CHAPTER II.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COUNTY, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, &c.

The current of immigration and settlement having been directed into the Black River valley, about the close of the last century, the country filled up in the space of a few years with a rapidity that has been seldom equaled, and it soon became difficult to meet the demands of justice, without the erection of new counties. The changes which had been previously made, so far as relates to our territory, were as follows:

Albany, formed Nov. 1, 1683 (an original county).
Tryon, " March 12, 1772, from Albany.
Montgomery, changed April 2, 1784, from Tryon.
Herkimer, formed February 16, 1791, from Montgomery.
Oneida, " March 15, 1798, from Herkimer.

Such had been the rapidity of settlement within five or six years from its opening, that the necessity of a division of Oneida became apparent, and local interests began to operate to secure the advantages expected from the location of the public buildings. Each section had its advocates. Nathan Sage in Redfield, Walter Martin in Martinsburg, Silas Stow and others in Lowville, Moss, Kent, Noadiah Hubbard and others in Champion, Henry Coffeen in Watertown, and Jacob Brown in Brownville, were each intent upon the project of a county seat. Many were for having but one new county, in which case Champion had the fairest prospects of success, and indeed such had been the chances, in the opinion of several prominent citizens, that they had located there. Among these were Moss Kent, a brother of Judge James Kent, Egbert Ten Eyck, &c. To obtain an expression of public opinion on this subject, three delegates, chosen at town meetings, from each town interested in the question, met at the house of Freedom Wright, in Harrisburgh, Denmark, November 20th, 1804. Many went with the intention of voting for one new county only, but strong local interests led to the attendance of those who so influenced the voice of the delegation that, with but one exception, they decided for two new counties, and the convention united upon recommending the names of the executive officers of the state and federal governments then in office, from whence came the names of Jefferson and Lewis, from Thomas Jefferson and Morgan Lewis, both men of national celebrity.

Application was accordingly made to the legislature, and on the 4th of March 1805, Mr. Wright, in the assembly, from th «