

for such offenses. Suspicion is aroused, confidence in those holding high official stations is shaken, and the slightest circumstance is accepted as conclusive proof. Gen. Smith's prominence, and his activity as a politician, made him a conspicuous object of attack by the opposition press, and this was the only charge that could be brought against his official conduct. It is not strange, therefore, in the heated political controversies of the past twenty-five years, that this single imputation should be made the most of; that it should be hurled against him whenever he was a candidate for the suffrages of the people. It was not as an open, direct accusation, but with the facts perverted, and with every circumstance distorted and magnified, that he was compelled to meet the insinuations of guilty complicity in an attempted fraud upon the ballot box. It is always hard to silence the tongue of calumny, when prompted by malice, and it was a great source of annoyance and pain to Gen. Smith that he should ever be called upon to refute a slander groundless in fact, and damaging only in the coloring that was given to acts which were prompted by the purest motives, and to circumstances for which he was in no wise accountable. The people of Madison, however, never lost confidence in the man, but showered their honors thick upon him. Four times was he elected to the office of mayor, in 1858, 1859, 1860, and in 1878, being the only citizen of the capital who ever enjoyed this distinction. In 1859, he was also chosen as a member of the assembly, and was again elected to that office in 1864, and in 1869. As a legislator he was able and influential, and never failed to meet the highest expectations of an exacting constituency.

Notwithstanding the hostile criticism of the opposition press, Gen. Smith's standing and influence in his own party was not shaken. His political friends had absolute confidence in his personal integrity and in the rectitude of his official conduct. He was frequently chosen a delegate to the conventions of his party, and labored with unfaltering zeal to maintain the organization intact under the most discouraging circumstances, and in the face of overwhelming defeat. He accepted a nomination for Congress in 1864, and again in 1872, and made a thorough and vigorous canvass, though he could not hope to overcome the opposition major-