

age much below that at which an active career should be expected to close, and certainly an age at which European statesmen are commonly thought to possess unabated powers. In opposition to him was a tradition peculiar to American politics though unsupported by any provision of the Constitution, according to which no one should be elected President for more than two terms. It may be questioned whether this tradition does not owe its strength more to the ambition of politicians than to sincere conviction on the part of the people.¹

So strong was the movement in favor of General Grant as President that the united strength of the other candidates had difficulty in staying the boom, which, indeed, might have been successful but for the arrogant methods and tactical blunders of Senator Conkling. When three of the delegates voted against a resolution binding all to support the nominee whoever that nominee might be, he offered

¹ The reasoning of *The Federalist* in favor of continued reeligibility is cogent in itself and is supported by the experience of other countries, for it shows that custody of power may remain in the same hands for long periods without detriment and without occasioning any difficulty in terminating that custody when public confidence is withdrawn. American sensitiveness on this point would seem to impute to the Constitution a frailty that gives it a low rating among forms of government. As better means are provided for enforcing administrative responsibility, the popular dislike of third terms will doubtless disappear.