same among the two peoples, although its developments are more or less free, and the consequences that are drawn from it are often different. This principle, by its nature, is essentially republican. Consequently, I think that France, with its King, resembles a republic more than the Union, with its President, resembles a monarchy.

In all that precedes, I have been careful to point out only the main points of difference. If I had wanted to get into details, the picture would have been still more striking. But I have too much to say not to want to be brief.

I remarked that the power of the President of the United States, in his sphere, exercises only a limited sovereignty, while that of the King, in France, acts within the circle of a complete sovereignty.

I could have shown the governmental power of the King in France surpassing even its natural limits, however extensive they were, and penetrating into the administration of individual interests in a thousand ways.

To this cause of influence, I could join that which results from the great number of public officials, nearly all of whom owe their mandate to the executive power. This number has surpassed all known limits among us; it reaches 138,000. Each of these 138,000 nominations must be considered as an element of strength. The President does not have an absolute right to appoint to public positions, and those positions hardly exceed 12,000.

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18. The sums paid by the State to these various officials amount annually to 200,000,000 francs.

19. Each year in the United States an almanac, called the National Calendar, is published; the names of all the federal officials are found there. The National Calendar of 1853 furnished me with the figure I give here.

It would follow from what precedes that the King of France has at his disposal eleven times more places than the President of the United States, although the population of France is only one and a half times greater than that of the Union.

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Accidental Causes That Can Increase the Influence of the Executive Power

External security that the Union enjoys.—Cautious policy.—Army of 6,000 soldiers.—Only a few ships.—The President possesses some great prerogatives that he does not have the opportunity to use.—In what he does have the opportunity to execute, he is weak.

If the executive power is less strong in America than in France, the cause must be attributed to circumstances perhaps more than to laws.

It is principally in its relations with foreigners that the executive power of a nation finds the opportunity to deploy skill and force.

If the life of the Union were constantly threatened, if its great interests were found involved daily in those of other powerful peoples, you would see the executive power grow in opinion by what would be expected of it and by what it would execute.

The President of the United States is, it is true, the head of the army, but this army is composed of 6,000 soldiers; he commands the fleet, but the fleet numbers only a few vessels; he directs the foreign affairs of the Union, but the United States has no neighbors. Separated from the rest of the world by the ocean, still too weak to want to dominate the sea, they have no enemies; and their interests are only rarely in contact with those of the other nations of the globe.

This demonstrates well that the practice of government must not be judged by theory.

The President of the United States possesses some nearly royal prerogatives that he does not have the opportunity to use; and the rights that, up to now, he is able to use are very circumscribed. The laws allow him to be strong; circumstances keep him weak.

On the contrary, circumstances, still more than the laws, give royal authority in France its greatest strength.

c. 4,000 in the manuscript.
In France, the executive power struggles constantly against immense obstacles and disposes of immense resources to overcome them. It increases with the greatness of the things that it executes and with the importance of the events that it directs, without thereby modifying its constitution.

Had the laws created it as weak and as circumscribed as that of the Union, its influence would soon become very much greater.

Why the President of the United States, to Lead Public Affairs, Does Not Need to Have a Majority in the Chambers

It is an established axiom in Europe that a constitutional King cannot govern when the opinion of the legislative chambers is not in agreement with his.

Several Presidents of the United States have been seen to lose the support of the majority of the legislative body, without having to leave power, nor without causing any great harm to society.

I have heard this fact cited to prove the independence and strength of the executive power in America. A few moments of reflection are sufficient, on the contrary, to see there the proof of its weakness.

A European King needs to obtain the support of the legislative body to fulfill the task that the constitution imposes on him, because this task is immense. A European constitutional King is not only the executor of the law; the care of its execution so completely devolves onto him that, if the law is against him, he would be able to paralyze its force. He needs the chambers to make the law; the chambers need him to execute it; they are two powers that cannot live without each other; the gears of government stop at the moment when there is discord between them.

In America, the President cannot stop the making of laws; he cannot escape the obligation to execute them. His zealous and sincere support is undoubtedly useful, but it is not necessary to the course of government. In everything essential that he does, he is directly or indirectly subject to the legislature; where he is entirely independent of it, he can hardly do anything. So it is his weakness, and not his strength, that allows him to live in opposition to the legislative power.

In Europe, there must be agreement between the King and the Chambers, because there can be a serious struggle between them. In America, agreement is not required, because the struggle is impossible.

Of the Election of the President

The danger of the system of election increases in proportion to the extent of the prerogatives of the executive power.—The Americans can adopt this system because they can do without a strong executive power.—How circumstances favor the establishment of the elective system.—Why the election of the President does not make the principles of government change.—Influence that the election of the President exercises on the fate of secondary officials.

The system of election, applied to the head of the executive power among a great people, presents some dangers that experience and historians have sufficiently pointed out.

Consequently, I do not want to talk about it except in relation to America.

The dangers feared from the system of election are more or less great, depending on the place that the executive power occupies and its importance in the State, depending on the method of election and the circumstances in which the people who elect are found.

Not without reason, the elective system, applied to the head of State, is criticized for offering such a great lure to individual ambitions and inflaming them so strongly in the pursuit of power that often, when legal means are no longer sufficient, they appeal to force when right happens to desert them.

It is clear that the greater the prerogatives of the executive power, the greater the lure; also, the more the ambition of the pretenders is excited, the more it finds support among a host of men of lesser ambition who hope to share power after their candidate has triumphed.d

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d. The wording of this paragraph is a bit different in the manuscript. The published version was suggested by Beaumont (YTC, CIIIb, 3, pp. 52–53).
The dangers of the elective system increase therefore in direct proportion to the influence exercised by the executive power in the affairs of the State. The Polish revolutions should not be attributed only to the elective system in general, but to the fact that the elected magistrate was the head of a large monarchy.

So before discussing the absolute goodness of the elective system, there is always an intervening question to resolve, that of knowing if the geographic position, laws, habits, mores and opinions of the people among whom you want to introduce it allow you to establish a weak and dependent executive power. To want the representative of the State to be simultaneously armed with great power and elected is, to my mind, to express two contradictory desires. For my part, I know only one way to make hereditary royalty change to a state of elected power. Its sphere of action must be contracted in advance; its prerogatives gradually reduced; and little by little, the people accustomed to living without its aid. But the republicans of Europe are hardly concerned with this. Since many among them hate tyranny only because they are the objects of its rigors, the extent of executive power does not offend them; they attack only its origin, without noticing the tight bond that links these two things.

No one has yet been found who cared about risking his honor and his life to become President of the United States, because the President has only a temporary, limited and dependent power. Fortune must put an immense prize at stake in order for desperate players to enter the lists. [For my part, I would prefer to be Premier Ministre in France than President of the Union.] No candidate, until now, has been able to raise ardent sympathies and dangerous popular passions in his favor. The reason is simple. Once at the head of the government, he can distribute to his friends nei-

ther much power, nor much wealth, nor much glory; and his influence in the State is too weak for factions to see their success or their ruin in his elevation to power.

Hereditary monarchies have a great advantage. Since the particular interest of a family is continually tied in a close way to the interest of the State, there is never a single moment when the latter is left abandoned to itself. I do not know if in these monarchies public affairs are better conducted than elsewhere; but at least there is always someone who takes charge for good or ill, depending on his capacity.

In elective States, on the contrary, at the approach of the election and a long time before it happens, the gears of government no longer function, in a way, except by themselves. The laws can undoubtedly be put together so that the election takes place at one go and rapidly, and the seat of executive power never remains vacant so to speak; but no matter what is done, an empty place exists mentally despite the efforts of the law-maker.

At the approach of the election, the head of the executive power thinks only of the struggle to come; he no longer has a future; he can undertake nothing, and pursues only languidly what someone else perhaps is going to achieve. "I am so near the moment of my retirement," wrote President Jefferson on 21 [28 (ed.)] January 1809 (six weeks before the election), "that I no longer take part in public affairs except by expressing my opinion. To me, it seems just to leave to my successor the initiation of measures that he will have to execute and for which he will have to bear responsibility."

On its side, the nation has its eyes focused only on a single point; it is occupied only with overseeing the birth about to take place.

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e. Cf. Rousseau, Considerations sur le gouvernement de Pologne, chapters VIII and XIV.
f. Hervé de Tocqueville: "Carefully check if this paragraph agrees well with what the author says in the chapters on the crisis [of election] and on re-election. You must be careful about even the appearance of contradiction. Later you talk about intrigues, about the efforts of the President to get himself re-elected and about the development of his power in this regard" (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 13).
g. In the manuscript: "... the President has only a few places ..." Hervé de Tocqueville: "These sentences are in clear opposition to what the author

h. Cf. non-alphabetic notebook 1, conversation with John (?) Livingston (YTC, BIIa, and Voyage, OC, V, 1, p. 60).
j. "In France, for society to work, social power must be not only centralized, but also stable.

"Power can be centralized in an assembly; then it is strong, but not stable. It can be centralized in a man. Then it is less strong, but more stable" (YTC, Cxe, p. 64).
The more vast the place occupied by the executive power in the leadership of public affairs, the greater and more necessary is its habitual action, and the more dangerous such a state of things is. Among a people who have contracted the habit of being governed by the executive power, and with even more reason, of being administered by it, election cannot help but produce a profound disturbance.

In the United States, the action of the executive power can slow down with impunity, because this action is weak and circumscribed.

When the head of government is elected, a lack of stability in the internal and external policies of the State almost always follows. That is one of the principal vices of this system.

But this vice is felt more or less, depending on the portion of power granted to the elected magistrate. In Rome, the principles of government never varied, although the consuls were changed annually, because the Senate was the directing power; and the Senate was an hereditary body. In most of the monarchies of Europe, if the King were elected, the kingdom would change faces with each new choice.

In America, the President exercises a fairly great influence on affairs of State, but he does not conduct them; the preponderant power resides in the whole national representation. Therefore, the mass of people must be changed, and not only the President, in order for the maxims of policy to change. Consequently, in America, the system of election, applied to the head of the executive power, does not harm the steadiness of government in a very tangible way.

The lack of steadiness is an evil so inherent in the elective system, moreover, that it still makes itself keenly felt in the President’s sphere of action, no matter how circumscribed.

Mr. Quincy Adams, when he took power, dismissed most of those appointed by his predecessor; and of all the removable officials that the federal administration uses, I do not know of a single one who was left in office by General Jackson in the first year that followed the election."}

k. This paragraph, which does not appear in the manuscript, is included in the edition of 1835 and eliminated from the sixth and later editions, following a letter from John Quincy Adams, dated June 12, 1837:

The Americans thought correctly that the head of the executive power, in order to fulfill his mission and bear the weight of full responsibility, had to remain free, as much as possible, to choose his agents himself and to remove them at will; m the legislative body watches over rather than directs

The truth is that I never dismissed a single individual named by my predecessor. It was a principle of my administration to dismiss no person from office but for misconduct, and there were in the course of four years that I presided, only two persons dismissed from civil executive office, both of them for gross official misdemeanors. My successor it is true did pursue a different principle. He dismissed many subordinate officer executive [sic] not however so generally as the remainder of the paragraph in your book, which I have cited, supposes. He left in office many of those who had been appointed by his predecessors, and would probably have left many more but for the influences by which he was surrounded (YTC, Cld).

On December 4, 1837, Tocqueville answers from Paris:

I receive with great pleasure the complaint that you very much wanted to address to me relating to a sentence in my book that concerns you. You can be assured that this sentence will disappear in the sixth edition which is supposed to appear, I believe, this winter. I am delighted that you have given me this occasion to please you and to correct an error that I regret having made. The fact you complain about and that you say is inaccurate had been affirmed to me in America itself (my notes prove it) by a man on whose veracity I thought I could count (YTC, Cld, and OC, VII, pp. 67–68). See, in the non-alphabetic notebooks 2 and 3, the second conversation with Mr. Walker (YTC, BIII, and Voyage, OC, V, p. 130).

m. In the manuscript:

The legislative body therefore interferes only very little in the choices of men to whom public positions are entrusted. It limits itself to supervising the President; it does not direct him. What is the result? At each election, a complete replacement takes place in the federal administration. [In the margin: This happened only under Quincy Adams and under Jackson.] There is not an employee so lowly who can claim to escape from the result of the vote. His place belongs in advance to the friends of the new power. People in the constitutional monarchies of Europe complain about seeing the fate of the secondary employees of the administration depend on the fate of the ministers. It is still much worse in States where the head of government is elected. Of the [blank (ed.)] revocable officials employed by the federal administration, I do not think that there was a single one that General Jackson left in place the first year that followed his election. The reason for this difference is easily understood. In monarchies, the ministers, in order to come to power and remain there, have no need to extend the circle of their influence very far; as long as they obtain the majority in the chambers, it is enough. But to bring about his election or reelection, the President needs to reach the popular masses; and in order to succeed in that, he must not neglect
the President. From that it follows that at each new election, the fate of all federal employees is as if in suspense.

a single means of action. Each election, therefore, brings to public affairs a new administration whose education is completed at the expense of the administered. As for the individual misfortunes that result...

(In the margin) False, for to bring about election and reelection of the deputies, the ministers need the same means.

Hervé de Tocqueville:

Here is a piece that Alexis proposes to delete. But it contains views and a fact worth keeping; perhaps it could be modified in the following way:

After the sentence: The legislative body therefore interferes only very little in, I would like a short note that explained how the legislative body intervenes in nominations. The flaw in this explanation is that something is missing.

A complete replacement takes place in the administration. Here a note at the bottom of the page where you will say that, because this replacement has taken place at the election of the last two Presidents, it may be believed that this precedent will be followed by their successors (YTC, CIIIb, 3, p. 14).

Gustave de Beaumont:

I would very much hesitate to delete the piece crossed out. Possibly it contains some ideas and opinions that need to be revised and modified. But as a whole it is very interesting and will be especially for the public, because it touches on a question extremely exciting to the personal interests of all public officials.

The contrast between the President and the ministers does not exist; they are in an analogous position in the sense that the ministers of a French monarchy have an interest in bringing their weight to bear on the least agents, in order to gain the majority in the chambers from the electoral body. And they cannot remain ministers if they do not have this majority, just as the President will not be elected if he does not gain it.

But here is the difference: a minister cannot think of dismissing everyone in order to remain minister; and if he wanted to do it, he would not be able to do so. Because public opinion, on which he depends, would never understand that the end justified the means. It is the opposite when it is a matter, for a man, of being head of the State (YTC, CIIIB, 3, pp. 53–54).

Édouard de Tocqueville:

Whatever your decision regarding this piece, I will make several observations; first this sentence: to remove them at will is trite. But the most serious flaw in this piece is to present a striking contradiction to what you said a few sentences earlier. Here you say that all the employees are replaced at the coming into office of the President and that he is obligated, in the machinery he puts in motion, to reach the popular masses, without neglecting a single means of action. While you say, p. 324, that no one cares about risking his honor and his life to become President, that no candidate

In the constitutional monarchies of Europe, the complaint is that the destiny of the obscure agents of the administration often depends on the fate of the ministers. It is even worse in States where the head of government is elected. The reason for this is simple. In constitutional monarchies, ministers replace each other rapidly; but the principal representative of the executive power never changes, which contains the spirit of innovation within certain limits. So administrative systems there vary in the details rather than in the principles; one cannot be suddenly substituted for another without causing a kind of revolution. In America, this revolution takes place every four years in the name of law.

As for the individual misfortunes that are the natural consequence of such legislation, it must be admitted that the lack of stability in the lot of officials does not produce in America the evils that would be expected elsewhere. In the United States, it is so easy to make an independent living that to remove an official from an office that he holds sometimes means taking away the comforts of life, but never the means to sustain it.

I said at the beginning of this chapter that the dangers of the mode of election, applied to the head of the executive power, were more or less great, depending on the circumstances in which the people who elect are found.

Efforts to reduce the role of the executive power are made in vain. There is something over which this power exercises a great influence, whatever the place that the laws have given it. That is foreign policy; a negotiation can hardly be started and successfully carried through except by a single man. [(Physical force can only be adequately put in motion [v: directed] by a single will.]]

The more precarious and perilous the position of a people, the more the need for consistency and stability makes itself felt in the direction of foreign
affairs, and the more dangerous the system of election of the head of State becomes.

The policy of the Americans in relation to the whole world is simple; you would almost be able to say that no one needs them, and that they need no one. Their independence is never threatened.

So among them, the role of executive power is as limited by circumstances as by laws. The President can frequently change his views without having the State suffer or perish.

Whatever the prerogatives with which the executive power is vested, the time that immediately precedes the election and the time while it is taking place can always be considered as a period of national crisis.

The more the internal situation of a country is troubled and the greater its external perils, the more dangerous this moment of crisis is for it. Among the peoples of Europe, there are very few who would not have to fear conquest or anarchy every time that they chose a new leader.

In America, society is so constituted that it can maintain itself on its own and without help; external dangers are never pressing. The election of the President is a cause for agitation, not for ruin.

Mode of Election

Skill which the American law-makers have demonstrated in the choice of the mode of election.—Creation of a special electoral body.—Separate vote of special electors.—In what case the House of Representatives is called to choose the President.—What has happened in the twelve elections that have taken place since the Constitution has been in force.

Apart from the dangers inherent in the principle, there are many others that arise from the very forms of election and that can be avoided by the care of the law-maker.\(^n\)

When a people gather in arms in the public square to choose a leader, it exposes itself not only to the dangers presented by the elective system itself, but also to all those of civil war which arise from such a method of election.

When Polish laws made the choice of the king depend on the _veto_ of a single man, they invited the murder of this man or created anarchy in advance.

As you study the institutions of the United States and look more attentively at the political and social situation of this country, you notice a marvelous accord there between fortune and human efforts. America was a new country; but the people who lived there had already long made use of liberty elsewhere: two great causes of internal order. Furthermore, America had no fear of conquest. The American law-makers, taking advantage of these favorable circumstances, had no difficulty in establishing a weak and dependent executive power; having created it so, they could make it elective without risk.

Nothing remained for them to do except to choose, from among the different systems of election, the least dangerous; the rules that they drew up in this respect completed admirably the guarantees that the physical and political constitution of the country already provided.

The problem to solve was to find a mode of election that, while still expressing the real will of the people, little excited their passions and kept the people in the least possible suspense. First, they granted that a _simple_ majority would make the law. But it was still very difficult to obtain this majority without having to fear delays that they wanted to avoid above all.

It is rare, in fact, to see a man get the majority of votes on the first try from among a large population. The difficulty increases still more in a republic of confederated states where local influences are much more developed and more powerful.

A way to obviate this second obstacle presented itself: to delegate the electoral powers of the nation to a body that represented it.

This mode of election made a majority more probable; for the fewer the electors, the easier it is for them to agree among themselves. It also presented more guarantees for a good choice.

But should the right to elect be entrusted to the legislative body itself,