THE CONGRESSIONAL CAREER OF JAMES A. GARFIELD
DURING THE HAYES ADMINISTRATION

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CHAPTER I

GARFIELD AND THE ELECTION OF 1876

In the autumn of 1876 the United States was plunged into its most critical political dilemma. In the months from November 1876 to March 1877 the name of the victorious Presidential candidate was clouded in bitter controversy.\(^1\) So vicious was the partisan sentiment in those months that at times the fortunes of the country teetered on the brink of civil war.\(^2\) In the events which culminated in the election of Rutherford B. Hayes, James Abram Garfield rose to a position of national prominence. He had long been a Republican leader in the House of Representatives, but his role in achieving victory for Hayes gave him new stature and confirmed his rigid Republican attitudes.\(^3\)

The results of the election of 1876 were to play an important part in determining the Democratic legislative efforts for the next four years. That party became obsessed with the idea of correcting what members believed to have been a travesty of justice—a situation which at least partially explains their strange maneuvers as the majority party in Congress. Actually the campaign of 1880 began on March 4, 1877.

As they approached their nominating convention in June 1876, the Republicans had found their power and prestige at their lowest point since 1860. The Grant Administration had been rocked by numerous
scandals and disclosures of ineptitude, and the nation was in the midst of a dismal depression.\textsuperscript{4} Garfield himself was just recovering from the nadir of his political career which in 1874 had seen his overwhelming margin of victory reduced to a relatively slim 6,346 votes.\textsuperscript{5} Not only had he been involved in the Credit Mobilier and DeGolyer scandals, but his acquiescence in the so-called "Salary Grab Bill" had shaken the confidence of his constituency.\textsuperscript{6} A storm of protest occurred which led to his being censured by the resolutions of three conventions in his own district.\textsuperscript{7} Therefore, it was imperative for the Republican leaders to choose a nominee untainted by corruption. The honor fell to the three-time governor of Ohio, Rutherford B. Hayes.

The morning papers of Wednesday, November 5, proclaimed the election of Samuel J. Tilden.\textsuperscript{8} The campaign had been bitterly contested on both sides, and the "bloody shirt" had been waved for all it was worth, but the Democrats were jubilant over their apparent triumph.\textsuperscript{9} On Saturday night Hayes wrote in his Diary, "The election has resulted in the defeat of the Republicans after a very close battle."\textsuperscript{10} Then a note of uncertainty began to prevail in some quarters.\textsuperscript{11} Sheer mathematics disclosed that Tilden had a total of 184 votes or one short of a majority. Twenty votes were contested—nineteen of which were in the three southern states of Louisiana, Florida, and South Carolina—and one was in Oregon.\textsuperscript{12} The fact that Hayes could not lose a single vote left no room for error. Representative Garfield revealed his concern in his Journal on December 11,
"Spent the evening reading up the early history of counting the electoral vote."13

On November 10 Garfield received a telegram from President Grant requesting him to help supervise a review of the returns in Louisiana.14 Garfield proceeded to that state only after a period of soul-searching and doubt. He believed that the situation was fraught with personal political perils. Certainly anyone who interfered opened himself to the accusation of being a meddler and a partisan. Yet, because of the crisis to his party and to the lawful institutions of his country, he felt an obligation which he could not avoid. He wrote to his intimate friend Burke A. Hinsdale, "I go with a great reluctance, but feel it to be a duty from which I cannot shrink."15

The "visiting statesman" arrived in New Orleans on November 14 and remained there until December 2. There he joined an increasing band of interested observers and party spokesmen. The turbulent conditions in Louisiana gave that state an "un-American" and "un-republican" flavor. Garfield saw evidences of murder and violence and was shocked over the plight of the Negroes.16 As a loyal Republican there seems to have been little doubt in Garfield's mind about the eventual verdict. In a letter to his wife he stated,

I do not see the outcome of the work here; but I believe that a fair count of the lawful vote of this state will give it to Hayes.17

By Louisiana law the review of the election returns rested solely with a five-man Returning Board which had been appointed by a
reconstruction governor. The Board had been reduced to four with the resignation of the lone Democratic member the previous year. It was the same group which in 1875 had been censured by two Republican dominated investigating committees, and only six years before Garfield had described it as a "graceless set of scamps." By 1876, however, his opinion had undergone a change. At the conclusion of his stay in Louisiana he signed a report written by Senator John Sherman which praised the integrity of the Board warmly. After returning to Washington Garfield had misgivings about signing the high recommendation of such questionable personnel.

To prevent, or to attempt to prevent hostile suspicions, the Republican "statesmen" invited five visiting Democrats to observe with them. Under the watchful eyes of their guests the Returning Board proceeded to investigate charges of intimidation and violence. Systematically the canvassers considered the parishes in which Tilden had received large majorities. They did their work so thoroughly that a large majority for Tilden was reversed giving all eight electoral votes to Hayes and Wheeler.

The decision of the Returning Board of Louisiana served to increase the outraged indignation of the Democratic members of Congress. Charges and counter-charges of fraud, conspiracy, and "bulldozing" filled the air. Perhaps Representative Crittenden assessed the situation in the fairest light,
I believe that the latest elections in at least three of the Southern States were an absolute farce...
I believe that must be the final conclusion of every fair-minded man... the cheating on both sides have been so absolutely universal that it is impossible for anyone to determine where the real truth lies.\(^{23}\)

Particularly dangerous to the ambitions of the Republicans was an obstacle which they themselves had created. Refusing to count Presidential electors on the grounds of malfeasance had become a precedent established in post-Civil War elections. A Radical controlled Congress had passed Joint Rule Twenty-Two in 1865. It had stipulated that the electoral vote of a state could be thrown out if either of the two Houses of Congress objected to it.\(^{24}\) Actually the Senate had rejected the rule in January 1876. In addition Garfield argued correctly that it was not binding unless passed by each Congress, and in a speech to the House of Representatives he admitted it had been a bad rule even in 1865. "It is best for men and parties frankly to confess their errors and correct them."\(^{25}\) The specter of Rule Twenty-Two still lingered, nevertheless, and haunted the aspirations of the supporters of Hayes.

As the months of December and January passed, public pressure began to build for a compromise solution. A joint committee of leading men from both parties was appointed to search for an answer. After careful deliberation they suggested the special electoral commission idead.\(^{26}\)

Despite the overwhelming post-mortem revulsion toward Electoral Commission on the part of the Democratic Party, the establishment
of the Commission had been in its origination a proposal which had won their hearty support. One of the strongest speeches in favor of the idea was made by Tilden's own campaign manager, Abram S. Hewitt.\textsuperscript{27} The Electoral Commission Bill also appealed to the citizens of the United States as a sensible compromise, and they flooded their Congressmen with petitions for its approval. In the Senate the bill passed by a vote of 47 to 7 with twenty-six Democrats and twenty-one Republicans in favor and one Democrat and sixteen Republicans opposed; in the House the bill passed by a vote of 191 to 86 with one hundred and sixty Democrats and thirty-one Republicans in favor and seventeen Democrats and sixty-nine Republicans opposed.\textsuperscript{28} It could be called, with little injustice, a Democratic proposition.

The Electoral Commission Law met its severest opposition from Republican leaders, among whom was Rutherford B. Hayes. After a short period of time to readjust his thinking, the Republican candidate had come to the conclusion that he had won the election. He consoled himself with the information that he had carried eighteen out of twenty-two free Northern states with a majority of 200,000 votes. He further reflected, as most Republicans did that if the Fifteenth Amendment had been faithfully executed the contest in the South would not have been close.\textsuperscript{29} Although he was determined not to interfere in the final outcome of the election, Hayes could not resist expressing his disappointment over the deliberations of the Congress as they moved towards a compromise. In a letter to John Sherman he gave his opinion, "I believe the Vice-President alone has the constitutional power to
count votes and declare the result." Any other method of selecting a President he regarded as a dangerous violation of the Constitution.

Joining the President-elect in his opposition was James A. Garfield. During the month of December he watched the maneuvers of the Democracy with a growing suspicion that they were up to mischief. Since the Democrats controlled the House of Representatives, they were in a dominating position if the Electoral College should fail to elect a President. In a letter to Hayes, Garfield disclosed his displeasure with other party members for not firmly adhering to the idea that only Vice-President Ferry had the constitutional right to count the electoral votes. In the secret of his Journal he wrote,

but it [Electoral Commission] appears to me not only a surrender of a certainty for an uncertainty but it seems to me a cowardly mortgaging of the safety of the future to secure an escape from the present danger.

On January 25, 1876 despite the sore throat after-effects of a slight case of typhoid fever, Garfield launched his strongest attack against the bill with a last minute speech in the House of Representatives. Clearly and logically Garfield argued his case. First he attacked the wild talk of war by saying, "with all my soul I despite your threat of civil war come it from what quarter or party it may." Why, he asked, should Congress frame a new device to elect when the Constitution solved the problem? The founding fathers had explicitly indicated their desire to exclude all Congressional interference in the election of Presidents. The selection of electors was one area of state sovereignty which could not be overruled. Even fraud or
corrupt practices could not be sufficient cause. 38 Once a state had legally chosen its electors Congress was compelled to count them. The phrase "shall be counted" was merely a command for simple arithmetic and did not imply judiciary powers. 39 If Congress had the authority to investigate one state's electoral vote, then it had the power to inquire into that of every state. So much time could be occupied by the process that the call of the states might not be completed before March 4. 40 In essence Congress was creating an unconstitutional committee one-third legislative, one-third executive, and one-third judiciary—and granting it powers which could not be assumed. 41 Garfield sincerely believed that if the plan was adopted it meant the destruction of the electoral system. 42 On January 26 he vainly cast his vote in the negative. 43

The very next day in a dramatic meeting the House of Representatives elected its five members to the Commission. By the provisions of the bill three Democrats and two Republicans were chosen. 44 A Republican caucus had already selected Garfield on the first ballot despite his strong sentiments against the plan. 45 Although his selection appeared inconsistent with his position, Garfield claimed that it did not disqualify him. He compared his role on the Commission to a judge deciding a case on the basis of evidence and not on personal opinion. He was determined to obey the law to the letter and in the spirit in which it was written. Looking back on this period of history, it would seem that Garfield's election to the Presidency four
years later indicated that his role in Louisiana and on the Electoral Commission was approved, forgiven, or forgotten.

The responsibility for the final result of the election of 1876 had been delegated to the hands of fifteen mortal men. Certainly no council had a more fateful decision, but to Garfield the work was to be an intellectually rewarding experience.46 Seven of the members were acknowledged Republicans and seven were acknowledged Democrats.47 Selecting a fifth Supreme Court Justice was a problem which challenged the workability of the compromise. For a time the logical choice was David Davis, an Associate Justice noted for his independent decisions. Then on January 24 a deadlocked Illinois legislature shocked the Democrats by electing him to the United States Senate.48 The four justices charged with choosing the final commissioner finally awarded the dubious honor to Joseph P. Bradley, the least objectionable remaining Republican on the Court. To him fell the terrible burden of casting the deciding vote, as the other members divided along strict party lines on every important issue; but he too could not deviate from party discipline and on only one occasion, admittance of extraneous evidence on the eligibility of one Florida elector, did he vote contrary to their wishes.49 The slogan "An eight to seven decision" became a battle cry during the Hayes Administration.50

There were four states which had more than one set of electoral returns: Florida, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Oregon. The cases were heard separately in alphabetical order. Garfield reiterated his
views that the Commission had no authority to reverse the findings of
the returning board of any state. New or old evidence on fraud and
intimidation could not be introduced. This thesis, shared by the other
Republican members, was upheld by the famous eight to seven margin. It
then became the function of the Board simply to determine which
state of electors had the official state approval. In the case of each
of the contested states the majority of eight to seven ruled in favor
of the Hayes electors. When a decision was reached in each case,
it was reported back to Congress for adoption. A provision of the
Electoral Commission Bill stated that no vote could be excluded except
by the concurrent action of both Houses. Following the familiar
partisan pattern, the Republican Senate voted their approval and the
Democratic House voted their disapproval in every case. The
Republicans had solved their greatest problem and had won all twenty
electoral votes.

As the calling of the roll of states for the purpose of count-
ing the electoral vote inched forward, the popularity of the Commission
with Tilden supporters diminished rapidly. Wild rumors filled the
country's newspapers, and friends of Garfield and Hoar warned them of
their personal safety. As early as February 13 Garfield began to be
alarmed over the obstructions and the delays which were designed to
slow the proceedings. He and other friends of Hayes advised the
Republican candidate to offer some form of conciliation to the Southern
legislators to win their support against filibustering. Several
meetings were arranged by the Republican managers for this purpose. 56
The most famous of these private conferences was held at the Wormley
Hotel on the evening of February 26. An invitation from Stanley
Matthews, led to the meeting of James Garfield, John Sherman, William
Dennison, and Charles Foster of Ohio with E. A. Burke, E. John Ellis,
and William Levy of Louisiana, and Henry Watterson of Kentucky. 57
Although no definite commitments were made—Hayes would venture no
further than his letter of acceptance—assurances were made that
federal troops would be withdrawn and that there would be no prosecutions
under the elections laws. In return the Southern leaders agreed to
resist delays in counting the electoral votes, to afford protection to
both whites and colored, and to guarantee peace and order in their
states. 58 Two years later in a speech Garfield strongly praised the
statesmanship of the southern representatives who had resisted filli-
buster ing, and rebuked those people who shouted corrupt bargain.

If there be a man in this world who says they traded,
I believe that man has been miserably duped or he
lies, and I say it for them. 59

Even after the count had successfully passed South Carolina,
the ability to beat the March 4 deadline was in doubt. On the 28th of
February Abram S. Hewitt stood up on the floor of the House and held
aloft a small package which contained a second set of returns from the
state of Vermont. If they were received, it meant another case for the
Electoral Commission and another delay. The Senate quickly decided to
count the first official slate, but the House adjourned before voting. The next day's session in the House was one of the stormiest in history. A small group of men tried every possible parliamentary maneuver to waste time, but the Democratic Speaker, Samuel J. Randall, firmly forced the debate to continue to an orderly conclusion. By a vote of 148 to 116 the second set of Vermont electors was rejected.

Only one more delay—that concerning one Wisconsin elector—interrupted the completion of the roll call. The filibusterers gave up the fight early Friday morning. At 4:15 A.M. on March 2 the President of the Senate read the name of the nineteenth President of the United States, Rutherford Birchard Hayes.

Although his inauguration ended the threat of open violence, the stream of abuse levelled at President Hayes continued as long as he was in office. Three years later in Congress he was still referred to as the "gentleman who crept into the presidency by fraud." Many in the Democratic Party seized the issue as though it were another "lost cause."

Early in the spring of 1878 a petition from the legislature of Maryland was read in the House of Representatives. It asserted that the electoral votes of that state had not had their "due effect" because of the fraudulent returns of Louisiana and Florida. Using this as a pretext, Clarkson N. Potter introduced a resolution calling for an investigation of the election in those two states. A select committee of eleven was to be given the power to subpoena witnesses
and election records to ascertain all the facts. The Republicans, sensing that the Democracy was trying to gain political advantage for that year's Congressional elections, decided in caucus to resist the establishment of the committee which Potter proposed. As the chief defender of the Administration, James A. Garfield took the leadership of the opposition. He referred to it as just another plan "to make campaign literature for the coming fall," and from May 14 to May 18 maneuvered to prevent a quorum. The Republicans also attempted to enlarge the scope of the investigation to cover fraud in all states, but by May 18 the Democrats had rounded up enough members to pass the resolution 146 to 2 with 143 abstentions.

During the summer of 1878 many notable politicians including Garfield and Samuel J. Tilden appeared before the Potter Committee. Many lesser figures were also eager to travel to Atlantic City to tell the "truth." Practically all of the witnesses suffered from the same mental defect, short memories. Most of the men on the returning boards of Louisiana and Florida had been given government jobs—many in the Treasury Department. Those who had been slighted relished a new opportunity to testify. Chief witnesses were the two self-confessed liars James E. Anderson, ex-superintendent of East Feliciana parish, and Samuel B. McLin, former member of a returning board in Florida. Their testimony and that of others dredged up all the dirt which had long since settled to the bottom, but added little to what was already known. Just when it seemed that the Democrats had won a propaganda
victory, a new disclosure was made by the New York Tribune. Several of its reporters had gotten hold of some ciphered telegrams which had originated in New York. As they were decoded it was discovered that several of the men named had been closely associated with Tilden including his own nephew, Colonel W. T. Pelton. When all the facts were finally revealed, the messages showed that definite attempts had been made to buy electoral votes for huge sums of money. Pelton tried to rationalize his actions by saying he was just trying to ransom stolen goods, but the damage had been done.\textsuperscript{71} Cynically it has been suggested that by the events of 1877 and 1878 both parties proved the other was unfit to rule.\textsuperscript{72}
CHAPTER II

MINORITY LEADER AND PARTY SPOKESMAN

With the appointment of John Sherman to the Cabinet the way was clear for Garfield to advance into the Senate. Strong forces were at work in Ohio to give him that promotion, yet the events of the first week of the new Administration were to move in another direction. On the day after the inauguration President Hayes, Garfield, and Sherman met at the home of the Senator. There, for the first time, it was proposed to Garfield that his services would be of more value to the Administration in the House rather than in the Senate. This proposal must have been a shock to Garfield, and perhaps his astonishment was evident to his hosts, for nothing was agreed upon that evening. The suggestion that Stanley Matthews should have the position which long service and party loyalty had ordained for him must have been a deep disappointment. Garfield confided to his Journal the next day, "I ought to have mentioned in yesterday's journal that I was a little bit nettled . . ." In the next few days he must have considered the possibility of disregarding the President's request. To further complicate the situation, Garfield received a telegram from his manager in Ohio advising him that he had been promised twenty-two votes to Matthew's thirteen. As the surprise wore off Garfield began to have second thoughts. He gradually became convinced that Hayes was sincere in his desire and did not mean it as a personal insult. As was his
custom Garfield sought relief from his troublesome thoughts by writing his life-long friend, Burke A. Hinsdale:

I understand he [Hayes] wants me to stay in the House. I shall see him this evening; and if he is decided in his wishes on that point, I shall probably decline to be a candidate for the Senate.5

Another factor in his decision must have been his great fondness for the House of Representatives. Garfield had been a member of that legislative body for fourteen years, and the thoughts of leaving it for the more dignified and staid Senate dampened his enthusiasm.

(When another opportunity for the Senatorship presented itself four years later, Garfield hesitated momentarily for the same reasons.)6

At a White House dinner on March 10 Hayes approached him a second time, and Garfield willingly gave his consent.7 Almost prophetically he wrote, "But I cannot believe that, in the long run a man will lose by self-sacrifice."8

The rejection of the Senatorship destined Garfield to play a major role in the policies of the Hayes Administration. His source of power sprang from many roots. Fourteen years of experience as a Representative had made him a master of the complicated House rules and of the parliamentary tricks; the former leader, James G. Blaine, had moved into the Senate; and the special Presidential mandate had given him enormous prestige; all combined to make Garfield the outstanding party spokesman.9 The epithet of party chieftain, which one biographer gave him, really applies to his role as minority leader from 1876 to
1880. The fact that the Democratic Party controlled the House for all four years and the Senate for the latter two years of Hayes's Administration, made Garfield assume the role of a maneuverer more than a legislator. It was primarily a negative function consisting of criticizing, attacking, and defeating; but he also had an equally difficult task of unifying and strengthening his weakened party. Perhaps the most valuable personal ability he had to aid him was his forensic skill. Few men could match his brilliance in debate and argument. He was always ready, also pointed, and always vehement. Rising to speak, Garfield at first appeared awkward—probably due to being left-handed—but he quickly captured his audience with his masterful treatment of the subject accentuated by emphatic gestures and a magnificent voice. Even his opponents recognized his competence,

He [Garfield] never does anything in the way of speech-making on the floor of this House that is not done well, and does not elicit the admiration of the House.

In his dual capacity as minority leader and party spokesman James A. Garfield was to achieve the most significant triumphs of his public life.

The name of James Garfield did not appear frequently in the Diary of Hayes. There was a definite coolness in their relationship which was not conducive to close cooperation. A March 29 entry into
Garfield's Journal pictured his impressions of their friendship,

I told him [J. Q. Smith] I had always felt a great distance between myself and the President. Intimate as I have been with Governor Hayes for many years, I have not yet been able to regain that feeling of familiarity that I am sure he would be willing should continue between us. I must try to overcome that feeling in part. 16

Although both men respected the political acumen of the other, each suffered from the conviction that the other man lacked some necessary personal qualities for his position. Garfield wrote, "The impression is deepening that he [Hayes] is not large enough for the place he holds..." 17

Despite the drawbacks in their personal relationship the two Republican leaders did work well together politically. Long conferences seeking to establish a workable program were held between the two men. 18 During the opening months of the Administration as Hayes's initial policies tended to split the party, it was Garfield who took the lead in coming to his defense. For one six-month period he refused to call a caucus in order to prevent a solidification of the anti-Hayes forces. 19 The President's desire to place a Southerner in his Cabinet had produced a depressed attitude among some Northern Republicans which grew to open hostility as he moved forward with his troop removal policy. 20 If that was not enough to cause dissension, the reappearance in Congress of many "Confederate Brigadiers" in the fall of 1877 was another rebuff to the proponents of radical Republican rule. 21 However, Garfield knew that the future of the
Republican Party was at stake and counseled patience, "It is due to Hayes that we stand by him and give his policy a fair trial." If the President was allowed to be attacked from within the vilified from without, the party would certainly suffer direct and dire consequences. As an astute politician Garfield was too shrewd to allow that to occur without a counterattack.

Convinced that the martial spirit was in need of a final burial and, convinced that the South needed a return to honest, intelligent, local government, President Hayes continued his plan to restore civil rule throughout the nation. The defeat of an army appropriation bill by the 44th Congress had necessitated a special session which convened on October 15, 1877. Some Republicans were confident that the Southern cooperation won in the electoral count struggle would continue and permit the Republicans to organize the House. Those dreams were quickly exploded as Samuel J. Randall received 149 votes to James A. Garfield's 132 votes and was reelected Speaker of the House.

The Southern problem had resolved itself to the states of Louisiana and South Carolina. In both there were rival governors, rival state legislatures, and in the case of Louisiana even rival supreme courts. Exerting his personal influence, Hayes sought to end the conflict in South Carolina without direct executive action. A letter from Stanley Matthews and endorsed by William Evarts to the Republican governor, D. H. Chamberlain, urged the factions to reach their own peaceful reconciliation. The two governors were invited to
Washington to give them a chance to observe the official Presidential attitude. Chamberlain took the obvious hints and yielded to the inevitable—federal troops were removed on April 10.

Carpetbag rule in Louisiana had been more severe and, considering the state's turbulent spirit, constituted a more difficult situation. Resorting to a favorite method, a five-man commission was dispatched on a fact-finding mission. Practicality rather than diplomacy won the day in that state also. The de jure state legislature, realizing that army support could not be maintained forever, began to make their peace with the de facto Democratic government. With the ordering of troops away from the capitol on April 24 all reconstruction government ended in the South. Naturally, there were many Republicans who protested the actions of their President, and claimed in essence that he was repudiating his own election; but Rutherford B. Hayes was certain he was right, "I am confident this is a good work. Time will tell."

The first duty of the Administration's spokesman in the House of Representatives was to promote harmony and to win support for the Southern policy. Morally, it was not a difficult task for Garfield to perform because he fully believed in its justice and in its constitutionality. In a speech to the House on February 19, 1878 he visualized Northern policy toward the South in three stages. The first stage was military conflict which had ended in 1865; the second stage was a
transition period with both civil and military elements which had ended when troops were withdrawn from Louisiana; and the third stage was complete civilian and local control which Hayes was eager to achieve. He expressed his earnest wish, "I have sought in every way in my power to help, wherever there was a place to help." The olive branch had been extended---offered, in fact, with both hands---but all too often the events of the day made such an attitude a difficult one to follow. Murders and atrocities to whites and blacks in the South had gone unpunished. Secret organizations terrorized the colored populace. Certainly, Garfield admitted, "there was a world of things to be forgotten and forgiven on both sides," but it was time that the Southern detractors of the Administration realized how leniently they had been treated. It was their duty to prove to the country that Hayes's policy was correct. Foolish resistance to the President was doing serious damage to the policy of pacification and to all of those people who defended it. Garfield warned, "I deplore the course you are pursuing." The friendly advice was not heeded.

The second major policy which disturbed the political waters of the first year was civil service reform. After the Southern problem was reasonably settled, Hayes was able to turn to another one of his primary goals. So strong was popular opinion for reform that Hayes underestimated the power of the "old guard" in each political party.
They had so carefully woven the idea of the spoils system into the fabric of public service that it had come to be considered the natural order of political life; and as the national governmental apparatus had become more and more complex, Congressmen had successfully infringed on the executive power of appointment. President Hayes realized new legislation was required to destroy the evil practices, but his preliminary steps alienated many of the "stalwarts" whose assistance he needed.

The membership of his Cabinet was the first area of disagreement. Most of the criticism was directed at William M. Evarts, David M. Key, and Carl Schurz. It was charged that there were only four Republicans in it. The choice of Schurz as Secretary of the Interior Garfield labelled as "unfortunate and unwise" and about the Secretary of Treasury he wrote, "Sherman's appointment was not satisfactory to me." The real crisis, however, arose over a letter Hayes wrote to Sherman in which he struck at the very heart of "bossism."

Party leaders should have no more influence in appointments than other equally respectable citizens. No assessment for political purposes, on officers or subordinates, should be allowed. No officer should be required or permitted to take part in the management of political organization, caucuses, or convention, or election campaigns.

Despite the furor the letter created, the principles of the elimination of Congressional influence on appointments, the prevention of the practice of assessments on office holders, and the prohibition of
office holders to engage in political activities became the foundation of an executive order written on June 22, 1877. 47

Since Congress was not in session during the summer, Hayes moved single-handedly toward reform. By judiciously forbidding sweeping dismissals and by choosing highly qualified men where vacancies occurred, Rutherford B. Hayes did achieve a marked improvement in civil service. 48

At home in Mentor Garfield closely watched the unfolding drama in Washington. To a veteran Congressman the Presidential decrees seemed to exceed proper limitations and discretion. He believed that they had injured the cause of reform rather than helped it, and had interfered in the undisputed political rights of American citizens. Removing the thousands of federal office holders from party participation weakened the whole system. Generalizing he commented, "There is too much proclamation in his method." 49

Listing the names of Representatives whom he regarded as true friends of civil service reform, President Hayes significantly omitted the name of James Garfield. 50 In theory, few men had made a stronger appeal for it. In an article appearing in the Atlantic Monthly of July 1877 Garfield made this statement, "To reform this service is one of the highest and most imperative duties of statesmanship." 51 He went on to enumerate five reasons why the spoils system had to be destroyed: it invaded the power of the President, it degraded the independence of the office holder, it diverted the Congressman from
his proper duties, it repelled higher types of individuals, and it debauched the office. Yet he laid the responsibility for poor government and poor officials on the complacency of the public, "Now, as always, Congress represents the prevailing opinions and political aspirations of the people."52

Congress remained out of sympathy with proposed reform legislation for the remainder of Hayes's term of office.53 With the passage in early 1878 of the Bland-Allison Act--and over a veto--the minority leader saw that the President's antagonism of Congress over civil service threatened the defeat of many Republican principles. In the light of that danger Garfield advised Hayes to give up some of his reform program.54

For the rest of his public life Garfield retreated from his firm stand on reforming governmental service. The views he pronounced in his letter of acceptance for the Republican Presidential nomination did little to foster optimism in the minds of ardent reformers.55 Ironically, James A. Garfield probably did more in death for a cause he favored, than he could have in living.
CHAPTER III

"HONEST MONEY" AND PROTECTIONISM

With nothing to lose politically the defeated Republican majority in the lame-duck session of the Forty-fourth Congress had passed the Resumption of Specie Payments Act. By its provisions the United States legal tender notes (greenbacks) were to be reduced in amount to 300,000,000 dollars, and made redeemable in gold.\(^1\) Just because the much discussed measure had become law, however, was not a guarantee of its long life. During the next four years the idea of resumption was to be the subject of almost continual attacks by the inflationary elements in the country. The struggle involved the conservative East versus the liberal West as well as Republicans against Democrats.\(^2\) Economic conditions in the United States had declined for five straight years after the Panic of 1873. There were more business failures in 1877 and 1878 than there had been in 1873 and 1874. Any act or action which tended to contract the currency—as the Resumption Act did—inhaired the animosity of the debtor classes throughout the nation. The elected representatives of the depressed citizenry directed their efforts against the "sound money" policies of the Hayes Administration in two ways: to repeal the Resumption of Specie Payments Act and to restore free and unlimited coinage of silver. During Garfield's term as minority leader fourteen different attempts
were made in the House to repeal resumption—either partially or completely. The defense of sound money became one of Garfield's chief activities as spokesman for the President. 3

Consistency was not a modus operandi for politicians during the 1870's. Especially was that true in the field of finance. Even those men who exhibited the best statesmanlike qualities were often found on opposite sides of the currency question during the period. Garfield was no different on most of the issues of the day, but he demonstrated a surprising degree of continuity on the policy he termed "honest money." One contemporary biographer stated that his speeches on money "became the financial gospel of the Republican Party." 4 While the statement was obviously exaggerated, Garfield did maintain an unavering course even though at times it was politically unpopular.

From the beginning of his career to the end Garfield believed that gold was the best metal which could be used as a monetary standard. Public pressures and changing conditions eventually forced him to accept a quantity of circulating greenbacks and limited silver coinage, but gold remained for him the only inviolable standard. 5 Paper was not suited to serve as money because it did not possess the necessary quality of intrinsic value. The simple fact that a government declared paper to be money did not give it value. 6 He pointed to statements made by George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and Thomas Jefferson which proved their opposition to paper money. 7 Using a technique of innuendo, Garfield suggested that behind the greenback movement was
Communism, "coming from its dens in Europe and this country." So
dedicated was his opposition to paper, Garfield used every available
opportunity to denounce what he regarded as a "heresy." At a memorial
service to Gustave Scheicher, for example, he related the entire
financial history of the Republic of Texas to illustrate that state's
outlawing of paper currency after sad experiences with many types.9

Greenbacks had become a part of the nation's currency as an
emergency war-time measure. Despite the depleted Treasury their
adoption had been almost universally deplored, and Congress had
established a permanent limitation at 400,000,000 dollars.10 The
extremities of war had created the need for greenbacks as a type of
forced loan without interest, Garfield believed;11 and he was able to
use a Supreme Court decision to affirm his idea.12 Since each legal
bearer note represented a promise, a contract to pay in specie, pay-
ment was the solemn duty of the federal government in order to keep
its pledged word. Justification for resumption was that simple in
Garfield's mind. In one of the most important speeches of his life
given in Faneuil Hall, Boston Garfield said,

We fought the great war of arms to make all men equal
before the law; we fight this battle of finance to make
all our dollars equal before the law, whether they be
silver, or gold, or paper.13

If, as some opponents to resumption charged, the gold reserve needed
for redemption resulted in a loss of interest that was the cost of
being honest.14 As January 1, 1879 neared, Garfield was jubilant
over the prospects of the completion of a project for which he had
worked so long. In a speech in the House of Representatives he said, "The prophets of evil who said resumption was impossible have seen their prophecies fall dead at their feet."^{15}

Combating the adherents to the idea that resumption would cause a depression, Garfield maintained that deflationary periods occurred in regular twenty-year cycles. No amount of legislation could prevent them. When a depression descended on the country, the government was obligated to help in anyway it could. The best way legislators could sid, Garfield thought, was to step aside—not to obstruct—and allow the normal business processes to restore prosperity.^{16}

Garfield attributed the Panic of 1873 to wild speculation and monetary instability. Resumption would, in the future, eliminate those possible causes of a depression.^{17}

Contrary to most economic spokesmen of his day Garfield believed that periods of deflation were, in many ways, periods of good times to the average American—the small business man, the laborer, and the farmer. Conversely, a deflated currency was injurious to many of the wealthier men of the country. To substantiate his argument, Garfield presented a curious analysis of the mechanics of capitalism. Because people of low income could not invest their money in large enterprises, they were usually regular depositors in savings banks. The combined deposits of thousands of workers created a source of capital for entrepreneurs. By their savings they became a vast creditor class and gained the benefits of a deflated currency. Secondly, Garfield
pointed out, during inflationary periods wages went up more slowly than prices. The rich man could afford to wait for prices to decline, but the workers had to buy goods at the higher costs. For those reasons, Garfield stated, resumption should be a measure receiving the complete approval of all low income groups.18

The Hayes Administration was just eight months old when the first attempt came to defeat resumption. On October 31 a bill, which had as its purpose the repeal of all provisions of the Resumption Act except one, was reported to the House from the Committee on Banking and Currency. (The one provision which was not repealed by the bill was the one ordering the substitution of silver coin for fractional currency.) The bill's author and spokesman was Representative Thomas Ewing of Ohio.19 In support of resumption Garfield made what E. L. Godkin of the Nation called, "a speech which actually changed votes."20 The old, hackneyed subject was brought to life by Garfield's oratorical magic.21

After a quick statement of the principal reason for resumption, to keep the promise of the government, Garfield attacked one of the major arguments against the law, contraction of the currency. Attempting to disprove that the country had a money shortage, he showed that in 1877 there were 736,000,000 dollars in circulation as compared to 407,000,000 dollars in 1860. Placing a large volume of money in circulation did not guarantee prosperity, Garfield pointed out. On the contrary, every financial crisis in the history of the country had
been preceded by an increase in the supply of paper money. Congress did not possess the power or the ability to determine the quantity of money needed for business, but it could determine the quality of money in circulation. Resumption, he said, was an effort to make greenbacks better by making them equal to coin. An unredeemable legal tender note had a debt paying power of one hundred cents, but it had a purchasing power which fluctuated dangerously. Garfield discounted the possibility of people hoarding gold by saying, "the moment your greenback is equal to gold, it is better than gold; for it is more convenient. . . ." 22 Concluding his speech, he counseled his fellow Representatives by suggesting that it would be foolish to turn back, when the fulfillment of resumption was so near. 23

The brilliant defense of the principles of resumption had not won enough votes; on November 23 the House passed the repeal measure by a vote of 133 to 120 with 38 abstentions. 24 As John Sherman remarked in his memoirs, "a large part of the opposition was purely political." 25 Resumption was a Republican law and Democrats hoped to defeat it. The bill moved to the Senate where it lingered in committee until mid-April, 1878. There the Republican majority amended it to death. 26

By May, 1878 the pressure of the inflationists had become so great that concessions had to be made to preserve resumption. The cause of the public clamor was the large contraction of currency which had taken place. In January, 1875 there had been banknotes valued at
332,000,000 dollars and greenbacks valued at 382,000,000 dollars in circulation, but by April, 1878 the amounts had been reduced to 321,000,000 dollars in banknotes and 347,000,000 dollars in greenbacks—a total contraction of 66,000,000 dollars. 27 Hurriedly Congress passed on May 31, 1878 an act which prohibited any further reduction of greenbacks and guaranteed that those which were redeemed would be reissued. The effect of the law was to create a permanent currency of greenbacks. Garfield's negative vote was one of only thirty-five which opposed the measure. 28

January 1, 1879 arrived without any of the grave consequences predicted by the Democrats. Hardly a murmur was heard from the economic world, but in Chicago Garfield made an address to commemorate the arrival of resumption. To him it was the end of an epoch, the financial completion of the Civil War. 29 In a speech in the House of Representatives on January 15 he hopefully requested that Congress call a truce to any further currency legislation. The business community needed time to adjust to the newly established conditions. 30

Returning to the attack, however, was Representative Ewing with his year old bill to repeal almost the entire act. On February 22, 1879 he reintroduced his measure as it had been amended by the Senate and moved for its adoption. 31 The public sale of the four per cent bonds had gone so well—in fifty days approximately 250,000,000 dollars had been subscribed—the inflationists feared that Secretary Sherman had discovered a new "contraction machine." Sherman had admitted in
his annual report of December, 1878 that he would not pay out greenbacks accept for gold. Garfield scoffed at the Democratic critics, "This bill comes to us now like a belated ghost. . . ." The business revival of the country made a mockery of the cries of calamity, Garfield claimed. He termed the attacks as, "... rude and violent assaults upon the most successful financial closing up of a great war ever known in history."

On Garfield's motion Ewing's bill was tabled by a vote of 141 to 110; the issue of the repeal of resumption was dead.

Before one threat to "honest money" passed away, another one took its place. The cry for greenbacks became a cry for "free silver." The expressed purpose of the two movements was the same, to increase the supply of currency in order to restore prosperity.

Six weeks before the adjournment of the second session of the Forty-fourth Congress Richard P. Bland introduced a bill calling for the remonetization of silver. It proposed unlimited coinage of silver at the weight of 412½ grains of silver per dollar. As a firm believer in the single gold standard, Garfield advised the House to consider the question carefully. The fluctuating tendency of the price of silver was his stated reason for taking a slow course. In the two year period 1874 to 1876 the price per ounce had gyrated from 60½ to 46 to 57 cents. To pay debts in depreciated silver would result in a partial repudiation. The only way the United States would be able to maintain its credit and honor would be to continue payments in gold. While he
affirmed his own confidence in monometallism, Garfield suggested an international conference to study the relationship of the two metals. Perhaps seven or eight countries could reach an agreement whereby silver could be kept in equipoise with gold.\textsuperscript{39}

By the summer of 1877 Garfield had changed his mind about a dual standard. At the Republican state convention in Ohio he was responsible for framing a resolution favoring the use of both silver and gold as the monetary standard.\textsuperscript{40} The change had been brought about by a summer of intense study on the problem. A book by a German author seemed to have been the most influential on Garfield's thinking. It concluded that gold mining had become very expensive as a result of the best deposits being exhausted. The price of gold was certain to increase in future years, a circumstance which would endanger its use as a single standard. A second reason given by Garfield for his shift was the fact that France had been able to keep both metals in circulation successfully. He wrote,

On these grounds I have become a probationary convert to bimetallism. Doubts hang about both theories; but more about the single standard. Hence I follow the path of least doubt.\textsuperscript{41}

The Bland Bill, having been approved by the House but delayed in the Senate, was brought back by its sponsor in the first session of the Forty-fifth Congress.\textsuperscript{42} Quickly the bill was passed again by the House and sent to the Senate. Garfield had futilely opposed the unlimited coinage feature for three reasons: it would not produce equality between the two dollars, it would not relieve the financial
distress, and it would injure the public credit. In the Republican controlled Senate two amendments were attached to the Bland-Alison Bill which greatly altered its form. One amendment provided for the call of a conference with the leading countries of Latin America and Europe in order to seek a common ratio. The more important Senate amendment was to set a monthly limit on the amount of silver coined—a figure between two to four million dollars. On February 21, 1878 both amendments received large, favorable majorities in the House with Garfield voting in the affirmative; but when the bill in its final form was brought to a vote, Garfield voted against it. Resisting strong pressures, President Hayes vetoed the bill on the grounds that it was a violation of national honor; but his decision was overridden. Republicans were demoralized by the Democratic victory, but the skillful enforcement of the law by Secretary Sherman nullified some of the advantage gained by the advocates of free silver.

The currency inflationists made one final attempt to win a complete victory during the years of Garfield's minority leadership. In May, 1879 another bill for the unlimited coinage of silver was introduced. Debating the bill, Garfield showed how far his thinking had drifted from the single gold standard by saying,

Many leading thinkers are becoming clearly of the opinion that by some wise, broad, judicious arrangement both precious metals must be kept in service for the currency of the world.
He insisted, however, that the coinage of silver stay within prescribed legal limits. To suddenly plunge into unrestricted coinage of silver was, in his opinion, sheer madness. Debate on the bill was cut off by a call for the previous question—much to Garfield’s anger. The House proceeded to pass the bill by a vote of 114 to 97, but it perished in the Senate.48

During Garfield’s early Congressional career he had hoped to reach a final solution to the financial question, but the years of continued debate had convinced him that the problems involved were too political in nature to reach a permanent settlement.

High protective tariffs, another temporary Civil War measure, came to be regarded as absolutely essential by the manufacturing interests of the country. During the years of reconstruction the defenders of the high war-time rates were successful in defeating all attempts at downward reform. Reflecting the attitudes of his rural constituency, Garfield entered Congress slightly inclined to favor free trade. His early years on the Ways and Means Committee brought him into contact with the tariff reformer David A. Wells. In 1867 Garfield had vigorously spoken for a tariff bill proposed by Wells which called for a general reduction in rates; and in 1870 he had voted to reduce the duty on pig iron—an action which had drawn the wrath of the iron men of Mahoning County. By 1876 Garfield had discovered that the political life of a tariff reformer was difficult. The overwhelming currents of industrial America and the pressures of partisan orthodoxy had made a new convert to protectionism.49
There was no major tariff legislation passed during the Hayes Administration. Two bills, the Wood Tariff and the Sugar Tariff, were introduced, but were not enacted into law. The debates on the measures on the floor of the House and in committee—Garfield was serving on the Ways and Means Committee for the second time—enabled the minority leader to express his matured tariff philosophy.

The most concise statement of Garfield’s beliefs was given by him in a speech which closed the debate on the Wood Tariff. His stated goal was to find a stable equilibrium in tariff rates which would allow American industries to make a fair profit but not punish consumers with higher prices. A tariff, according to Garfield, had two functions. The most important purpose was to raise revenue. He said, “I freely admit that revenue is the primary object of taxation.” The federal government could not exist without revenue, therefore, the power to tax was vital. The Constitution gave Congress three reasons to tax: to pay debts, to provide defense, and to promote the general welfare. Under the provision of general welfare, Garfield argued, protection of industries necessary for the growth and strength of the country was a legitimate second function of tariffs,

... it is an incidental and vitally important object of the law to keep in healthy growth those industries which are necessary to the well-being of the whole country.

Protective tariffs had permitted American industries to develop, and if they were eliminated, the United States would be reduced to an
The tariff question, Garfield stated, had been influenced too much by narrow and sectional interests. Contrary to what the proponents of the Wood Tariff thought, Garfield believed that the tariff legislation on the statute books—basically dating back to 1862 and 1864—accomplished both revenue and protection functions. He pointed out in a speech on June 4 that under a so-called revenue tariff in 1860 a revenue of $170,5 million dollars had been collected compared to 212 million dollars in 1872. In addition, Garfield argued, there had already been an indirect reduction of rates. Since tariffs were paid in coin, the gradual decrease in the price of gold, which had been the result of approaching resumption, had decreased the duties paid by foreign countries. Because the Wood Tariff would cripple the protective feature, he argued, the legislators were obligated to protect the twenty-two percent of the American people who were employed in manufacturing. When the bill was brought before the House, Garfield was instrumental in killing it by rallying enough votes to strike out the enacting clause.

The discussions on the Sugar Tariff gave Garfield another opportunity to express his viewpoints. Four considerations, he thought, should guide the lawmakers in their deliberations concerning import customs. The rates should provide revenue, protect home industries, encourage foreign trade, and safeguard the consumer. In 1878 sugar duties constituted one-sixth of all revenues from all sources. Garfield believed that the existing sugar law was based on sound
principles. It provided for higher rates on the better grades of sugar which were imported. The graduated scale of rates tended to protect the refinery interests in the United States. The only problem, as Garfield saw it, was one of enforcement, as higher grades of sugar were being imported concealed as lower types. He opposed the proposed Robbins Tariff because it "tinkered" with rates which he considered proper. The session ended without positive action on the new bill.\textsuperscript{59} The positions taken by Garfield on the Wood Tariff and the Sugar Tariff enabled him to receive the stamp of approval from industrial leaders in the Presidential campaign of 1880.\textsuperscript{60}
CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT DEBATE OF 1879

In the spring of 1879 the Democratic party embarked on a course of action which was to provide James A. Garfield with the opportunity to win his most brilliant parliamentary victory. Since the end of the Civil War there had been on the statute books three laws which had been part of the Congressional reconstruction legislation. One law authorized the use of federal troops at the polls to preserve order, another law required all jurors serving on federal courts to take a Test Oath, and the third law allowed United States marshals to appoint as many deputies as needed to prevent voting frauds.\(^1\) The total effect of the laws was to give the Republican Party a tremendous political advantage over the Democratic Party, especially in the South. In practice the deputies who were appointed were Republicans and were often illiterate Negroes. by strong-armed methods white Democrats were frequently persuaded not to vote, and those deprived of the suffrage who appealed their cases to a federal court usually were confronted by an all-Republican jury. On the other hand, the Election Laws did provide the necessary protection for Negroes exercising their newly acquired constitutional privilege. As reconstruction broke down in the mid-1870's the three remnants of military occupation became increasingly odious to Southern Congressmen.\(^2\)
When the Democrats had gained control of the House of Representatives for the first time since before the Civil War, they had attempted to force the removal of federal troops from South Carolina and Louisiana. Their method had been to attach an amendment to an Army Appropriation Bill. The non-concurrence of three conference committees had then necessitated the extra session of 1877. In the light of Hayes’s later actions the attempted coercion was unnecessary and reckless; but the Democrats, embittered by twelve years of reconstruction, were not inclined to be reasonable. Garfield cautioned the Southerners that they were re-arousing distrust and asked them,

Do you not run the risk of leading people to think you wish to break the public peace, and that by this measure you are preparing for disturbance?  

Despite the warning, the rider method was to be used more fully by the Democrats in the next session of Congress.

As the conclusion of the Forty-fifth Congress approached, the law-makers were again faced with the passage of the major appropriation bills. The Democrats had laid the ground work for a fight to repeal the Election Laws by passing House Rule 120 allowing in the case of an appropriation bill any germane amendment which reduced expenditures. In caucus they had guaranteed unity of action by requiring unanimous support of their drive against the laws. Having taken those two preliminary steps, the Democrats attached to the appropriation bills three riders nullifying the offensive laws.

On February 6 and February 19 Garfield made two speeches bitterly attacking the actions of the Democrats. Rule 120, he said,
was a ruse by which any type of legislation could be passed under the pretense of saving money.\textsuperscript{6} The Democratic Party, using caucus dictation, was trying to convert the House "into a great electioneering machine for 1880," and they were trying to assure their control of Congress by permitting outrages at the ballot-box to go unobserved and unhindered. By their plan the Democrats were preparing to intimidate the Southern Negro voters and to corrupt the vote of large northern cities. To the proponents of repeal Garfield pledged resistance by every constitutional method, "We shall resist the repeal of these laws whether it takes one night, two nights, ten nights, or all the days during which this Congress lives."\textsuperscript{7}

The conflict between the two parties moved toward a dramatic climax. The Democratic House stood firmly by its conviction that the three laws were relics of the past, and the Republican Senate stubbornly insisted that the Election Laws were vital to fair elections. In the dying hours of Congress on March 4 Garfield attempted to arrive at a compromise. He offered to agree to the repeal of the two laws providing for the Juror's Test Oath and for the safe-guarding of the polls with the army, if the Democrats would drop their fight to annul the Election Laws which allowed deputies to supervise the polls. Convinced that they would be foolish to bargain away a certain victory, the House Democrats rejected the arrangement as unsatisfactory.\textsuperscript{8}

On the surface the Democrats were in a formidable position. The new Congress, which undoubtedly would be called into an extra
session would be completely under their control. That fact made the passage of their bills a certainty. Furthermore, the Democrats banked on executive approval for two reasons: the threat of financial chaos which they held over the President's head, and the known hostility of Hayes toward the reconstruction laws. A final assurance to their ambitions was the knowledge that the record would disclose the Republicans as adherents to the rider method on numerous occasions in the past. It did not seem possible that the Republican Party could win public support by hypocritically frowning on the use of riders. Unfortunately for the Democrats, they misjudged the reaction of Hayes and never anticipated the trap which Garfield was preparing.

Sensing that he was on the verge of a significant political triumph, James A. Garfield planned his strategy carefully. The Democrats had already given the Republicans an opening wedge by forcing another unpopular extra session on the American people. Garfield knew, however, that he needed an unassailable argument to justify the Republican rejection of the rider-attached appropriation bills. The two obvious defenses were unfeasible. Only the most resolute party member could fail to see that the usefulness of the reconstruction laws had come to an end, and the weakness of an attack on the principle of riders was well appreciated by the minority leader. A third and more devious approach was decided upon by Garfield. The merits of the laws and the legality of riders were to be completely overlooked. Republicans orators were instructed to base their case on the grounds that a Democratic controlled Congress was forcing its opinions on another
independent branch of government. The effect of Garfield's plan was to raise a technical point to the level of principle. 12

One additional tactical assurance had to be obtained. The Republican Congressional stand would collapse beneath their feet unless the President gave his support. To a cautious man like Garfield, it was urgent to reach a complete understanding prior to the start of the battle. For the purpose of reaching that accord Garfield made two calls on Hayes, one on February 22 and the other on March 6. In the talks the President asserted that he would veto any appropriation bill which included the repeal of the Election Laws. 13 Rumors still persisted during the month of March that the Administration was waver-
ing on the issue. Those rumors were laid to rest when on the morning of March 18 Hayes visited Garfield. Over breakfast the Presidential veto of a bill not yet passed was read. Garfield described the incident in his journal,

While I was at breakfast the President called and read me the rough draft of his veto message of the Army appropriation bill, stating briefly the grounds of opposition and asking my advice on several points. 14

The stage was set for Garfield to launch his plan.

Using extremely solemn language, Garfield delivered a speech on March 29 which opened a dramatic three-month debate. "Revolution in Congress," as he entitled it, was the first of his seven major addresses on the appropriation controversy. More than any other man, Garfield established the pattern of the debate. Purposely his speech included a challenge to the Democrats to prove to him that his
contentions were wrong. In the first paragraph Garfield gravely pronounced his charge,

But no view I have ever taken has entered more deeply and more seriously into my conviction than this: that this House has to-day resolved to enter upon a revolution against the Constitution and Government of the United States. 15

If the Democratic Party insisted on their political amendments, it meant that they were attempting to subvert the constitutional government. "Our theory of law is free consent," Garfield asserted. The caucus decision of the Democrats was depriving the freedom of independent action from their own party members and from the President of the United States. Their threat of not appropriating the necessary funds proved that the Democrats were perfectly willing to allow the federal government to be destroyed unless the President gave into their demands. 16 Garfield cautioned the Democrats that he was not arguing the merits of the three amendments, but that he was discussing their proposed method of legislation.

It [the method of legislation] is revolutionary to the core, and is destructive of the fundamental element of American liberty, the free consent of all the power that unite to make laws.

The well-chosen words of Garfield--subversion, destruction, revolution--were designed to draw indignant, unreasoned responses. As if those words were not enough to arouse hostile passions, Garfield concluded his speech by comparing the Democrats of 1879 to the Democrats of 1861. Both, he claimed, had as their motives the
destruction of the government, one by shooting it to death the other by starving it to death. The Democrats of the Forty-sixth Congress were certainly less honorable because they were using "a method which the wildest secessionist scorned to adopt . . ."\(^1\) 

In the next four days the flood gates of bitterness opened and a stream of abusive tirade poured forth. Once again the speeches of Congressmen contained references to such dead questions as the Fugitive Slave Law, Dred Scott, and secession. A series of Democratic speakers defended the actions of their party. Unanimously they affirmed their loyalty and their right to attach riders to legislation. Almost no one, however, detected the technical logic of Garfield's argument.\(^2\)

After hearing the rebuttals, Garfield resumed his attack on April 4. He pointed out how badly his first speech had been interpreted by the Democrats, and clearly restated his thesis,

You threatened the President in advance, before you allow him an opportunity to say yes or no.\(^3\)

The Democrats had the right to use riders, but to link them to bills whose passage was necessary for the government to function, was adding the illegal element of coercion. Again Garfield offered to vote for the repeal of two laws if they were placed in separate bills. While he was offering conciliation, Garfield made an appeal for popular revulsion of the Democrats for attempting to destroy the "noble achievements" of reconstruction. If the Democrats could in 1880 gain control of both the executive and the legislative branches of government then they could "tear out one by one the records of the last
In a series of letters written between April 7 and June 6, 1879, the two speeches made by Garfield drew the friendly criticism of Professor Hinsdale. To Hinsdale the speeches of the man whom he admired and respected seemed strangely out of character. Garfield had used the words "revolution" and "new rebellion" as though he intended to create an impression of an impending crisis. Hinsdale commented cynically that when he looked out the window he saw no sign of a revolution. If Garfield had been attacking the method of the Democrats, to the average reader his point was obscured in phrases of impassioned rhetoric. Was not the method of the Democrats one which the Republicans had used with President Johnson? Certainly, Hinsdale thought, Garfield had been guilty of overstatement. Hinsdale wrote, "If you call a blazing strawpile a 'conflagration' what is Chicago on fire?" Sadly, Hinsdale believed that the speeches of Garfield were becoming increasingly partisan, and that Garfield was beginning to sacrifice "the best qualities to present effect."

Obviously hurt by the observations of his friend, Garfield sent Hinsdale the full text of both speeches so that they could be studied thoroughly. The situation in 1879 was different, Garfield believed, than it was in 1868. Although riders had been placed on appropriation bills, the Republicans had had the necessary votes to override a Presidential veto. No revolution was involved then because there had been no danger of an impasse between the two branches of government. Garfield wrote that he believed the Republicans had
exposed a potential nation-wide revolution. By disclosing the Democratic purposes to public view he had helped to prevent their plan from developing further than in Congress. Garfield admitted that a "war-horse" type of Republican had developed in the Reconstruction Period, but maintained that his own grave statements had been prompted by earnest convictions. The contest in Congress, he argued, had not been started by the Republicans, but by the Democrats.

On April 26 Garfield spoke again in the House of Representatives and taunted the Democrats with a series of rhetorical questions,

Who raised this unhappy issue? Did any republican begin it? Was it not brought here by the predetermined caucus action of the democratic party?

Forty-five Democratic speakers, Garfield claimed, had not refuted his original charges. The Democrats could have placed him in an awkward position, if they had offered their amendments as independent bills, but that had not been done. Garfield concluded, "you have made by accusation overwhelmingly true." Despite Garfield's speech the Legislative Appropriation Bill passed the House. Three days later President Hayes vetoed the Army Appropriation Bill which had been passed earlier, on the grounds that the amendments to it might deprive civil authorities of the capability to keep the peace and that the amended bill would, "tend to destroy the equal independence of the several branches of the Government." On May 1 the vetoed army bill
failed to receive the necessary two-thirds vote in either the House or the Senate. 30

By late May many members of the Democratic Party began to appreciate their dangerous situation. They had gone too far to turn back from their course, yet they were afraid to continue. 31 Earlier in May the Democrats had passed a separate bill limiting the use of the army at elections. Garfield realized that it placed the President in a weaker position, but still he advised a veto—which came on May 12. Elated over his influence over the President, Garfield wrote his wife,

I think I have never had so much intellectual and personal influence over him [Hayes] as now. He is fully in line with his party. 32

The Legislative Appropriation Bill followed the same path as the army bill. It passed the House by a vote of 141 to 120, and passed the Senate by a vote of 37 to 27, but fell victim to a veto. It too did not receive the necessary overriding votes. 33 The battle continued into June and entered a final phase.

The Democrats permitted the Legislative Appropriation Bill to pass unencumbered by any rider early in June. It was signed into law by the President on June 21, 1879. 34 Making one more attempt to prohibit the army from the election polls, the Democrats changed their amendment to the Army Appropriation Bill so as to prevent the army from being used as a police force. To Garfield the new rider was acceptable since the use of the army "as a police force" was impossible.
There were only 25,000 soldiers and there were over 40,000 polling places. Because he did not think the new amendment impeded the powers of the President in any practical way, Garfield urged the House Republicans to support the appropriation bill and was gratified over his ability to carry his party with him. The vote was 172 to 31 with only "eleven inconspicuous members" not concurring with his wishes. Prior to its passage Garfield could not resist a last opportunity to inject some campaign oratory into the debate. Denying that the army ever interfered in elections, he described the election of 1862 when he voted at Missionary Ridge. Shells were bursting and some voters were killed, he said, "That was the only military interference with elections that I ever witnessed." Only the Judiciary Appropriation Bill remained in question with its amendment directed toward the Election Laws.

During the closing phase of the debate Garfield adopted a new charge to hurl at the Democrats. In a speech on June 10 he accused them of nullification. Section Two of the judicial bill, which the Democrats had written, read:

No Department of officer of the Government shall, during said fiscal year, make any contract or incur any liability for the future payment of money until an appropriation sufficient to meet such contract or pay such liability shall have first been made by law.

Immediately the minority leader attempted to strike out the words, "or incur any liability," but he was defeated. No longer were the
Democrats attempting to repeal the laws, Garfield announced, they
were trying to prevent their enforcement. He reproached the Democrats,

Now gentlemen, that is only an indirect way of
doing temporarily for one year what you have no
constitutional authority to do absolutely and
permanently.40

On June 19 Garfield continued his attack. By deliberately not appro-
priating enough money, Congress would make it impossible for President
Hayes to fulfill his constitutional obligation to enforce the laws.
Garfield offered the Democrats a compromise which would have required
a federal judge to appoint an equal number of Democrats and Republicans
as election deputies, but he observed, "They [the House Democrats]
do not wish to better the law, but to annul it."41 The last speech
which Garfield made in the extra sessions ensnared additional Democrats
into making rash statements. In the speech, given on June 27, he
cited Democratic speakers as saying that there were no "national"
elections, that there were no "national" voters, that the states were
sovereign regarding all elections, and that the United States was
actually a confederacy. Those statements, Garfield commented, indicated
that the Democrats had drifted back to extreme states sovereignty
beliefs. They are "more rabid in their states' sovereignty than ever
before, except perhaps before the Civil War."42 Garfield then stated
his personal beliefs: the United States was created by sovereign
people and not sovereign states, the United States was a federal nation
with national laws, and the federal government had the right to defend
itself against individual states. States' sovereignty, he added, was the "incarnate devil of America." The Republican party would always insist on supervising national elections with national officers. 43

Even on June 27 many Democrats did not conceive how Garfield had led them into extreme views. His attack on states' rights was more than Southern Democrats could bear. Two ex-Confederate officers, Alexander H. Stephens and John H. Reagan, proceeded to lecture Garfield and the Republicans on the foundations of states' rights. 44 Some Democrats insisted that they would never pay deputy marshals to supervise elections. 45

The last effort to pass the Judicial Appropriation Bill met with another veto. Hayes used familiar language in his veto message, "the principle of this bill is to make a radical, dangerous, and unconstitutional change in the character of our institutions." 46 On June 30 Congress voted to adjourn. 47

Most Republican leaders considered the extra session of Congress to be a complete victory. Only the United States marshals received no appropriation; 45,000,000 dollars had been scheduled to be appropriated and of that amount all but 600,000 dollars was provided by legislation. 48 Garfield's viewpoints of the session were expressed in a letter to Hinsdale, "Party wise, the extra session has united the Republicans more than anything since 1868—and it bids fair to give us 1880." 49

Using all the skills of an expert parliamentarian, James A. Garfield had implanted in the public mind the idea that the Democratic Party was irresponsible in a position of power. He had aroused the
suspicion that the Democrats of 1879 were very much like the Democrats of 1859. All Republicans could agree that Democrats as Garfield had represented them were dangerous to the Republican Party. On that common ground united Republicans could sally forth to save the country. The appeal may not have been reasonable, but it was successful. Where no hope existed before, Garfield had made election victory in 1880 a distinct possibility.

The problem of unpaid marshals came up in the second session of the Forty-sixth Congress. Although all the old arguments and passions were renewed, a different aspect was brought into focus by the capable Senator Allen G. Thurman. In the years 1877 and 1878, Thurman proved, the great proportion of the money spent by the government enforcing the Election Laws had been spent in the North--most of it in New York. Laws which had originally been adopted to protect the Southern Negro voter had, in actual practice, been used to provide the Republican Party with additional campaign funds in a key state. The argument was devastating.

In defense of the Election Laws on March 19, 1880 Garfield proceeded to debate around the points made by Thurman. Two important factors came to his rescue. Many die-hard Democrats had been guilty of careless language by threatening to break the laws, if they were not repealed; and secondly, the Supreme Court had recently ruled in a decision ex parte Siebold that the Election Laws were constitutional. Just because the members of a political party do not agree with a law, Garfield reasoned, was no excuse to break it. Even the talk of
disobedience by Congressmen was establishing a bad example to the turbulent elements of American society. If the Supreme Court ruled that a law was constitutional, all citizens were obligated to obey it. To the list of crimes attributed to the Democrats, Garfield added a new one, "Now this cool, calm, deliberate assassination of the law will not be tolerated." Recognizing that an impartial selection of deputies could lead to electioneering, Garfield repeated his offer to change the Election Laws so that circuit judges would be required to appoint an equal number of Democrats and Republicans as deputies. Quickly seizing their opportunity, the Democrats incorporated Garfield's proposal verbatim as a rider to the Deficiency Bill. Consistency enabled Garfield to oppose it on the ground of the change being a rider, but the Democratic move did place Garfield in a situation where he was opposing his own suggestion. The amended Deficiency Bill passed the House by a vote of 111 to 104 with Garfield recorded against it. Knowing that President Hayes would have reasonable justification to veto the bill, Senate Democrats, led by Thomas Bayard, copied Garfield's proposed change and passed it as a separate bill. Party loyalty demanded that Hayes veto the Bayard Bill which he did on June 15. Fate did not permit Garfield to witness that final embarrassment; on May 23, 1880 he had left Washington to go to the Republican Nominating Convention in Chicago.
CHAPTER V

THE EDUCATOR AS A LEGISLATOR

James A. Garfield in his meteoric public career assumed many varied roles. Soldier, lawyer, Congressman, and President were positions in which he served with distinguished success, but none of those professions was as esteemed to him as his role as an educator. Garfield in his day symbolized the scholar in public life, and his efforts in the field of education must be regarded as one of his outstanding achievements.

During his Congressional years Garfield was often accused of drifting with the tide of public opinion rather than maintaining firm principles. Undoubtedly there was some truth to the charge for his instincts as a politician would not tolerate any other standard of conduct. His career was spotted with instances of shifts in policy, but no shiftiness was evident in his beliefs concerning education. Perhaps a partial explanation for his apparent hesitation and uncertainty in other matters was, as his friend and colleague George F. Hoar suggested, not a weakness in character, but an aspect of an inquiring mind.

Garfield's hesitation, want of certainty, liability to change his position suddenly were in my opinion the result of intellectual hesitation and of a habit of going down to the roots of his mind, nobody and no consideration of personal interest or advantage could stir him an inch.1

54
From the first moment he entered the House of Representatives until he left it eighteen years later the former professor of Hiram College never forgot his academic pursuits. The Congressional Record recorded countless requests by Representative Garfield for delays or for more debating time in order to discuss a problem more fully.

Garfield's desk was frequently piled high with books and manuscripts as he diligently prepared on as many as ten topics at once. Along with Oliver P. Morton and Charles Sumner, he was one of the most frequent users of the Library of Congress, and the range of his reading interest was phenomenal. Garfield was immensely proud of the Library and of its Head Librarian, and he voted for any practical suggestion designed to improve its services. As a result of his intellectual endeavors Garfield was as much a leader of thought as he was a leader of men. E. L. Godkin, who was often critical of Garfield when his conduct appeared to yield to party pressure, analyzed the minority leader's intellectual quality in an editorial in the Nation.

Mr. Garfield is one of the few Republicans statesmen of the day who is a real orator and whose speeches one cannot easily sketch before he delivers them—that is, he is not a party hack and has personal opinions and utters them.

As early in his Congressional career as 1866 Garfield proposed legislation which had as its objective the advancement of the American educational system. On February 14 of that year he introduced in the House a bill proposing a National Bureau of Education. After being debated and amended it was defeated by a vote of sixty-one to fifty-nine.
Ten years later on June 19, 1876 a similar bill was introduced and it gained the necessary votes for passage. A progressive step had been taken even though the Bureau in later years was often to suffer from lack of funds.  

In many House speeches Garfield deplored the concept that the powers of government were rigidly divided into state powers and federal powers. He asserted that there was a third classification, "voluntary powers" left to the personal discretion of individual citizens. Freedom to choose one's own religion was a good example. In a statement bristling with laissez faire philosophy Garfield said,

> It is a safe and wise rule to follow in all legislation, that whatever the people can do without legislation will be better done than by the intervention of the State of the nation.  

The principle of non-intervention did not, in his mind, apply to the field of public education. For as he said, "It is cheaper and wiser to give education than to build jails." The national government was not, however, to rush into giving aid for education haphazardly because, he thought, too many local school systems tended to be overly ambitious. More money should be spent, Garfield believed, not for elaborate buildings, but on teachers' salaries. Smaller schools and more teachers was his favorite axiom.

Money for federal aid to education was to come from the proceeds from the sale of public lands. That sum of money in 1872 constituted approximately one per cent of all federal revenues. The only control over the money given to each state was to be an annual report
listing the projects on which the gift federal aid was spent. Part of the funds devoted to education Garfield thought, should be applied to establishing schools at all army posts. (Sixty-nine posts already had such schools.) There, English and United States History could be taught to good advantage, and the time occupied studying those subjects would alleviate the greatest danger to a soldier, idleness. The largest amount of money granted to the states was, by Garfield's plan, to go to those sections of the country which desperately needed to raise their standard of education but were not in a financial position to do it themselves. Specifically, Garfield hoped that sizable amounts of money would be appropriated to school systems in the South. There the problem of an ignorant electorate had been aggravated by the Fifteenth Amendment. In a speech in the House immediately after the Civil War Garfield posed the question, "Shall we enlarge the boundaries of citizenship and make no provision to increase the intelligence of the citizen?" He staunchly believed that the best life insurance for democracy was better schools. Free public education had prevented the rise of fixed classes in the United States by providing anyone with the opportunity to advance, regardless of the "depth of poverty his lot may be cast..." To the very end of his public service Garfield affirmed his dedication to advancing the cause of learning. In his letter of acceptance of the nomination for President he ranked education next to freedom and justice, and in his Inaugural Address he stated,
All the constitutional power of the nation end of the States, and all the volunteer forces of the people, should be summoned to meet this danger [an ignorant electorate] by the saving influence of universal education. 14

In one of his last letters to Hinsdale, Garfield made his final reference to the subject,

I am going to keep that subject [education] before me all the time, and shall see that something is done in that direction if possible. 15

In his beliefs toward education, if in no other, Garfield's political motives remained completely submerged.

If the short term as President afforded Garfield no chance to demonstrate his sincerity on improvement of education, his position as minority leader in the House of Representatives did. Not only was he in favor of education bills, he was also in favor of "educated bills," legislation based on facts not fancy. To illustrate that premise, E. V. Smalley once described an incident which occurred during Garfield's service as Chairman of the Appropriation Committee. At the chairman's request the committee, which at the time was studying the ninth census bill, met in a basement room of the capitol. There for two weeks Garfield conducted a symposium of research and discussion. Every census law ever passed in the United States was analyzed in intricate detail. 16

When he was a member of the Ways and Means Committee during the Forty-Sixth Congress, Garfield moved the unanimous adoption of a report favoring the purchase of a set of books relating to finance.
The cost of five hundred dollars seemed extravagant to some legislators, but he argued that the books were necessary to enable committee members to write more intelligent bills. The finance books were to be a "kit of tools" for the committee. The report was adopted by a vote of 172 to 67 with 52 abstentions.\(^1\)

Another method to promote better legislation was suggested by Garfield. To help coordinate the executive and legislative branches of government, he proposed that cabinet members be allowed to sit in Congress as non-voting members. On the floor of the House or Senate they could actively work for the passage of bills on which they had strong opinions.\(^2\) The growing complexities of government, he thought, demanded closer harmony between the two branches on vital legislation.

The census studies which the House's Appropriation Committee had made clearly indicated that a different law was needed. Because of his prior study in the area, James A. Garfield was prominent in considering new legislation. The old act still had a slave schedule, and the fact that it stipulated United States marshals to take the count was a point of controversy. Naturalized citizens tended to be quite dubious of questions which might deprive them of their right to vote.\(^3\) The question of a revised census act was injected into discussions in the House of Representatives in both the Forty-fifth and Forty-sixth Congresses. During that period Garfield worked to remove the issue from party politics. If a census was accurately taken, he argued, it could provide a wealth of valuable information which would
be useful to all departments of governments. The census could truly become a noble institution. Throughout the debates, which culminated in a new act on April 13, 1879, Garfield rose to give numerous suggestions and advice.\textsuperscript{20} Although the new census act was not a "Garfield law," its final form certainly had been influenced by him.

Garfield's scholarship and desire for intelligent legislation were reflected in a multitude of bills either passed or considered during the years 1876 to 1880. He was, for example, one of the first men to suggest an annual national budget. His term of duty on the Appropriation Committee had confirmed his ideas that there was a definite need for the systematic planning of federal expenditures. Reflecting the experienced of his years as a legislator, Garfield's plan called for a Congressional committee to formulate the budget and not the Chief Executive.\textsuperscript{21}

As a state senator Garfield had supported a geological survey of Ohio, and true to form as a member of the House of Representatives he supported the coastal survey and the plans for a complete national geological survey.\textsuperscript{22} The accurate determination of locations and boundaries had become essential as two waves of settlement—one from the west and one from the east—were rapidly converging. The old checkerboard of land survey was not suitable to the mountainous terrain of the West, therefore, Garfield worked for the adoption of a new method. He was for change not for the sake of change but to intelligently meet new situations.\textsuperscript{23} Despite the high cost of an accurate geological survey Garfield regarded its completion as imperative for
the proper growth of the country. He gave his strongest views on the subject in the House,

[The geological survey is] a work which cannot be done in a day, which may not be done in the next twenty-five years, and every generation of men, every Congress, every Committee on Appropriations honors itself and its intelligence when it helps on this grand and comprehensive and most important work.24

James A. Garfield also favored the creation of many commissions and investigating committees to look into special national problems. During the third session of the Forty-fifth Congress he introduced a resolution to find a means to prevent yellow fever by sending a commission into the highly infested areas of the country.25 In 1878 he introduced a bill, which Charles Francis Adams had written for him, favoring more thorough investigation of railroad accidents.26 He also favored a permanent government for the District of Columbia. Garfield's plan for government of the District called for commissioners appointed by the President of the United States and not by Congress.27

During the Forty-sixth Congress Garfield spoke in favor of river and harbor legislation, "I believe in the river and harbor legislation of this country. I believe in promoting and improving the great internal water courses of the country."28 A commission was needed, he said, to study the improvement of the Mississippi River from source to mouth.29 Over and over again the quest for scientific study and investigation appeared as an integral part of Garfield's ideas on how to achieve intelligent legislation.
The fight to maintain an adequate standing army was another activity of the Representative from Ohio. Early in the first session of the Forty-fifth Congress Garfield voted for an amendment to the Army Appropriation Bill which kept the number of men at 25,000 rather than reducing the size of the army to 20,000. He pointed out that many of the first one hundred years of the country had been war years, and he warned that the threat of a conflict with Mexico and that the continuing crisis with the western Indians constituted ample reasons for keeping a strong army. The nation was still disturbed over the strikes of 1877 when Garfield said, "I am for the reign of law in this Republic and for an army large enough to make it sure." Garfield's beliefs on labor tolerated strikes and granted the workers the right of protection from iniquitous laws, but neither labor nor capital had the right to coerce workers to do things which they did not want to do. Violence and mob action were not compatible with the American system.

There were two pieces of legislation on which Garfield took a stand which became major issues after his death. As early as 1878 Garfield had spoken for legislation which foreshadowed the Interstate Commerce Act. He had taken an affirmative position on a railroad bill striving to give equal facilities to all customers and to set fair rates on long and short hauls. Unfortunately the measure was shelved because of the adjournment of Congress. The second bill on
which Garfield expressed opinions was the question of regulating the use of alcoholic beverages. In relationship to determining taxes and import duties he advised members of the House to gather information on the sale of whisky. Because drinking fell in the domain of personal moral conduct, Garfield did not suggest a prohibition law, but he did favor a study of the problem to illuminate the areas in which Congress might have moral obligation. Substantiating his views he said,

... it would not hurt any member of this House to have his intelligence illuminated and his conscience informed on the relationship of the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors to the public welfare.... the business of this House is to get information.  

The last contribution which Garfield made to the House of Representatives was his work on the revision of rules. At the opening of the Forty-sixth Congress he and five other prominent House leaders were appointed to a select committee whose purpose was to simplify and organize the existing rules. (Garfield again lost the Speakership contest to Randall.)

There had not been a major overhauling of the rules in ninety years, and the additions and the amendments in that number of years had created a parliamentary maze of confusion. Only a few of the veteran Representatives could say that they had mastered the rules, and a new member to Congress was often completely baffled by them. Since the work had been delayed so long, at the suggestion of Garfield the committee took time to work on the revision during the summer vacation months. On March 2, 1880 the new rules were adopted by the House without a dissent.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

As he journeyed to Chicago in the spring of 1880 the Senator-elect of Ohio could hardly suspect that his Congressional service had ended. Fully expecting to return to Congress in the winter, James A. Garfield delivered no farewell address in the halls which had been the scene of so many of his speeches. The coming year was to see the culmination of Garfield's political career in his election to the Presidency of the United States; but the unfinished work of the statesman was to remain incomplete.\(^1\) A true judgement of the place of Garfield in American history cannot be based merely on his seven months as President or on estimates of what might have been if assassination had not cut his life short. The proper assessment of Garfield's success or failure must be based to a large extent on his eighteen years in the House of Representatives and particularly on his last four years of service during the Hayes Administration.

Hayes's term of office produced little constructive legislation. The Bland-Allison Act, the most important law passed, was considered a minor victory for the Democrats. Actually, on the whole, the Republicans successfully checked the soft-money ideals of paper money and "free silver." Greenbacks were made redeemable, and silver coinage was limited. Resumption of specie payments was inaugurated on
January 1, 1879 despite Democratic efforts to the contrary, and
prosperity slowly returned to the country.

The disputed election of 1876 was a decisive factor in the
events of the four years. Hayes's questionable victory and the
control of Congress by the Democrats placed the Republicans on the
defensive. Too eager to capitalize on their dominant position, the
Democracy rushed into serious mistakes. The Potter Committee cast
suspicion on the defeated Democratic Presidential candidate, and the
election laws struggle cast suspicion on the Democratic Party. In
1880 a Republican President, a Republican Senate, and a Republican House
of Representatives were elected.

Forced by circumstances into a position of minority leader-
ship, Garfield had fought to preserve Republican programs and to
restore complete Republican control of the national government. His
objectives were made more difficult to achieve because of Presidential
policies which tended to split the Republicans. By necessity Garfield
became more of a party leader than a Congressional leader. Skillfully,
he maneuvered the Democrats into a position which made their party
appear unworthy of high office and enabled Republican orators to
question the loyalty of the Democratic Party. In one masterful stroke
Garfield had given the Republicans an explosive campaign issue and
had provided the one point on which his party could find unity.

Garfield's own triumphs were primarily a result of personal
qualities and abilities. While it was true that his reputation as a
good party man was extremely helpful, he was not a machine politician. Partisanship and personal ambition were driving forces in the life of Garfield, but so were devotion to duty and personal integrity. Many people voted for Garfield because his intellectual and religious qualities gave them faith in him as a person. Garfield, in his rise from a humble birth to national prominence, symbolized the American ideal of the self-made man.

Unfortunately for Garfield he lived in an age when real national issues were subordinated to party loyalties deeply rooted in sectional strife. On two important problems, civil service and inter-state commerce, he gave only token support to constructive proposals. Yet, Garfield must be remembered as one of the outstanding legislators of the 1870's. His record in the House illustrated the fact that he was willing to adjust his beliefs in order to achieve a partial rather than a complete victory. On the dominant issue of his legislative career, sound money, Garfield accepted what to him was an imperfect solution. Redemption was achieved, but a large number of greenbacks was kept in circulation; gold was preserved as the chief monetary standard, but a limited amount of silver was coined. The ability to compromise, a trait which made him a successful legislator, opened Garfield to the criticism of men who accused him of having a convenient conscience. The picture of a man willing to surrender his beliefs, and the picture of a man dedicated to party control must always cast doubt on the executive aptitude of Garfield.
Rutherford B. Hayes expressed great satisfaction over the nomination of Garfield by the Republican convention of June, 1880. That a man so closely allied to his Administration should be honored, was proof to Hayes that his Presidency had been vindicated. If that was true, then the nomination and the subsequent election of James A. Garfield was a testimonial to the confidence he had won as minority leader of the Republican Party.
FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

1 See Paul L. Haworth, The Hayes-Tilden Disputed Election of 1876 or C. Vann Woodward, Reunion and Reaction for the complete description of this period. (These works will hereafter be referred to as Haworth, Disputed Election and Woodward, Reunion.)

2 Not only were the partisan newspapers filled with these rumors, but the atmosphere also prevailed in Congress. Even the names of potential field generals were discussed.

3 Theodore C. Smith, The Life and Letter of James Abram Garfield, I, 646. (This work will hereafter be referred to as Smith, Life and Letters.)

4 Letter Garfield to Hinsdale, January 7, 1873, Mary L. Hinsdale, ed., Garfield-Hinsdale Letters, 309. (This work will hereafter be referred to as Hinsdale, Garfield-Hinsdale.)

5 James D. McCabe, Our Martyred President, 221.

6 Robert G. Caldwell, James A. Garfield, Party Chieftain, 223-230, 236-238. (This work will hereafter be referred to as Caldwell, Party Chieftain.)

7 Ibid., 233-36.

8 Haworth, Disputed Election, 45-48.

9 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 247.

10 Charles R. Williams, The Life of Rutherford B. Hayes, I, 495. (This work will hereafter be referred to as Williams, Life of Hayes.)

11 Haworth, Disputed Election, 49-51. The chief men who were involved were John C. Reid and W. E. Chandler.

12 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 252.

13 Smith, Life and Letters, I, 623.
15. Ibid., 618.
16. Letter to Hinsdale, November 11, 1876, Hinsdale, Garfield-Hinsdale, 340-42.
17. Letter Garfield to Hinsdale, December 4, 1876, ibid., 343-45; Smith, Life and Letters, I, 615.
23. Speech in House of Representatives, January 20, 1877, Congressional Record; 44th Congress, 2nd session, V, 792.
25. Williams, Life of Hayes, I, 524; Speech in House of Representatives, January 23, 1877, Congressional Record, 44th Congress, 2nd session, V, 971.
27. Williams, Life of Hayes, I, 526.
28. Haworth, Disputed Election, 217; Congressional Record, 44th Congress, 2nd session, V, 1050.
29. Charles R. Williams, ed., Diary and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes, Nineteenth President of the United States, III, 375-77. (This work will hereafter be referred to as Williams, Diary of Hayes.)
30. Letter Hayes to John Sherman, January 5, 1877, ibid., 400.
31. Ibid., 406.
32. Letter Garfield to Hinsdale, December 18, 1876, Hinsdale, Garfield-Hinsdale, 347.
33 Letter Garfield to Hayes, January 19, 1877, Williams, *Diary of Hayes*, III, 408-09.


43 *Congressional Record*, 44th Congress, 2nd session, V, 1050.

44 *Ibid.*, 1113. The five Representatives who were selected were Garfield, Hoar, Payne, Hunton and Abbott.


47 Haworth, *Disputed Election*, 168, 200-03.


51 Congressional Record, 44th Congress, 2nd session, V, 242.
52 Ibid., 56-57, 118-19, 178, 192.
53 Haworth, Disputed Election, 206-207.
54 Ibid., 236-45, 255-57.
55 Smith, Life and Letters, I, 641.
56 Haworth, Disputed Election, 268.
57 Smith, Life and Letter, I, 644; Williams, Life of Hayes, I, 533-34.
58 Haworth, Disputed Election, 270.
59 Speech in House of Representatives, February 13, 1878, Congressional Record, 43rd Congress, 2nd session, VII, 1010.
60 Haworth, Disputed Election, 275-76.
61 Ibid., 277-80.
62 Smith, Life and Letters, I, 645.
64 Ibid., 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 2522.
65 Ibid., 3488.
66 Smith, Life and Letters, II, 666.
67 Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 3439, 3471, 3483, 3501, 3524, 3529.
68 Ibid., 3528-29, 3447.
69 Ibid., 3578; Smith, Life and Letters, II, 669.
70 Haworth, Disputed Election, 308-13.
72 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 251.
CHAPTER II

1 Smith, Life and Letters, I, 647.

2 An entry in the Garfield Journal, March 6, 1877, as quoted in ibid.

3 Ibid., 648.

4 Ibid.

5 Letter to Hinsdale, March 10, 1877, Hinsdale, Garfield-Hinsdale, 368.

6 Letter Garfield to Hinsdale, January 28, 1880, ibid., 437.

7 Smith, Life and Letters, I, 648.

8 Ibid., 649.

9 Ibid., 650.

10 That title was given to Garfield by Robert G. Caldwell in his book, James A. Garfield Party Chieftain.

11 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 247.

12 Smith, Life and Letters, II, 638-69.


14 Smith, Life and Letters, II, 704.

15 Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 2nd session, X, 3766.

16 An entry in the Garfield Journal, March 29, 1877, as quoted in Smith, Life and Letters, II, 651.

17 Smith, Life and Letters, II, 664.

18 Ibid., 659.

19 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 262.


72
21 Ibid., 657.
22 Letter Garfield to Hinsdale, March 10, 1877, Hinsdale, Garfield-Hinsdale, 368.
23 An entry of February 25, 1877, Williams, Diary of Hayes, III, 421.
24 Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 1st session, VI, 50-53.
26 Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 1st session, VI, 53-54.
27 Williams, Life of Hayes, II, 34.
28 Ibid., 42.
29 Ibid., 51-53.
30 The five commissioners were John M. Harlan, James R. Hawley, Charles B. Lawrence, Wayne Macveagh, and John C. Brown.
31 An entry of April 22, 1877, Williams, Diary of Hayes, III, 430.
32 Williams, Life of Hayes, II, 38.
33 An entry of April 22, 1877, Williams, Diary of Hayes, III, 430.
34 Speech in House of Representatives, February 19, 1878, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 1192.
35 Ibid., 1192-93.
36 Ibid.
37 In the speech on February 19 Garfield referred to the murder of Negroes at Hamburg and Ellenton, Louisiana. No one was indicted.
38 Speech in House of Representatives, February 19, 1878, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 1192.
39 Ibid., 1194.
40 An entry of April 22, 1877, Williams, Diary of Hayes, III, 430.
42. An entry of April 22, 1877, Williams, Diary of Hayes, III, 430.
43. An entry of October 24, 1877, Ibid., 449.
44. Smith, Life and Letters, II, 653.
45. Letter Garfield to Hinsdale, March 10, 1877, Hinsdale, Garfield-Hinsdale, 368.
46. Letter Hayes to Sherman, May 26, 1877, as quoted in Williams, Life of Hayes, II, 74-76.
47. Williams, Life of Hayes, II, 74-76.
48. Ibid.
49. Letter Garfield to Hinsdale, September 10, 1877, Hinsdale, Garfield-Hinsdale, 377-78.
50. An entry of October 18, 1877, Williams, Diary of Hayes, III, 448.
51. Burke A., Hinsdale, The Works of James Abram Garfield, II, 483. (This work will hereafter be referred to as Hinsdale, Works.)
52. Ibid., 486-88.
53. Williams, Life of Hayes, II, 104.
CHAPTER III

1Don Carlos Barrett, The Greenbacks and Resumption of Specie Payments, 1862-1879, pp. 181-83. (This work will hereafter be referred to as Barrett, Resumption.)

2Williams, Life of Hayes, II, 115.

3Barrett, Resumption, 162, 202-03, 210-15.

4James D. McCabe, Our Martyred President, 284.

5Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 157.

6Speech in Faneuil Hall, Boston, September 10, 1878, Hinsdale, Works, II, 594.

7Speech in House of Representatives, March 6, 1878, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 1526.

8Speech in Faneuil Hall, Boston, September 10, 1878, Hinsdale, Works, II, 607.

9Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 3rd session, VIII, 1503.

10Speech in Faneuil Hall, Boston, September 10, 1878, Hinsdale, Works, II, 588-89.


12Speech in House of Representatives, March 6, 1878, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 1527.

13Hinsdale, Works, II, 601.

14Ibid., 602.

15Speech in House of Representatives, June 12, 1878, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 4501.

16Speech in Faneuil Hall, Boston, September 10, 1878, Hinsdale, Works, II, 592.

17Speech in Chicago, January 2, 1879, Ibid., 613-18.
18 Speech in House of Representatives, November 16, 1877, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 1st session, VI, 464.

19 John Sherman, Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate, and Cabinet, II, 597. (This work will hereafter be referred to as Sherman, Recollections.)

20 Smith, Life and Letters, II, 661.

21 The Speaker's hammer fell before Garfield was finished, but there were many cries to allow him to continue. Fifteen additional minutes were allotted to him.

22 Speech in House of Representatives, November 16, 1877, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 1st session, VI, 461-63.

23 Ibid., 464.

24 Ibid., 632.

25 Sherman, Recollections, II, 598. Garfield quoted Hewitt as describing resumption as a Republican measure which should not be supported by the Democrats, Hinsdale, Works, II, 332.

26 Ibid., 597-98.

27 Barrett, Resumption, 189. The exact amount of greenbacks kept in circulation was $346,681,016.

28 Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 2928.


30 Speech in House of Representatives, January 15, 1879, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 3rd session, VIII, 470.

31 Speech in House of Representatives, February 22, 1879, ibid., 1778-79. The two Senate amendments made greenbacks receivable for 4% bonds and for payment of customs.


33 Speech in House of Representatives, February 22, 1879, ibid., 1787.

34 Ibid., 1794.

35 Ibid., 1795.
36__Ibid., 44th Congress, 2nd session, V, 171.

37_Speech in House of Representatives, December 13, 1876, __Ibid.,
167.

38_Speech in House of Representatives, July 13, 1876, Hinsdale,
Works, II, 342.

39_Speech in House of Representatives, December 13, 1876,
Congressional Record, 44th Congress, 2nd session, V, 168.

40_Smith, Life and Letters, II, 655.

41_Letter Garfield to Hinsdale, September 10, 1877, Hinsdale,
Garfield-Hinsdale, 376.

42_Williams, Life of Hayes, II, 112-14.

43_Speech in House of Representatives, February 21, 1878,
Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 1279.

44_Ibid., 1284-1285. The vote on the international conference
was 196 to 71 and on the two to four million dollar restriction 203
to 72.

45_An entry of November 5, 1877, Williams, Diary of Hayes, III,
460-62.

46_Smith, Life and Letters, II, 663.

47_Speech in House of Representatives, May 17, 1879, Congres-
sional Record, 46th Congress, 1st session, IX, 1443.

48_Ibid., 1444, 1532.

49_Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 192-99.

50_Speech in House of Representatives, June 4, 1878, Congress-
al Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, app., 293-94.

51_Ibid., 291.

52_Hinsdale, Works, II, 559.

53_Ibid., 561.

54_Speech in House of Representatives, June 4, 1878,
Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, app., 292.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid., 293.
57 Hinsdale, Works, II, 569. The vote was 134 yeas to 121 noes.
59 Ibid., 1967, 2256.
60 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 200.
CHAPTER IV

1 Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 1st session, IX, 117.

2 Haworth, Disputed Election, 83, 88.

3 Speech in House of Representatives, March 3, 1877, Congressional Record, 44th Congress, 2nd session, V, 2247-48, 2252.

4 Smith, Life and Letters, II, 674.

5 Speech in House of Representatives, March 3, 1879, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 3rd session, VIII, 2381-82.

6 Speech in House of Representatives, February 6, 1879, ibid., 1067.

7 Speech in House of Representatives, February 19, 1879, ibid., 1617-18.

8 Ibid., 2381-84.

9 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 266.

10 In a speech on April 30, 1878 Hewitt had accused Garfield of initiating more riders than any other man in public office. Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 2986.

11 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 266.


13 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 266-67.


15 Speech in House of Representatives, March 29, 1879, Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 1st session, IX, 115.

16 Ibid., 116.

17 Ibid., 117-18.

18 Ibid., 119.

19 Speech in House of Representatives, April 4, 1879, Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 1st session, IX, 243.
20 Ibid., 244.
21 Letter Hinsdale to Garfield, April 27, 1879, Hinsdale, Garfield-Hinsdale, 405.
22 Letter Hinsdale to Garfield, June 6, 1879, ibid., 420.
23 Letter Hinsdale to Garfield, April 27, 1879, ibid., 410.
24 Letter to Hinsdale, April 9, 1879, ibid., 403.
25 Letter to Hinsdale, May 20, 1879, ibid., 413.
26 Ibid., 414-16. Garfield thought the contest had been conceived by Senator Thurman hoping to win support for the Democratic Presidential nomination in 1880.
27 Speech in House of Representatives, April 26, 1879, Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 1st session, IX, 946.
28 Ibid. Rep. Kelly, Garfield's old adversary, said that he thought Garfield had undergone a "mental revolution." Ibid., 947.
29 Ibid., 993-94.
30 Ibid., 1014-15.
33 Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 1st session, IX, 960, 1484-85, 1709-11.
34 Ibid., 1876, 2280.
37 Speech in House of Representatives, June 11, 1879, Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 1st session, IX, 1938.
38 Speech in House of Representatives, June 10, 1879, ibid., 1879, 1893-94.
39 Ibid., 1899.

40 Ibid., 1893.

41 Speech in House of Representatives, June 19, 1879, Ibid., 2183.

42 Speech in House of Representatives, June 27, 1879, Ibid., 2388.

43 Ibid., 2389-90.

44 Ibid., 2391-92.

45 Speech in House of Representatives, June 19, 1879, Ibid., 2184.

46 Ibid., 2400.

47 Ibid., 2442.

48 Ibid., 2453.


50 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 271.

51 Speech in House of Representatives, March 17, 1880, Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 2nd session, X, 1640.

52 Speech in House of Representatives, March 19, 1880, Ibid., 1706.

53 Ibid., 1715-16.

54 Caldwell, Party Chieftain, 272-73; Smith, Life and Letters, II, 696-97.
CHAPTER V

1 George F. Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years, I, 398.
2 Smith, Life and Letters, II, 701.
3 Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 1st session, IX, 1196.
4 Editorial in Nation, January 8, 1880, as quoted in Smith, Life and Letters, II, 720.
5 Burke A. Hinsdale, President Garfield and Education, 161. (This work will hereafter be referred to as Hinsdale, Education.)
6 Speech in House of Representatives, February 11, 1879, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 3rd session, VIII, 1209.
7 Ibid.
8 Hinsdale, Education, 339-41.
9 Ibid., 218-219, 229.
10 Ibid., 173.
11 Ibid., 169-71.
12 Ibid., 212; Speech in House of Representatives, May 21, 1878, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 3637.
14 Inaugural Address, March 4, 1881, ibid., 792.
17 Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 2nd session, X, 298-99.
18 Hinsdale, Works, II, 484.
19 Congressional Record, 46th Congress, 2nd session, X, 2034.

82


36. *Ibid.*, 28. The members of the committee were Stephens, Randall, Blackburn, Fyfe, and Garfield.


CHAPTER VI

1 Hinsdale, Garfield-Hinsdale, 433.

2 Letter Hinsdale to Garfield, January 13, 1880, ibid., 435.

3 Letter Hinsdale to Garfield, November 9, 1880, ibid., 464.

4 Even Horatio Alger, Jr. made the life of Garfield the subject of one of his books, From Canal Boy to President.

5 The criticism was made by Rep. Samuel S. Cox, May 13, 1878, Congressional Record, 45th Congress, 2nd session, VII, 3439.

6 An entry of June 5, 1880, Williams, Diary of Hayes, III, 600-01.
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