

CHAPTER XIII.

SAMUEL SWARTWOUT, COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS.

1829-1838.

ON the fourth of March, 1829, General Andrew Jackson was inaugurated president of the United States of America. John Quincy Adams, whom he succeeded, was the only one of his six predecessors who had held the office for four years, each of the others had served two terms. In politics the first two had been federalists and the last four republicans. General Jackson was the first person to represent the democratic party in the administration of the national government.

In his inaugural address in speaking of the appointment of men to offices by the executive, he said: "I shall endeavor to select men whose diligence and talents will insure in their respective stations, able and faithful co-operation, depending for the advancement of the public service, more on the integrity and zeal of the public officers, than on their numbers."

Thirteen days after his inauguration the senate adjourned. During its recess, President Jackson made a number of appointments, embracing ministers plenipotentiary, consuls, collectors of customs, surveyors of ports, naval officers, marshals, district-attorneys, department officials, receivers and registers of western lands, which caused him to be accused by his political opponents of rewarding those of his partisans who had been instrumental in promoting his election and of removing men against whom no act of official delinquency had been proved. He was charged by them "with usurping an authority not conferred by the constitution, which it was contended only gave him the right to fill vacancies either accidentally occurring, or caused by some official misconduct, and even, if acting within the limits of his constitutional prerogative, it was a proscription for opinion's sake contrary to the spirit of our institutions and without a precedent in the history of the country." His partisans, on the other hand, contended "that the executive was solely invested with the right of removal, that it was a discretionary right, for the exercise of which he was responsible solely to the nation, that that power was given to enable him not