

The prospects of the young Republic at the close of the war for independence were by no means bright. Although the Americans were emancipated from British rule, although a system which forbade the manufactures of iron, the erection of forges, the making of hats, and generally, imposed restrictions upon colonial trade of every kind which was supposed to affect British interests, ceased to exist, they had not attained to a state of real independence, their manufactures and arts, their literature and laws, science and religion, were largely tributary to the mother country. They had not yet formed themselves into a nation, and it was not until the convention of States which met at Philadelphia in 1787, that their present Constitution was framed. The work occupied four months, and after a thorough discussion of the instrument in the several States, it was finally adopted by them all. The Constitution went into operation after two-thirds of the States had voted in the affirmative, and then only did the history of the United States properly begin.*

The thirteen States were:—Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina and Rhode Island. George Washington, of Virginia, was elected President, and John Adams, of Massachusetts, (the same who had been Ambassador to England) Vice-President. Washington and Adams entered upon office on the 30th of April, 1789; their administration witnessed a rapid consolidation of the nation, and the inauguration of a sound system of finance. It was distinguished by some impressions and effects of the French revolution; and the rise of two great political parties: the Federalists led by Washington, Adams, Hamilton and Jay, who were satisfied with the organization of the Government, and the turn which affairs were beginning to take; and the

* Lossing—Field book of the war of 1812.