

the republican cause, which before had been gaining ground, received an ominous check."<sup>1</sup> \* \* \* \*

"As the time for choosing presidential electors drew near, it became apparent that the state of New York would decide the contest in the Union, and that the city would decide the contest in the state. To every leading republican in the country, except one, defeat looked inevitable. John Jay, in 1798, had been elected governor over Chancellor Livingston by a majority of 2,382, which was then a great majority. In 1779, the republican ticket in the city, headed by the name of Aaron Burr, had been defeated by a majority of nine hundred. In April, 1800, the electing legislature was to be chosen. Jefferson might well say, as he did say, one month before the New York election, that he considered the contest more doubtful than that of 1796. But Burr would not admit the idea of failure. He breathed the fire of his own sanguine disposition into the hearts of his followers, and kept every faculty on the alert to take instant advantage of the enemy's mistakes. \* \* \* \* His first step was to prepare a list of candidates to represent the city in the assembly. But a difficulty arose at the very outset: Hamilton's whole heart was in this election, and it was certain that he would take an active personal part in the campaign; and that, particularly, during the three days of the election, his harangues to the people would be more effective than ever before. Burr, too, must be on the ground. It was also thought indispensable to the complete success of the plan, that he should be a member of the legislature. But if his name were on the city ticket, it would neutralize his exertions, as he would seem to be electioneering and haranguing for himself. Some votes would also be diverted from the republican side by the recollection of Burr's agency in the Manhattan Bank affair. In this dilemma, it was suggested that he should be a candidate for the assembly in Orange County, where he was better known and more popular than in any other county. This part of the plan was confided to influential democrats of that county, and, it may as well be stated at once, was successful.

"This matter disposed of, the city ticket was drawn up. With matchless audacity, Burr proposed to his confederates the following persons as candidates for the assembly. At the head of his ticket he placed the name of George Clinton, so long the governor of the state, now retired from all public employments, and declining into the vale of years. Next came the name, not less distinguished, of the conqueror of Burgoyne, General Horatio Gates. Then followed Samuel Osgood, Henry Rutgers, Elias Neusen, Thomas Storm, George Warner, Philip J. Arcularius, James Hunt, Ezekiel Robins, Brockholst Livingston and John Swartwout, all of them gentlemen, who, for one reason or another, added particular strength to the ticket. Osgood, for example, had

<sup>1</sup> The life and times of Aaron Burr. By James Parton, vol. i., pp. 237, 238, 239.