

American Statesmen

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JAMES MADISON

BY

SYDNEY HOWARD GAY



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EDITOR'S PREFACE

FEW men, so well equipped intellectually as was Madison, have, by reason of the characteristics of their equipment, been so dependent for success upon the conditions amid which they have been placed. Madison was preëminently what may be called a cabinet statesman. He was better as a thinker than as an actor. He had the constructive quality, and was a master of principles of government; but in the practical application of those principles which he himself had formulated and shaped, if not created, he was not fitted to excel, unless possibly when the current of events was running smoothly. His strength did not lie in the executive or administrative directions. Had he died before he was President, his fame would not have been less than it is to-day, when he is remembered and admired chiefly for his labors in connection with the creation of the Constitution and the foundation of the government. He amply deserved the honor of the presidential office, though it added so little to his reputation; but it really meant that because he had done one task exceedingly well, he was now appointed to do a