

irreparable loss in the death of his wife, from cancer, after a long and painful illness.

How much Col. Burr's subsequent misfortunes were due to the loss of this estimable lady, can not be determined, but it is certain that, had she lived, his career would have had a very different ending. She died in the spring of 1794. On the 4th of March, 1797, Col. Burr's term in the Senate expired, and he was succeeded by Gen. Philip Schuyler, the Federal party being then in the ascendant in New York.

Burr returned to his law business in the metropolis, without however losing his hold on national politics. On the contrary he had formed the design of destroying at a blow Federal supremacy in the United States. For two years he worked in silence, then in April, 1800, the time came for him to show his hand.

The fourth presidential election was but six months distant, and the rival parties were already in the field. They were two—the Federal, a party of old renown, strong in the prestige of victory, conservative, arrogant, English in everything but in name, and clinging tenaciously to class privileges and class domination.

Its great rival, the Republican party, was liberal and progressive in the extreme. It was the popular party, *par excellence*, and as much French as the other was English. It advocated an open senate, a free press, free speech, free schools, and free religion. Its leading principle was that so pithily expressed by Mr. Seward, "the emancipation of the masses from the domination of classes."

Of this party Thomas Jefferson was the nominal leader, the historical figure-head, but its real *imperator* was Aaron Burr, the man who, in the conflict which we are now to consider, taught it how to win. In those days the legislature of each State cast the vote of its State for President. It early became apparent that New York would decide the presidential contest. It was also apparent, that if the Republicans could secure the New York legislature, (to be chosen in April, 1800,) the national issue was already decided, and to attain this object Burr had planned and toiled during the two previous years, and now redoubled his exertions.

It was a mistake of Hamilton's that made his great rival's triumph possible. That chieftain strong in Federal supremacy, gathered his friends together a few weeks before the election, and made out a list of his candidates from the city for assemblymen. They were all his personal friends and men of but little weight in the