, he had written the lengthy, bewilderingly complex document at top speed. Like all his other papers, it displayed no evidence of the fierce pace and nervous energy that had gone into its making. It was logical, precise, and clear.

What did the debt of the United States consist of? On the domestic side, it meant monies due soldiers for army service, merchants for goods and supplies, farmers for provisions. On the foreign side, it represented the loans which had been subscribed to by European bankers and others during and after the Revolution.

No one disputed the fact that the foreign debt, with interest, must eventually be paid in full. Otherwise, the infant nation must declare itself in bankruptcy and find itself excluded from the money markets of the world. The big dispute came over the question of the domestic debt.

Here there was considerable room for argument. During those years of the Revolution, the struggling Continental Congress had paid its way chiefly by pieces of paper called scrip. These were negotiable—that is, transferable—and represented promises to pay at some future date in cash.

Unfortunately, the returned soldiers had to eat in the meantime. They could not afford to wait for that very indefinite future date. Neither could many of the smaller merchants and farmers. As the Confederation got into trouble, and there seemed less and less likelihood that the scrip would ever be paid, these needy holders decided that a bird in the hand

was worth two in the bush. Therefore, when speculators offered them hard cash now for their pieces of paper—at a substantial discount, of course—they were only too happy to sell the scrip.

The result was that more and more of the domestic debt found its way into the strongboxes of the wealthy and the speculators. They bought it as low as twelve cents on the dollar and could afford to wait for the day when the scrip could be cashed at full value. Since they were also influential, they kept pressing the government for payment and supported the Constitution and Hamilton's idea of a powerful central government in the belief that these would hasten the day.

The radicals, however—among whom Madison was now to be counted—insisted that it was not fair to pay over the full amount to those who had purchased the scrip from the original holders at a mere fraction of its face value. To do so, they argued, would reward the gambler, the stockjobber, and the wealthy, while penalizing the poor and the deserving. In fact, these latter would be doubly penalized. Not merely would they have lost the difference, but they would now be compelled to pay taxes for the benefit of those who had taken advantage of their need.

Some of the radicals went so far as to demand that the domestic debt be paid only at the current market price for the scrip and that the government benefit by the reduction. Others, like Madison, more moderately proposed that the face amount be divided among the original and present holders. Give the latter, they said, only what they actually paid for the scrip and give all the rest to the original payees. In that way, everyone would get what they were actually entitled to.

But Hamilton from the very beginning set his face like flint against any and all of the plans proposed by the radicals. The debt of the United States, he declared in ringing tones, was a debt of honor and the price which we had paid for our liberties. It must be met in full. Nor could we make any distinction between past and present holders. Congress had said in the beginning that the paper was negotiable, that it could be bought and sold. Otherwise, it would have had practically no value at all. As a result, people had purchased it in good faith and were now the legal owners.

To attempt to go behind the present legal ownership, he continued, and differentiate between holders would fly in the face of all law and usage, ruin the credit of the country, and be even unjust to the paper holders themselves. How, he asked, was it possible to arrange sets of payments to holders past and present? Much of the paper had passed through several hands at different prices; it was impossible to determine exactly who had owned it at what times and what they had paid for it. Don't you see, he exclaimed, what a mess would result and what room it would leave for endless claims and disputes?

The same arguments held good for the state debts. These also consisted of promises to pay by the states for services rendered during and after the Revolution. Under the Articles of Confederation these debts were supposed to be met by the states themselves. But, argued Hamilton, they too had been for the general cause and to meet the expenses of the Revolution. They should therefore be assumed by the national government and paid in exactly the same fashion as the Continental debt. Furthermore—and this was an argument Hamilton was careful not to use too much in public debate—if the states continued to be responsible, they would have to lay heavy taxes on domestic items like land and whisky and would vigorously oppose a double tax on them by the national government. But Hamilton had already included such direct taxes, particularly on whisky, as an integral part of his own scheme of revenue.

Having thus to his own satisfaction settled the question of payment in full and the assumption by the national government of the state debts, the next step was to solve the problem of how they were to be paid. This was certainly not simple. The total ran to about 85 million dollars, a staggering sum for a tiny nation still unsure of itself and without money or an industrial economy on which to draw.

Yet Hamilton faced the issue boldly and confidently. He was sure of the essential soundness of the nation and its future prosperity if only a firm government continued to hold the reins and there was external peace for a long enough period so that commerce and industry could grow unhampered. He foresaw that the debt, and even a greater one, could be taken in its stride by an expanding America. And he believed that such a debt, instead of sinking the country as his opponents feared, would actually be a bond by which it would be held together. For the new holders of this debt, under his scheme, would be wealthy men who had surplus funds to invest. With these new promises to pay in their pockets, it would obviously be to their interest to ensure that the nation continue to exist and remain solvent; otherwise their investment would go up in smoke.

With such ideas in mind, Hamilton proposed that all the old scrip—Continental or state—be called in and that new

bonds or stock guaranteed by the United States, bearing an attractive rate of interest, be sold to the general public to pay for it. Such a method of issuing bonds in exchange for the old certificates of indebtedness was called "funding the debt," and the method by which Hamilton worked it out became known as his "funding system."

How pay the annual interest on these new bonds and meet the principal when it came due? Levy taxes, said Hamilton. Place an import duty on most articles from abroad; exact from each ship trading in our harbors a charge based on its gross tonnage; and put an excise, or internal, tax on items like whisky distilled at home.

Hamilton expected to appear before Congress in person to explain his propositions and to meet questions and objections raised from the floor. But the radicals raised a clamor about it as an attempt to influence their debate, and the idea was voted down. Instead, the written report was submitted to the House and referred to a select committee of its own.

By voting down Hamilton's offer to appear in person, the whole future course of the nation was determined. Had it been accepted, we might have had today something like the responsible cabinet government of England, where the ministers must appear in Parliament to explain and defend their actions and are thereby subject to its control. As it now stands, the members of the Cabinet are responsible only to the President. Thus Congress did the very thing it had sought to avoid—it strengthened the executive branch of the government.

While Hamilton's report was in the making, and before it had been laid publicly before Congress, there was a sudden surge of activity in the trading of scrip, and the price began to soar. There were those in Congress who saw a connection and angrily accused Hamilton of having given advance information of his proposals to friends who thereby stood to make a fortune. For the report called for payment of the scrip at face value. The current market price was around forty cents on the dollar. Those in on the secret, therefore, could more than double their money in a very short time.

Senator William Maclay of Pennsylvania—a fearless, plain-spoken, rough-and-ready backwoodsman—literally scorched the pages of his journal with his blistering comments. "This business," he wrote grimly, "will, I think in all probability, damn the character of Hamilton as a minister forever."

Certainly there was an increasing number of opponents to Hamilton and his policies who tried their best to "damn" him forever. The chorus rose that Hamilton deliberately handed out state secrets to friends, relatives, and political cronies by which they could benefit financially and that, in return, they formed a "political phalanx" of followers in Congress and out to further his policies and do his bidding.

There is no real evidence to prove these charges in so far as Hamilton personally is concerned. Yet there is evidence that his assistant in the Treasury, William Duer, of New York, used the information he gained by virtue of his position to speculate profitably on his own and to hand out tips to commercial friends. Hamilton himself never made a penny on matters of which he possessed advance knowledge, and it is certain that he left the Treasury a poorer man than when he entered it.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that he was not unduly disturbed that men of wealth were in a position to make more money as a result of leaks from his department. From his point of view, the more the rich invested in the debt of the United States, the more they would support the government which had to repay it.

But such a philosophy only infuriated the more those who thought corruption to be corruption, no matter what its ultimate goal, and who now began to view with considerable alarm the whole drift of Hamilton's plans. Reports of fast ships sailing south and faster horsemen spurring into the remote backwoods, commissioned by northern speculators and congressmen to buy up the paper held by people who had not yet heard of Hamilton's funding scheme, only added fuel to the wrath of the righteous.

"My soul rises indignant," thundered Jackson, of Georgia, to a crowded House, "at the avaricious and immoral turpitude which so vile a conduct displays."

As he spoke, he turned pointedly to certain members of Congress who everyone knew, or thought they knew, were speculating in the scrip.

Nevertheless, in spite of the opposition of men like Jackson, Madison, and Maclay, in spite of the rising tide of indignation in the country, the funding of the national debt as proposed in Hamilton's report was pushed through both branches of Congress and became law.

With the first great section of his plan thus swiftly put into effect, Hamilton immediately moved to obtain a similar approval for the second part: the assumption by the national government of the debts of the various states and their inclusion in the common national debt.

At first glance, it might be considered that there would certainly be no trouble in putting this through, that the states would be only too happy to unload their burden of debts on the national government. But there was more to it than met the eye.

Hamilton was frank enough in stating his purpose: first, he wished to have a single national debt so that uniform national taxes might be levied to pay it; second, that the great number of state creditors might have an equal interest with the national creditors in the perpetuation of the Union.

The states, on the other hand, realized only too well that such a shifting of the debt would weaken their own position with respect to the federal government and that the old adage "Beware the Greeks bearing gifts" applied squarely to this particular proposition. Had they been unanimous in opposition, they could easily have defeated the assumption. But they were not; and for this too there were good reasons.

The New England states, for example, were staggering under heavy war debts which they had so far done little to pay off and were therefore eager to transfer the burden to the nation. The southern states, however, were in a different situation. Georgia's war debt was small, and she saw no reason why her citizens should later be taxed by the federal government to help pay the larger debts of the other states. Virginia, whose debt had truly been large, had managed to pay off most of it and now humanly resented being taxed for the benefit of states like Massachusetts which had made no such effort. And there was another complication. Most of the state debts had fallen into the hands of northern speculators, purchased from the original holders at a heavy discount. Why, argued the South, should we bring the value up to par, at a heavy cost in taxes to ourselves, merely to enrich these vultures who had taken advantage of the needs of our citizens?

It is obvious, therefore, that there were good arguments on either side; neither had a monopoly on truth or justice. Yet in the long run, and in spite of current injustices, Hamilton was right. If a nation was ever to develop from a loose association of states, each primarily going its own way and consulting its own interests, a cement of union had to be discovered and applied. And, for good or ill, a financial cement, compounded of a common fund, a common debt, and universal taxes uniformly applied, is the most durable of all.

If the struggle over the funding of the national debt had been bitter, the fight that now raged over the assumption of the state debts burst all the bounds of passion. In Congress opposing members shouted insults. Outside, men spoke openly of corruption on the one hand and the breakup of the Union on the other.

On April 12, 1790, the plan of assumption was put to a vote in the House and went down to defeat by a margin of two votes.

Hamilton was stunned. All his plans were now disorganized. What was there left for him to do? He shut himself up in his room and concentrated on the problem. Only two votes short! Actually, he needed more because absent members of Congress were hurrying to New York to join in the epic struggle. For the hundredth time he counted his supporters in both chambers of Congress. Five additional votes were necessary in the House, and a single one in the Senate. Where could he get them?

The hours passed. Eliza knocked timidly on the door. "It's after midnight, Alec," she said anxiously. "Please go to bed."

But he made no move. Then, suddenly, he snapped his fingers. "Now why didn't I think of that before?" He flung open the door, called upstairs. "Eliza!" His voice was gay. "It's amazing what a little hard thinking will do. I've just solved my problem."

"Then come to bed at once," she replied with pardonable wifely exasperation.

The next morning, bright and early, Hamilton dressed and hurried down Broadway to within a block of President Washington's house. He looked at his timepiece. It was almost 9 A.M. Ordinarily, the man he was waiting for should have been here by now, coming down the street with that loose-limbed swing of his. No one could mistake the tall, rather gangling gentleman with the reddish-sandy hair, the mild, open countenance, the gray eyes, and the clothes that still bore the impress of Paris upon them.

Ah, there he was! Hamilton hurried forward, hand outstretched. "What a coincidence, Mr. Jefferson!" he exclaimed. "I was just thinking of you. Where are you going?"

Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State, paused in his stride. "To the President, of course," he replied. "Aren't you in attendance on him this morning, Mr. Hamilton?"

"Later! Later!" Hamilton, short, erect, took the tall man's arm. "I am in terrible trouble, sir," he said with a great sigh and a tragic expression on his face.

Jefferson stared down at his companion in alarm. "Mrs. Hamilton—the children——"

"No, thank God! Yet this is almost worse. You know, assumption was defeated yesterday."

"Oh, that! Well, I don't know. My fellow Virginians feel pretty strongly on that subject. Madison says——"

"That's just it," Hamilton broke in eagerly. "Madison says, and everyone follows obediently. You've been in France for quite a few years, so you don't know in what a state this country is."

"That's true," Jefferson admitted. "Nevertheless——"

But Hamilton was hurrying on. "If you knew what I knew, Mr. Jefferson. Should assumption fail, the Union is at an end. I saw the members of the New England delegations last night. They're boiling with rage. They swear they're going home and tell their constituents that the South, and especially Virginia, doesn't care whether the North goes into bankruptcy or not. They're going, so they say, to call for state conventions to secede from the Union."

"Oh, they can't do that. The Constitution——"

"They claim it's the South that's tearing up the Constitution. Now, look, we're both members of the government. We can't stand by and see the nation we both worked so hard to build breaking up before our eyes."

"I suppose you're right," said Jefferson somewhat doubtfully. "But the southern states feel that the North has been getting the best of things so far."

"Oh, you mean the permanent capital of the United States," exclaimed Hamilton. This was the point to which he had been leading up all the time.

Jefferson was taken aback for a moment. "Well, since you mention it, I suppose that's a major item in their thinking," he agreed. "The temporary capital is in New York, and you easterners want it to remain here, while the Pennsylvanians are insisting that Philadelphia or some other spot in that state be chosen. We would like it on the Virginia border. That's the central location of the country, you know."

Hamilton pretended deep thought. The game was in his hands. "Suppose," he said finally, "I promise that enough friends of mine in Congress will vote for placing the capital where you want it; would some of your friends vote for assumption?"

"Hmm!" Jefferson studied the idea. "I'm really a stranger to the political scene here, but——" He broke off. "Suppose I arrange a little dinner, Mr. Hamilton, with you and some of my friends present? You can tell them just what you've been telling me."

Hamilton wrung the tall man's hand. "Name the place and the time, and I'll be there."

As he watched the gangling Virginian mount the steps of Washington's quarters, he chuckled to himself. He knew now that assumption was as good as passed. "What do I care where the capital is," he thought scornfully, "as long as there's a nation to support it?"

The dinner was held, and the deal was made. The necessary number of southern congressmen gave their votes to assumption, while a sufficient number of northerners agreed that the new capital would be built on the banks of the Potomac—later to be called the city of Washington. In order to placate the Pennsylvania delegation, it was agreed that first the temporary capital would be moved from New York to Philadelphia, there to remain for ten years, until the permanent capital was built and made ready for occupancy.

But Jefferson was later to regret bitterly that deal into which he had been drawn. As Hamilton's policies continued to unfold, he began to realize that there must be war to the death between his beliefs and Hamilton's. To him it was essential that the country remain a nation of small, sturdy, and independent farmers, a nation where personal liberty was primary and there would be no government supervision of or interference with the lives of the people, a nation where the common man would rule and democracy flourish.

Hamilton, on the other hand, believed that a nation devoted almost wholly to agricultural pursuits could never be anything but weak and powerless, the prey of the great empires of the world. Only industrialization and the growth of manufacturing could create strength. As for democracy, he had no great admiration for the common man nor a belief in his wisdom and judgment. To be governed properly, he thought, a country must be ruled by the rich and the well-born. They were necessarily better educated, more intelligent and, from sheer self-interest, would always stand for order and stability as against chaos and anarchy.

With two such diverse views, it is no wonder that Hamilton and Jefferson must someday come to a dramatic head-on collision.

9 *The Bank at Home and Convulsions Abroad*

Late in 1790 the temporary capital, as had been arranged, was moved from New York to Philadelphia. Hamilton was barely settled in his new quarters when he commenced working on the third section of his tremendous scheme to place the nation on a sound financial basis.

Ever since he had been a youth of twenty-two, he had considered a national bank, partly governmental and partly private, as necessary to public welfare. It was the Bank of England, he was convinced, that had been primarily responsible for that country's rise to greatness; and the United States must follow suit if it expected to become equally great.

On December 14, 1790, he laid a complete scheme for such a bank before the House of Representatives. In essence it followed the lines of his recommendations of previous years, but with the difference that he was no longer an obscure, if brilliant, young man. He was Secretary of the Treasury and recognized by friend and foe alike as one of the most influential leaders of his time.

His plan called for a bank capital of 10 million dollars divided into 25,000 shares of stock. Of these the government would take 5,000 shares; and private individuals would subscribe the rest. There would be twenty-five directors to manage its affairs, only five of whom would represent the government's interest. Hamilton strongly was of the opinion that the bank must not be made into a political football, that only a sense of private interest and ownership could be relied on for careful and wise administration. Another point of interest—and one which Hamilton planned to ensure that people would be eager to purchase the governmental bonds which had been issued to pay off the scrip—he provided that only a quarter of the subscription price for the bank stock should be paid in cash; the other three-quarters was to be paid by depositing bonds to that amount.

The bank was given the power to issue its own notes for general circulation as money, up to a certain amount in excess of its assets, while the government was authorized to borrow sums from time to time from the bank in an amount not to exceed its own investment, that is, 2 million dollars. Otherwise, the bank was to operate like any private bank.

The whole plan seemed dry and technical, and not worth any particular fuss. Yet no measure offered by Hamilton during his entire tumultuous career raised such an immediate passion of opposition. The battles over the funding of the national debt and the assumption of the state debts were pink teas compared to what now took place.

Several great principles were involved. In the first place, the average farmer, planter, and mechanic—all, in fact, who were not businessmen—mistrusted and hated banks. Their sole contact with them was when they had to borrow money to live on or to pay off old debts, at a pretty steep rate of interest. Since they rarely realized enough cash from the sale of their farm products or their personal services to meet the interest charges, or the principal when it fell due, the amount they owed would steadily snowball in size. The unfortunate debtors would find themselves working all their lives—at least so they claimed—for the benefit of shrewd, hardhearted financiers who did nothing but sit back and collect interest on their money.

In the second place, nothing specific had been said in the Constitution about the power of the federal government to charter a national bank. How then was that precious document to be construed? Was it to be considered as a strictly limited instrument, granting no powers whatever to the national government that were not specifically mentioned in it? Or was it to be considered more broadly, as containing certain implied powers which might be spelled out from the general clauses or even from a consideration of the nature of government itself?

If the so-called "strict constructionists" won this particular battle, then the national government must forever be hampered in its operations and the states must remain the ultimate sovereigns. If, on the other hand, the upholders of implied powers were victorious, then the Constitution could be made into a flexible instrument whereby the central government would necessarily find new sources of authority as the need developed and eventually triumph in the struggle for sovereignty over the states.

Therefore it was not only the immediate question of a bank or no bank that was involved, but also the larger and more tremendous issue of where sovereignty must eventually lie—with the nation or with the states?

Both sides were thoroughly aware of the implications of the struggle, and found in it the all-important issue on which to form political parties as we know them today. The conservatives, the men of property, the merchants, the businessmen,

and many of the large planters who treated their estates as businesses, wanted the Constitution to be interpreted "liberally." Hamilton was their leader and they became known as the Federalist Party.

The small farmers, the mechanics in the cities, the believers in a wide democracy, all who feared that a strongly centralized government might lead to tyranny and a return to a monarchy, demanded that nothing be read into the Constitution that was not there in black and white. Jefferson became their leader, and they went under the name of Republicans or Democratic-Republicans. In later years this was shortened to Democrats.

Now, with the lines clearly drawn between two theories of government, Hamilton and Jefferson began their great feud. They fought one another in the Cabinet, in Congress, and in the public press. In the heat of battle they called each other names and accused one another of ambitions and ideas that were, to say the least, exaggerated. From friendly acquaintances they turned to the bitterest of enemies. Jefferson thought that Hamilton was trying to change the United States into a hereditary monarchy. Hamilton believed that Jefferson was a dreamer, a radical, and a leveler. Neither one really understood what the other was trying to do.

After a bitter struggle, Hamilton's forces managed to push the bank bill through both branches of Congress, in spite of loud cries that it was unconstitutional.

When the bill came to President Washington for signature, however, he was troubled. Was the bank authorized by the Constitution or not? He sought the opinions of his Cabinet. That body of advisers divided in accordance with their political beliefs. Hamilton and Knox said it was; Jefferson and Randolph declared it was not.

Both Hamilton and Jefferson submitted written opinions. These were powerful statements of their points of view. Washington was convinced by Hamilton's arguments rather than Jefferson's, and signed the bill. The doctrine of implied powers, as stated by the former, became thereafter a part of constitutional law and was later quoted as such by Chief Justice John Marshall in a series of important decisions.

The importance of Hamilton's victory cannot be overestimated, for it set the nation firmly on the path which we today, more than 150 years later, are still traveling. Had Jefferson won, it is difficult to see how a strong, united nation, capable of withstanding stress and strain, could ever have developed. In fact, when Jefferson himself became President, he found that there were occasions when it was necessary for him to close his eyes to evasions of a truly strict interpretation of the Constitution.

Hamilton was not a man content to rest on his laurels. No sooner had he placed a firm foundation under the nation's financial structure than he turned his attention to what he considered the keystone of his system—the encouragement and promotion of industry and manufacturing.

Unlike Jefferson, who firmly believed that an agricultural society was the purest and most natural form, Hamilton pinned his faith on a nation in which great cities and belching chimneys produced a never-ending supply of manufactured goods.

No country, he declared, could ever be prosperous on agriculture alone. A nation of farmers who had to import every plow, every stitch of clothing that could not be made in the home, every pot and pan, every tool would soon find itself helplessly dependent upon the whims or greed of other nations. Let us meet them on equal terms, he insisted; let us have the means of independence.

The industrial revolution was just commencing in England, and Hamilton read the signs correctly. In a world of competition and grasping for power, any country that refused to industrialize itself would soon find itself out of the race and a victim of those that did.

But the United States was as yet primarily an agricultural country. The small industries that did exist could not compete even in the domestic market with the more advanced industries of England. Therefore, proposed Hamilton, let us encourage the establishment of manufacturing at home by granting liberal financing help to get them started and enacting a protective tariff to keep out foreign competition thereafter.

He stated these observations and the proposed remedies in a long and famous "Report on Manufactures" which he

submitted to Congress at the end of 1791. But the lawmakers were not ready for such a comprehensive scheme and the large sums of money it would require, while the Republicans saw in it the deathblow for their own philosophy of government and way of life. The report was therefore pigeonholed.

Defeated in his attempt to obtain government aid for industry, Hamilton tried another tack. His busy mind evolved a scheme for a great, privately supported society to promote manufacturing in this country. If he could get adventurous, profit-seeking investors to subscribe a million dollars, he thought, the society could proceed with the manufacture of paper, sailcloth, stockings, blankets, carpets, shoes, cotton goods, and a host of other essential items that were then largely imported from England.

He wrote and distributed an explanation of his plan in the best and most flamboyant modern advertising technique. Within a remarkably short time he had obtained promises of \$250,000 from eager investors who had confidence in Hamilton. Thus armed, he drew up a charter of incorporation with extensive powers to the new company and persuaded the New Jersey legislature to adopt it in November, 1791.

The Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures (or "SUM" as it came familiarly to be called) commenced operations at the falls of the Passaic River—the present site of the city of Paterson. Buildings were erected, machinery was ordered, and workmen and superintendents were hired.

But the glowing dream soon faded. For one thing, it was difficult to obtain skilled workmen who knew machinery and the methods of production. It is true that England had them, but she was smart enough to hold on to them and made it a criminal offense for anyone to lure them out of the country. Hamilton disregarded the law and sent agents abroad to offer attractive inducements, but with little success.

Worse still, one of the directors of SUM was William Duer, Hamilton's friend and former assistant in the Treasury. But Duer's tips to speculators about Hamilton's proposed policies had raised such a storm that Hamilton had been compelled to "accept" his resignation. Once again a private citizen, Duer continued his off-color enterprises, with the ultimate result that his speculations became so complicated and so shady that the structure now collapsed with a resounding crash. Thousands of gullible little people had been taken in by his reckless promises, and they saw their life's savings vanish into smoke.

Duer went to jail, but that did not restore the lost monies. One of his chief creditors, in fact, was the SUM. Duer had not hesitated to use its funds in his own enterprises, nor could the commingling ever be properly untangled.

The fall and bankruptcy of Duer toppled other businesses like a house of cards, and panic and depression followed. Hamilton tried heroically to stem the tide of disaster, but it swept beyond his control. SUM, to his bitter regret, was forced to give up all its projects and content itself with remaining a mere landholding corporation. As such it existed until recent years, when the State of New Jersey finally purchased its last charter rights.

What Jefferson and his followers had predicted now actually came to pass. A mania for speculation had seized the country as a result of Hamilton's most successful policies. It began with the rush to deal in the scrip when he first proposed to fund it at par and had increased when he put forward his plan for a national bank. Rights merely to subscribe to its stock passed rapidly from hand to hand, each time at a large increase in price, until they reached enormous figures.

Everyone rushed to get in on the easy money. The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker, the widow with her mite, and the soldier with his service bonus—all were seized with the universal get-rich mania. And, like all small people in every clime and time who try their hands at speculation, they got burned.

For the moment, however, the profits—on paper—were enormous. Warnings went unheeded. "It has risen like a rocket," cried the *New York Daily Advertiser*. "Like a rocket it will burst with a crack and down drops the rocket stick. What goes up must come down—so take care of your pate, brother Jonathan." But no one paid any attention to the advice.

Hamilton was himself uneasy over the orgy of speculation, and tried to stop it. As he explained to his friend Rufus King, "A bubble connected with my operations is of all the enemies I have to fear, in my judgment, the most formidable."

He sought to support the price of government bonds and even to help Duer when he crashed. But his help could only be a drop in the bucket. The bottom suddenly dropped out; there was a wave of bankruptcies; the small fry were wiped out; and a great cry rose for Duer's blood and, by implication, for Hamilton's.

As we have said, Duer went to jail; but Hamilton managed to weather the storm. In spite of gossip and open accusations that he had been directly involved in Duer's manipulations, the only thing that could be proved was that, at worst, he had been unwise in seeking to save his former assistant and friend from the consequences of his criminal folly.

The enmity that had existed in principle between Hamilton and Jefferson now became personal as well as political. Step by step Jefferson had watched Hamilton's policies unfold and achieve success. They went counter to everything in which Jefferson believed; yet Washington, as President, seemed more and more inclined to take Hamilton's side on every issue. Jefferson fumed and fretted but temporarily held his peace.

Then Hamilton poached on Jefferson's private preserves—the official conduct of foreign relations; and the fat was in the fire. France, our ally during the Revolution, was now in the midst of her own and far more thoroughgoing revolution. In the beginning most Americans hailed it with delight, thinking it would be a moderate one like their own. They were soon disabused. As the wave of revolutions swept over Europe, encouraged and supported by the French armies, it proved to be a social and economic as well as a political upheaval. And, since it set class against class within each country, the struggles were bitter, ruthless, and bloody. The Continent became a battlefield of arms and ideas, with France rallying to her support the republican and radical forces, while England rapidly assumed the leadership of the conservatives.

Something of the same feelings that affected Europe found echoes in America. By and large the common man, the small farmer, and the artisan, the followers of Jefferson, favored the French; the merchants, the great landowners, and the rich, under Hamilton, took the part of England.

The split coincided generally with the new division into parties of Republicans and Federalists. Old World hatreds were transported bodily to the New World. The Republicans wore the French colors on their hats and shouted the slogan "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." They hailed every French victory with cheers, and every defeat with a groan. They formed "democratic" clubs in imitation of the French revolutionists and held somewhat pompous secret meetings. They greeted one another in the streets and in their letters as "Citizen" instead of plain "Mister."

The Federalists, on the other hand, viewed the course of the French Revolution more and more with horror and turned instead to the British system as one of law, order, and respect for property rights. They accused the Republicans of attempting a similar anarchy here and sincerely believed that the so-called "democratic" clubs were intended to initiate a French-type revolution in the United States.

The Republicans retorted by charging the Federalists with being monarchists at heart and secretly regretful that they had ever severed themselves from England. Passions rose and tempers snapped. Men who had been lifelong friends now crossed the street rather than meet. Brother did not speak with brother, nor father with son.

Outwardly, at least at Cabinet meetings under the watchful eye of the President, Hamilton and Jefferson maintained a formal courtesy. Privately, they each spoke in bitter terms of the other. Everything was therefore ripe for the final explosion.

England had sent George Hammond as envoy to the United States to negotiate the numerous matters in dispute between the two countries. The chief items related to the execution—or rather, the inexecution—of the treaty of peace. England by its terms was bound to surrender the forts and trading posts which she held within the northern and western borders of the United States. She was also supposed to pay damages for the Negro slaves her army had taken with it when it evacuated the American shore.

Neither of these treaty clauses had been fulfilled. England claimed she had not done so because the United States in turn had not lived up to her obligations under the treaty. At the time of the Revolution, many Americans owed money to English merchants for goods purchased. The outbreak of war naturally put a stop to payments, and various states passed what were called "stay" laws to prevent suits being brought on these debts in their courts. When the war ended, the northern states generally discontinued such laws or their citizens paid up in any event. The situation was different in the

South, however. The planters, heavily indebted and without funds with which to pay, saw to it that the laws continued in effect. As a result, British merchants raised a great clamor.

The treaty of peace therefore contained a clause that such "stay" laws be repealed so that British creditors might sue in the state courts and obtain judgments. It is true that Congress duly recommended such repeal to the several states; it is also true that the southern states disregarded the recommendation.

With these claims and counterclaims between them, it is obvious that Anglo-American relations were delicate enough. But there were other points of friction. England had practically put an end to the once lucrative American trade with her island colonies in the West Indies, and had seized and confiscated those ships which attempted to evade the stringent regulations. As her relations with France worsened, England also found herself in desperate need of sailors to man her navy. The higher pay and better working conditions on American ships had attracted many English-born seamen to them, and some of them had actually become American citizens. But the British contended that once an Englishman, always an Englishman, and claimed the right to board and search any American ship in order to impress these men.

All negotiations on these points of dispute were technically in the domain of the State Department and, therefore, of Jefferson. But Hamilton considered that the nature of American relations with Great Britain was a matter of concern to every officer of government, and peculiarly vital to the stability and success of his own financial system. A war with England would send toppling to disaster everything he had thus far accomplished. Commerce would halt, revenues would cease, and his entire credit structure would collapse. War was therefore unthinkable, and he felt justified in doing everything in his power to prevent it, if possible.

Accordingly, soon after Hammond had presented his credentials as the new British envoy, Hamilton hastened privately to him.

"How are you getting along in your negotiations with Mr. Jefferson?" he asked.

"Not at all well, sir. I'm afraid Mr. Jefferson is no friend to His Majesty's government. He stubbornly insists that we give up the forts and pay compensation for the Negroes. When I point out that you Americans breached the treaty first by refusing to repeal the stay laws, he counters with the nonsensical argument that since Congress recommended repeal to the states, even if the states failed to do so, you had lived up to the letter of the treaty."

Hamilton shook his head sadly. "Mr. Jefferson," he said, "has some strange ideas. Would you believe that he actually excuses the horrible cruelties of the French Revolution on the ground that the tree of liberty sometimes requires a little blood as fertilizer?"

"I'd believe anything of him," Hammond retorted. "You understand, Mr. Hamilton, it is impossible for me to come to any agreement with him."

"I know," acknowledged Hamilton. "I find him difficult enough myself. But you must realize that his opinions are his own; they do not represent the thinking of the government of the United States."

"No?"

"Not at all. I flatter myself that the President and I see eye to eye on these matters, and we sincerely want to straighten out every dispute between our two countries."

Hammond raised his brows. "But we seem so far apart."

Hamilton smiled. "Not as far as you suppose. The one thing that this government will insist on is the return of the border posts and forts; though even here we might be willing to grant you special privileges with respect to the fur trade. As far as damages for the slaves who went off with your army——" Hamilton shrugged, "that does not seem to me as important as it does to certain other people."

Hammond took his hand. "You have been a great help, Mr. Hamilton," he exclaimed. "I'm certain that, were you at the head of the State Department, we could settle all our difficulties."

"No doubt about it," replied Hamilton complacently.

But Jefferson was of a different opinion. When it finally dawned on him that Hamilton was talking privately to Hammond, his indignation knew no bounds. He hastened to Washington to complain and even threatened to resign. It was with great difficulty that Washington talked him out of giving up his post.

Nevertheless, smarting under this undermining of his own careful negotiations, Jefferson determined to strike back. He also believed that Hamilton's playing up to England and snubbing France would eventually lead to disaster and that Washington was being influenced by him in the wrong direction. Unless public opinion was aroused to exert pressure on the government, we would soon find ourselves on the side of England and at war with France.

There was only one way to arouse public opinion, Jefferson decided; and that was through the newspapers. Unfortunately, most of those in Philadelphia were Federalist in politics; particularly so was the *United States Gazette*, edited by John Fenno, which was semiofficial and generally recognized as reflecting Hamilton's views. It was necessary, therefore, to start a new paper which would present his, Jefferson's, side of the controversy.

Secretly, and with the help of James Madison, Jefferson brought Philip Freneau, a well-known poet and newspaper writer, to Philadelphia. He gave him the post of French translator in the State Department at a salary of \$250 a year, with the privilege of running a newspaper on the side. In this fashion the *National Gazette* was born.

The new Republican paper was an immediate sensation. Freneau's pen was biting and his assaults savage. He minced no words and did not hesitate to name names. He attacked Hamilton and his policies in most intemperate language and even intimated that Washington was under his thumb and the country was going to the dogs.

Now it was Hamilton's turn to be furious. He soon discovered that Jefferson stood behind Freneau and determined to strike directly at him.

On July 25, 1792, the subscribers to Fenno's *United States Gazette* (Fenno and Freneau and the two *Gazettes* are confusingly similar in names) casually opened their newspaper at the dinner table, glanced at the advertisements on the front page, then turned to the inside. As they suddenly stiffened, their wives were startled. "What's the matter, John (or James or William)?" asked the wives anxiously.

"Whew!" whistled their lords and masters. "Just listen to this, Betty (or Mary or Martha)!"

This is what they read, printed in bold black type.

"The editor of the *National Gazette* receives a salary from government. Question: Is this salary paid to him for *translations*, or for publications, the design of which is to vilify those to whom the voice of the people has committed the administration of our public affairs. . . . In common life it is thought ungrateful for a man to bite the hand that puts bread in his mouth; but if the man is hired to do it, the case is altered."

Everyone knew instantly that the last reference was to Jefferson; and the country buzzed with excitement. The little item had been signed with the initials "T. L." Who was T. L.?

The secret was soon out. It was Alexander Hamilton. The buzz rose to a tremendous roar. The clandestine war between the two members of the Cabinet had exploded into the open.

Nor was Hamilton finished. He followed up this initial assault with others, under the pseudonym "An American." Madison and other Republicans rushed to Jefferson's defense, and for months the big guns volleyed and thundered. Only the main target, wounded though he was to the core, kept a public silence. The government was split wide open, and the rival parties, rallying behind their chiefs, hardened into open enmity.

Washington was dismayed. He had hoped to keep the differences of his two temperamental Cabinet members a private affair; but now all the dirty linen was on display for the dullest witted to see. He first tried to reconcile the antagonists. They retorted with bitter complaints against each other. Each offered to resign. Washington refused to accept the resignations. Both were too valuable to the country in their present posts. In spite of clashes, both were necessary as

balance wheels in the middle course he was firmly determined to steer. With either out, the government would find itself committed to an extreme position. With both out, the administration would find itself compelled to choose men of far less political and intellectual standing.

He therefore employed all his influence and persuasive powers to get them to remain. Reluctantly, and sullenly, they finally agreed. But the war had been joined and there could be no retreat. The political parties which no one had contemplated when the Constitution had been drafted were now fully in the field, and it was only a question of time when the battle would be renewed.

10 *A World Aflame*

The party split was openly evident in the presidential election of 1792. There was no question as to the next President. Both sides were unanimous on George Washington for another term; although some of the more radical Republicans grumbled privately that he had become a tool in the hands of Hamilton.

But there was no such agreement on the choice for Vice-President. The Republicans accused John Adams, the incumbent, of favoring a monarchy and aristocracy, and put up Governor George Clinton of New York as the opposing candidate.

Hamilton himself, though of the same party as Adams, would have preferred someone else, but he dared not risk a split in the ranks if Adams were by-passed and reluctantly supported him.

Washington was re-elected easily; and Adams remained in the vice-presidency, though not without a stiff battle against three rival candidates.

The Republicans professed themselves as elated over the result. Where they had exerted their full strength, they had shown a strong following everywhere but in New England. They even claimed that the majority of the nation was in their camp, pointing to the strict qualifications then in effect for the privilege to vote. Suffrage was by no means universal; only those who possessed a certain amount of property were permitted to attend the polls; and it has been estimated that not more than one-sixth of the total free white adult population could cast the ballot.

The new Congress, moreover, disclosed a substantial increase in Republican strength, sufficient to encourage Hamilton's enemies to make a supreme effort to get rid of him and disgrace him forever in the eyes of the public.

On February 27, 1793, William Giles, of Virginia, the Republican leader in the House, rose dramatically to move a series of resolutions. Ten in number, these accused Hamilton of illegal acts as Secretary of the Treasury in handling the funds entrusted to his care. In preparation for these specific charges, Giles had a month previously called on Hamilton for a complete accounting of his operations in the foreign debt and his relations with the Bank of the United States.

Hamilton had long suspected that he would soon be under open attack, but he had not expected such a set of serious charges on the floor of Congress.

"They are trying to drive me out of public life," he told his wife grimly that night, when the first demand came to him.

"But what can you do, Alec?" she cried in despair. "It's impossible for you to get together the immense amount of material they demand in the few weeks left in the session. That's why they held off asking for it until now."

"The Republicans rely on that," Hamilton admitted. "They expect to make political capital out of my alleged silence during the months when Congress stands adjourned. But I'll fool them," he added grimly. "The accounting they demand will be ready before they adjourn."

"It's an impossible task," cried Eliza.

Hamilton chuckled her under the chin. "I am accustomed to doing the impossible," he grinned.

On February 13 a messenger appeared in the House, bowed to the Speaker, and laid an overwhelming portfolio of papers and documents on the desk. In a loud voice he said, "Sir, I submit to the House of Representatives the formal accounting of the Secretary of the Treasury as requested in their resolution of January 23."

Giles, who had been lounging comfortably in his seat, started violently. "By God!" he swore. "I never thought that fellow Hamilton could have had it ready in time."

The remark was overheard by William Smith, of South Carolina, one of Hamilton's most ardent admirers. He leaned forward in his chair. "Mr. Giles," he chuckled, "by this time you ought to know that it is dangerous to underestimate that fellow Hamilton. He always does the impossible."

To which taunt Giles could only return a baffled glare.

Nevertheless, the Republicans went ahead with their plans, though Hamilton's report was so complete as to seem to provide no chink in its armor. Giles introduced his resolutions on February 27, based on what appeared to be certain small technical irregularities in the vast financial operations. In a speech on March 1, he tried to substantiate the charges.

But Smith, of South Carolina, was instantly on his feet to reply. So eloquent was his response and so crushing its logic and weight of evidence that, when he finally sat down, it was obvious to all unprejudiced onlookers that the resolutions would never pass. Nor did they; even Republicans, except for the die-hards, joined with the Federalists to vote them down.

That night Eliza cried out in glad relief, "I'm so happy, Alec. Wasn't that a wonderful speech Mr. Smith made?"

"Oh, it wasn't bad," Hamilton dismissed it offhandedly. How could he tell her that he had written the speech himself?

The long-expected war in Europe flamed up in February, 1793. Revolutionary France hurled its troops against monarchical England and her allies on the Continent. Like all wars that are fought over ideas, this one soon spread beyond the boundaries of the original combatants. The distant United States divided sharply in sympathies, and so strong was the disagreement that for years there seemed grave danger that civil war might break out.

The European belligerents fished diligently in the troubled American waters and employed every technique to bring the United States into the general conflict. England's minister, George Hammond, turned naturally to Hamilton for aid and comfort, while the French envoy looked similarly to Jefferson. The fact that America might prefer to remain neutral in the holocaust did not occur to either of them.

In a certain sense France had the inside track. She had been America's ally during the Revolution, and she had a treaty with the United States whereby the latter guaranteed that the French West Indies colonies would be protected from seizure by any aggressor nation.

But both belligerents reckoned without the good sense of President Washington and, for all their opposing sympathies, the essential patriotism of Hamilton and Jefferson.

The moment Washington heard of the outbreak of war, he called his Cabinet together and submitted a series of questions to them. Should the United States issue a proclamation of neutrality? Should Citizen Edmond Charles Genêt, the new French minister on his way to America with proposals for a war alliance, be received? Should the United States honor the old treaty with France or consider it at an end? Should Congress be called into session? On these vital questions depended the fate of the nation and the alternatives of peace or war.

Actually, as Jefferson suspected, Hamilton had drafted these questions for Washington to present and had worded them so that the answers were implicit in the questions. For himself, Hamilton promptly answered most of them in the affirmative.

On the first, he said yes, we ought to issue a proclamation of neutrality. Jefferson, though just as firm a believer in the fact of neutrality, argued we were throwing away a bargaining point by announcing thus publicly that we would not join the war on either side.

On the second and third, Hamilton would have preferred not to receive Genêt; but since that would have meant a break in diplomatic relations with France, he demanded that Genêt be told on his arrival that we reserved to ourselves the right to determine whether the old treaty of guarantee was in effect or not. Actually, Hamilton wanted to rid himself once and for all of this dangerous guarantee. To all this, Jefferson retorted on the sanctity of treaties and our base ingratitude for France's former help if we now let her down.

With most of the questions thus in hot dispute, it was necessary to compromise. Genêt was to be received, and the question of what to tell him was left for the future. Congress was not to be called in special session. A proclamation of neutrality would be issued, but it was not to be labeled as such. This last proviso was due to Jefferson's insistence. History, however, has persisted in calling it the Proclamation of Neutrality.

The Proclamation, as it was eventually issued, declared it to be the intention of the United States to "adopt and pursue a conduct friendly and impartial toward the belligerent powers" and warned American citizens against doing anything to

violate such a policy. All pronouncements by the American government in the same field have been based on this proclamation. To put it into practice, however, amid the violent taking of sides by the American people proved another matter.

Citizen Genêt, the new envoy from France, proved the worst possible choice for a delicate mission. He was vain, arrogant, puffed up with his own importance, and contemptuous of the piddling little nation to which he was sent.

Instead of landing in Philadelphia, the capital of the United States, he found an excuse to put in instead at Charleston, far to the south, and to go by land to the seat of government. As far as he was concerned, the results justified this move.

The southern states, and Pennsylvania as well, were overwhelmingly Republican in politics and were admirers of the French. Officials and general populace alike contributed to making Genêt's journey a triumphant procession, complete with parades, cannon salutes, cheers, dinners, speeches, and all the trimmings.

No wonder that Genêt lost what little wits he had. He considered himself a conquering hero, a superman to whom all things would be granted. Were not the people of the United States conclusively on his side? What mattered then what Washington and the government thought?

For a while it actually seemed as if he were correct in this arrogant surmise. At Charleston, Genêt was able to enlist Americans in the armed service of France, outfit privateers, and send them out to prey on British commerce. When they returned with captured prizes, Genêt ordered them sold in American ports. In short, he conducted himself as if he were, in truth, above the laws of the country to which he had been accredited as envoy.

The Republicans saw nothing wrong in all this, not even a breach in American neutrality. But the Federalists viewed the matter differently. From Genêt's actions and the applause with which the Republicans greeted them, the Federalists were certain that another reign of terror was just around the corner, with themselves earmarked as the chief victims. One of them wrote in great fear to Hamilton, "Only you can save us from disaster and the wreck of our government."

Hamilton thought so too. He watched the slow approach of Genêt with growing rage. "This most unneutral progress," he told Washington, "is an insult to the government of the United States. We shall have to take him down a peg." Washington agreed.

Finally, on May 17, 1793, the dilatory Genêt appeared in Philadelphia and presented his credentials. Washington received them with frigid politeness. The cold correctness of the reception, after the unmeasured enthusiasm to which he had become accustomed, angered Genêt. "Old man Washington is jealous of my success," he sneered, "and of the enthusiasm with which the whole town flocks to my house."

At least the Philadelphia Republicans frequented his quarters, including Jefferson, the Secretary of State. Just as Hamilton had been most chummy with Hammond, the British envoy, so now Jefferson took up Genêt with equal ardor.

Trouble started almost at once. The British made formal complaint of Genêt's privateers operating out of Charleston as a breach of neutrality, and Hamilton backed up their complaints. Even Jefferson admitted that Genêt had gone too far. In fact, the more he saw of the latter, the more his enthusiasm for him cooled. This domineering, stupid fellow acted like a mad bull in a china shop, doing his best to wreck the interests of his own country and, worse still, making the Republican cause objectionable to the majority of Americans. "He will sink the Republican interest," Jefferson was finally forced to complain, "if they do not abandon him."

The last straw in Genêt's conduct was his action over a British merchant ship called the *Little Sarah*. It had been captured at sea by a French frigate and sent to Philadelphia as a prize. Under the rules of neutrality this was permissible. But Genêt then took a step which was wholly outside the rules.

On July 6, 1793, Hammond, the British minister, stormed into Hamilton's office. Washington was vacationing at home in

Mount Vernon, and the Cabinet had been empowered to handle affairs during his absence.

Hamilton stared in surprise at the pale, shaking minister. "What is the matter, sir?" he asked. "Are you ill?"

"Ill enough," shouted Hammond. "Your neutrality, sir, is a farce."

"What do you mean?"

"I have information that the *Little Sarah* has been armed and outfitted by that precious Genêt as a privateer to prey on our shipping. She is due tomorrow to sneak down the river and out to sea."

Hamilton jumped to his feet. His gray eyes snapped fire. "I shall take this up with Jefferson at once."

"Much good that will do," Hammond retorted. "He is hand in glove with the Frenchman."

"You mistake him, sir. We disagree on many things, but not on a fundamentally American position."

Jefferson was shocked at Hamilton's news. "Give me a chance to have Governor Mifflin make inquiries," he said. "The ship lies in his jurisdiction."

"And if it be so?"

"Then Genêt has gone too far, and we'll take the necessary measures to prevent the sailing."

The next day Jefferson came all smiles to the Cabinet meeting. Only Hamilton and Knox were present; both Washington and Randolph, the Attorney General, were on vacation.

"Everything has been straightened out," he said. "I saw Genêt, and he promised not to let the *Little Sarah* quit its anchorage until the President returns to Philadelphia."

Hamilton's brows raised. "He promised?"

Jefferson flushed. "Yes, he did," he replied with some heat. "Citizen Genêt is a gentleman."

Hamilton had some doubts about that; but aloud he only said, "I still think we ought to order a battery of artillery placed on Mud Island down the river, with instructions to fire on the ship if she tries to slip away."

General Knox stirred his stout bulk in the chair. "I agree with Colonel Hamilton," he rumbled.

"Well, I don't," cried Jefferson. "Such a move would be an insult to a friendly nation. It might even lead to war, and we have no right to risk that possibility in the President's absence."

The next morning, wholly unaware of the excitement of the previous day, Washington rode leisurely into Philadelphia. Promptly Hamilton and Jefferson placed their separate views before him. Hamilton slyly added something Jefferson had seen fit not to mention: that Genêt, in his interview with Jefferson, had yelled and stamped his feet and cried out that the President of the United States was his personal enemy and also the enemy of France, that he, Genêt, would appeal over his head to the American people and that they would force the government to change its course.

For once Washington lost his iron control. "Is the Minister of the French Republic," he stormed, "to be permitted to set the acts of this government at defiance? Is he to be permitted to threaten the President of the United States with an appeal to the people? What must the world think of such conduct, and of the government of this nation for submitting to it?"

Jefferson tried to explain, to defend, to deny; but Washington would have none of it. Even as Jefferson stammered along, Governor Mifflin was announced. He entered with a tragic air. "The *Little Sarah*," he said, "has just gone down the river, in spite of Genêt's promise."

A bombshell could not have had more effect. Washington started to his feet, the veins swelling on his forehead. Jefferson went pale as ashes. Only Hamilton smiled. "So much the better," he said. "We now know how to treat Genêt. We must

demand his recall."

That evening, Hamilton went to his desk and began to write at a furious pace. So Genêt was going to appeal to the American people. That was a game that two could play.

A series of open letters were already appearing in the *Gazette of the United States*. They were signed "Pacificus," but everyone knew they came from the vigorous pen of Hamilton. They placed the Federalist position on the European war squarely before the public. Now, another series made their appearance, entitled "No Jacobin." These exposed Genêt's conduct and made much of his threat to appeal to the people against Washington.

When he read these powerful articles, Jefferson was at his wit's end. Frantically, he called on Madison to reply. "For God's sake, my dear Sir, take up your pen, select the most striking heresies and cut him to pieces in the face of the public. There is nobody else who can and will enter the lists with him."

Madison reluctantly obeyed his chief; nevertheless, when the smoke of battle had cleared, Hamilton was triumphant. No one, indeed, could overcome him in a dispute. He was without doubt the most remarkable pamphleteer of his age.

A demand for Genêt's recall was sent to France, but France had already acted. The party there in power had been overthrown, and the incoming group sent Fauchet as minister to replace Genêt with instructions to return him to France under arrest.

Fortunately for the discredited Genêt, Washington was not vindictive. Knowing that perhaps the guillotine awaited the recalled minister, he refused to compel him to leave the country. Genêt gladly decided to remain in the land he had abused and despised. Marrying Governor Clinton's daughter, he settled in New York and ended his days in obscurity.

Hamilton had emerged from the fray a victor, but he paid a price for his great efforts. Yellow fever had come to Philadelphia, and each day the ominous carts went down the streets, picking up the dead. Those who could, fled from the stricken town. Hamilton stuck to his post until he awoke one day with a high fever and found that the dreaded spots were upon him.

For over a week his life was despaired of. Ned Stevens, his boyhood friend, now a doctor, hurried to his rescue. He ordered cold baths in constant succession and drinks made from the infusions of bark. It was a heroic treatment—no one seemed in the current state of medical science to know how to cure the disease. In Hamilton's case, however, it worked. He was one of the few to survive yellow fever. Weak and shaken, he was transported in a coach to the Schuyler home in Albany to regain his strength. It was October before he was able to return to Philadelphia and resume his duties.

However, the dangerous illness had not softened the hearts of his enemies. They even redoubled their efforts to drive him from office and public life. True, Jefferson himself had finally wearied of the conflict and resigned to return to his beloved Monticello. But the Republican forces in Congress and out still hammered away at Hamilton and his policies. Equally tired, Hamilton offered his resignation. Washington would have none of it. He had already lost Jefferson, and he successfully insisted that Hamilton remain.

With Genêt's dismissal, the difficulties with France seemed at an end. But those with England now grew worse. Engaged in a life-and-death struggle with France, the "Mistress of the Seas" was not disposed to pay much attention to the rights of neutrals. She forbade all commerce with the French West Indies and seized hundreds of American ships when they refused to obey what they believed an illegal prohibition.

Before he resigned, Jefferson had protested strenuously but in vain against the numerous limitations with which England was strangling American commerce. Hamilton had not joined him in these protests. In the first place, he feared they

would lead to war; in the second, he believed that England was fighting the battle of civilization against the monster, France, and could not be held to a strict obedience of the rules. But now, with this new and savage deathblow to the most lucrative field for American trade, even Hamilton turned angrily on his friend Hammond and called the restrictions "atrocious."

The country at large blazed with fury, and the Republicans seized the opportunity to demand retaliatory measures against the British. Hamilton's indignation cooled when he contemplated these proposed measures. They called for heavy duties on British goods and even a temporary embargo against them. Hamilton was convinced that this meant war; and war would be complete disaster. He saw clearly that what the United States needed above all things was peace. She was still weak. War would totally disrupt the country and bring to an end the great experiment that was America.

The nationwide clamor for retaliation and even for war brought the Federalists to a realization that some dramatic step must be taken to stem the tide. A small group of leaders, all devoted to Hamilton, met in secret and decided that a special envoy ought to be sent to England in a final effort to settle the outstanding differences between the two nations. Who should be the envoy? Hamilton, of course.

Oliver Ellsworth, of Connecticut, one of the conferees, laid the plan before Washington. The President was impressed by the urgency of the occasion and the remedy proposed, but he balked at sending Hamilton. Not that he doubted his ability and talents, he said; Hamilton was too much of a party man and "did not possess the general confidence of the country." He chose instead John Jay, the Chief Justice of the United States.

Though Hamilton was somewhat disappointed at not being the envoy, he cooperated loyally with Jay and drafted for him a set of instructions to guide him through the negotiations. These called for a greater freedom of the seas for American ships, a more stringent definition of contraband, damages for previous seizures, fulfillment of the terms of the old treaty of peace with respect to the kidnaped slaves and the return of the border posts, and a right to trade with England and her colonies on fair terms.

Armed with these instructions, which Washington had approved, Jay sailed for England. There he proved himself to be a poor negotiator and diplomat. He allowed the British to flatter and twist him around their fingers. He did not even know that Sweden and Denmark were rallying the neutral nations of Europe into an alliance of defense against British violations of neutrality—a step which alarmed England mightily and would have disposed her to try all means to keep the United States from joining.

Jay therefore permitted himself to be wheedled into accepting a treaty which gave America only a small portion of her demands. England did agree to give up the forts, but made the time for doing so indefinite. In the West Indies she granted such a limited and grudging trade that she might as well have granted none at all. And that was the sum total of her concessions. Nothing was said about the kidnaped slaves; nothing about the freedom of the seas or the all-important items of contraband and the right of search.

Yet it must be admitted that Jay was not all to blame for his failure to obtain greater concessions; Hamilton must be held responsible to a certain extent. In his anxiety to ensure a peaceful settlement, Hamilton had talked too freely and too much with Hammond. He informed the British minister confidentially that we would never agree to join a group of European nations in an alliance of any kind—meaning the "armed neutrality" group being formed by Sweden and Denmark. The British gleefully received this wholly gratuitous and vital bit of information and immediately stiffened their attitude toward Jay.

Jay returned in 1795 with the treaty he had fashioned, and found to his bewilderment that its terms roused a storm of indignation. The Republicans shouted that he had sold his country for a mess of pottage. Even the Federalists, including Hamilton, were at first aghast. But they soon rallied to the defense. Bad as the treaty is, thought Hamilton, and contrary to his instructions, it still gave the United States a breathing space and kept her from war, which he dreaded more than anything else.

By this time Hamilton had finally resigned from the Treasury and engaged once more in the practice of law. But he was still regarded as the leader of the Federalist party, and could no more keep out of public affairs than he could from breathing.

The Republicans denounced the treaty and threatened, even after the Senate had ratified it with certain reservations and Washington had signed it, to use their majority in the House of Representatives to kill it by refusing to appropriate the

funds necessary to put it into effect.

The Federalists in turn, overcoming their own misgivings, organized mass meetings and signed petitions in favor of the treaty. Once again the country was split into two warring camps.

Hamilton jumped into the fray. He did not like the treaty himself, but he felt it had to be upheld. Peace and trade with England were essential. And by now he hated the French Revolution with a consuming hatred and sincerely believed that most Republicans in this country were willing to follow that bloody example. People in the mass he looked upon as a mob, as "a great beast" who must be firmly dealt with to keep it from overturning orderly government and instituting a reign of terror. An unpleasant experience only served to confirm these prejudices.

He was defending the treaty before a great mass meeting in New York. The crowd, chiefly Republican, howled him down. He raised his voice angrily against the uproar. The mob flung stones. One hit him squarely on the forehead. He staggered, and the blood streamed down his face.

Hamilton was never greater than at this moment. Holding his handkerchief to the jagged wound, he bowed ironically to the yelling mob. "If you use such knockdown arguments then I must retire." Nevertheless, he stood his ground, and the revulsion of the more decent members of the audience forced the rowdies to subside. Whereupon Hamilton offered a vote of confidence in Washington and the Senate. The resolution was voted down.

Hamilton now resorted to his best and most feared weapon—the pen. In a series of public letters signed "Camillus" he made out the strongest possible case for Jay's treaty. His arguments greatly strengthened Washington's hand in the struggle with the House of Representatives, who claimed a right to kill a treaty by refusing to vote funds. The debate was long and bitter, but in the end the House backed down and the treaty became effective.

Hamilton had won again; but privately he was furious with the British for having placed the Federalists and the government in such an embarrassing position. "The British Ministry," he wrote, "are as great fools or as great rascals as our Jacobins, else our commerce would not continue to be distressed by their cruisers; nor would the Executive be embarrassed as it now is by the new proposition."

11 Whisky Rebellion and Private Scandal

Before Hamilton finally stepped out of his office, he found an opportunity to hammer home to the country the truth of his idea that the United States was a nation and not a mere collection of semi-independent states, that the central government had the will and the power to enforce its laws and was, if it came to it, prepared to use arms to compel obedience.

One of the mainstays of his financial system was the independent income enjoyed by the federal government. One part of it came from the duties on imports; another from taxes on certain domestic products, chief of which was whisky.

Very few objected to the import duties, but there was vehement opposition from the Republicans to the excise tax. Since this was an internal tax, they claimed that only the states had the right to levy it, not the federal government. To this every farmer and frontiersman west of the Alleghenies heartily agreed. For the only way these dwellers across the mountain barrier could get their corn to market was to distill it into the more compact and easily transportable whisky. A tax, therefore, on this essential item of commerce, payable in hard cash, of which they had none, seemed to them a rank discrimination and an unbearable burden.

They rose, therefore, literally in arms. They tarred and feathered any tax collector foolhardy enough to penetrate their districts; they drove the more timid away; they threatened the sheriffs and the judges; they held mass meetings of defiance and raised liberty poles ominously reminiscent of the Revolution. A first-class revolt seemed in the making.

Hamilton viewed with the greatest indignation these symptoms of a spirit which, he had once declared, must be scotched or it would kill the country. This was not the first time the western people had rioted over the excise taxes. Once before, in 1792, Washington had been compelled to issue a proclamation calling on the westerners to obey the laws. The agitation had subsided then; but now, in 1794, it had revived with redoubled force. It was Shays' Rebellion all over again—tar and feathers, beatings, house burnings, closing of the courts, and armed bands roaming the country.

This time Hamilton determined on a showdown. He intended to convince the rioters that the central government would tolerate no nonsense and that French-type terroristic tactics would be given short shrift in America. He told Washington bluntly that the time for decisive action had come. Any faltering or backing down in the face of rebellion meant the end of the government's prestige. "Call out 12,000 militia," he advised. "Issue a proclamation ordering the rebels to disperse. Then march."

Washington, who held the same views as Hamilton, promptly issued the proclamation. But he hesitated about the militia. First, he thought, Pennsylvania, the chief trouble spot, ought to be given a chance to put down the insurrection itself. Governor Mifflin evaded the issue. He did not like to cooperate with the national government on such an unpopular measure, and he feared that the local militia would refuse to go against their neighbors.

Hamilton was pleased at this turn of events. He had privately fumed at Washington's attempt to work through the state government. This, he felt, was strictly the business of the national government. There must be no befogging of the issue or any doubt as to the agency that was responsible for the crushing of the insurrection. Another circumstance pleased him also. General Knox had resigned as Secretary of War, and Hamilton was temporarily in charge. This gave him the chance to get personally into the picture.

On Mifflin's failure to act, Washington called out the national militia. It assembled at Philadelphia and other key points in the state in overwhelming force—9,000 foot soldiers and 3,000 cavalry. Hamilton was delighted. The dreams of glory as a boy now seemed about to be translated into reality.

During these tremendous preparations, however, the rebellion was already fading out. Commissioners sent out in advance by the President were peacefully discussing grievances with the discontented farmers; resolutions of submission were being voted; and the rioting had ceased. Nevertheless, Hamilton was determined to march. A show of force, he thought, was essential to overawe the rebellious folk and keep them from repeating the disturbance at a later date. Furthermore, it would be an object lesson to the nation as a whole of the power of the government.

Late in September, 1794, therefore, the army started out of Philadelphia with flags flying and drums beating. Major General Lee was technically in command, but Hamilton rode by his side in his capacity of Secretary of War. It was an impressive sight; unfortunately, the weather turned rainy and not an "enemy" was in sight. There were only "peaceful" farmers who stared blankly at the endless array of troops and committees hastening to pass resolutions avowing their

peaceful intentions.

Nevertheless, several hundred men were arrested and clapped into jail. Since there was no evidence of present armed resistance, the militia went home and left the accused in the hands of the civil authorities. Later on most of them were released. The great Whisky Rebellion was over.

Hamilton returned to Philadelphia to be greeted with a storm of criticism and abuse from the Republicans. They asserted that the whole business was an invention of the Federalists to keep themselves in power, that honest and freedom-loving farmers were being persecuted simply because they dared stand up for their rights.

Hamilton was now ready to resign. He had wanted to do so several times before, but each time Washington had begged him to remain. His family, however, was steadily enlarging; and he was a poor man. As Secretary of the Treasury he received a salary of \$3,500 a year. As a lawyer in private practice he could make from ten to fifteen thousand dollars annually.

He had sacrificed long enough for his country. He had placed its finances in a sound position, with the result that the credit of the United States took first place in the money markets of Europe. He had been largely instrumental in hammering out a foreign policy and, in spite of certain errors, had helped preserve the peace the country needed so badly. More than anyone else, he had been responsible for welding the nation with what he hoped were permanent ties. More than anyone else, he had placed such an interpretation on the Constitution as to make it a sufficient and responsible instrument for all foreseeable future use.

With these services accomplished, he submitted his resignation, to take effect on January 31, 1795. Washington accepted it, with regret and the warmest praise for his long devotion to the country.

Hamilton was now a private citizen. He resumed the practice of law in New York City and, as much for his acknowledged legal brilliance as for his public prestige and private connections, became immediately one of the leaders of the bar.

He was as diligent in his devotion to his clients as he had been to the nation. Talleyrand, temporarily exiled from France, drove late one evening past Hamilton's law office on Pine Street. Candles within cast a flicker of yellow light out into the street. He saw a slight, spare figure bent over a desk piled high with legal documents, writing steadily with firm, clean strokes of the pen. Some minutes later, Talleyrand walked into a gay salon, bright with candles, glittering with dazzling costumes, and humming with party chatter. The hostess came hurrying up. "You are late, Comte de Talleyrand," she murmured reproachfully.

"Late?" There was a dazed look in his eyes. "Oh, yes. But there is one who is still later than I."

"What on earth are you talking about?"

"Monsieur Hamilton. I've just passed his office. He is still at his desk." He shook his head in bewilderment. "I don't understand it. There is a man who has made the fortune of his country; yet now he is working all night to support his family."

One of the other guests turned to a friend. "How could Talleyrand understand?" he whispered. "To him public office is only an excellent means of lining one's own pocket."

Even in his law practice Hamilton thought more of his clients' welfare than of his own pocket. His fees were reasonable; never did he hesitate to take a case simply because his client was too poor to pay. Only one other lawyer in New York equaled him in ability. That was Aaron Burr, his political rival. Time and again they met as opposing counsel in court, and the honors were fairly evenly divided.

Outwardly, the two men were friends, but there existed a secret enmity between them that was to result in tragedy. For Burr was the idol of the New York Republicans and Hamilton's chief opponent for control of the key city of New York. There was much that was alike in the two men; both were short, erect, with a record of gallantry during the war; both were nimble of wit, agile of mind, and personally charming. Burr had been a Senator from New York and later organized the Bank of the Manhattan Company in New York City, much to the dismay of the local bank which Hamilton favored.

Perhaps it was because they were so alike that they were enemies. Hamilton looked on Burr as an ambitious, unscrupulous politician who thought nothing of the welfare of his country and only of his own personal aggrandizement. When Burr sought public office, Hamilton moved heaven and earth to defeat him, going beyond the ordinary language of political controversy to term him a would-be dictator, a man who would not hesitate to sell out his country for gold.

What particularly enraged Hamilton was the fact that a good many Federalists were personally well disposed to Burr, in spite of his Republican politics, and were on occasion even ready to support him for office. Such treason on the part of his friends caused Hamilton to redouble his epithets against Burr. Eventually, and in most disastrous fashion, they came home to roost.

Hamilton was no longer formally connected with the government, but he continued to play a leading role in affairs. He fought successfully for the acceptance of Jay's treaty, and actively interested himself in the politics of New York and the nation.

Washington was determined to retire from the presidency at the end of his second term, and all the pleadings in the world could not change his decision. He was tired of public life, of the steady and increasing chorus of abuse from the Republican press, and he yearned for his home in Mount Vernon and the life of a plantation farmer.

Before he retired, he contemplated a farewell address to his countrymen which would survey the situation at home and abroad and offer some warnings and advice as to the future policies of the nation he had done so much to mold.

Some years before, Madison had sketched out some ideas for him. But Madison was now in the opposition, and the draft did not sufficiently meet the present circumstances. As in the days when he had paced his tent and told his orderly, "Call Colonel Hamilton," now again he called Colonel Hamilton.

Once again Hamilton responded to the appeal of his old chief in war and peace. Washington sent him Madison's draft with his penciled revisions. "Put it into your own shape," wrote Washington, "basing it of course on the ideas you will find enclosed."

Back and forth went the various drafts, worked on first by Hamilton, then by Washington, and again by Hamilton. Finally both were satisfied, and the great Farewell Address was completed—that wise and solemn speech which, up to a generation or so ago, every schoolboy was supposed to know by heart.

Washington's steadfast refusal to accept the presidency a third time threw the election of 1796 into a scramble. The Federalists in general considered John Adams, twice Vice-President, as entitled to the office. Republicans in turn picked Thomas Jefferson as their candidate.

For the second place on the ticket, the Federalists put up Thomas Pinckney, of South Carolina, who had been the American minister to England; the Republicans chose Aaron Burr, of New York.

Hamilton was not particularly pleased with the Federalist choice of Adams for the premier post; he would have preferred Pinckney. For a time, indeed, he toyed with the idea of so maneuvering the electoral votes that Pinckney might get in. But the danger that either Jefferson or Burr would win as a result decided him against it.

To Hamilton, as to most Federalists, the victory of either of these men spelled disaster to the country. Party passions ran high, higher perhaps than at any future era in the nation's history. Only in Lincoln's first election did a similar situation arise. At other times, though campaigns might become extremely heated and orators solemnly predict the end of the world if their opponents got in, very few really believed it. In 1796, however, and again in 1800, the cries of alarm and the accusations were sincere.

The election was close. Not until the last minute, almost, was it known who had won. When the smoke finally cleared, Adams was President with 71 electoral votes and Jefferson Vice-President with 68. There is evidence that the actual result was even closer—that it really was 70 to 69.

No one was satisfied. Adams was bitter because his margin of victory was so uncomfortably slim. Thomas Pinckney's friends accused New England electors of deliberately throwing their second votes away from him. Adams's friends

retorted that Hamilton had tried to ensure Pinckney's election and displace Adams. Burr accused Jefferson's southern electors of splitting their second votes between himself and George Clinton, claiming that this was a breach of faith. Only Jefferson professed himself content, saying that he had not really wanted to be President.

The presidency of John Adams began in turmoil and ended in the disruption of the Federalist party. Foreign relations had steadily worsened. France was everywhere victorious in Europe, and now disregarded American rights on the high seas and in the ports under her control with the same arrogance that had once been England's special forte.

With this shift in the aspect of our foreign relations came a curious shift in the attitude of the parties at home. When England had been the main aggressor, the Republicans had been hot for war, while the Federalists preached peaceful submission. Now that France was in the spotlight, it was the Federalists who shouted for war, while the Republicans suddenly discovered the advantages of peace.

In the beginning, Hamilton faithfully followed the Federalist line. French aggressions, he asserted, were far worse than England's had ever been. "The man who, after this mass of evidence," he wrote in a public letter, "shall be the apologist of France, and the calumniator of his own government, is not an American. The choice for him lies between being deemed a fool, a madman, or a traitor."

To him, and to most Federalists, a French-type revolution seemed just around the corner. In their heated imaginations every Republican was a secret traitor ready to cooperate with the French fleet and army already, so rumor had it, in full sail to conquer America.

A series of fires happened to break out in New York. The Federalists told each other that the incendiary Republicans were trying to burn down the city and take advantage of the resulting confusion to start a revolution. To counteract such a plot, they patrolled the streets at night in armed bands, vigilant against both fires and revolutions. Hamilton tramped with the rest until he sprained his ankle on the cobblestones and was laid up at home.

As time went on, however, Hamilton calmed down and adopted a more statesmanlike view. War with France would be almost as much a calamity as war with England. The same considerations that had called for peace with the latter held equally good with the former. Why not, therefore, inquired Hamilton, repeat the procedure of the previous emergency; that is, send a special mission to France just as John Jay had been sent to England?

Hamilton had a way of making his private views felt in the councils of the government, without the knowledge of President Adams. No friendship now existed between Hamilton and Adams; and the former's direct advice would have been completely disregarded. But Adams's Cabinet—an inheritance from Washington's administration—was another matter.

Its chief members were Timothy Pickering, Secretary of State, Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury, and James McHenry, Secretary of War. All were Federalists, close friends of Hamilton, and eager to obey him as their leader. As for their titular head, the President of the United States, they resented him and spoke of him privately with contempt.

Everything that happened in government, therefore, no matter how secret and confidential, was first submitted to Hamilton in New York for his advice. When Adams requested written opinions from his Cabinet on the course to be pursued with France, the three officers of government promptly sent the questions along to Hamilton and waited for his reply.

Hamilton, in response, suggested that a mission of three envoys be sent abroad to attempt a settlement of all outstanding grievances; but in the meantime, and in order to give point to the mission, an embargo be laid on trade with France, the navy be greatly enlarged, and a professional army raised.

Wolcott obediently copied Hamilton's plan and sent it to Adams as his own. Pickering and McHenry were willing to follow the second half, but disliked the idea of the mission. When Hamilton insisted on it, however, they yielded and so advised Adams.

It was a strange situation, one of which Adams for a long time was wholly ignorant. His Cabinet was not his own; rather, it was Hamilton's. The private citizen in New York had as much to say, if not more, concerning governmental policies than the duly elected President of the United States.

Adams approved of the idea of a special mission to France. As a sensible and moderate man, he had resisted the

pressure of the more extreme members of his party who had been demanding an immediate declaration of war. Accordingly, he appointed John Marshall, of Virginia, Charles C. Pinckney, of South Carolina, and Elbridge Gerry, of Massachusetts, as special envoys. The first two were strong Federalists; the last a former Federalist who was turning Republican.

While the country waited impatiently to hear the results of this mission, Hamilton found himself unexpectedly under serious attack. The story went back to 1792, when he was still Secretary of the Treasury and the Republicans were eager for his scalp.

On a day in December of that year, three Republican congressmen, James Monroe, Muhlenberg, and Venable, stalked into Hamilton's private office. Monroe carried a wallet of papers, and all their faces were grim and accusing.

Hamilton stared up at them in some surprise. "What do you wish, gentlemen?" he asked.

For answer, Monroe threw the pile of documents on the table. "Read these, Mr. Hamilton," he said coldly. "If you have any explanation you care to offer, we shall be glad to hear it."

Even more surprised, Hamilton picked them up and commenced to read. As his practiced eye went from sheet to sheet, the congressmen could see a flush mounting on his cheeks.

The papers were damning enough. They consisted of affidavits by a certain unsavory couple, Mr. and Mrs. James Reynolds, and by two men who had been minor clerks in the Treasury—Jacob Clingman and Andrew G. Fraunces. According to their sworn statements, Hamilton had conspired with his friend William Duer to buy up secretly the certificates of the debt of the United States before anyone knew that Hamilton intended to propose their payment at face value. After the news became public, Duer was able to sell them at a handsome profit, sharing the proceeds with Hamilton. At least, so stated the affidavits.

When he had read the final sheet, Hamilton stared at the three grim men. "Meet me at my home tomorrow evening, gentlemen," he said quietly, "and I shall have ready for you evidence of my innocence."

They bowed and went out. For almost an hour Hamilton sat unmoving in his chair. He could see that the Republicans had been skeptical; and in truth, on their face, the affidavits seemed unanswerable. Then, with a sigh, he picked up his hat and went home.

The next evening, Monroe and his associates appeared promptly at Hamilton's house. The latter was ready for them. He handed them a series of letters written by the Reynolds couple. They unveiled a sordid story of private blackmail which had nothing to do with the Treasury, speculation in the funds, or Hamilton's public conduct. Each check which Hamilton had paid, each letter he had written them, which had seemed to dovetail into the story of their affidavits, now appeared in its true light by the admissions contained in their own letters. It was only when Hamilton had resolutely refused to submit any further to the blackmail that the Reynoldses, with their confederates, had sought to take revenge and concocted their tale.

The congressmen were convinced by the evidence which Hamilton presented to them, picked up their papers, and swore on their honor as gentlemen that the matter would go no further.

For five years it did not. In 1797, however, a Republican hack scribbler named James T. Callender began the installment publication of what pretended to be a history of the United States during the preceding year. In this highly partisan publication Callender spread before the public view all of the charges and affidavits which the congressmen had sworn to Hamilton would be held forever in the strictest privacy.

In hot haste Hamilton called on the three men for an explanation. Muhlenberg and Venable promptly responded that they knew nothing of it, that the papers had not been left in their hands. Monroe did not answer.

In a fury, Hamilton, with a witness, called on Monroe. There was a heated scene.

Monroe, faced with the accusation that he had broken his pledge, reddened. "I did not," he replied angrily. "I sent those

papers under seal to a friend in Virginia to hold for me. I was in Europe and knew nothing of their publication until I returned."

"That, sir," cried Hamilton, "is a falsehood."

Monroe jumped up from his chair. "If you say I lie," he shouted, "you are a scoundrel."

It was now Hamilton's turn to come to his feet. "I will meet you like a gentleman."

"Get your pistols," retorted Monroe. "I am ready."

By this time the friends on either side were intervening, crying, "Gentlemen! Gentlemen! Be moderate." They managed finally to persuade the glaring antagonists to sit down again, and after much further talk the matter seemed to be satisfactorily settled. Monroe agreed to join Muhlenberg and Venable in a statement absolving Hamilton from all blame in the charges directed against him in Callender's history.

But the statement never was issued; and Monroe proved evasive when Hamilton continued to press him. The letters between them grew more and more bitter until a duel seemed unavoidable. Ironically enough, it was prevented by the intervention of Aaron Burr.

Hamilton, however, found himself in a dilemma. He could not let the charges thus publicly spread in Callender's scandalous pages go unanswered. Yet to reply to them meant unfolding the tale of blackmail. In the end he decided that his public honor was dearer to him than his private.

He wrote and issued a pamphlet in which he disclosed the entire story, proving conclusively to every unprejudiced man that he had not been guilty of using his public office for private gain. It required a great deal of courage to do so, and many Republicans jeered at his embarrassment. Even his Federalist friends thought it would have been wiser to have remained silent.

It has never been fully disclosed just who was the "friend in Virginia" to whom the incriminating documents had been sent by Monroe. It was either Jefferson or John Beckley, clerk of the House of Representatives. More probably it was the latter, who had deliberately turned them over to Callender for publication as a party weapon to drag the Federalists down in the person of their greatest leader.

12 *Downfall of the Federalists*

In March, 1798, Marshall and Pinckney returned from France with an unbelievable tale. They had quit France in a towering fury; though Gerry, the third member of the mission, had elected to remain.

What had happened to cause them to shake the dust of France off their feet? After their arrival, they explained, they had cooled their heels day after day in the antechamber of Talleyrand without an audience. Talleyrand had been recalled to France from his exile and made into an all-powerful minister of state.

When they entered a formal protest to the discourtesy, three men who claimed to be Talleyrand's agents came to them secretly.

"To get anywhere in France you must do two things," they said.

"What are they?"

"In the first place, your government must lend our government a large sum of money."

"When would we get it back?" demanded Marshall.

The agents merely shrugged.

"What is the second thing?" asked Pinckney.

"Ah! that is even more important. You must give to our principal a very substantial *douceur*—how do you say it in English?"

"Bribe!" Pinckney retorted with a tinge of sarcasm.

"Call it what you wish. Only so will Monsieur Talleyrand interest himself in your case."

Pinckney's face reddened with indignation. "No! No! Not a sixpence!" he cried, while his fellow envoys nodded their heads emphatically. (The famous line attributed to Pinckney, "Millions for defense, but not a cent for tribute," is very pretty; but it was coined by an after-dinner speaker at a later date.)

The agents shrugged again, bowed, and departed.

The news was withheld from the public by Adams until he could make up his mind what course of action he ought to pursue. He was afraid that if the cynical proposition of the three agents (anonymously named in the dispatches as X, Y, and Z) became generally known, the resulting indignation would force him to go to war, whether he thought it advisable or not.

But his Secretary of State, Timothy Pickering, told Hamilton all about it "in perfect confidence" and asked his opinion.

Hamilton advised him to remain calm. At the same time, however, he proceeded to whip up public indignation against the French in a series of articles entitled "The Stand." In these he called attention to the conduct of the French: the "disgusting spectacle" of their Revolution, and "the volcano of atheism, depravity, and absurdity" which they represented.

By this time the so-called "XYZ Affair" had leaked out, and even the Republicans were taken aback. Many were ready to join the Federalists in a cry for war. Others, like Jefferson, preferred to believe that the story was a Federalist lie. Had not Gerry, the Republican, remained behind to continue negotiations?

Hamilton, while not yet demanding a declaration of war, insisted that an army be immediately raised. A bill to that effect was rushed through Congress; though Adams did not want it and the Republicans, saying that a professional army would be used as a tool of oppression, cried out against it.

There was no question as to the head of the new army. There could only be one man—George Washington, now living in peaceful retirement at Mount Vernon. He consented, on two conditions: that he would be permitted to select his own staff and that he should not have to take command in the field until an actual necessity arose.

In effect, that meant that his second in command would be the real head of the army.

At once there was a scramble for that coveted position. This was the chance for which Hamilton had long and impatiently waited. That boyhood dream had never faded. He still panted for glory on the battlefield, for the baton of a marshal, for the gallant charge at the head of his troops through a storm of shot and shell. He had had only a minor fling at it during the Revolution; the Whisky Rebellion had collapsed before his army reached the scene; it was now or never.

His friends in the Cabinet worked feverishly to gain him the honor. They pressed it without Adams's knowledge on Washington; and McHenry even made a special journey to Mount Vernon to argue the case. Washington agreed, and placed Hamilton at the head of his list of proposed generals, with the title of Inspector General. He gave second and third places respectively to Charles C. Pinckney, one of the envoys to France, and Henry Knox, former Secretary of War, with the titles of Major General.

Adams, who knew nothing of these backstairs negotiations and who thought that, as President of the United States, he had the final say on military appointments, had other plans in mind.

When, therefore, Washington's list came to his hands, he stared at it in amazement. What! Place Hamilton, a mere lieutenant colonel of yesteryear and with no field experience, over the heads of such battle-trying generals as Knox and Pinckney? And what about Generals Gates, Lincoln, and Morgan, any one of whom far outranked Hamilton?

He sat down to write sharply to McHenry, the Secretary of War. Both Knox and Pinckney, he insisted, must rank over Hamilton. "This, sir," he cried, "is a humiliation to the New England states that they will not bear."

McHenry sent the news in haste to Washington. "Mr. Adams," he wrote angrily, "intends to disregard your recommendations."

Thus prodded by McHenry and by other of Hamilton's friends, Washington intimated stiffly to the President that he would resign the command if his wish were not fulfilled.

Adams was defeated, and knew it. The name of Washington still possessed some of its old magic with the country, and if it became known that he refused to serve and on what grounds, it might wreck the administration. With many grumblings and an exceedingly bad grace, Adams yielded. Hamilton was duly appointed Inspector General and second to Washington.

As Inspector General, Hamilton had complete charge of raising, equipping, and drilling an army—everything, in short, until there was actual war.

He threw himself into the heartbreaking task with all his old energy and enthusiasm. America had never possessed a true professional army—even the regular Continental troops of the Revolution could not be placed in such a category. Hamilton had to start from scratch and build from the ground up.

The Republicans, recovered from their first panic, added to his difficulties. They hated the whole idea of a professional army. It was, they claimed, a tool which the Federalists were fashioning, not against France, but against the righteous discontent at home. They laughed at the eagerness with which Federalists applied for commissions. "Very well then," they jeered, "let only Federalists become privates in the army. Let us see how many they will be able to muster."

John Adams did nothing to help; he had been pushed against his will into the idea of an army. And McHenry, friend though he was to Hamilton, was thoroughly incompetent as Secretary of War; and Hamilton knew it.

But Hamilton always was at his best when confronted with what appeared to be overwhelming difficulties. He worked at his new job with almost superhuman energy. He permitted nothing to escape his personal attention: a commission as lieutenant for the friend of a friend of some Federalist politician in New Hampshire, the costs and quality of blankets, the

number of rounds of ammunition to be provided each soldier, the grave question whether an obscure fort in the West should be garrisoned by twenty or twenty-five men, the cost of fortifications for New York Harbor, the bore of the cannon to be installed.

All orders, communications, plans, requests for information, contracts, and so on, were personally written by him in his swift, bold hand and copies made for his own files. No secretary took the load off his shoulders as he had once done for General Washington. No one helped him—from the President and the inept Secretary of War down to the sullen Republicans in Congress who sought to hamper him at every turn. He barely ate or slept; he abandoned his law practice; he hardly saw anything of his wife and children.

Meanwhile, the national hysteria grew in fervor. An undeclared shooting war with France was in progress—at least on the sea. French frigates captured every American merchantman they met; in return, a hornet's nest of American privateers raided French commerce. Set battles took place between French and American ships of war—sea fights that have taken high place in the glorious annals of the American navy. The *Constitution* smashed the *Guerrière*, while the *Constellation* forced the heavier-armed *L'Insurgente* to flee.

So far, the Federalists had the country with them. But now, in their exasperation with their Republican opponents, they became hysterical and committed a fatal blunder.

To their superheated imaginations, every French alien in this country was a spy and every Republican critic of the government a traitor. Laboring under such delusions, the Federalist majority in Congress forced through two notorious laws, known to history as the Alien and Sedition Acts.

The first gave the President the power to deport any alien who spoke or wrote against the government, or who might be suspected of doing so. The second called for heavy fines and terms of imprisonment for any citizen of the United States who "defamed" or sought to bring into "contempt and disrepute" either the President or the Congress of the United States.

There is no question that these laws, particularly the Sedition Act, stretched the Constitution to the breaking point, if not actually beyond it. It is true that the Republican press had achieved new heights, or rather depths, of political slander and abuse. Epithets were being applied to poor John Adams, as well as to the more extreme Federalist leaders in Congress, that could not be used in ordinary conversation today. But the problem has always been: which is worse, to permit unrestrained freedom to the press, subject to the laws of libel, or to allow the administration in power to throttle all criticism against itself?

As a result of the Alien Act, French liberals like the philosopher-scientist Volney departed in haste from the country. Under the Sedition Act several Republican editors were called before grand juries for indictment. They were tried by unfriendly judges and hand-picked juries; some were heavily fined and others were sentenced to prison.

The Republicans were up in arms. The laws were unconstitutional, they cried; the country was groaning under a tyranny far worse than any which Great Britain had dared to impose. Jefferson and Madison, the party leaders, decided that here was a crisis which must be met immediately if freedom were not to be destroyed.

In strictest secrecy, Jefferson drafted a series of resolutions which he transmitted to a Kentucky friend for introduction into the legislature of that state. They were passed almost at once. Madison wrote another series, more moderate in tone, for the Virginia legislature to adopt. They have become known in history as the Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions.

The resolutions denounced the Alien and Sedition Acts as unconstitutional and wholly out of the power of Congress to enact. They declared further that the states, as sovereign powers, had the right and the duty to determine whether any law passed by Congress was unconstitutional or not. And, in Kentucky, the doctrine was boldly announced that a state had the power to treat such a law as having no effect within its own borders.

To Hamilton, of course, all this was very close to treason. He had not devoted his entire life to building a national unity only to see it broken to pieces simply because a state or group of states did not like the laws or actions of the central government.

When he heard of the resolutions, his eyes flashed. "This," he exclaimed, "is why it is necessary to have a standing army that will obey the national government. I am willing to place myself at the head of the troops and march them down to the borders of Virginia. Then let us see whether they will resist the enforcement of the nation's laws."

But he never had a chance to put the question to the final test. For John Adams, President of the United States, suddenly decided to take back the government into his own hands. He had been blind long enough to the fact that he was not master in his own Cabinet, that its members were secretly taking orders from a certain private citizen in New York by the name of Alexander Hamilton.

John Adams was a man of notably short temper; and now that he had discovered what was going on behind his back, he exploded with tremendous violence. He dashed his wig on the floor and swore that he would not be pushed into a full-scale war with France simply because some extremists in the Federalist party saw glory or advantage to themselves in it. He would make a last desperate effort to come to terms with the French government. If that did not work, then there would be time to talk of war.

He acted with speed and dispatch. Without consulting his Cabinet, he nominated the American envoy to Holland, William Vans Murray, as special minister to France. Murray was an able diplomat with no political axes to grind, and could be counted on to obey the instructions of the President.

The nomination, when submitted for approval by the Senate, acted like a bombshell on the Federalists. What! This President whom they were accustomed to treating almost as an office boy had taken action on his own? Suppose Murray did come to some sort of an agreement with France! What would happen to the forthcoming presidential election of 1800? What would be the fate of the great army they were building so carefully? Peace would mean they had lost their biggest campaign issue—fear of French aggression and the almost treasonable friendliness of the Republicans to the enemy. The army, on which they had relied to enforce the national authority against civil and state disobedience at home, would have to be disbanded. Didn't that fool Adams realize he was ensuring his own and his party's defeat in the election?

Hamilton joined in the general indignation. He had gradually come around to the view that a war with France would unite the country and end incessant party squabbles. At the same time, he was intelligent enough to see that the peace mission idea as such could not be denounced. The nation would not understand Federalist motives. Therefore, he proposed to modify the character of the mission by sending three envoys instead of one. If Adams stubbornly refused to agree to this plan, then the Senate would be in an excellent position to reject the nomination. If he accepted, then the party leaders would make certain that two sound Federalists were joined with Murray.

Adams saw through the clever idea and expressed his willingness to send a mission of three. The Senate, therefore, could do nothing else but confirm. The envoys did not sail for some time, but the very fact of their appointment put an end to the war fever; and the country gradually became calm.

This was a bitter disappointment to Hamilton. He watched the army he had worked so hard to create disband and go home, and with it went his dream of glory. Never again would there be an opportunity to prove himself one of the great captains of all time.

There was nothing left for him but to return to the humdrum pursuits of civilian life.

As the election campaign of 1800 approached, both parties braced themselves for their mightiest effort. It was universally admitted that the election would be exceedingly close.

The problems and issues involved were complex. Had the country had enough after twelve years of Federalist supremacy? Did the people approve of Hamilton's financial system, with a public debt as a means of cementing the Union? Did they prefer a strong national government armed with full authority, proceeding under a Constitution that could be interpreted to grant it greater powers? Did they agree that only the rich, the well-born, and the educated were competent to rule? Did they prefer the English mode of society and politics to the French revolutionary model? Were all men really created free and equal, as Jefferson had asserted in the Declaration of Independence? Did they approve of the Alien and Sedition Acts, or did they resent them as tyrannical and oppressive? Had a state the right to determine whether

an act of Congress was constitutional? What was the true nature of the Constitution that bound the states together?

These were burning questions that agitated the nation and gave rise to innumerable pamphlets and appeals to party passions. Yet it must not be forgotten that not everyone had the right to express his or her opinion through the ballot box. Women, for example, could not vote. Neither could Negro slaves. Nor, for that matter, could the majority of adult white men. Most states enforced property qualifications for voting. The poor who had no land or did not pay a certain amount of taxes were disfranchised and had no say in the choice of officials either in the state or national government.

In addition, there was no direct choice of President and Vice-President. Under the Constitution these officers of government were chosen by electors from the various states, who met and cast their ballots for two men each. The man who received the greatest number of votes, provided it was a majority of the whole, became President. The runner-up became Vice-President.

The electors were chosen differently in each state. Some provided for a state-wide election of them by the people qualified to vote. Others, and they were in the majority, called for their appointment by the state legislature. And in theory the electors were not bound to vote for any named candidate, but could exercise their free choice. Actually, though not to the same extent as today, they tended to follow party orders.

Jefferson was unanimously picked to head the Republican ticket, and it was understood that any Republican electors chosen in the states would vote for him. After considerable maneuvering, Aaron Burr was selected for the vice-presidential post.

On the Federalist side John Adams, the President, was the logical choice. But many leading Federalists disliked him as stubborn and independent of the party conclaves. They also believed he had hurt the party's chances with his move to send a mission to France.

To add to their bitterness, Adams demanded the resignation of two members of his Cabinet—Timothy Pickering, Secretary of State, and James McHenry, Secretary of War—on the ground that they had disobeyed his orders and plotted with Hamilton and others behind his back. Why he did not also include Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury, is something of a mystery, for Wolcott was equally guilty with the others.

Hamilton was confronted with a dilemma. He was disgusted with Adams, whom he considered a bad President and destructive of Federalist principles and policies. In addition, by dismissing Pickering and McHenry, Adams in effect had declared war on him personally.

Yet he dared not openly oppose Adams for the presidency. To do so would certainly wreck the party and bring in the Republicans. For a time, indeed, he toyed with the idea. "I would rather," he wrote bitterly, "see Jefferson president than Adams. If we must have an enemy at the head of the government, let it be one whom we can oppose, and for whom we are not responsible, who will not involve our party in the disgrace of his foolish and bad measures."

That idea, however, was soon displaced by a subtle plan which would defeat both Adams and Jefferson, and yet bring victory to the Federalists. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, of South Carolina, had been spoken of for the vice-presidency. Why not, pondered Hamilton, see to it that such Federalist electors as were chosen by the states would take orders from himself? Let Adams be the ostensible candidate for the presidency, and Pinckney for the vice-presidency. When the electors met, all would cast one of their ballots for Pinckney. On the second ballot, however, a few would forget to vote for Adams and cast it for an outsider. In that way Pinckney would receive the higher number—always provided, of course, that the Federalist electors outnumbered the Republican—and become President.

The first step was to make certain that a majority of the electors chosen by the states were Federalists. The New England states were safe, though unfortunately most of them would definitely back Adams. Most of the southern states would go into the Republican column, though South Carolina—Pinckney's home state—was doubtful. The pivotal states in the election would be Pennsylvania and New York. Whichever way they went, so would go the final election. And of these two, New York was the more crucial.

The situation in New York was confused. The upper state was fairly evenly divided, with a slight edge in favor of the Republicans. The vote in the City of New York usually swung the election into either camp. Therefore, it might be said, that as the city went, so went the nation.

In New York it was the legislature that chose the electors. Hence it was vital to obtain control of that body. The election which would decide its composition took place in the spring of 1800. Hamilton was confident of the issue; for years the legislature had been Federalist in complexion, and Hamilton's candidates had been regularly successful in the city.

Hamilton hand-picked a group of candidates for the city, men who—if elected—would vote exactly as he told them. He worked hard to put them across, enlisting the aid of the city merchants and business people who, in turn, exercised a powerful pressure on their employees to vote the "right" way.

But Aaron Burr, the Republican leader in the city, was not idle. For years he had been engaged in perfecting a political machine. Through the Tammany Society—an outgrowth of the old Liberty Boys of Revolutionary days—he organized each ward on a mass basis, seeing to it that every Republican came out to vote and using ingenious schemes to bring known Republicans, no matter how poor, within the financial qualifications for the exercise of the ballot.

The great day arrived. Hamilton was confident of success. He rode from polling booth to booth on a great white horse, stopping at each one to make a speech to the assembled voters. Burr, on the other hand, made no speeches. He did not have to; his work had already been done. Tammany marched its men in a body to the booths and voted them in machinelike fashion.

When the votes were counted, it was a stunning upset. The Republicans had swept the city and gained sufficient votes in the state legislature to dominate the appointment of the national electors.

The returns crushed Hamilton. Disaster stared him in the face. All his carefully laid plans had gone awry. He lost his head completely. He asked the Federalist governor of New York, John Jay, to change the method for choosing the electors. Jay had the good sense and the decency to refuse.

After a while Hamilton recovered from his first despair. Perhaps there was still a chance. Even with New York in the Republican column, New England was firm, there was a probability of picking up votes in the South, and Pennsylvania was still to be heard from. But, he told himself grimly, rather Jefferson than Adams; rather the devil himself than that man in the presidential seat.

Ordinarily, Hamilton was clear-thinking and realistic. But resentment against Adams, who was reported to have said that Hamilton belonged to an English faction, clouded his reason.

For a week of nights Hamilton sat late in his office, writing at breakneck speed. His wife, his children, the importunity of his friends—nothing could stop him. What he wrote was a long pamphlet which he headed "The Public Conduct and Character of John Adams, Esq., President of the United States."

It was an amazing performance indeed, but not of the caliber of his great reports. This was a blunderbuss loaded with shot—a wild, free-swinging attack on Adams as an individual, a party leader, and a President. It spoke of Adams's "disgusting egotism, distempered jealousy, and ungovernable indiscretion"; it roundly declared that he was unfit for the office of President.

Hamilton had sufficient caution left to realize that this was dynamite, that if the pamphlet fell into the hands of the Republicans, he had personally hammered the last nail into the coffin of Federalism. He therefore caused it to be printed privately by a supposedly loyal printer and sent under seal of secrecy to key Federalist leaders. The pamphlet was intended to convince them that they ought to scuttle Adams, choose electors who would vote first for Pinckney, and drop enough votes from Adams to ensure the former's election. By this time Hamilton did not care whether Jefferson retained the vice-presidency or not, as long as Pinckney was President and Adams was out.

He reckoned, however, without the clever Mr. Burr. That astute gentleman had ways and means of getting information. He found out about the pamphlet and where it was being printed. Then he went to work.

The next day a boy rushed panting into the tiny printing establishment. "Mr. Hamilton sent me," he gasped breathlessly. "He wants a press copy of that John Adams thing right away."

"But——" protested the printer.

"He's got to change one paragraph," interposed the lad hurriedly. "It contains a terrible mistake and it mustn't go out like that."

Convinced, the printer gave him a copy. He sped out of doors, rushed by back alleys to Burr's law office.

"Have you got it?" cried Burr.

The boy grinned. "Here it is. I put on a good act."

Burr snatched the still damp sheets from him, glanced through them rapidly. "Aha!" he cried in great satisfaction, "now I have Mr. Hamilton in the hollow of my hand! Here, boy, take this to my printer and tell him——" He stopped, stared shrewdly at the lad. "On second thought, I'll take it myself."

The following week, every Republican newspaper in the land carried the full text of "The Public Conduct and Character of John Adams." Republicans howled with laughter as they read this bitter assault by the leading Federalist of the day on the Federalist candidate for the presidency. But the Federalists groaned in dismay. Had Hamilton gone mad? Supporters of Adams rushed into the fray with ardent defenses of their hero and violent counterattacks on Hamilton, while the Republicans stood gleefully on the sidelines and egged both sides on. The wiser Federalists shook their heads sadly. "Hamilton has ruined our chances," they told one another. "This will kill the party."

After the event, Hamilton knew he had committed a fatal blunder. But there was nothing he could do now except try and pick up the pieces. Everywhere he turned, he ran into a stone wall.

The New England Federalists refused to have anything to do with his plan, and threatened instead to drop Pinckney and even take up with Burr. This was enough to infuriate Hamilton. If he despised Adams and disliked Jefferson, he hated Burr.

Always it had been Burr whose figure blocked his path. For over a decade they had fought each other in New York as opposing attorneys and as rival politicians for the mastery of the state. The fortunes of war had varied. But now Burr had snatched the victory and made Hamilton into the laughingstock of the nation. That was unforgivable. To political enmity was added personal hate.

When, therefore, he heard that certain Federalists were playing with the idea of supporting Burr, he lost his last vestige of caution and wrote extraordinary letters to them, denouncing Burr's political and personal character in the most unmeasured terms. The idea faded; but Burr learned of the letters and of the epithets which Hamilton had employed. He said nothing for the moment, biding his time.

There was no single election day. Each set of electors was appointed or elected in the several states at different times; and the results traveled slowly by messenger and stagecoach to the other states. It was late in December, 1800, before the last results came in, and it was finally obvious that Jefferson and Burr had defeated Adams and Pinckney. The Federalist party, in power since the beginning of the nation, had been finally ousted.

It was not, so far as the votes went, an overwhelming defeat. In spite of the Alien and Sedition Acts, in spite of the split in the Federalist ranks, in spite of Hamilton's ill-advised pamphlet, in spite of last minute dropping of votes, the margin of victory was not great. Jefferson and Burr each received 73 electoral votes; Adams obtained 65 and Pinckney 64.

Nevertheless, the Republicans were justified in rejoicing. They were now in a position to put into effect the policies for which they had clamored through the years of their minority in the administrations of Washington and Adams: to scuttle the hated Hamiltonian policies against which they had so long declaimed.

Whether it was possible to do so, however, remained to be seen.

13 Public Defeat and Private Tragedy

The Republicans had won, but a strange situation now arose. Under the Constitution as it stood, each elector had voted for two men without being able to state any preference between them. Jefferson and Burr were therefore tied for first place, though everyone knew it had been the intention of the people and of the electors to make Jefferson President and Burr Vice-President.

The law provided that in such a case the final decision lay in the House of Representatives, voting as state units and not as individuals. Had the House followed the obvious will of the country, there would have been no trouble. But the defeated Federalists thought they saw an opportunity in the muddle to gain political advantage for themselves. For the choice would rest with the lameduck Congress, not with the one just elected; and the Federalists held a majority there.

The Federalists in Congress promptly went into consultation. For a while the more extreme members proposed to keep both Jefferson and Burr out of the presidency and to elevate as acting President one of their own party from the Senate. The majority, however, thought this was going too far and decided instead to make Burr President. They considered him a more moderate and practical man than Jefferson, and less likely to make radical changes in the government.

When Hamilton heard of this decision, he emerged from the sullen retirement into which he had gone after the storm aroused by his pamphlet on Adams. This was the last straw. Jefferson would be bad enough, with his theories of government and his opposition to strong administrative control; but at least he was an honest man. Hamilton did not believe Burr to be one. Jefferson, so Hamilton read his character, was timid in action, and would not go as far in practice as the bolder and more daring Burr in persuading the people to follow Republican principles. In this diagnosis he disagreed with his Federalist fellows.

Once more, therefore, he wrote letters. "Let it be Jefferson, by all means," he pleaded, "not Burr. For Heaven's sake, let not the Federalist party be responsible for the elevation of such a man!"

But the leaders in Congress refused to listen to his warnings. They cast their votes for Burr, while the Republicans voted for Jefferson. Nine out of a total of sixteen states were necessary to elect. Eight went to Jefferson, six to Burr, and two were tied.

Ballot after ballot, day after day, did not break the deadlock. Not a member, not a state, switched their vote. The country was in a turmoil. The Republicans threatened to use the Republican militia to march on Washington and seize the government.

Federalists sped to New York to try and make a deal with Burr to bring over certain waverers. They could get nothing from him. Then they went to Jefferson. He agreed to certain compromises—at least, so the Federalists later claimed and Jefferson denied—and the deadlock was broken.

Jefferson became President, and Burr Vice-President. It was over; and a new era began—the age of Jefferson and of Republican domination.

Back in New York, Hamilton was disgusted, even though in these last days he had worked mightily to elevate Jefferson over Burr. He was convinced that the country would go to the dogs under Republican rule, that everything for which he had labored would now be destroyed. "I am through with politics," he lamented to his good and faithful follower Robert Troup. "Only a general convulsion will ever call me back to public affairs. Hereafter I am a lawyer, and nothing else."

But this was easier said than done. Like an old war horse, he sniffed battle from afar. He could no more help getting into a fight when issues were involved than breathing.

The more he thought over his original defeat by Burr in New York, the more he was convinced it had been due to the lack of a good Federalist newspaper in the city. The Republicans had several, and they had been extraordinarily effective in name calling—particularly of Hamilton—and in whipping up enthusiasm for the Republican ticket.

With Hamilton, to think of a thing was to do it. He called a meeting of his friends and told them what he proposed. "But we need a good man for editor," he added. "A man who can stand up to these Republican scribblers and give them better than he takes. Do you know of anyone?"

There was a pause. Then Troup spoke up, "I think I know just the man. He's William Coleman, a fairly young lawyer who likes to write. I've seen some of his stuff. It's good."

"Bring him to me, Bob."

Hamilton liked Coleman and his ideas. "We'll set you up in business within a couple of months," he told the new editor.

"How about money?" asked Coleman diffidently.

"Leave that to me. I'll subscribe a thousand dollars. And I'll get the rest from my friends."

"And the name of the paper?"

Hamilton thought a moment. "We'll call it the New York *Evening Post*." He rose, extended his hand. "Good day, Mr. Coleman, and good luck." As the editor reached the door, Hamilton said, "Oh, by the way, I shall of course contribute some articles to your paper."

"Of course, Mr. Hamilton," agreed Coleman effusively.

The first issue of the *Evening Post* appeared on November 16, 1801. The Federalists naturally subscribed to it and quoted its opinions. Just as naturally, the Republicans and the rival editors jeered. But the *Post* outlived them all. It still exists, one of the oldest continuously printed newspapers in the country.

Coleman did not hesitate to take Hamilton at his word. Regularly, some such scene as the following would take place.

It was eleven at night. The knocker on Hamilton's door resounded. Hamilton, still awake and busy with the preparation of a law case, went to the door.

"Ah, Coleman, it's you!" he greeted the late caller. "Come into my library."

Once seated, the editor explained his errand. "Mr. Hamilton, the Republicans in Congress have moved to repeal the Judiciary Act and abolish the judgeships created in the last days of Mr. Adams's administration. I think we ought to have a good, swinging editorial denouncing a repeal."

"Why, of course, you should," Hamilton agreed. He threw himself back in his chair, stared at the ceiling. "This is a vital blow to the Constitution," he began. "All good Americans must rally to the defense——"

Coleman had whipped out a notebook, and took down rapidly Hamilton's words as he went on and on.

At midnight Hamilton stopped. "There," he remarked, "I believe I have given you some pointers on the subject."

The editor put away his notebook. "You certainly have, Mr. Hamilton. Thank you very much for your assistance." Then he hurried down to his tiny printing office, smiling quietly to himself.

The next day, a vigorous, well-thought-out editorial appeared in the columns of the New York *Evening Post*. Its subscribers read the article with open admiration. "This fellow Coleman is good!" they chuckled. "Why, he writes almost as well as Hamilton himself!"

Only Coleman knew that it actually was Hamilton, taken down in shorthand as Hamilton had talked on and on. Even Hamilton did not realize he was being quoted verbatim.

Jefferson was installed as President on March 4, 1801. The months passed, and still the country held an even keel. There was no bloody revolution, no proscriptions, no forcible seizures of property such as the more extreme Federalists had confidently predicted. In fact, one could hardly tell that there had been a change in administration. Jefferson skillfully aided the illusion with soothing words. In his inaugural speech he proclaimed, "We are all Federalists; we are all

Republicans," and thereby sought to woo the rank and file of the opposition party into his own camp.

Hamilton's financial system continued practically intact. The bank remained in business; Hamilton's taxes were collected; and the funded debt continued to be a legal obligation. The only changes that Jefferson instituted were in the direction of economy. He cut down on expenses wherever he could, particularly in the Department of the Navy, and sought to pay off the debt as rapidly as possible.

Though still watching the course of the Republicans with a vigilant eye, Hamilton now had some time to devote to his private affairs. His family had grown tremendously in size. There were eight children growing to maturity, of whom his son Philip was the eldest. It was time to move from his cramped quarters in the city and build himself a spacious house in the country.

With this in mind, he purchased some fifteen acres in the northern part of Manhattan Island, then considerably out of town. The land was located on the side of a hill on what is now Amsterdam Avenue, between 144th and 145th Streets. From the top of the hill he could command a noble view of the Hudson River and the Palisades on the Jersey shore.

For a whole year Hamilton was busy planning and supervising the construction of his new house, which he called the Grange, in honor of the Hamiltons of Scotland. Around the house he planted thirteen gum trees, symbolic of the thirteen original states of the Union. He went in for gardening on a large scale, soliciting all his friends for seeds and rare saplings. He was only forty-four, but he considered himself a settled man who could now sit back and enjoy the twilight of life with his wife Eliza and his numerous children.

His law office, naturally, was still downtown in the "city." Each morning Hamilton saddled his horse and rode the ten miles along the Broadway turnpike to his business; and each evening he rode the same distance back to the bosom of his family.

Of his eight children, the apple of his eye was young Philip, now nineteen and recently graduated from Columbia College. Philip was destined to follow his father's footsteps in the law; and Hamilton, with a rigor that no modern father would dare employ, laid down a set of rules for him to observe.

From the first of April to the first of October he is to rise not later than six o'clock; the rest of the year not later than seven. If earlier, he will deserve commendation. Ten will be his hour of going to bed throughout the year.

From the time he is dressed in the morning till nine o'clock (the time for breakfast excepted) he is to read law. At nine he goes to the office, and continues there till dinner-time. He will be occupied partly in writing and partly in reading law.

After dinner he reads law at home till five o'clock. From this time till seven he disposes of his time as he pleases. From seven to ten he reads and studies whatever he pleases.

From twelve on Saturday he is at liberty to amuse himself.

On Sunday he will attend the morning church. The rest of the day may be applied in innocent recreations.

He must not depart from any of these rules without my permission.

Just how faithfully young Philip carried out these strict rules must remain in doubt. In any event, on a Friday evening in November, 1801, Philip Hamilton and a friend named Price attended the theater. In the box next to them sat a politically active Republican lawyer by the name of George I. Eacker. The preceding Fourth of July, Eacker had made a speech in which he had assailed the political views of Philip's father.

Philip and his friend stared at Eacker and passed uncomplimentary references about his speaking abilities in loud tones meant to attract attention. Eacker reddened and invited them out into the lobby. Not at all reluctant, the young men went. There the three men began to quarrel. Harsh words were passed; a crowd gathered. Eacker shook his fist and shouted, "Sir, you are a damned rascal!"

Philip went white. "Sir," he said, "this calls for explanations. Let us leave this public place and go across the street to

the tavern."

"By all means!" cried Eacker.

There, in a private room, Philip Hamilton and Price turned on the Republican. "To whom, sir, did you apply that epithet?"

"To both of you."

"Then," burst from both young men simultaneously, "I challenge you."

"That suits me fine," retorted Eacker.

That Sunday morning, Price and Eacker met on a secluded field. Shots were exchanged several times. No one was hit, and the seconds stopped the duel.

Now it was Philip Hamilton's turn. Their duel took place on November 23. He and Eacker paced off their steps. "Fire!" called one of the seconds. Both men turned, raised pistols. There was a blast of sound. When the smoke cleared, Eacker was seen standing erect. But Philip staggered, clapped a hand to his side, and fell.

They took the wounded young man away, and the doctors worked over him. But no remedy helped. Within a short time he was dead.

Pale as a ghost, Price sped to the Hamilton home. It was still only a little after dawn, and Hamilton threw a dressing gown over himself as he answered the door. He saw his son's friend standing there. "What——what is it?" he cried.

"It——it's Philip!" panted Price. "He's been hurt——in a duel."

Hamilton staggered, leaned against the door. From upstairs floated Eliza's voice. "Who is there, Alec?"

Hamilton gestured to Price to keep silent. "It's some urgent legal business, my love," he called up. "I'll have to go down to the office at once. Don't bother getting up."

Within seconds he was on his horse, galloping madly down the great highroad to New York, anguish tearing at his heart. When he arrived, however, it was too late. Philip was cold, silent, and beyond the hearing of his heartbreaking cry.

Neither Hamilton nor his wife ever fully recovered from the tragedy. For weeks they hid themselves from the public eye and even from the sympathy of their friends. Philip's eldest sister, Angelica, went into a nervous breakdown and her mind became permanently clouded. It was a home of double sorrow.

Gradually, Hamilton steeled his will to emerge; once more he would resume his law practice and participate in the embittered politics of the day. He had noted with increasing alarm Jefferson's attempts to win over the more moderate of the Federalist rank and file, and now urged them not to listen to the siren's voice. But his efforts were without effect; and more and more the once proud Federalist party shrank.

This was a disaster to Hamilton almost on a level with his personal tragedies. For many years he had labored to place the party on a solid and permanent foundation; and now the end seemed at hand. Under the Republicans, he was sincerely convinced, the country would wither and eventually fall to pieces. How could it do otherwise when governed by such a false philosophy? If only he could rouse his fellow citizens to the dangers that lay ahead! But they went about their business and paid little attention to his incessant laments. Even some of his old friends began to shrug their shoulders.

"Mine is an odd destiny," wrote Hamilton despairingly. "Perhaps no man in the United States has sacrificed or done more for the present Constitution than myself. . . . Yet I have the murmur of its friends no less than the curses of its foes for my reward. What can I do better than withdraw from the scene? Every day proves to me more and more that this American world was not made for me."

It would have been better for him had he taken his own advice and withdrawn, if not from the America he had helped to build, then certainly from politics. He had done his share. He did not realize in the heat of the moment that what he had done was permanently a part of the America he loved. The Republicans might change certain things, perhaps for the better, but they could not uproot his essential foundation. That was solid and enduring.

It was not in Hamilton's nature, however, to stay out of a political fight. When the Republicans sought to repeal the Judiciary Act which had placed staunch Federalists on the bench for life, Hamilton proclaimed that such a repeal would be "a vital blow to the Constitution." He called on his old cronies to form societies and agitate among the people against the administration in office; but they merely nodded their heads and did nothing. The magic of Hamilton's name was gradually losing its power.

He did, however, regain some of his former prestige in a libel suit which had been brought against a small-town Federalist editor in Hudson, New York. Croswell, the editor, had printed some violent accusations of Jefferson. They were similar in venom to those which Republican editors had once employed against Adams when he was President. At that time the Federalists had promptly indicted the offending Republicans and sent some of them to jail under the Sedition Act.

The Sedition Act had since been repealed; therefore, no charge could now be brought under federal law. Nevertheless, libel remained a criminal offense under state law, and the Republicans indicted Croswell in New York for his statements concerning Jefferson.

It was now the Federalists' turn to raise an outcry about the freedom of the press. As the leading lawyer and the leading Federalist in the state, Hamilton was asked to represent Croswell. At the time he was tied up with other cases; and Croswell was defended by other counsel. The trial judge charged the jury that the truth of Croswell's printed assertions was no defense, that the only thing for the jury to decide was whether he had actually made those assertions. Since he obviously had, he was duly convicted.

The judge's charge was based on old English law; though a famous American case during colonial days—that of Peter Zenger—had been decided otherwise. Nowadays the law has been changed. A defendant in a libel suit may introduce evidence to show that what he said was true; and if the jury believes him, they may acquit him.

Croswell appealed his conviction; and Hamilton, freed of his former entanglements, now entered the case. The appeal was heard in February, 1804; and such was the interest aroused that people throughout the country waited breathlessly for the result. On the bench of the appellate court to hear arguments were four judges; two of them were Republicans and two were Federalists.

There was eminent counsel on both sides, but Hamilton outshone them all. He argued the appeal with such brilliant logic and impassioned fervor that William Kent, one of the judges—and a Federalist—remarked afterward that he had been "sublimely eloquent." His closing speech, so Kent added, was "probably never surpassed and made the deepest impression. I never heard him so great."

Hamilton may have been eloquent and great, but the judges decided the appeal, not on its merits, but along strict party lines. The two Republicans voted to sustain the conviction; the two Federalists to reverse it. Since the vote was a tie, by the rules the verdict of the lower court must be sustained; and poor Croswell therefore stood convicted and had to suffer the penalty.

Hamilton's fame as a lawyer, however, rose to new heights. His name was on everyone's tongue, and all who could rushed to obtain his services. As a result of the case, a bill was introduced in the legislature to make the truth of an alleged libel a good defense; but it was 1821 before it finally became the law of the state.

14 *Duel and Death*

Hamilton's days were now numbered. A chain of grim circumstances, ominously linked, brought him to the end of the trail and snapped his life in the full vigor of its prime.

For many years he and Aaron Burr had been political enemies as well as rival attorneys in court. But that had been the case with many another, and had not led to tragedy. In this instance, however, doom approached swiftly.

Hamilton had always believed Burr to be a dangerous man, one who, by hook or crook, sought to mount to the highest offices for wholly selfish and corrupt purposes. Many a politician thinks the same of his rivals, but usually he is careful not to say it aloud and in plain language. Hamilton was never famous for his caution; what he had to say he said boldly and recklessly. He had spoken and written his opinion of Burr on many an occasion. There were dozens of letters extant in which he had unreservedly committed himself.

It is highly probable that Burr, with his unrivaled espionage system, knew of Hamilton's personal comments about him. He held his peace, however, since the accusations were contained in private letters to Federalist leaders and had not been made known publicly.

But the state election of 1804 brought the matter into the open, so that it could no longer be disregarded. Burr was Vice-President of the United States. However, he had fallen out with Jefferson nationally and with the Republican faction in New York headed by De Witt Clinton, the ruthless nephew of old George Clinton, the former governor. Since Burr knew that Jefferson would never permit his renomination for Vice-President in the coming election of 1805, he was confronted with a choice: either retire to private life or fight it out with Clinton and his allies, the Livingstons, in New York State. He chose the latter course. He decided to run for governor.

The Republican party, however, dominated by De Witt Clinton, nominated Morgan Lewis. Burr refused to bow silently to this mandate. He looked about him for allies to aid him in an independent race for the office. In New York City he had a loyal and faithful following, spearheaded by the Tammany Society. In the state at large he also had a considerable personal following among Republicans, many of whom felt that he had been badly treated by Jefferson and the local politicians.

He was also on good terms with a large number of Federalists who thought him a moderate and able man. Since they could not hope to win with a candidate of their own party, they sensibly determined to support Burr for the governorship and thereby gain a measure of political rewards for their help.

They reckoned without Hamilton. When he heard that they were seriously discussing the idea of supporting Burr, he lost whatever trace of caution he might have lingeringly possessed. Burr by now was the mortal enemy, the man who must be defeated though the heavens fell. Anyone—let it be the bitterest Republican—could be elected; it must not be Burr!

About the same time, other news reached him which only increased his determination. A group of extreme New England Federalists, convinced they could never regain their former power within the Union, decided to have the New England states secede and form a confederacy of their own. But they realized that New England could not go it alone; New York was necessary as a member if secession was to succeed.

They therefore sent a secret representative to sound out Burr, offering him support for the governorship and a prominent place in the new confederacy. Burr refused to commit himself, and the emissary was compelled to report failure. Nevertheless, they went ahead with their plans to support Burr, hoping that when the time came he would, as an act of political gratitude for their assistance, come in with them.

Thus faced on the one hand with the possibility of Burr's election and on the other with the treasonable plots of some of the leaders of his own party, Hamilton went into action.

On the matter of the treason, he rose to the heights of patriotism. What! Break up the United States simply because the Republicans were in power? Never, as long as he had speech and pen! He wrote angry letters to every Federalist among the plotters and warned off other Federalist leaders from joining the conspiracy. By such efforts he managed to scotch the scheme before it got past the talking stage.

Then he turned his attention to Burr. Though he knew Burr had refused to join the conspiracy, Hamilton was certain that,

should he be elected, he would put himself at its head. He wrote further letters to his Federalist friends, this time in New York and elsewhere, pointing out the dangers of supporting such an unprincipled man as Burr. He attended secret meetings of the party politicians and begged them with all the old passion not to join forces with Burr.

One such meeting was held in a tavern. It was highly secret, but Burr managed to get some spies inside. In spite of Hamilton's name calling, in spite of his denunciations, the assembled Federalists decided to support Burr. Hamilton was slipping; no longer was he the infallible leader whose every word was a command. Even his own newspaper, the *Evening Post*, deserted him and practically came out for Burr.

These were bitter blows. Hamilton felt his life had been useless, that he was merely a lone voice crying in the wilderness. At a private dinner in Albany, just before the election, he really let himself go. He denounced Burr in terms reserved usually for a thief, a scoundrel, and a man of the most abandoned morals.

Burr had no spies at this dinner; but Charles D. Cooper, who had been present at the dinner, wrote two letters to friends. In these Cooper said that Hamilton had declared Burr to be "a dangerous man and ought not to be trusted." If this were all, nothing might have happened. But the luckless Cooper went on to say that he could tell his correspondents "a still more despicable opinion which General Hamilton had expressed of Mr. Burr."

If Cooper was a fool, his friends were even worse. For they sent the letters to be published in the local press.

This was just before election day, and Burr waited. When the results were in, he found himself defeated by the Republican candidate. Tammany had voted for Burr, so had a majority of the Federalists. But Hamilton's efforts had switched a sufficient number of the latter to the Republican ticket to ensure Lewis's election.

Burr was through politically. His last chance for a comeback had failed; and Hamilton had been responsible.

On June 18, 1804, a gentleman galloped up to the Grange, handed the reins to a servant, and mounted the stately steps. Hamilton, seated at breakfast, glanced up in surprise at the early morning visitor; then, as recognition came, the glance deepened into something else.

"Mr. Van Ness!" he exclaimed. "What——er——I had not expected, sir, the honor of a visit from you. Will you have coffee with me?"

William P. Van Ness bowed. "My business with you, Mr. Hamilton, does not permit me to partake of your hospitality. I have a letter for your perusal, sir."

"Ah!" Hamilton braced himself. Now he knew why this close friend and political lieutenant of Aaron Burr had come so early from the city. "Very well, sir," was all he said.

He stared a moment at the envelope which Van Ness handed him. It bore only his name: "Alexander Hamilton, Esq." Then he opened it, smoothed out the sheet of paper within.

Sir,

I send for your perusal a letter signed Charles D. Cooper, which, though apparently published some time ago, has but very recently come to my knowledge. Mr. Van Ness, who does me the favour to deliver this, will point out to you that clause of the letter to which I particularly request your attention. You must perceive, sir, the necessity of a prompt and unqualified acknowledgement or denial of the use of any expressions which would warrant the assertions of Mr. Cooper. I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,

A. Burr

For a moment further Hamilton sat, while Van Ness stood erect and formal. He did not have to look at the enclosure of newspaper clippings. He knew them by heart, and had many times cursed the stupidity of Cooper and of his correspondents in permitting such explosive material to get into the papers.

A swirl of thoughts, of regrets, crowded his mind. The bitter memory of his son Philip, pale, cold, and bloody, rose like a specter before him. Yet how could he deny? He had said things to justify Cooper's phrase. He had said and written worse things of Burr for many years. And Burr, he was certain, knew of them.

Not that he was afraid! He had proved his personal courage too many times. But he had a family—a wife and seven sons and daughters—who needed him. He had a mission yet unfulfilled, to ensure that the country of his adoption grew strong and united. And if he acknowledged the truth of Cooper's assertion, as Burr demanded, there could be only one outcome.

He looked up at Van Ness. "Sir," he said in a steady voice, "this matter requires careful consideration. I shall send you a reply shortly."

Van Ness bowed, departed. The hoofbeats of his horse galloping down the highroad to New York receded and died.

Eliza came in. "Who was it, Alec?" she asked.

"Someone about business." He kissed her, put on his coat, and rode at a slow pace to his office.

It took Hamilton two days to compose a reply, he who could dash off a complicated state paper or an involved financial report overnight. Sheets of scrap paper littered his desk before he was finally satisfied.

"I have maturely reflected on the subject of your letter of the 18th inst.," he wrote, "and the more I have reflected the more I have become convinced that I could not, without manifest impropriety, make the avowal or disavowal which you seem to think necessary." After all, he continued, Burr had not told him what the offending phrase was. Until this was done, how could he, Hamilton, deny it? Furthermore, in politics people said many things about one another. But, he concluded, "I stand ready to avow or disavow promptly and explicitly any precise or definite opinion which I may be charged with having declared of any gentleman." He hoped Burr would see the matter in the same light as he did. "If not," Hamilton added most unwisely, "I can only regret the circumstance, and must abide the consequence."

It would have been far better had Hamilton not taken so long to write this letter or had he consulted a discreet friend about it. His usual clear-mindedness had deserted him. He had written just the kind of letter which led directly to the dueling field.

Had he merely replied with a denial of any remark which gave a "despicable opinion" of Burr, the latter would have been compelled to close the incident. Instead, he demanded from Burr a specific account of it, which Burr necessarily did not have. And his last sentence put an end to any possibility of compromise; it expressed his willingness to settle the matter by a duel.

It must be said on Hamilton's behalf that he was in a tight spot. Had he denied making any statement which could have justified Cooper's adjective, Burr would naturally have published it to the world. Then there would have been consequences. In the first place, those who had been present remembered only too well what he had actually said, and would have taken the denial as a sign of cowardice on the part of their great leader. In the second place, Burr could then have turned to Cooper for redress. In either event, Hamilton's reputation would have suffered irremediably and his usefulness to his party and country would have ended abruptly. This was something Hamilton could not have borne.

Burr read the letter and smiled. He now had Hamilton at his mercy. He wrote in return a cold, vigorous, remorseless letter that tore Hamilton's evasions to shreds.

"Political opposition," said Burr, "can never absolve gentlemen from the necessity of a rigid adherence to the laws of honour and the rules of decorum. I neither claim the privilege nor indulge it in others." And he concluded with ominous language, "Your letter has furnished me with new reasons for requiring a definite reply."

This sharp, precise note was again delivered by Van Ness. Hamilton's face flushed as he read it. "This," he told the waiting emissary, "contains several offensive expressions and seems to close the door to further reply."

Without a word, Van Ness went away, and Hamilton braced himself for the inevitable.

Thinking it over, however, he picked up his hat and went to see a good friend, Nathaniel Pendleton. Had he done so before, the entire sad tragedy might have been averted. Now it was too late. Pendleton shook his head when he heard the story. "I'll see what I can do, Mr. Hamilton," he said soberly, "but I'm afraid——" His unended sentence was more eloquent than any words.

"I know you'll do your best," said Hamilton quietly. Then he handed him a sealed letter. "If the worst comes to the worst, and Burr challenges, will you give this to Van Ness?"

Pendleton saw Van Ness several times, but nothing satisfactory came out of their conferences. On June 27 Burr sent his formal challenge; and Pendleton accepted it on behalf of Hamilton. The date of the duel was set for July 11, the time at dawn, and the place on the rise of ground at Weehawken, New Jersey, on the other side of the Hudson River.

As Hamilton lay in bed, staring sleeplessly at the darkened ceiling and listening to the gentle breathing of his wife, he reviewed all the events of an eventful life. Thus far he had said nothing to Eliza, nor to any of his children. Only Pendleton knew of the coming encounter.

That Burr was going to do his best to kill him, he was certain. But what should he do? Should he try to kill Burr; or should he deliberately miss the first shot and give the seconds an opportunity to stop the duel at that point?

Hamilton's conscience was bothering him. It was true he had called Burr many names, names that justified his being called out on the field of honor. True, he had sincerely believed Burr to be without morals and a menace to the country. But ought he to have said so openly and without equivocation?

"I am only forty-seven," thought Hamilton, "in the prime of life. I have a family to support. I still have years of usefulness ahead to the country. What can I do? What ought I do?"

With a sudden determination, he slipped out of bed, taking care not to waken Eliza. He went downstairs to his desk, lit the lamp, took pen and paper, and commenced to write.

He first wrote a letter to his wife. "This letter, my dear Eliza," he said, "will not be delivered to you, unless I shall first have terminated my earthly career." And it ended, "Adieu, best of wives—best of women. Embrace all my darling children for me."

Then he wrote a longer one, for his friends, the public, and posterity. It contained a statement of his position, a justification of his conduct.

He was opposed, he wrote, to dueling on moral and religious grounds. He had not been actuated by personal enmity to Burr; his opposition had been based solely on political views. He had, he admitted, been perhaps extremely severe in his comments on Burr as a politician and as a private individual. It was possible, he admitted further, that he might have been wrong in some of his uttered appraisals.

Therefore—and his pen moved steadily—he was resolved to shoot into the air on the first exchange of shots, and give Burr a chance to pause and reflect before a second exchange.

Why had he not, in view of his aversion to dueling, refused to accept the challenge? That was impossible, he replied, if he were to continue to be useful to his country. For the people generally would not believe the true reasons for his refusal and would treat him with contempt as a coward.

The letters were written and carefully sealed. Then he went back to bed. Eliza had not awakened.

The days went all too swiftly. There was much for Hamilton to do. He wound up his law cases, settled his clients' affairs. Then he attended to his own private matters, putting his house in order, just in case. He wrote his will and tried to arrange money matters. He was heavily in debt because of the great expense to which his mansion, the Grange, had put

him. He had lived up every penny of his income, and there were no reserves. In the meantime, he went about his business as usual, wearing a mask of calm so that nothing would be suspected.

He told only one other besides Pendleton of the impending duel—Rufus King, his personal and political friend. When the two men heard of Hamilton's determination to fire into the air, they exploded. "For God's sake, Alec," expostulated King, "are you mad? Burr is a good shot. You will surely be killed."

Hamilton replied quietly, "That is the chance I shall have to take. I shall not aim at him; at least not on the first fire." And from that position he could not be budged.

On July 4 the Society of the Cincinnati held its annual banquet. This was the organization which had been formed by the officers of the Revolution. Both Hamilton and Burr were members; and both attended the celebration.

Hamilton was never gayer. He jumped on the table to sing an old military song and led his brother officers in the chorus. Those who were present afterward remembered how joking and carefree he had seemed. But Burr sat in a deathly silence, with fixed, impenetrable face. When Hamilton shouted for them all to join in the chorus, Burr neither sang nor spoke; he just stared up at the flushed face of his enemy with a strange expression.

The morning of July 11, 1804, dawned a misty red. Hamilton, Pendleton, and Dr. David Hosack as attending physician rowed quietly over the sluggish Hudson to the meeting ground. They scrambled up the tiny path that led to the top of the Weehawken plateau. Out of the mist loomed the figures of Aaron Burr and Van Ness. It was seven o'clock, and the sun was moving up the horizon, burning the morning fog away.

It was a desolate spot, with not a house to be seen; only brambles, underbrush, and trees. But in one spot there was a clearing, ringed around by elms and maples; and this had become the usual resort of those who sought revenge for fancied attacks on their honor. Another reason for the choice of Weehawken was that it lay in New Jersey and, therefore, was out of the jurisdiction of New York. After all, there were laws on the statute books against dueling, though no one seemed to pay any attention to them.

The two seconds, Pendleton and Van Ness, went into consultation. The principals, Hamilton and Burr, stood apart, careful not to cast even a glance in each other's direction. The doctor placed his black bag on the grass, opened it, and took out his grisly instruments. They gleamed ominously in the morning light.

Each second had a case of pistols; each examined those of the other. Then they paced off ten steps and drew marks in the grass. Pistols in hand, Hamilton and Burr strode to the marked positions, took their stands. Their arms were at their sides, the pistols were cocked and gripped with whitened fingers.

"When I call 'fire!'" said Pendleton, "you will shoot as you will; but not before. Do you understand?"

Both men nodded.

Pendleton looked at his watch, raised his hand, shouted the fatal word, "Fire!"

Both men raised their guns. There were two reports, one a little behind the other. Smoke billowed. A leaf from an overhanging tree fluttered down to the earth.

Hamilton jerked convulsively, raised himself on his toes, staggered, and pitched headlong to the ground. Burr remained erect, his smoking pistol still in his hand.

Pendleton ran over to his stricken friend, shouting for Dr. Hosack to come and help. Burr's face clouded with regret; he took an impulsive step toward his fallen foe; but Van Ness caught him by the arm and pulled him away. A barge was crossing the river and he did not wish Burr to be recognized by the boatmen.

Hosack hastened up, instruments ready. Pendleton had his chief in his arms, the tears streaming down his cheeks. The blood gushed from Hamilton's right side in a thick, red stream.

As Hosack came up, Hamilton opened his eyes. "This is a mortal wound, Doctor!" he said feebly. Then he fainted and slid from Pendleton's hold to the grass.

Hosack knelt, swiftly probed the gaping wound with his instrument. Then he looked up at Pendleton, and his face was

grim. "The ball entered the right side, fractured a rib. I can't find it; I'm afraid it has ripped through vital organs. We must get him back to New York at once. Perhaps there——"

"Will he live, Doctor?" cried Pendleton in anguished tones. Hosack averted his eyes and made no response.

The approaching barge was hailed, and the wounded man was carried carefully down the steep path to the boat. The boatmen leaned on their oars and sent the clumsy craft shooting across the incoming tide.

Halfway across, Hamilton opened his eyes. "My——my vision is indistinct," he gasped. "I can see nothing." Then, as the others bent down to catch his words, he muttered, "Pendleton knows——I did not intend to fire at him." Then he collapsed again.

They took the dying man to a friend's house on Jane Street, and more doctors were called in. Even a surgeon from a French frigate in the harbor was summoned to try his skill.

It was all to no avail. The bullet had crashed through the liver and diaphragm and lodged in the vertebrae of the spine. It could not be removed. For thirty-one hours Hamilton lingered in a frightful agony that no sedative could alleviate. About his bedside crowded his anguished wife, their bewildered children, friends, and followers.

At two in the afternoon, on July 12, 1804, Hamilton died.

The news spread like wildfire. Bells tolled, and the city went into mourning. So did the nation, as messengers and papers carried the news from Maine to Georgia. In a hundred pulpits sermons were preached to mark the passing of a great man, one of the greatest this country has ever seen. The Federalists rallied their ranks; even those who had become restive under Hamilton's leadership now hailed him as the noblest of them all. Even the Republicans regretted his death.

A great outcry rose against Aaron Burr, the man who had killed him. New York indicted him for murder, though the crime had not been committed in its jurisdiction. New Jersey, which had the legal right, did the same. The Vice-President of the United States was compelled to flee south for refuge until the excitement could subside. Even when the indictments were finally quashed and Burr returned to Washington to complete his term of office, he was a doomed man. His political days were over. Later, he went on to fantastic adventures and mysterious schemes in the Southwest that resulted in one of the most famous treason trials in history. He was acquitted, journeyed to Europe, and returned eventually to practice law in New York in obscurity.

But Hamilton, his great rival, was dead. In death, however, Hamilton had triumphed. He had accomplished more in his short life than men who lived almost twice as long. He had helped bring about a new nation and set it on the path to greatness. He died believing he had failed; yet he had built more surely than he knew. The foundations were strong, the edifice firm; and the course he had envisioned was traversed by the ship of state with but few variations from his dreams. As much as any other figure in American history, Hamilton might truly be called "the nation's builder."

For Further Reading

For the benefit of those who may wish to read further concerning the history of Hamilton's times and of his great colleagues and contemporaries, the author has prepared the following short list of books from the hundreds available.

GENERAL HISTORY

Bassett, John S., *The Federalist System*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1906.

Blake, Nelson M., *A Short History of American Life*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1952.

Bowers, Claude G., *Jefferson and Hamilton*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1925.

Channing, Edward, *History of the United States*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 6 vols., 1927-1930. (See Vols. 3 and 4.)

Greene, Evarts B., *The Revolutionary Generation*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1943.

Krout, John A., and Dixon R. Fox, *The Completion of Independence*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1944.

McLaughlin, Andrew C., *The Confederation and the Constitution*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1905.

DOCUMENTS

The Federalist, by Hamilton, Madison, and Jay (E. J. Bourne, Editor), Tudor Publishing Company, New York, 1937.

Hacker, Louis M., *The Shaping of the American Tradition*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1947. (See pages 233-309.)

BIOGRAPHIES

Brant, Irving, *James Madison, The Nationalist*, Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, 1948.

Chinard, Gilbert, *Honest John Adams*, Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1933.

Ford, Henry J., *Washington and His Colleagues*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1918.

Schachner, Nathan, *Alexander Hamilton*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1946.

----, *Aaron Burr*, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1937.

----, *Thomas Jefferson*, 2 vols., Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1951.

Index

A

Adams, John, [181](#)
appoints generals, [178-179](#)
appoints new mission to France, [183-184](#)
defeated for re-election, [186-188](#), [190-194](#)
elected President, [166-167](#)
elected Vice-President, [106](#)
ousts Cabinet, [183](#)
re-elected Vice-President, [141-142](#)
sends mission to France, [168-170](#)
XYZ Affair, [176-177](#)

Alien and Sedition Acts, [181-182](#), [205](#)

André, Major John, [57-61](#)

Arnold, Benedict, his treason, [57-60](#)

Arnold, Peggy Shippen, [58-60](#)

B

Bank of the United States, [123-127](#)

Beckley, John, [174](#)

Boudinot, Elias, [18-19](#)

Burr, Aaron, [167-174](#)
called names by Hamilton, [207-208](#)
challenges Hamilton, [211-217](#)
defeated for governor of New York, [208-211](#)
defeats Hamilton in New York, [189](#)
elected Vice-President, [186-196](#)
kills Hamilton, [218-220](#)
rival of Hamilton, [164-165](#)

C

Callender, James T., [172-174](#)

Clingman, Jacob, [171](#)

Clinton, De Witt, [208](#)

Clinton, George, [56](#), [70](#), [79](#), [82](#), [85](#), [95](#), [99](#), [100-103](#), [141](#), [168](#), [208](#)

Clinton, Sir Henry, [46](#), [58](#), [66](#)

Coleman, William, [197-199](#)

Congress, Continental, [47-48](#), [54-55](#), [71-75](#), [80-81](#)

Constitutional Convention and ratification of Constitution, [85-93](#), [94-108](#)

Cooper, Charles D., [210-211](#), [214](#)

Cooper, Dr. Myles, [20](#), [27](#)

Hamilton helps him escape, [28-30](#)

Cornwallis, Lord, [66-68](#)

Croswell, Harry, [204-206](#)

Cruger, Nicholas, [1-2](#)

employs Hamilton as clerk, [8](#), [10-12](#), [15](#), [18](#)

D

D'Estaing, Admiral, [46](#)

Duane, James, [54](#), [56](#), [78](#)

Duer, William, [115](#), [130](#), [131-132](#), [171](#)

E

Eacker, George J., [201-202](#)

Ellsworth, Oliver, [155](#)

F

Farewell Address, [165](#)

Fawcett (Faucette), John, [4-5](#)

Fawcett, Mary, [5-6](#)

Federalist Papers, [95-98](#)

Fenno, John, [138](#)

Fraunces, Andrew G., [171](#)

Freneau, Philip, [138](#)

G

Gates, Horatio, [41-42](#), [57](#)

Genêt, Edmond Charles, [145-152](#)

Gerry, Elbridge, [170](#), [177](#)

Giles, William B., resolutions on Hamilton, [142-144](#)

Greene, Nathanael, [60](#), [61](#)

H

Hamilton, Alexander, activities against Burr, [207-211](#)

aide to Washington, [36-37](#)

army general, [177-180](#)

attacks Jefferson, [138-140](#)

attends King's College, [21-31](#)

Bank of the United States, [123-127](#)

battle of Monmouth, [44-45](#)

becomes lawyer, [69](#)

becomes Secretary of Treasury, [108-109](#)

birth and boyhood, [1-16](#)

breaks with Washington, [61-63](#)

builds the Grange, [199-200](#)

Burr challenges, [211-217](#)

campaign at Philadelphia, [38-40](#)

captain of artillery, [31-32](#)

clerk, [1-4](#), [9-12](#)

collector of taxes, [70-71](#)

death of, [220-222](#)

death of son, [200-203](#)

defends Crosswell, [204-206](#)

delegate to Constitutional Convention, [85-93](#)

delegate to Continental Congress, [71-73](#)

duel, [218-220](#)

election of 1800, [185-194](#)

Farewell Address, Washington's, [166](#)

Federalist Papers, [95-98](#)

fight at White Plains, Raritan, Princeton, [33-34](#)

fight over financial schemes, [114-122](#)

foreign relations, [132-137](#)

founds *New York Evening Post*, [197-199](#)

and Genêt, [145-152](#)

Giles's resolutions, [142-144](#)

goes to New York, [15-18](#)

"Hurricane Letter," [12-15](#)

Jay's mission, [154-158](#)

law practice, [75-79](#)

letter, to Duane, [54-56](#)

to Robert Morris, [63-65](#)

to Sullivan, [47-50](#)

marries Elizabeth (Eliza) Schuyler, [62](#)

meets Elizabeth Schuyler, [52-53](#)

mission to Gates and Putnam, [41-43](#)
in New York Assembly and Annapolis Convention, [82-85](#)
pamphlets against Seabury, [25-27](#)
quarrel with Adams, [183-185](#)
rather Jefferson than Burr, [192](#), [195](#)
report on public credit, [109-114](#)
"Report on Manufactures" and SUM, [128-130](#)
resigns, [156](#)
revolutionary agitation, [23-24](#)
Reynolds affair, [71-74](#)
Rutgers vs. Waddington, [76-78](#)
saves Dr. Cooper, [28-30](#)
schooling, [19-20](#)
the struggle for ratification, [85-93](#)
unofficial adviser, [168-170](#)
Whisky Rebellion, [159-162](#)
writes pamphlet against Adams, [190-192](#)
XYZ Affair, [176-177](#)
at Yorktown, [66-68](#)

Hamilton, Elizabeth (nee Schuyler), [52-53](#), [96-97](#), [108](#), [118-119](#), [143-144](#), [202-203](#), [216](#), [221](#)
marriage of, [62](#)

Hamilton, James, [6-7](#)
father of Alexander, [7](#)

Hamilton, Philip, [200-203](#)

Hamilton, Dr. Will, [6-7](#)

Hammond, George, [134](#), [136-137](#), [145](#), [149](#), [154](#)

Hosack, Dr. David, [218](#), [219-220](#)

Howe, General William, [32](#), [38](#)

J

Jay, John, [23](#), [75](#), [96](#), [99](#), [101](#), [189](#)
mission to England, [155-158](#)

Jefferson, Thomas, [154](#), [174](#), [199](#), [204](#)
becomes Secretary of State, [107](#)
drafts Kentucky Resolutions, [182](#)
elected President, [185-196](#)
elected Vice-President, [166-168](#)
foreign affairs, [132-137](#)
and Genêt, [145-152](#)
makes deal on assumption, [119-122](#)
opposes Bank, [126-128](#)
relations with Hamilton, [137-140](#)
resigns, [153](#)

K

Kent, James, [205-206](#)

King, Rufus, [75](#), [81](#), [217](#)

King's College (Columbia), [20-21](#), [27](#), [31](#)

Knox, Henry, [107](#), [127](#), [150](#), [178](#)

Knox, Dr. Hugh, [14-15](#), [18](#)

L

Lafayette, Marquis de, [61](#)

Lansing, John, [85](#), [92](#)

Lee, General Charles, [44-45](#)

Lee, Henry, [38-40](#), [162](#)

Levine, John Michael, [4](#)

Rachel Fawcett, marries, [5-6](#)
divorces, [6](#)

Levine, Peter, [6](#), [8](#)

Levine, Rachel (nee Fawcett), [4-7](#)

death of, [7](#)
marriage to John Michael Levine, [5-6](#)
meets James Hamilton, [6](#)
mother of Alexander, [7](#)

Livingston, William, [18-19](#)

M

McHenry, James, [57](#), [59](#), [169-170](#), [178-180](#), [187](#)

Maclay, William, [115](#), [116](#)

Madison, James, [82](#), [86](#), [95](#), [96](#), [102](#), [138](#), [152](#), [166](#)
drafts Virginia Resolutions, [182](#)
opposes Hamilton, [111](#), [116](#)

Marshall, John, [170](#)

XYZ Affair, [175-177](#)

Mifflin, Governor Thomas, [151](#), [161](#)

Monroe, James, [171-174](#)

Morris, Robert, [63](#), [64](#), [70](#), [86](#), [108](#)

Mulligan, Hercules, [18-20](#)

Murray, William Vans, [183](#)

N

New York *Evening Post*, [197-199](#)

P

Pendleton, Nathaniel, [215](#), [218-220](#)

Pickering, Timothy, [169-170](#), [176](#), [187](#)

Pinckney, Charles C., [170](#), [187-188](#), [193](#)
XYZ Affair, [175-178](#)

Pinckney, Thomas, [167](#)

Putnam, Israel, [41-43](#)

R

Randolph, Edmund, [107](#), [127](#)

Reports on public credit, [109-114](#)

"Report on Manufactures," [128-129](#)

Reynolds, Mr. and Mrs. James, affair of, [171-174](#)

Rutgers vs. Waddington, [76-78](#)

S

Schuyler, Philip, [52-53](#), [63](#), [66](#)

Seabury, Samuel, [26](#)

Shays' Rebellion, [83-84](#)

Smith, William, [143-144](#)

Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures (SUM), [129-130](#)

Stevens, Edward, [8](#), [9](#), [21](#), [153](#)

Sullivan, John, [48](#), [50](#), [101](#)

T

Talleyrand, Charles Maurice de, [163-164](#), [175-176](#)

Tammany Society, [189](#), [208](#), [211](#)

Troup, Robert, [21](#), [69](#), [75](#), [100-101](#), [196-197](#)

V

Van Ness, William W., [211-213](#), [215](#), [218-219](#)

W

Washington, George, [18](#), [86](#), [132](#), [138](#), [139](#), [153](#), [163](#)

appoints Hamilton aide, [36-43](#)

Arnold's treason, [59-60](#)

Battle of Monmouth, [44-45](#)

becomes President, [106](#)

campaigns, [32-35](#)

elected to second term, [141-142](#)

Farewell Address of, [165-166](#)

and Genêt, [145-152](#)

Hamilton breaks with, [61-63](#)

heads army, [177-179](#)

issues Proclamation of Neutrality, [146](#)

organizes government, [107-108](#)

signs bank bill, [127](#)

takes Hamilton's advice, [46](#)

Whisky Rebellion, [160-161](#)

at Yorktown, [66-67](#)

Whisky Rebellion, [159-162](#)

Witherspoon, Dr., [19-20](#)

Wolcott, Oliver, [169-170](#)

Y

Yates, Robert, [85](#), [92](#)

[The end of *Alexander Hamilton* by Nathan Schachner]