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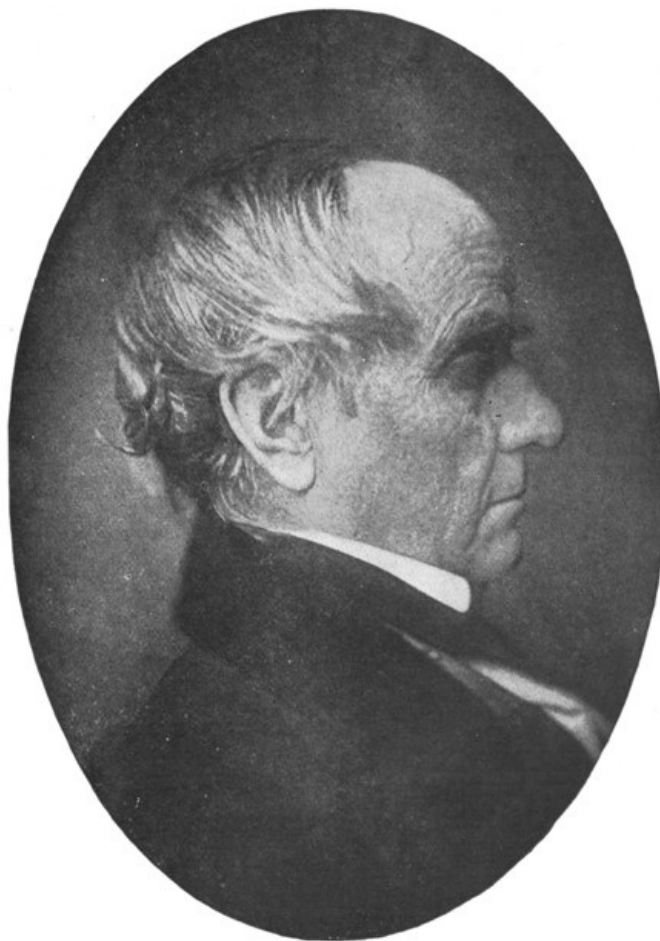
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AMERICANS ***

Speeches by Daniel Webster



DANIEL WEBSTER.

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DANIEL WEBSTER

FOR YOUNG AMERICANS

COMPRISING
THE GREATEST SPEECHES OF THE DEFENDER
OF THE CONSTITUTION

WITH NOTES BY
CHARLES F. RICHARDSON
PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

School Edition
ILLUSTRATED

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1907

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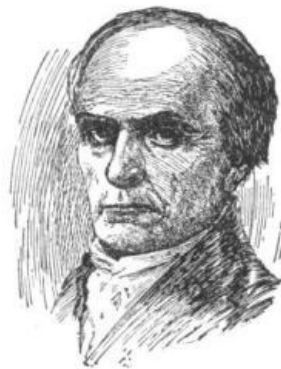
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DANIEL WEBSTER

CHRONOLOGY

Born at Salisbury, now Franklin, New Hampshire	January 18, 1782
Graduated at Dartmouth College	1801
Admitted to the bar	1805
Practised law in Boscawen, New Hampshire	1805-7
Removed to Portsmouth, New Hampshire	1807
Member of the United States House of Representatives from New Hampshire	1813-7
Removed to Boston	1816
Dartmouth College case, United States Supreme Court	1818
Member of the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention	1820-1
Oration at Plymouth, Massachusetts	1820
Member of the United States House of Representatives from Massachusetts	1823-7
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Senator from Massachusetts	1827-41
Reply to Hayne	1830
Argument in White murder case, Salem, Massachusetts	1830
Reply to Calhoun: The Constitution not a Compact between Sovereign States	1833
Secretary of State under Presidents Harrison and Tyler	1841-3
Webster-Ashburton Treaty between the United States and England	1842
Oration on the completion of Bunker Hill Monument	1843
Senator from Massachusetts	1845-50
Seventh of March Speech for compromise between Northern and Southern States	1850
Secretary of State under President Fillmore	1850-2
Died at Marshfield, Massachusetts	October 24, 1852

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DANIEL WEBSTER *for* YOUNG AMERICANS

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THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF NEW ENGLAND

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT PLYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS,
DEC. 22, 1820.

[In 1820 the "Pilgrim Society" was formed by the citizens of Plymouth, Massachusetts, and the descendants of the Pilgrims in other places, desirous of uniting "to commemorate the landing, and to honor the memory of the intrepid men who first set foot on Plymouth Rock." The foundation of this society gave a new impulse to the anniversary celebrations of the two hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth. Mr. Webster was requested to deliver the public address on the 22d of December of that year, and the following discourse was pronounced by him, in the presence of a great gathering of people.]

Let us rejoice that we behold this day. Let us be thankful that we have lived to see the bright and happy breaking of the auspicious morn which commences the third century of the history of New England. Auspicious, indeed,—bringing a happiness beyond the common allotment of Providence to men,—full of present joy, and gilding with bright beams the prospect of futurity, is the dawn that awakens us to the commemoration of the landing of the Pilgrims.

**Beginning of the
third century of New
England history.**

Living at an epoch which naturally marks the progress of the history of our native land, we have come hither to celebrate the great event with which that history commenced. Forever honored be this, the place of our fathers' refuge! Forever remembered the day which saw them, weary and distressed, broken in everything but spirit, poor in all but faith and courage, at last secure from the dangers of wintry seas, and impressing this shore with the first footsteps of civilized man!

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It is a noble faculty of our nature which enables us to connect our thoughts, our sympathies, and our happiness with what is distant in place

New England's

or time; and, looking before and after, to hold communion at once with our ancestors and our posterity. Human and mortal although we are, we are nevertheless not mere insulated beings, without relation to the past or the future. Neither the point of time, nor the spot of earth, in which we physically live, bounds our rational and intellectual enjoyments. We live in the past by a knowledge of its history; and in the future, by hope and anticipation. By ascending to an association with our ancestors, by contemplating their example and studying their character, by partaking their sentiments and imbibing their spirit, by accompanying them in their toils, by sympathizing in their sufferings, and rejoicing in their successes and their triumphs, we seem to belong to their age and to mingle our own existence with theirs. We become their contemporaries, live the lives which they lived, endure what they endured, and partake in the rewards which they enjoyed. And in like manner, by running along the line of future time, by contemplating the probable fortunes of those who are coming after us, by attempting something which may promote their happiness and leave some not dishonorable memorial of ourselves for their regard when we shall sleep with the fathers, we protract our own earthly being, and seem to crowd whatever is future, as well as all that is past, into the narrow compass of our earthly existence. As it is not a vain and false, but an exalted and religious imagination which leads us to raise our thoughts from the orb which, amidst this universe of worlds, the Creator has given us to inhabit, and to send them with something of the feeling which nature prompts, and teaches to be proper among children of the same Eternal Parent, to the contemplation of the myriads of fellow-beings with which his goodness has peopled the infinite of space; so neither is it false or vain to consider ourselves as interested and connected with our whole race, through all time; allied to our ancestors; allied to our posterity; closely compacted on all sides with others; ourselves being but links in the great chain of being, which begins with the origin of our race, runs onward through its successive generations, binding together the past, the present, and the future, and terminating at last, with the consummation of all things earthly, at the throne of God.

ancestors.

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We have come to this Rock, to record here our homage for our Pilgrim Fathers;^[1] our sympathy in their sufferings; our gratitude for their labors; our admiration of their virtues; our veneration for their piety; and our attachment to those principles of civil and religious liberty which they encountered the dangers of the ocean, the storms of heaven, the violence of savages, disease, exile, and famine, to enjoy and to establish. And we would leave here, also, for the generations which are rising up rapidly to fill our places, some proof that we have endeavored to transmit the great inheritance unimpaired; that in our estimate of public principles and private virtue, in our veneration of religion and piety, in our devotion to civil and religious liberty, in our regard for whatever advances human knowledge or improves human happiness, we are not altogether unworthy of our origin.

The Pilgrim Fathers.

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There is a local feeling connected with this occasion, too strong to be resisted; a sort of genius of the place, which inspires and awes us. We feel that we are on the spot where the first scene of our history was laid; where the hearths and altars of New England were first placed; where Christianity and civilization and letters made their first lodgment, in a vast extent of country, covered with a wilderness, and peopled by roving barbarians. We are here at the season of the year at which the event took place. The imagination irresistibly and rapidly draws around us the principal features and the leading characters in the original scene. We cast our eyes abroad on the ocean, and we see where the little bark, with the interesting group upon its deck, made its slow progress to the shore. We look around us, and behold the hills and promontories where the anxious eyes of our fathers first saw the places of habitation and of rest. We feel the cold which benumbed, and listen to the winds which pierced them. Beneath us is the Rock on which New England received the feet of the Pilgrims. We seem even to behold them as they struggle with the elements, and with toilsome efforts gain the shore. We listen to the chiefs in council; we see the unexampled exhibition of female fortitude and resignation; we hear the whisperings of youthful impatience; and we see what a painter of our own has also represented by his pencil,^[2] chilled and shivering childhood, houseless but for a mother's arms, couchless but for a mother's breast, till our own blood almost freezes. The mild dignity of Carver and of Bradford; the decisive and soldier-like air and manner of Standish; the devout Brewster; the enterprising Allerton; the general firmness and thoughtfulness of the whole band; their conscious joy for dangers escaped; their deep solicitude about dangers to come; their trust in Heaven; their high religious faith, full of confidence and anticipation,—all of these seem to belong to this place, and to be present upon this occasion, to fill us with reverence and admiration.

The genius of the place.

Plymouth Rock.

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The settlement of New England by the colony which landed here on the twenty-second^[3] of December, 1620, although not the first European establishment in what now constitutes the United States, was yet so peculiar in its causes and character, and has been followed and must still be followed by such consequences, as to give it a high claim to lasting commemoration. On these causes and consequences, more than on its immediately attendant circumstances, its importance as an historical event depends. Great actions and striking occurrences, having excited a temporary admiration, often pass away and are forgotten, because they leave no lasting results affecting the prosperity and happiness of communities. Such is frequently the fortune of the most brilliant military achievements. Of the ten thousand battles which have been fought, of all the fields fertilized with carnage, of the banners which have been

Importance of the landing at Plymouth as an historical event.

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bathed in blood, of the warriors who have hoped that they had risen from the field of conquest to a glory as bright and as durable as the stars, how few that continue long to interest mankind! The victory of yesterday is reversed by the defeat of to-day; the star of military glory, rising like a meteor, like a meteor has fallen; disgrace and disaster hang on the heels of conquest and renown; victor and vanquished presently pass away to oblivion, and the world goes on in its course, with the loss only of so many lives and so much treasure.

But if this be frequently, or generally, the fortune of military achievements, it is not always so. There are enterprises, military as well as civil, which sometimes check the current of events, give a new turn to human affairs, and transmit their consequences through ages. We see their importance in their results, and call them great, because great things follow. There have been battles which have fixed the fate of nations. These come down to us in history with a solid and permanent interest, not created by a display of glittering armor, the rush of adverse battalions, the sinking and rising of pennons, the flight, the pursuit, and the victory; but by their effect in advancing or retarding human knowledge, in overthrowing or establishing despotism, in extending or destroying human happiness. When the traveller pauses on the plain of Marathon,^[4] what are the emotions which most strongly agitate his breast? What is that glorious recollection which thrills through his frame, and suffuses his eyes? Not, I imagine, that Grecian skill and Grecian valor were here most signally displayed; but that Greece herself was saved. It is because to this spot, and to the event which has rendered it immortal, he refers all the succeeding glories of the republic. It is because, if that day had gone otherwise, Greece had perished. It is because he perceives that her philosophers and orators, her poets and painters, her sculptors and architects, her governments and free institutions, point backward to Marathon, and that their future existence seems to have been suspended on the contingency whether the Persian or the Grecian banner should wave victorious in the beams of that day's setting sun. And, as his imagination kindles at the retrospect, he is transported back to the interesting moment; he counts the fearful odds of the contending hosts; his interest for the result overwhelms him; he trembles, as if it were still uncertain, and seems to doubt whether he may consider Socrates and Plato, Demosthenes, Sophocles, and Phidias, as secure yet to himself and to the world.

The Battle of Marathon.

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"If we conquer," said the Athenian commander on the approach of that decisive day, "if we conquer, we shall make Athens the greatest city of Greece." A prophecy how well fulfilled! "If God prosper us," might have been the more appropriate language of our fathers, when they landed upon this Rock, "if God prosper us, we shall here begin a work which shall last for ages; we shall plant here a new society, in the principles of the fullest liberty and the purest religion; we shall subdue this wilderness which is before us; we shall fill this region of the great continent, which stretches almost from pole to pole, with civilization and Christianity; the temples of the true God shall rise where now ascends the smoke of idolatrous sacrifice; fields and gardens, the flowers of summer, and the waving and golden harvest of autumn, shall spread over a thousand hills and stretch along a thousand valleys, never yet, since the creation, reclaimed to the use of civilized man. We shall whiten this coast with the canvas of a prosperous commerce; we shall stud the long and winding shore with a hundred cities. That which we sow in weakness shall be raised in strength. From our sincere but houseless worship there shall spring splendid temples to record God's goodness; from the simplicity of our social union there shall arise wise and politic constitutions of government, full of the liberty which we ourselves bring and breathe; from our zeal for learning, institutions shall spring which shall scatter the light of knowledge throughout the land, and in time, paying back where they have borrowed, shall contribute their part to the great aggregate of human knowledge; and our descendants, through all generations, shall look back to this spot and to this hour with unabated affection and regard.

The high purpose of the Pilgrim Fathers.

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Of the motives which influenced the first settlers to a voluntary exile, induced them to relinquish their native country, and to seek an asylum in this then unexplored wilderness, the first and principal, no doubt, were connected with religion. They sought to enjoy a higher degree of religious freedom, and what they esteemed a purer form of religious worship, than was allowed to their choice, or presented to their imitation, in the Old World. The love of religious liberty is a stronger sentiment, when fully excited, than an attachment to civil or political freedom. That freedom which the conscience demands, and which men feel bound by their hope of salvation to contend for, can hardly fail to be attained. Conscience, in the cause of religion and the worship of the Deity, prepares the mind to act and to suffer beyond almost all other causes. It sometimes gives an impulse so irresistible that no fetters of power or of opinion can withstand it. History instructs us that this love of religious liberty, a compound sentiment in the breast of man, made up of the clearest sense of right and the highest conviction of duty, is able to look the sternest despotism in the face, and, with means apparently most inadequate, to shake principalities and powers. There is a boldness, a spirit of daring, in religious reformers, not to be measured by the general rules which control men's purposes and actions. If the hand of power be laid upon it, this only seems to augment its force and its elasticity, and to cause its action to be more formidable and violent. Human invention has devised nothing, human power has compassed nothing, that can forcibly restrain it when it breaks forth. Nothing can stop it, but to give way to it; nothing can check it, but indulgence. It loses its power only when it has gained its object. The principle of toleration, to which the world has come so slowly, is at once the most just and the most wise of all principles. Even when religious feeling takes a character of extravagance and enthusiasm, and seems to threaten the order of society

Love of religious liberty the motive for the settlement of New England.

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and shake the columns of the social edifice, its principal danger is in its restraint. If it be allowed indulgence and expansion, like the elemental fires, it only agitates, and perhaps purifies, the atmosphere; while its efforts to throw off restraint would burst the world asunder.

It is certain, that, although many of them were republicans in principle, we have no evidence that our New England ancestors would have emigrated, as they did, from their own native country, would have become wanderers in Europe, and finally would have undertaken the establishment of a colony here, merely from their dislike of the political systems of Europe. They fled not so much from the civil government as from the hierarchy, and the laws which enforced conformity to the church establishment. Mr. Robinson^[5] had left England as early as 1608, on account of the persecutions for non-conformity, and had retired to Holland. He left England from no disappointed ambition in affairs of state, from no regrets at the want of preferment in the church, nor from any motive of distinction or of gain. Uniformity in matters of religion was pressed with such extreme rigor that a voluntary exile seemed the most eligible mode of escaping from the penalties of non-compliance. The accession of Elizabeth had, it is true, quenched the fires of Smithfield,^[6] and put an end to the easy acquisition of the crown of martyrdom. Her long reign had established the Reformation, but toleration was a virtue beyond her conception and beyond the age. She left no example of it to her successor; and he was not of a character which rendered it probable that a sentiment either so wise or so liberal would originate with him. At the present period it seems incredible that the learned, accomplished, unassuming, and inoffensive Robinson should neither be tolerated in his peaceable mode of worship in his own country, nor suffered quietly to depart from it. Yet such was the fact. He left his country by stealth, that he might elsewhere enjoy those rights which ought to belong to men in all countries. The departure of the Pilgrims for Holland is deeply interesting, from its circumstances, and also as it marks the character of the times, independently of its connection with names now incorporated with the history of empire. The embarkation was intended to be made in such a manner that it might escape the notice of the officers of government. Great pains had been taken to secure boats which should come undiscovered to the shore and receive the fugitives; and frequent disappointments had been experienced in this respect.

Religious persecutions in England.

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At length the appointed time came, bringing with it unusual severity of cold and rain. An unfrequented and barren heath, on the shores of Lincolnshire, was the selected spot where the feet of the Pilgrims were to tread for the last time the land of their fathers. The vessel which was to receive them did not come until the next day, and in the mean time the little band was collected, and men and women and children and baggage were crowded together, in melancholy and distressed confusion. The sea was rough, and the women and children were already sick, from their passage down the river to the place of embarkation on the sea. At length the wished-for boat silently and fearfully approaches the shore, and men and women and children, shaking with fear and with cold, as many as the small vessel could bear, venture off on a dangerous sea. Immediately the advance of horses is heard from behind, armed men appear, and those not yet embarked are seized and taken into custody. In the hurry of the moment, the first parties had been sent on board without any attempt to keep members of the same family together; and on account of the appearance of the horsemen, the boat never returned for the residue. Those who had got away, and those who had not, were in equal distress. A storm, of great violence and long duration, arose at sea, which not only protracted the voyage, rendered distressing by the want of all those accommodations which the interruption of the embarkation had occasioned, but also forced the vessel out of her course, and menaced immediate shipwreck; while those on shore, when they were dismissed from the custody of the officers of justice, having no longer homes or houses to retire to, and their friends and protectors being already gone, became objects of necessary charity as well as of deep commiseration.

The embarkation from Lincolnshire.

The stormy voyage to Holland.

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THE EMBARKATION OF THE PILGRIMS FROM DELFTSHAVEN

As this scene passes before us, we can hardly forbear asking whether this be a band of malefactors and felons flying from justice. What are their crimes, that they hide themselves in darkness? To what punishment are they exposed, that, to avoid it, men and women and children thus encounter the surf of the North Sea and the terrors of a night storm? What induces this armed pursuit and this arrest of fugitives, of all ages and both sexes? Truth does not allow us to answer these inquiries in a manner that does credit to the wisdom or the justice of the times. This was not the flight of guilt, but of virtue. It was an humble and peaceable religion, flying from causeless oppression. It was conscience, attempting to escape from the arbitrary rule of the Stuarts. It was Robinson and Brewster, leading off their little band from their native soil, at first to find shelter on the shore of the neighboring continent, but ultimately to come hither; and having surmounted all difficulties and braved a thousand dangers, to find here a place of refuge and of rest. Thanks be to God, that this spot was honored as the asylum of religious liberty! May its standard, reared here, remain forever! May it rise up as high as heaven, till its banner shall fan the air of both continents, and wave as a glorious ensign of peace and security to the nations!

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They came hither to a land from which they were never to return. Hither they had brought, and here they were to fix, their hopes, their attachments, and their objects in life. Some natural tears they shed, as they left the pleasant abodes of their fathers, and some emotions they suppressed, when the white cliffs of their native country, now seen for the last time, grew dim to their sight. They were acting, however, upon a resolution not to be

**The Pilgrims sought
a home, not a place
of exile.**

daunted. With whatever stifled regrets, with whatever occasional hesitation, with whatever appalling apprehensions, which might sometimes arise with force to shake the firmest purpose, they had yet committed themselves to Heaven and the elements; and a thousand leagues of water soon interposed to separate them forever from the region which gave them birth. A new existence awaited them here; and when, they saw these shores, rough, cold, barbarous, and barren, as then they were, they beheld their country. That mixed and strong feeling which we call love of country, and which is, in general, never extinguished in the heart of man, grasped and embraced its proper object here. Whatever constitutes country, except the earth and the sun, all the moral causes of affection and attachment which operate upon the heart, they had brought with them to their new abode. Here were now their families and friends, their homes and their property. Before they reached the shore, they had established the elements of a social system, and at a much earlier period had settled their forms of religious worship. At the moment of their landing, therefore, they possessed institutions of government and institutions of religion; and friends and families, and social and religious institutions, framed by consent, founded on choice and preference, how nearly do these fill up our whole idea of country! The morning that beamed on the first night of their repose saw the Pilgrims already at home in their country. There were political institutions, and civil liberty, and religious worship. Poetry has fancied nothing, in the wanderings of heroes, so distinct and characteristic. Here was man, indeed, unprotected, and unprovided for, on the shore of a rude and fearful wilderness; but it was politic, intelligent, and educated man. Everything was civilized but the physical world. Institutions, containing in substance all that ages had done for human government, were organized in a forest. Cultivated mind was to act on uncultivated nature; and, more than all, a government and a country were to commence, with the very first foundations laid under the divine light of the Christian religion. Happy auspices of a happy futurity! Who would wish that his country's existence had otherwise begun? Who would desire the power of going back to the ages of fable? Who would wish for an origin obscured in the darkness of antiquity? Who would wish for other emblazoning of his country's heraldry, or other ornaments of her genealogy, than to be able to say, that her first existence was with intelligence, her first breath the inspiration of liberty, her first principle the truth of divine religion?

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THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIMS

Local attachments and sympathies would ere long spring up in the breasts of our ancestors, endearing to them the place of their refuge. Whatever natural objects are associated with interesting scenes and high efforts obtain a hold on human feeling, and demand from the heart a sort of recognition and regard. This Rock soon became hallowed in the esteem of the Pilgrims, and these hills grateful to their sight. Neither they nor their children were again to till the soil of England, nor again to traverse the seas which surround her. But here was a new sea, now open to their enterprise, and a new soil, which had not failed to respond gratefully to their laborious industry, and which was already assuming a robe of verdure. Hardly had they provided shelter for the living, ere they were summoned to erect sepulchres for the dead. The ground had become sacred, by enclosing the remains of some of their companions and connections. A parent, a child, a husband, or a wife had gone the way of all flesh, and mingled with the dust of New England. We naturally look with strong emotions to the spot, though it be a wilderness, where the ashes of those we have loved repose. Where the heart has laid down what it loved most, there it is desirous of laying itself down. No sculptured marble, no enduring monument, no honorable inscription, no ever-burning taper that would drive away the darkness of the tomb, can soften our sense of the reality of death, and hallow to our feelings the ground which is to cover us, like the consciousness that we shall sleep, dust to dust, with the objects of our affections.

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In a short time other causes sprung up to bind the Pilgrims with new cords to their chosen land. Children were born, and the hopes of future generations arose, in the spot of their new habitation. The second generation found this the land of their nativity, and saw that they were bound to its fortunes. They beheld their fathers' graves around them, and while they read the memorials of their toils and labors, they rejoiced in the inheritance which they found bequeathed to them.

Their chosen land.

The nature and constitution of society and government in this country are interesting topics, to which I would devote what remains of the time allowed to this occasion. Of our system of government the first thing to be said is, that it is really and practically a free system. It originates entirely with the people, and rests on no other foundation than their assent. To judge of its actual operation, it is not enough to look merely at the form of its construction. The practical character of government depends often on a variety of considerations, besides the abstract frame of its constitutional organization. Among these are the condition and tenure of property; the laws regulating its alienation and descent; the presence or absence of a military power; an armed or unarmed yeomanry; the spirit of the age, and the degree of general intelligence. In these respects it cannot be denied that the circumstances of this country are most favorable to the hope of maintaining the government of a great nation on principles entirely popular. In the absence of military power, the nature of government must essentially depend on the manner in which property is holden and distributed. There is a natural influence belonging to property, whether it exists in many hands or few; and it is on the rights of property that both despotism and unrestrained popular violence ordinarily commence their attacks. Our ancestors began their system of government here under a condition of comparative equality in regard to wealth, and their early laws were of a nature to favor and continue this equality.

Popular government in America.

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A republican form of government rests not more on political constitutions than on those laws which regulate the descent and transmission of property. Governments like ours could not have been maintained where property was holden according to the principles of the

The distribution of property in New England.

feudal system; nor, on the other hand, could the feudal constitution possibly exist with us. Our New England ancestors brought hither no great capitals from Europe; and if they had, there was nothing productive in which they could have been invested. They left behind them the whole feudal policy of the other continent. They broke away at once from the system of military service established in the Dark Ages, and which continues, down even to the present time, more or less to affect the condition of property all over Europe. They came to a new country. There were, as yet, no lands yielding rent, and no tenants rendering service. The whole soil was unreclaimed from barbarism. They were themselves, either from their original condition or from the necessity of their common interest, nearly on a general level in respect to property. Their situation demanded a parcelling out and division of the lands, and it may be fairly said, that this necessary act fixed the future frame and form of their government. The character of their political institutions was determined by the fundamental laws respecting property.

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The laws rendered estates divisible among sons and daughters. The right of primogeniture, at first limited and curtailed, was afterwards abolished. The property was all freehold. The entailment of estates, long trusts, and the other processes for fettering and tying up inheritances, were not applicable to the condition of society, and seldom made use of. On the contrary, alienation of the land was every way facilitated, even to the subjecting of it to every species of debt. The establishment of public registries, and the simplicity of our forms of conveyance, have greatly facilitated the change of real estate from one proprietor to another. The consequence of all these causes has been a great subdivision of the soil, and a great equality of condition; the true basis, most certainly, of a popular government. "If the people," says Harrington, "hold three parts in four of the territory, it is plain there can neither be any single person nor nobility able to dispute the government with them; in this case, therefore, except force be interposed, they govern themselves."

The division of governments into departments, and the division, again, of the legislative department into two chambers, are essential provisions in our system. This last, although not new in itself, yet seems to be new in its application to governments wholly popular. The Grecian republics, it is plain, knew nothing of it; and in Rome, the check and balance of legislative power, such as it was, lay between the people and the senate. Indeed, few things are more difficult than to ascertain accurately the true nature and construction of the Roman commonwealth. The relative power of the senate and the people, of the consuls and the tribunes, appears not to have been at all times the same, nor at any time accurately defined or strictly observed. Cicero, indeed, describes to us an admirable arrangement of political power, and a balance of the constitution, in that beautiful passage in which he compares the democracies of Greece with the Roman commonwealth.

The American system of government.

The Roman commonwealth.

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But at what time this wise system existed in this perfection at Rome, no proofs remain to show. Her constitution, originally framed for a monarchy, never seemed to be adjusted in its several parts after the expulsion of the kings. Liberty there was, but it was a disputatious, an uncertain, an ill-secured liberty. The patrician and plebeian orders, instead of being matched and joined, each in its just place and proportion, to sustain the fabric of the state, were rather like hostile powers, in perpetual conflict. With us, an attempt has been made, and so far not without success, to divide representation into chambers, and, by difference of age, character, qualification, or mode of election, to establish salutary checks, in governments altogether elective.

Having detained you so long with these observations, I must yet advert to another most interesting topic,—the Free Schools. In this particular New England may be allowed to claim, I think, a merit of a peculiar character. She early adopted, and has constantly maintained, the principle that it is the undoubted right and the bounden duty of government to provide for the instruction of all youth. That which is elsewhere left to chance or to charity, we secure by law. For the purpose of public instruction, we hold every man subject to taxation in proportion to his property, and we look not to the question, whether he himself have, or have not, children to be benefited by the education for which he pays. We regard it as a wise and liberal system of police, by which property, and life, and the peace of society are secured. We seek to prevent in some measure the extension of the penal code, by inspiring a salutary and conservative principle of virtue and of knowledge in an early age. We strive to excite a feeling of respectability, and a sense of character, by enlarging the capacity and increasing the sphere of intellectual enjoyment. By general instruction, we seek, as far as possible, to purify the whole moral atmosphere; to keep good sentiments uppermost, and to turn the strong current of feeling and opinion, as well as the censures of the law and the denunciations of religion, against immorality and crime. We hope for a security beyond the law, and above the law, in the prevalence of an enlightened and well-principled moral sentiment. We hope to continue and prolong the time when, in the villages and farm-houses of New England, there may be undisturbed sleep within unbarred doors. And knowing that our government rests directly on the public will, in order that we may preserve it we endeavor to give a safe and proper direction to that public will. We do not, indeed, expect all men to be philosophers or statesmen; but we confidently trust, and our expectation of the duration of our system of government rests on that trust, that, by the diffusion of general knowledge and good and virtuous sentiments, the political fabric may be secure, as well against open violence and overthrow as against the slow, but sure, undermining of licentiousness.

Education in New England.

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A conviction of the importance of public instruction was one of the earliest sentiments of our ancestors. No lawgiver of ancient or modern times has expressed more just opinions, or adopted

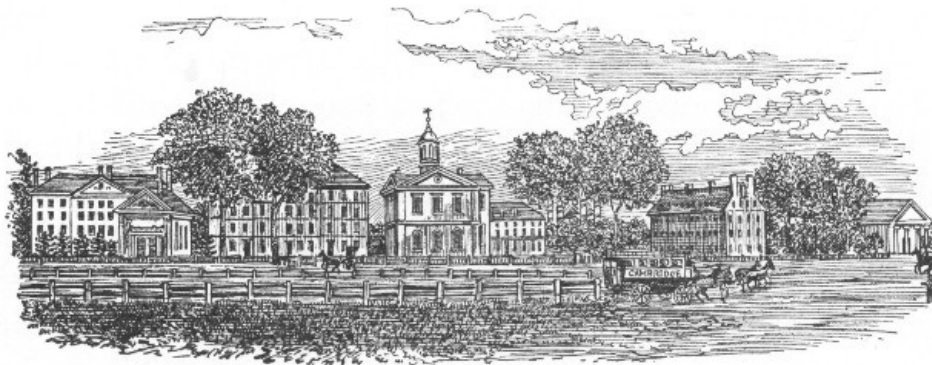
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wiser measures, than the early records of the Colony of Plymouth show to have prevailed here. Assembled on this very spot, a hundred and fifty-three years ago, the legislature of this Colony declared, "Forasmuch as the maintenance of good literature doth much tend to the advancement of the weal and flourishing state of societies and republics, this Court doth therefore order, that in whatever township in this government, consisting of fifty families or upwards, any meet man shall be obtained to teach a grammar school, such township shall allow at least twelve pounds, to be raised by rate on all the inhabitants."

Having provided that all youth should be instructed in the elements of learning by the institution of free schools, our ancestors had yet another duty to perform. Men were to be educated for the professions and the public. For this purpose they founded the university, and with incredible zeal and perseverance they cherished and supported it, through all trials and discouragements. On the subject of the university, it is not possible for a son of New England to think without pleasure, or to speak without emotion. Nothing confers more honor on the state where it is established, or more utility on the country at large. A respectable university is an establishment which must be the work of time. If pecuniary means were not wanting, no new institution could possess character and respectability at once. We owe deep obligation to our ancestors, who began, almost on the moment of their arrival, the work of building up this institution.

Harvard College.

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A View of Harvard College.

Although established in a different government, the Colony of Plymouth manifested warm friendship for Harvard College. At an early period, its government took measures to promote a general subscription throughout all the towns in this Colony, in aid of its small funds. Other colleges were subsequently founded and endowed, in other places, as the ability of the people allowed; and we may flatter ourselves that the means of education at present enjoyed in New England are not only adequate to the diffusion of the elements of knowledge among all classes, but sufficient also for respectable attainments in literature and the sciences.

Lastly, our ancestors established their system of government on morality and religious sentiment. Moral habits, they believed, cannot safely be trusted on any other foundation than religious principle, nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits. Living under the heavenly light of revelation, they hoped to find all the social dispositions, all the duties which men owe to each other and to society, enforced and performed. Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens. Our fathers came here to enjoy their religion free and unmolested; and, at the end of two centuries, there is nothing upon which we can pronounce more confidently, nothing of which we can express a more deep and earnest conviction, than of the inestimable importance of that religion to man, both in regard to this life and that which is to come.

Religious influences.

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If the blessings of our political and social condition have not been too highly estimated, we cannot well overrate the responsibility and duty which they impose upon us. We hold these institutions of government, religion, and learning to be transmitted as well as enjoyed. We are in the lines of conveyance, through which whatever has been obtained by the spirit and efforts of our ancestors is to be communicated to our children.

The duty of the descendants of the Pilgrims.

We are bound not only to maintain the general principles of public liberty, but to support also those existing forms of government which have so well secured its enjoyment, and so highly promoted the public prosperity. It is now more than thirty years that these States have been united under the Federal Constitution, and whatever fortune may await them hereafter, it is impossible that this period of their history should not be regarded as distinguished by signal prosperity and success. They must be sanguine, indeed, who can hope for benefit from change. Whatever division of the public judgment may have existed in relation to particular measures of the government, all must agree, one should think, in the opinion that in its general course it has been eminently productive of public happiness. Its most ardent friends could not well have hoped from it more than it has accomplished; and those who disbelieved or doubted ought to feel less concern about predictions which the event has not verified than pleasure in the good which has been obtained. Whoever shall hereafter write this part of our

American constitutional history.

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history, although he may see occasional errors or defects, will be able to record no great failure in the ends and objects of government. Still less will he be able to record any series of lawless and despotic acts, or any successful usurpation. His page will contain no exhibition of provinces depopulated, of civil authority habitually trampled down by military power, or of a community crushed by the burden of taxation. He will speak, rather, of public liberty protected, and public happiness advanced; of increased revenue, and population augmented beyond all example; of the growth of commerce, manufactures, and the arts; and of that happy condition in which the restraint and coercion of government are almost invisible and imperceptible, and its influence felt only in the benefits which it confers. We can entertain no better wish for our country than that this government may be preserved; nor have a clearer duty than to maintain and support it in the full exercise of all its just constitutional powers.

The cause of science and literature also imposes upon us an important and delicate trust. The wealth and population of the country are now so far advanced as to authorize the expectation of a correct literature and a well-formed taste, as well as respectable progress in the abstruse sciences. The country has risen from a state of colonial subjection; it has established an independent government, and is now in the undisturbed enjoyment of peace and political security. The elements of knowledge are universally diffused, and the reading portion of the community is large. Let us hope that the present may be an auspicious era of literature. If, almost on the day of their landing, our ancestors founded schools and endowed colleges, what obligations do not rest upon us, living under circumstances so much more favorable both for providing and for using the means of education? Literature becomes free institutions. It is the graceful ornament of civil liberty, and a happy restraint on the asperities which political controversies sometimes occasion. Just taste is not only an embellishment of society, but it rises almost to the rank of the virtues, and diffuses positive good throughout the whole extent of its influence. There is a connection between right feeling and right principles, and truth in taste is allied with truth in morality. With nothing in our past history to discourage us, and with something in our present condition and prospects to animate us, let us hope that, as it is our fortune to live in an age when we may behold a wonderful advancement of the country in all its other great interests, we may see also equal progress and success attend the cause of letters.

American literature.

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Finally, let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought hither by their high veneration for the Christian religion. They journeyed by its light, and labored in its hope. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society, and to diffuse its influence through all their institutions, civil, political, or literary. Let us cherish these sentiments, and extend this influence still more widely, in the full conviction that that is the happiest society which partakes in the highest degree of the mild and peaceful spirit of Christianity.

The influence of religion.

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The hours of this day are rapidly flying, and this occasion will soon be passed. Neither we nor our children can expect to behold its return. They are in the distant regions of futurity, they exist only in the all-creating power of God, who shall stand here a hundred years hence, to trace, through us, their descent from the Pilgrims, and to survey, as we have now surveyed, the progress of their country during the lapse of a century. We would anticipate their concurrence with us in our sentiments of deep regard for our common ancestors. We would anticipate and partake the pleasure with which they will then recount the steps of New England's advancement. On the morning of that day, although it will not disturb us in our repose, the voice of acclamation and gratitude, commencing on the Rock of Plymouth, shall be transmitted through millions of the sons of the Pilgrims, till it lose itself in the murmurs of the Pacific seas.

The future progress of New England.

We would leave, for the consideration of those who shall then occupy our places, some proof that we hold the blessings transmitted from our fathers in just estimation; some proof of our attachment to the cause of good government, and of civil and religious liberty; some proof of a sincere and ardent desire to promote everything which may enlarge the understandings and improve the hearts of men. And when, from the long distance of a hundred years, they shall look back upon us, they shall know, at least, that we possessed affections which, running backward and warming with gratitude for what our ancestors have done for our happiness, run forward also to our posterity, and meet them with cordial salutation, ere yet they have arrived on the shore of being.

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Advance, then, ye future generations! We would hail you, as you rise in your long succession, to fill the places which we now fill, and to taste the blessings of existence where we are passing, and soon shall have passed, our own human duration. We bid you welcome to this pleasant land of the fathers. We bid you welcome to the healthful skies and the verdant fields of New England. We greet your accession to the great inheritance which we have enjoyed. We welcome you to the blessings of good government and religious liberty. We welcome you to the treasures of science and the delights of learning. We welcome you to the transcendent sweets of domestic life, to the happiness of kindred and parents and children. We welcome you to the immeasurable blessings of rational existence, the immortal hope of Christianity, and the light of everlasting truth!

This uncounted multitude before me and around me proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, and from the impulses of a common gratitude turned reverently to heaven in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.



THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchres of our fathers. We are on ground distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans. We live in what may be called the early age of this great continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to enjoy and suffer the allotments of humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born, and settled the condition in which we should pass that portion of our existence which God allows to men on earth.

The Battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775.

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We do not read even of the discovery of this continent, without feeling something of a personal interest in the event; without being reminded how much it has affected our own fortunes and our own existence. It would be still more unnatural for us, therefore, than for others, to contemplate with unaffected minds that interesting, I may say that most touching and pathetic scene, when the great discoverer of America stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea, yet no man sleeping; tossed on the billows of an unknown ocean, yet the stronger billows of alternate hope and despair tossing his own troubled thoughts; extending forward his harassed frame, straining westward his anxious and eager eyes, till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world.

The discovery of America.

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Nearer to our times, more closely connected with our fates, and therefore still more interesting to our feelings and affections, is the settlement of our own country by colonists from England. We cherish every memorial of these worthy ancestors; we celebrate their patience and fortitude; we admire their daring enterprise; we teach our children to venerate their piety; and we are justly proud of being descended from men who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human knowledge. To us, their children, the story of their labors and sufferings can never be without its interest. We shall not stand unmoved on the shore of Plymouth, while the sea continues to wash it; nor will our brethren in another early and ancient colony forget the place of its first establishment, till their river shall cease to flow by it.^[8] No vigor of youth, no maturity of manhood, will lead the nation to forget the spots where its infancy was cradled and defended.

The first settlement of New England.

But the great event in the history of the continent, which we are now met here to commemorate, that prodigy of modern times, at once the wonder and the blessing of the world, is the American Revolution. In a day of extraordinary prosperity and happiness, of high national honor,

The American Revolution.

distinction, and power, we are brought together, in this place, by our love of country, by our admiration of exalted character, by our gratitude for signal services and patriotic devotion.

The Society whose organ I am was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monument to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought that for this object no time could be more propitious than the present prosperous and peaceful period, that no place could claim preference over this memorable spot, and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking than the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for his blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will be prosecuted, and that, springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain as long as Heaven permits the works of man to last, a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised, and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

The object of the monument.

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We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself can carry information of the events we commemorate where it has not already gone; and that no structure which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice, to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors; and, by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed, not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart.

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Let it not be supposed that our object is to perpetuate national hostility, or even to cherish a mere military spirit. It is higher, purer, nobler. We consecrate our work to the spirit of national independence, and we wish that the light of peace may rest upon it forever. We rear a memorial of our conviction of that unmeasured benefit which has been conferred on our own land, and of the happy influences which have been produced, by the same events, on the general interests of mankind. We come, as Americans, to mark a spot which must forever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish that whosoever, in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event to every class and every age. We wish that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. We wish that labor may look up here, and be proud in the midst of its toil. We wish that, in those days of disaster which, as they come upon all nations, must be expected to come upon us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power are still strong. We wish that this column, rising towards heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object to the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden his who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise! let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

Importance of the site.

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We still have among us some of those who were active agents in the scenes of 1775, and who are now here, from every quarter of New England, to visit once more, and under circumstances so affecting, I had almost said so overwhelming, this renowned theatre of their courage and patriotism.

The survivors of 1775.

Venerable men! you have come down to us from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you might behold this joyous day. You are now where you stood fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers and your neighbors, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered! The same heavens are indeed over your heads; the same ocean rolls at your feet; but all else how changed! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon, you see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewed with the dead and the dying; the impetuous charge; the steady and successful repulse; the loud call to repeated assault; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death,—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more. All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole happy population, come out to welcome and greet you with a universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and

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defence. All is peace; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you!

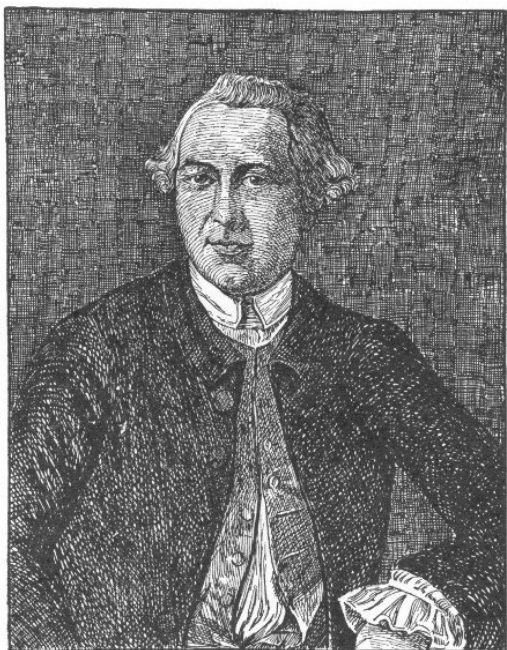
But, alas! you are not all here! Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Read, Pomeroy, Bridge! our eyes seek for you in vain amid this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve that you have met the common fate of men. You lived at least long enough to know that your work had been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like

“another morn,
Risen on mid-noon;”

and the sky on which you closed your eyes was cloudless.

The dead patriots.

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Joseph Warren.

But ah! Him!^[9] the first great martyr in this great cause! Him! The premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the lead of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands, whom nothing brought hither but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit! Him! cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage!—how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name! Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure! This monument may moulder away; the soil ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy memory shall not fail! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit!

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But the scene amidst which we stand does not permit us to confine our thoughts or our sympathies to those fearless spirits who hazarded or lost their lives on this consecrated spot. We have the happiness to rejoice here in the presence of a most worthy representation of the survivors of the

whole Revolutionary army.

Veterans! you are the remnant of many a well-fought field. You bring with you marks of honor from Trenton and Monmouth, from Yorktown, Camden, Bennington, and Saratoga. Veterans of half a century! when in your youthful days you put everything at hazard in your country's cause, good as that cause was, and sanguine as youth is, still your fondest hopes did not stretch onward to an hour like this! At a period to which you could not reasonably have expected to arrive, at a moment of national prosperity such as you could never have foreseen, you are now met here to enjoy the fellowship of old soldiers, and to receive the overflowings of a universal gratitude.

The veterans of the Revolution.

But your agitated countenances and your heaving breasts inform me that even this is not an unmixed joy. I perceive that a tumult of contending feelings rushes upon you. The images of the dead, as well as the persons of the living, present themselves before you. The scene overwhelms you, and I turn from it. May the Father of all mercies smile upon your declining years, and bless them! And when you shall here have exchanged your embraces, when you shall once more have pressed the hands which have been so often extended to give succor in adversity, or grasped in the exultation of victory, then look abroad upon this lovely land which your young valor defended, and mark the happiness with which it is filled; yea, look abroad upon the whole earth, and see what a name you have contributed to give to your country, and what a praise you have added to freedom, and then rejoice in the sympathy and gratitude which beam upon your last days from the improved condition of mankind!

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Sir, we are assembled to commemorate the establishment of great public principles of liberty, and to do honor to the distinguished dead. The occasion is too severe for eulogy of the living. But, Sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us, call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration.^[10]

Tribute to Lafayette.

Fortunate, fortunate man! with what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are



Marquis de Lafayette.

connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You will account it an instance of your good fortune, Sir, that you crossed the seas to visit us at a time which enables you to be present at this solemnity. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France, and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt thrown up by the incredible diligence of Prescott; defended, to the last extremity, by his lion-hearted valor; and within which the corner-stone of our monument has now taken its position. You see where Warren fell, and where Parker, Gardner, McCleary, Moore, and other early patriots, fell with him. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you. Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of the war. Behold! they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you. Behold! they raise their trembling voices to

invoke the blessing of God on you and yours forever.

Sir, you have assisted us in laying the foundation of this structure. You have heard us rehearse, with our feeble commendation, the names of departed patriots. Monuments and eulogy belong to the dead. We give them this day to Warren and his associates. On other occasions they have been given to your more immediate companions in arms, to Washington, to Greene, to Gates, to Sullivan, and to Lincoln. We have become reluctant to grant these, our highest and last honors, further. We would gladly hold them yet back from the little remnant of that immortal band. *Serus in caelum redeas.*^[11] Illustrious as are your merits, yet far, oh, very far distant be the day when any inscription shall bear your name, or any tongue pronounce its eulogy!

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The leading reflection to which this occasion seems to invite us respects the great changes which have happened in the fifty years since the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. And it peculiarly marks the character of the present age, that, in looking at these changes, and in estimating their effect on our condition, we are obliged to consider, not what has been done in our own country only, but in others also. In these interesting times, while nations are making separate and individual advances in improvement, they make, too, a common progress; like vessels on a common tide, propelled by the gales at different rates, according to their several structure and management, but all moved forward by one mighty current, strong enough to bear onward whatever does not sink beneath it.

The common progress of nations.

A chief distinction of the present day is a community of opinions and knowledge amongst men in different nations, existing in a degree heretofore unknown. Knowledge has, in our time, triumphed, and is triumphing, over distance, over difference of languages, over diversity of habits, over prejudice, and over bigotry. The civilized and Christian world is fast learning the great lesson, that difference of nation does not imply necessary hostility, and that all contact need not be war. The whole world is becoming a common field for intellect to act in. Energy of mind, genius, power, wheresoever it exists, may speak out in any tongue, and the world will hear it. A great chord of sentiment and feeling runs through two continents, and vibrates over both. Every breeze wafts intelligence from country to country; every wave rolls it; all give it forth, and all in turn receive it. There is a vast commerce of ideas; there are marts and exchanges for intellectual discoveries, and a wonderful fellowship of those individual intelligences which make up the mind and opinion of the age. Mind is the great lever of all things; human thought is the process by which human ends are ultimately answered; and the diffusion of knowledge, so astonishing in the last half-century, has rendered innumerable minds, variously gifted by nature, competent to be competitors or fellow-workers on the theatre of intellectual operation.

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The great wheel of political revolution began to move in America. Here its rotation was guarded, regular, and safe. Transferred to the other continent, from unfortunate but natural causes, it received an irregular and violent impulse; it whirled along with a fearful celerity; till at length, like the chariot-wheels in the races of antiquity, it took fire from the rapidity of its own motion, and blazed onward, spreading conflagration and terror around.

Influence of the American Revolution upon Europe.

We learn from the result of this experiment, how fortunate was our own condition, and how admirably the character of our people was calculated for setting the great example of popular governments. The possession of power did not turn the heads of the American people, for they had long been in the habit of exercising a great degree of self-control. Although the paramount authority of the parent state existed over them, yet a large field of legislation had always been open to our Colonial assemblies. They were accustomed to representative bodies and the forms of free government; they understood the doctrine of the division of power among different

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branches, and the necessity of checks on each. The character of our countrymen, moreover, was sober, moral, and religious; and there was little in the change to shock their feelings of justice and humanity, or even to disturb an honest prejudice. We had no domestic throne to overturn, no privileged orders to cast down, no violent changes of property to encounter. In the American Revolution, no man sought or wished for more than to defend and enjoy his own. None hoped for plunder or for spoil. Rapacity was unknown to it; the axe was not among the instruments of its accomplishment; and we all know that it could not have lived a single day under any well-founded imputation of possessing a tendency adverse to the Christian religion.

It need not surprise us, that, under circumstances less auspicious, political revolutions elsewhere, even when well intended, have terminated differently. It is, indeed, a great achievement, it is the master-work of the world, to establish governments entirely popular on lasting foundations; nor is it easy, indeed, to introduce the popular principle at all into governments to which it has been altogether a stranger. It cannot be doubted, however, that Europe has come out of the contest, in which she has been so long engaged, with greatly superior knowledge, and, in many respects, in a highly improved condition. Whatever benefit has been acquired is likely to be retained, for it consists mainly in the acquisition of more enlightened ideas. And although kingdoms and provinces may be wrested from the hands that hold them, in the same manner they were obtained; although ordinary and vulgar power may, in human affairs, be lost as it has been won; yet it is the glorious prerogative of the empire of knowledge, that what it gains it never loses. On the contrary, it increases by the multiple of its power; all its ends become means; all its attainments, helps to new conquests. Its whole abundant harvest is but so much seed wheat, and nothing has limited, and nothing can limit the amount of ultimate product.

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Under the influence of this rapidly increasing knowledge, the people have begun, in all forms of government, to think and to reason on affairs of state. Regarding government as an institution for the public good, they demand a knowledge of its operations, and a participation in its exercise. A call for the representative system, wherever it is not enjoyed, and where there is already intelligence enough to estimate its value, is perseveringly made. Where men may speak out, they demand it; where the bayonet is at their throats, they pray for it.

The representative system of government.

We may hope that the growing influence of enlightened sentiment will promote the permanent peace of the world. Wars to maintain family alliances, to uphold or to cast down dynasties, and to regulate successions to thrones, which have occupied so much room in the history of modern times, if not less likely to happen at all, will be less likely to become general and involve many nations, as the great principle shall be more and more established, that the interest of the world is peace, and its first great statute that every nation possesses the power of establishing a government for itself. But public opinion has attained also an influence over governments which do not admit the popular principle into their organization. A necessary respect for the judgment of the world operates, in some measure, as a control over the most unlimited forms of authority. It is owing, perhaps, to this truth, that the interesting struggle of the Greeks has been suffered to go on so long, without a direct interference, either to wrest that country from its present masters, or to execute the system of pacification by force, and, with united strength, lay the neck of Christian and civilized Greek at the foot of the barbarian Turk. Let us thank God that we live in an age when something has influence besides the bayonet, and when the sternest authority does not venture to encounter the scorching power of public reproach. Any attempt of the kind I have mentioned should be met by one universal burst of indignation; the air of the civilized world ought to be made too warm to be comfortably breathed by any one who would hazard it.

Respect for the judgment of the world.

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It is, indeed, a touching reflection, that, while, in the fulness of our country's happiness, we rear this monument to her honor, we look for instruction in our undertaking to a country which is now in fearful contest, not for works of art or memorials of glory, but for her own existence.^[12]

The Greek struggle for independence.

Let her be assured that she is not forgotten in the world; that her efforts are applauded, and that constant prayers ascend for her success. And let us cherish a confident hope for her final triumph. If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

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When the battle of Bunker Hill was fought, the existence of South America was scarcely felt in the civilized world. The thirteen little Colonies of North America habitually called themselves the "Continent." Borne down by Colonial subjugation, monopoly, and bigotry, these vast regions of the South were hardly visible above the horizon. But in our day there has been, as it were, a new creation. The southern hemisphere emerges from the sea. Its lofty mountains begin to lift themselves into the light of heaven; its broad and fertile plains stretch out, in beauty, to the eye of civilized man, and at the mighty bidding of the voice of political liberty the waters of darkness retire.

South American liberty.

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And, now, let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit which the example of our country has produced, and is likely to produce, on human freedom and human happiness. Let us endeavor to comprehend in all its magnitude, and to feel in all its importance, the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows that such governments are compatible not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws, and a just administration.

The example of the republic of the United States.

We are not propagandists. Wherever other systems are preferred, either as being thought better in themselves, or as better suited to existing condition, we leave the preference to be enjoyed. Our history hitherto proves, however, that the popular form is practicable, and that with wisdom and knowledge men may govern themselves; and the duty incumbent on us is to preserve the consistency of this cheering example, and take care that nothing may weaken its authority with the world. If, in our case, the representative system ultimately fail, popular governments must be pronounced impossible. No combination of circumstances more favorable to the experiment can ever be expected to occur. The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us; and if it should be proclaimed that our example had become an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty would be sounded throughout the earth.

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These are excitements to duty; but they are not suggestions of doubt. Our history and our condition, all that is gone before us, and all that surrounds us, authorize the belief that popular governments, though subject to occasional variations, in form perhaps not always for the better, may yet, in their general character, be as durable and permanent as other systems. We know, indeed, that in our country any other is impossible. The *principle* of free governments adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it, immovable as its mountains.

And let the sacred obligations which have devolved on this generation, and on us, sink deep into our hearts. Those who established our liberty and our government are daily dropping from among us. The great trust now descends to new hands. Let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us, as our appropriate object. We can win no laurels in a war for independence. Earlier and worthier hands have gathered them all. Nor are there places for us by the side of Solon, and Alfred, and other founders of states. Our fathers have filled them. But there remains to us a great duty of defence and preservation; and there is open to us, also, a noble pursuit, to which the spirit of the times strongly invites us. Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects which our condition points out to us, let us act under a settled conviction, and an habitual feeling, that these twenty-four States are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act. Let our object be, OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY, AND NOTHING BUT OUR COUNTRY. And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of Wisdom, of Peace, and of Liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration forever!

The obligations of Americans.

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THE COMPLETION OF THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT

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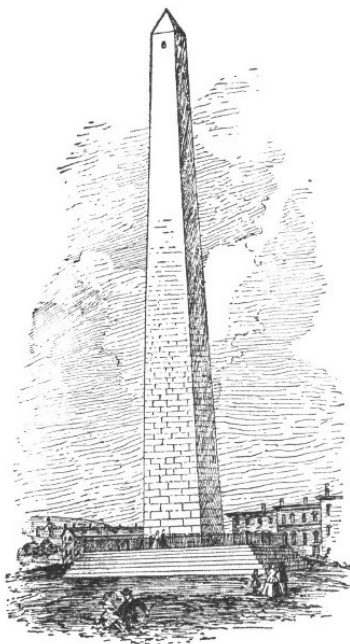
AN ADDRESS DELIVERED JUNE 17, 1843

[It was determined by the directors of the Bunker Hill Monument Association, that the completion of the work should be celebrated in a manner not less imposing than that in which the laying of the corner-stone had been celebrated, seventeen years before. The co-operation of Mr. Webster was again invited, and, notwithstanding the pressure of his engagements as Secretary of State at Washington, was again patriotically yielded. The President of the United States and his Cabinet had accepted invitations to be present; and delegations of the descendants of New England attended from all parts of the Union, including one hundred and eight surviving veterans of the Revolution, among whom were some who were in the battle of Bunker Hill. According to the estimate of Richard Frothingham, one hundred thousand persons were gathered, and nearly half that number are supposed to have been within the reach of the orator's voice. The ground rises slightly between the platform and the Monument Square, so that the whole of this concourse, compactly crowded together, was within the full view of the speaker. When, after saying, "It is not from my lips, it could not be from any human lips, that that strain of eloquence is this day to flow most competently to move and excite the vast multitudes around me,—the powerful speaker stands motionless before us," Mr. Webster paused, and pointed to the monument, the audience burst into long and loud applause. It was some moments before he could go on with his address.]

A duty has been performed. A work of gratitude and patriotism is completed. This structure, having its foundations in soil which drank deep of early Revolutionary blood, has at length reached its destined height, and now lifts its summit to the skies.

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Time and nature have had their course in diminishing the number of those whom we met here on the 17th of June, 1825. Most of the Revolutionary characters then present have since deceased; and Lafayette sleeps in his



Bunker Hill Monument.

native land. Yet the name and blood of Warren are with us; the kindred of Putnam are also here; and near me, universally beloved for his character and his virtues, and now venerable for his years, sits the son of the noble-hearted and daring Prescott.

The changes of
eighteen years.

The Bunker Hill Monument is finished.

Here it stands.^[13] Fortunate in the high natural eminence on which it is placed, higher, infinitely higher in its objects and

The purpose of the
monument.

purpose, it rises over the land and over the sea; and visible at their homes to three hundred thousand of the people of Massachusetts, it stands a memorial of the last, and a monitor to the present, and to all succeeding generations. I have spoken of the loftiness of its purpose. If it had been without any other design than the creation of a work of art, the granite of which it is composed would have slept in its native bed. It has a purpose, and that purpose gives it its character. That purpose enrobes it with dignity and moral grandeur. That well-known purpose it is which causes us to look up to it with a feeling of awe. It is itself the orator of this occasion. It is not from my lips, it could not be from any human lips, that that strain of eloquence is this day to flow most competent to move and excite the vast multitudes around me. The powerful speaker stands motionless before us. It

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is a plain shaft. It bears no inscriptions, fronting to the rising sun, from which the future antiquary shall wipe the dust. Nor does the rising sun cause tones of music to issue from its summit. But at the rising of the sun, and at the setting of the sun; in the blaze of noonday, and beneath the milder effulgence of lunar light; it looks, it speaks, it acts, to the full comprehension of every American mind, and the awakening of glowing enthusiasm in every American heart. Its silent, but awful utterance; its deep pathos, as it brings to our contemplation the 17th of June, 1775, and the consequences which have resulted to us, to our country, and to the world, from the events of that day, and which we know must continue to rain influence on the destinies of mankind to the end of time; the elevation with which it raises us high above the ordinary feelings of life,—surpass all that the study of the closet, or even the inspiration of genius, can produce. To-day it speaks to us. Its future auditories will be the successive generations of men, as they rise up before it and gather around it. Its speech will be of patriotism and courage; of civil and religious liberty; of free government; of the moral improvement and elevation of mankind; and of the immortal memory of those who, with heroic devotion, have sacrificed their lives for their country.

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In the older world, numerous fabrics still exist, reared by human hands, but whose object has been lost in the darkness of ages. They are now monuments of nothing but the labor and skill which constructed them.

The monuments of
the past.

The mighty pyramid itself, half buried in the sands of Africa, has nothing to bring down and report to us but the power of kings and the servitude of the people. If it had any purpose beyond that of a mausoleum, such purpose has perished from history and from tradition. If asked for its moral object, its admonition, its sentiment, its instruction to mankind, or any high end in its erection, it is silent; silent as the millions which lie in the dust at its base, and in the catacombs which surround it. Without a just moral object, therefore, made known to man, though raised against the skies, it excites only conviction of power, mixed with strange wonder. But if the civilization of the present race of men, founded, as it is, in solid science, the true knowledge of nature, and vast discoveries in art, and which is elevated and purified by moral sentiment and by the truths of Christianity, be not destined to destruction before the final termination of human existence on earth, the object and purpose of this edifice will be known till that hour shall come. And even if civilization should be subverted, and the truths of the Christian religion obscured by a new deluge of barbarism, the memory of Bunker Hill and the American Revolution will still be elements and parts of the knowledge which shall be possessed by the last man to whom the light of civilization and Christianity shall be extended.

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This celebration is honored by the presence of the chief executive magistrate of the Union. An occasion so national in its object and character, and so much connected with that Revolution from which the government sprang at the head of which he is placed, may well receive from him this mark of attention and respect. Well acquainted with Yorktown, the scene of the last great military struggle of the Revolution, his eye now surveys the field of Bunker Hill, the theatre of the first of those important conflicts. He sees where Warren fell, where Putnam, and Prescott, and Stark, and Knowlton, and Brooks fought. He beholds the spot where a thousand trained soldiers of England were smitten to the earth, in the first effort of revolutionary war, by the arm of a bold and determined yeomanry, contending for liberty and their country.

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Banners and badges, processions and flags, announce to us, that amidst this uncounted throng are thousands of natives of New England now residents in other States. Welcome, ye kindred names, with kindred blood! From the broad savannas of the South, from the newer regions of the West, from amidst the hundreds of thousands of men of Eastern origin who cultivate the rich valley of the Genesee or live



John Tyler.

along the chain of the lakes, from the mountains of Pennsylvania, and from the thronged cities of the coast, welcome, welcome! Wherever else you may be strangers, here you are all at home. You assemble at this shrine of liberty, near the family altars at which your earliest devotions were paid to Heaven, near to the temples of worship first entered by you, and near to the schools and colleges in which your education was received. You come hither with a glorious ancestry of liberty. You bring names which are on the rolls of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. You come, some of you, once more to be embraced by an aged Revolutionary father, or to receive another, perhaps a last, blessing, bestowed in love and tears by a mother yet surviving to witness and to enjoy your prosperity and happiness.

President Tyler.

Visitors present at the dedication.

But if family associations and the recollections of the past bring you hither with greater alacrity, and mingle with your greeting much of local attachment and private affection, greeting also be given, free and hearty greeting, to every American citizen who treads this sacred soil with patriotic feeling, and respires

with pleasure in an atmosphere perfumed with the recollections of 1775! This occasion is respectable, nay, it is grand, it is sublime, by the nationality of its sentiment. Among the seventeen millions of happy people who form the American community there is not one who has not an interest in this monument, as there is not one that has not a deep and abiding interest in that which it commemorates.

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Woe betide the man who brings to this day's worship feeling less than wholly American! Woe betide the man who can stand here with the fires of local resentments burning, or the purpose of fomenting local jealousies and the strifes of local interests festering and rankling in his heart! Union, established in justice, in patriotism, and the most plain and obvious common interest,—union, founded on the same love of liberty, cemented by blood shed in the same common cause,—union has been the source of all our glory and greatness thus far, and is the ground of all our highest hopes. This column stands on Union. I know not that it might not keep its position, if the American Union, in the mad conflict of human passions, and in the strife of parties and factions, should be broken up and destroyed. I know not that it would totter and fall to the earth, and mingle its fragments with the fragments of Liberty and the Constitution, when state should be separated from state, and faction and dismemberment obliterate forever all the hopes of the founders of our republic, and the great inheritance of their children. It might stand. But who, from beneath the weight of mortification and shame that would oppress him, could look up to behold it? Whose eyeballs would not be seared by such a spectacle? For my part, should I live to such a time, I shall avert my eyes from it forever.

The American Union.

It is not as a mere military encounter of hostile armies that the battle of Bunker Hill presents its principal claim to attention. Yet even as a mere battle there were circumstances attending it extraordinary in character, and entitling it to peculiar distinction. It was fought on this eminence; in the neighborhood of yonder city; in the presence of many more spectators than there were combatants in the conflict. Men, women, and children, from every commanding position, were gazing at the battle, and looking for its results with all the eagerness natural to those who knew that the issue was fraught with the deepest consequences to themselves, personally, as well as to their country. Yet, on the 16th of June, 1775, there was nothing around this hill but verdure and culture. There was, indeed, the note of awful preparation in Boston. There was the Provincial army at Cambridge, with its right flank resting on Dorchester, and its left on Chelsea. But here all was peace. Tranquillity reigned around. On the 17th, everything was changed. On this eminence had arisen, in the night, a redoubt, built by Prescott, and in which he held command. Perceived by the enemy at dawn, it was immediately cannonaded from the floating batteries in the river, and from the opposite shore. And then ensued the hurried movement in Boston, and soon the troops of Britain embarked in the attempt to dislodge the Colonists. In an hour everything indicated an immediate and bloody conflict. Love of liberty on one side, proud defiance of rebellion on the other, hopes and fears, and courage and daring, on both sides, animated the hearts of the combatants as they hung on the edge of battle.

Importance of the battle of Bunker Hill.

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I suppose it would be difficult, in a military point of view, to ascribe to the leaders on either side any just motive for the engagement which followed. On the one hand, it could not have been very important to the Americans to attempt to hem the British within the town, by advancing one single post a quarter of a mile; while, on the other hand, if the British found it essential to dislodge the American troops, they had it in their power at no expense of life. By moving up their ships and batteries, they could have completely cut off all communication with the mainland over the Neck, and the forces in the redoubt would have been reduced to a state of famine in forty-eight hours.

The motive for the engagement.

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But that was not the day for any such consideration on either side! Both parties were anxious to try the strength of their arms. The pride of England would not permit the rebels, as she termed them, to defy her to the teeth; and, without for a moment calculating the cost, the British general determined to destroy the fort immediately. On the other side, Prescott and his gallant followers longed and thirsted for a decisive trial of strength and of courage. They wished a battle, and wished it at once. And this is the true secret of the movements on this hill.

I will not attempt to describe that battle. The cannonading; the landing of the British; their advance; the coolness with which the charge was met; the repulse; the second attack; the second repulse; the burning of Charlestown; and, finally, the closing assault, and the slow retreat of the Americans,—the history of all these is familiar.

But the consequences of the battle of Bunker Hill were greater than those of any ordinary conflict, although between armies of far greater force, and terminating with more immediate advantage on the one side or the other. It was the first great battle of the Revolution; and not only the first blow, but the blow which determined the contest. It did not, indeed, put an end to the war, but in the then existing hostile state of feeling, the difficulties could only be referred to the arbitration of the sword. And one thing is certain: that after the New England troops had shown themselves able to face and repulse the regulars, it was decided that peace never could be established, but upon the basis of the independence of the Colonies. When the sun of that day went down, the event of Independence was no longer doubtful. In a few days Washington heard of the battle, and he inquired if the militia had stood the fire of the regulars. When told that they had not only stood that fire, but reserved their own till the enemy was within eight rods, and then poured it in with tremendous effect, "Then," exclaimed he, "the liberties of the country are safe!"

The consequences of the battle.

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The Mayflower sought our shores under no high-wrought spirit of commercial adventure, no love of gold, no mixture of purpose warlike or hostile to any human being. Like the dove from the ark she had put forth only to find rest. Solemn supplications on the shore of the sea, in Holland, had invoked for her, at her departure, the blessings of Providence. The stars which guided her were the unobscured constellations of civil and religious liberty. Her deck was the altar of the living God. Fervent prayers on bended knees mingled, morning and evening, with the voices of ocean, and the sighing of the wind in her shrouds. Every prosperous breeze which, gently swelling her sails, helped the Pilgrims onward in their course, awoke new anthems of praise; and when the elements were wrought into fury, neither the tempest, tossing their fragile bark like a feather, nor the darkness and howling of the midnight storm, ever disturbed, in man or woman, the firm and settled purpose of their souls, to undergo all, and to do all, that the meekest patience, the boldest resolution, and the highest trust in God could enable human beings to suffer or to perform.

The purposes of the Pilgrims of Plymouth.

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The Colonists of English America were of the people, and a people already free. They were of the middle, industrious, and already prosperous class, the inhabitants of commercial and manufacturing cities, among whom liberty first revived and respired, after a sleep of a thousand years in the bosom of the Dark Ages. Spain descended on the New World in the armed and terrible image of her monarchy and her soldiery; England approached it in the winning and popular garb of personal rights, public protection, and civil freedom. England transplanted liberty to America; Spain transplanted power. England, through the agency of private companies and the efforts of individuals, colonized this part of North America by industrious individuals, making their own way in the wilderness, defending themselves against the savages, recognizing their right to the soil, and with a general honest purpose of introducing knowledge as well as Christianity among them. Spain stooped on South America like a vulture on its prey. Everything was force. Territories were acquired by fire and sword. Cities were destroyed by fire and sword. Hundreds of thousands of human beings fell by fire and sword. Even conversion to Christianity was attempted by fire and sword.

English liberty and Spanish greed.

Behold, then, fellow-citizens, the difference resulting from the operation of the two principles! Here, to-day, on the summit of Bunker Hill, and at the foot of this monument, behold the difference! I would that the fifty thousand voices present could proclaim it with a shout which should be heard over the globe. Our inheritance was of liberty, secured and regulated by law, and enlightened by religion and knowledge; that of South America was of power, stern, unrelenting, tyrannical, military power. And now look to the consequences of the two principles on the general and aggregate happiness of the human race. Behold the results in all the regions conquered by Cortéz and Pizarro, and the contrasted results here. I suppose the territory of the United States may amount to one-eighth, or one-tenth, of that colonized by Spain on this continent; and yet in all that vast region there are but between one and two millions of people of European color and European blood, while in the United States there are fourteen millions who rejoice in their descent from the people of the more northern part of Europe.

The consequences of the two principles.

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The great elements of the American system of government, originally introduced by the Colonists, and which were early in operation, and ready to be developed, more and more, as the progress of events should justify

The seeds of government sown by

or demand, were,—

the Colonists.

Escape from the existing political systems of Europe, including its religious hierarchies, but the continued possession and enjoyment of its science and arts, its literature, and its manners;

Home government, or the power of making in the Colony the municipal laws which were to govern it;

Equality of rights;

Representative assemblies, or forms of government founded on popular elections.

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Few topics are more inviting, or more fit for philosophical discussion, than the effect on the happiness of mankind of institutions founded upon these principles; or, in other words, the influence of the New World upon the Old.

American institutions.

Her obligations to Europe for science and art, laws, literature, and manners, America acknowledges, as she ought, with respect and gratitude. The people of the United States, descendants of the English stock, grateful for the treasures of knowledge derived from their English ancestors, admit also, with thanks and filial regard, that among those ancestors, under the culture of Hampden and Sydney and other assiduous friends, that seed of popular liberty first germinated which on our soil has shot up to its full height, until its branches overshadow all the land.

But America has not failed to make returns. If she has not wholly cancelled the obligation, or equalled it by others of like weight, she has, at least, made respectable advances towards repaying the debt. And she admits that, standing in the midst of civilized nations, and in a civilized age, a nation among nations, there is a high part which she is expected to act, for the general advancement of human interests and human welfare.

America's contributions to European welfare.

American mines have filled the mints of Europe with the precious metals. The productions of the American soil and climate have poured out their abundance of luxuries for the tables of the rich, and of necessaries for the sustenance of the poor. Birds and animals of beauty and value have been added to the European stocks; and transplantations from the unequalled riches of our forests have mingled themselves profusely with the elms, and ashes, and Druidical oaks of England.

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America has made contributions to Europe far more important. Who can estimate the amount, or the value, of the augmentation of the commerce of the world that has resulted from America? Who can imagine to himself what would now be the shock to the Eastern Continent, if the Atlantic were no longer traversable, or if there were no longer American productions or American markets?

But America exercises influences, or holds out examples, for the consideration of the Old World, of a much higher, because they are of a moral and political character.

The American example.

America has furnished to Europe proof of the fact that popular institutions, founded on equality and the principle of representation, are capable of maintaining governments able to secure the rights of person, property, and reputation.

America has proved that it is practicable to elevate the mass of mankind,—that portion which in Europe is called the laboring, or lower class;—to raise them to self-respect, to make them competent to act a part in the great right and great duty of self-government; and she has proved that this may be done by education and the diffusion of knowledge. She holds out an example, a thousand times more encouraging than ever was presented before, to those nine-tenths of the human race who are born without hereditary fortune or hereditary rank.

America has furnished to the world the character of Washington! And if our American institutions had done nothing else, that alone would have entitled them to the respect of mankind.

The character of Washington.

Washington! "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen!" Washington is all our own! The enthusiastic veneration and regard in which the people of the United States hold him, prove them to be worthy of such a countryman; while his reputation abroad reflects the highest honor on his country. I would cheerfully put the question to-day to the intelligence of Europe and the world, what character of the century, upon the whole, stands out, in the relief of history, most pure, most respectable, most sublime; and I doubt not that, by a suffrage approaching to unanimity, the answer would be Washington!

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The structure now standing before us, by its uprightness, its solidity, its durability, is no unfit emblem of his character. His public virtues and public principles were as firm as the earth on which it stands; his personal motives as pure as the serene heaven in which its summit is lost. But, indeed, though a fit, it is an inadequate emblem. Towering high above the column which our hands have builded; beheld, not by the inhabitants of a single city or a single State, but by all the families of man, ascends the colossal grandeur of the character and life of Washington. In all the constituents of the one, in all the acts of the other, in all its titles to immortal love, admiration, and renown, it is an American production. It is the embodiment and vindication of our transatlantic liberty. Born upon our soil, of parents also born upon it; never for a moment having had sight of the Old World; instructed, according to the modes of his time, only in the spare, plain, but wholesome elementary knowledge which our institutions provide for the children of the

people; growing up beneath, and penetrated by, the genuine influences of American society; living from infancy to manhood and age amidst our expanding but not luxurious civilization; partaking in our great destiny of labor, our long contest with unreclaimed nature and uncivilized man, our agony of glory, the war of Independence, our great victory of peace, the formation of the Union, and the establishment of the Constitution,—he is all, all our own! Washington is ours. That crowded and glorious life,—

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“Where multitudes of virtues passed along,
Each pressing foremost, in the mighty throng
Ambitious to be seen, then making room
For greater multitudes that were to come,”—

that life was the life of an American citizen.

I claim him for America. In all the perils, in every darkened moment of the state, in the midst of the reproaches of enemies and the misgiving of friends, I turn to that transcendent name for courage and for consolation. To him who denies or doubts whether our fervid liberty can be combined with law, with order, with the security of property, with the pursuits and advancement of happiness; to him who denies that our forms of government are capable of producing exaltation of soul, and the passion of true glory; to him who denies that we have contributed anything to the stock of great lessons and great examples;—to all these I reply by pointing to Washington!

And now, friends and fellow-citizens, it is time to bring this discourse to a close.

We have indulged in gratifying recollections of the past, in the prosperity and pleasures of the present, and in high hopes for the future. But let us remember that we have duties and obligations to perform, corresponding to the blessings which we enjoy. Let us remember the trust, the sacred trust, attaching to the rich inheritance which we have received from our fathers. Let us feel our personal responsibility, to the full extent of our power and influence, for the preservation of the principles of civil and religious liberty. And let us remember that it is only religion, and morals, and knowledge, that can make men respectable and happy, under any form of government. Let us hold fast the great truth, that communities are responsible, as well as individuals; that no government is respectable which is not just; that without unspotted purity of public faith, without sacred public principle, fidelity, and honor, no mere forms of government, no machinery of laws, can give dignity to political society. In our day and generation let us seek to raise and improve the moral sentiment, so that we may look not for a degraded, but for an elevated and improved future. And when both we and our children shall have been consigned to the house appointed for all living, may love of country and pride of country glow with equal fervor among those to whom our names and our blood shall have descended! And then, when honored and decrepit age shall lean against the base of this monument, and troops of ingenuous youth shall be gathered round it, and when the one shall speak to the other of its objects, the purposes of its construction, and the great and glorious events with which it is connected, there shall rise from every youthful breast the ejaculation, “Thank God, I—I also—AM AN AMERICAN!”

The obligations of
Americans.

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ADAMS AND JEFFERSON

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A DISCOURSE IN COMMEMORATION OF THE LIVES AND
SERVICES OF JOHN ADAMS AND THOMAS JEFFERSON;
DELIVERED IN FANEUIL HALL, BOSTON, AUGUST 2, 1826

[Since the death of Washington, on the 14th of December, 1799, the public mind had never been so powerfully affected by any similar event as by the death of John Adams, on the 4th of July, 1826. The news reached Boston in the evening of that day. It acquired a singular interest from the year and the day on which it took place;—the 4th of July of the year completing the half-century from the Declaration of Independence, a measure in which Mr. Adams himself had taken so distinguished a part. The emotions of the public were greatly increased by the indications given by Mr. Adams in his last hours, that he was fully aware that the day was the anniversary of Independence, and by his dying allusion to the supposed fact that his colleague, Jefferson, survived him. When, in the course of a few days, the news arrived from Virginia, that Jefferson also had died on the same day and a few hours before Mr. Adams, the patriotic emotions of the country at large were touched beyond all example. The occurrence was justly deemed without a parallel in history. The various circumstances of association and coincidence which marked the characters and careers of these great men, and especially their simultaneous decease on the 4th of July, were dwelt upon with deep interest. The circles of private life, the press, public bodies, and the pulpit, were for some time almost engrossed with the topic; and exercises of commemoration were held throughout the country.]

This is an unaccustomed spectacle. For the first time, fellow-citizens, badges of mourning shroud the columns and overhang the arches of this hall. These walls, which were consecrated, so long ago, to the cause of American liberty, which witnessed her infant struggles, and rung with the shouts of her earliest victories, proclaim, now, that distinguished friends and champions of that great cause have fallen. It is right that it should be thus. The tears which flow, and the honors that are paid, when the founders of the republic die, give hope that the republic itself may be immortal. It is fit that, by public assembly and solemn observance, by anthem and by eulogy,

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we commemorate the services of national benefactors, extol their virtues, and render thanks to God for eminent blessings, early given and long continued, through their agency, to our favored country.



Faneuil Hall.

Adams and Jefferson are no more; and we are assembled, fellow-citizens, the aged, the middle-aged, and the young, by the spontaneous impulse of all, under the authority of the municipal government, with the presence of the chief magistrate of the Commonwealth, and others its official representatives, the University, and the learned societies, to bear our part in those manifestations of respect and gratitude which pervade the whole land. Adams and Jefferson are no more. On our fiftieth anniversary, the great day of national jubilee, in the very hour of public rejoicing, in the midst of echoing and re-echoing voices of thanksgiving, while their own names were on all tongues, they took their flight together to the world of spirits.

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If it be true that no one can safely be pronounced happy while he lives, if that event which terminates life can alone crown its honors and its glory, what felicity is here! The great epic of their lives, how happily concluded! Poetry itself has hardly terminated illustrious lives, and finished the career of earthly renown, by such a consummation. If we had the power, we could not wish to reverse this dispensation of the Divine Providence. The great objects of life were accomplished, the drama was ready to be closed. It has closed; our patriots have fallen; but so fallen, at such age, with such coincidence, on such a day, that we cannot rationally lament that the end has come which we knew could not be long deferred.

An epic consummation.

Neither of these great men, fellow-citizens, could have died, at any time, without leaving an immense void in our American society. They have been so intimately, and for so long a time, blended with the history of the country, and especially so united, in our thoughts and recollections, with the events of the Revolution, that the death of either would have touched the chords of public sympathy. We should have felt that one great link connecting us with former times was broken; that we had lost something more, as it were, of the presence of the Revolution itself, and of the act of independence, and were driven on, by another great remove from the days of our country's early distinction, to meet posterity, and to mix with the future. Like the mariner, whom the currents of the ocean and the winds carry along, till he sees the stars which have directed his course and lighted his pathless way descend, one by one, beneath the rising horizon, we should have felt that the stream of time had borne us onward till another great luminary, whose light had cheered us and whose guidance we had followed, had sunk away from our sight.

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But the concurrence of their death on the anniversary of Independence has naturally awakened stronger emotions. Both had been Presidents, both had lived to great age, both were early patriots, and both were distinguished and ever honored by their immediate agency in the act of independence. It cannot but seem striking and extraordinary that these two should live to see the fiftieth year from the date of that act; that they should complete that year; and that then, on the day which had fast linked forever their own fame with their country's glory, the heavens should open to receive them both at once. As their lives themselves were the gifts of Providence, who is not willing to recognize in their happy termination, as well as in their long continuance, proofs that our country and its benefactors are objects of His care?

The remarkable similarity between Adams and Jefferson in their lives and in their deaths.

Adams and Jefferson, I have said, are no more. As human beings, indeed, they are no more. They are no more, as in 1776, bold and fearless advocates of independence; no more, as at subsequent periods, the head of the government; no more, as we have recently seen them, aged and venerable objects of admiration and regard. They are no more. They are dead. But how little is there of the great and good which can die! To their country they yet live, and live forever. They live in all that perpetuates the remembrance of men on earth; in the recorded proofs of their own great actions, in the offspring of their intellect, in the deep-engraved lines of public gratitude, and in the

Their example.

respect and homage of mankind. They live in their example; and they live, emphatically, and will live, in the influence which their lives and efforts, their principles and opinions, now exercise, and will continue to exercise, on the affairs of men, not only in their own country, but throughout the civilized world. A superior and commanding human intellect, a truly great man, when Heaven vouchsafes so rare a gift, is not a temporary flame, burning brightly for a while, and then giving place to returning darkness. It is rather a spark of fervent heat, as well as radiant light, with power to enkindle the common mass of human mind; so that when it glimmers in its own decay, and finally goes out in death, no night follows; but it leaves the world all light, all on fire, from the potent contact of its own spirit. Bacon died; but the human understanding, roused by the touch of his miraculous wand to a perception of the true philosophy and the just mode of inquiring after truth, has kept on its course successfully and gloriously. Newton died; yet the courses of the spheres are still known, and they yet move on by the laws which he discovered, and in the orbits which he saw, and described for them, in the infinity of space.

No two men now live, fellow-citizens, perhaps it may be doubted whether any two men have ever lived in one age, who, more than those we now commemorate, have impressed on mankind their own sentiments in regard to politics and government, infused their own opinions more deeply into the opinions of others, or given a more lasting direction to the current of human thought. Their work doth not perish with them. The tree which they assisted to plant will flourish, although they water it and protect it no longer; for it has struck its roots deep, it has sent them to the very centre; no storm, not of force to burst the orb, can overturn it; its branches spread wide; they stretch their protecting arms broader and broader, and its top is destined to reach the heavens. We are not deceived. There is no delusion here. No age will come in which the American Revolution will appear less than it is, one of the greatest events in human history. No age will come in which it shall cease to be seen and felt, on either continent, that a mighty step, a great advance, not only in American affairs, but in human affairs, was made on the 4th of July, 1776. And no age will come, we trust, so ignorant or so unjust as not to see and acknowledge the efficient agency of those we now honor in producing that momentous event.

Their work.

We are not assembled, therefore, fellow-citizens, as men overwhelmed with calamity by the sudden disruption of the ties of friendship or affection, or as in despair for the republic by the untimely blighting of its hopes. Death has not surprised us by an unseasonable blow. We have, indeed, seen the tomb close, but it has closed only over mature years, over long-protracted public service, over the weakness of age, and over life itself only when the ends of living had been fulfilled. These suns, as they rose slowly and steadily, amidst clouds and storms, in their ascendant, so they have not rushed from their meridian to sink suddenly in the west. Like the mildness, the serenity, the continuing benignity of a summer's day, they have gone down with slow-descending, grateful, long-lingering light; and now that they are beyond the visible margin of the world, good omens cheer us from "the bright track of their fiery car"!

The occasion, fellow-citizens, requires some account of the lives and services of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. This duty must necessarily be performed with great brevity, and in the discharge of it I shall be obliged to confine myself, principally, to those parts of their history and character which belonged to them as public men.

Their public services.

John Adams was born at Quincy, then part of the ancient town of Braintree, on the nineteenth day of October (Old Style), 1735.^[14] He was a descendant of the Puritans, his ancestors having early emigrated from England, and settled in Massachusetts. Discovering in childhood a strong love of reading and of knowledge, together with marks of great strength and activity of mind, proper care was taken by his worthy father to provide for his education. He pursued his youthful studies in Braintree, under Mr. Marsh, a teacher whose fortune it was that Josiah Quincy, Jr., as well as the subject of these remarks, should receive from him his instruction in the rudiments of classical literature. Having been admitted, in 1751, a member of Harvard College, Mr. Adams was graduated, in course, in 1755; and on the catalogue of that institution, his name, at the time of his death, was second among the living Alumni, being preceded only by that of the venerable Holyoke. With what degree of reputation he left the University is not now precisely known. We know only that he was distinguished in a class which numbered Locke and Hemmenway among its members.

Adams the chief advocate of the Declaration of Independence.

His education.

Choosing the law for his profession, he commenced and prosecuted its studies at Worcester, under the direction of Samuel Putnam, a gentleman whom he has himself described as an acute man, an able and learned lawyer, and as being in large professional practice at that time. In 1758 he was admitted to the bar, and entered upon the practice of the law in Braintree. He is understood to have made his first considerable effort, or to have attained his first signal success, at Plymouth, on one of those occasions which furnish the earliest opportunity for distinction to many young men of the profession, a jury trial, and a criminal cause. His business naturally grew with his reputation, and his residence in the vicinity afforded the opportunity, as his growing eminence gave the power, of entering on a larger field of practice in the capital. In 1766 he removed his residence to Boston, still continuing his attendance on the neighboring circuits, and not unfrequently called to remote parts of the Province. In 1770 his professional firmness was brought to a test of some severity, on the application of the British officers and soldiers to undertake their defence, on the



John Adams.

trial of the indictments found against them on account of the

Studies law.

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transactions of the memorable 5th of March.^[15] He seems to have thought, on this occasion, that a man can no more abandon the proper duties of his profession, than he can abandon other duties. The event proved that as he judged well for his own reputation, so, too, he judged well for the interest and permanent fame of his country. The result of that trial proved that notwithstanding the high degree of excitement then existing in consequence of the measures of the British government, a jury of Massachusetts would not deprive the most reckless enemies, even the officers of that standing army quartered among them, which they so perfectly abhorred, of any part of that protection which the law, in its mildest and most indulgent interpretation, affords to persons accused of crimes.

Without following Mr. Adams's professional course further, suffice it to say, that

An early prophecy.

on the first establishment of the judicial tribunals under the authority of the State, in 1776, he received an offer of the high and responsible station of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. But he was destined for another and a different career. From early life the bent of his mind was toward politics; a propensity which the state of the times, if it did not create, doubtless very much strengthened. Public subjects must have occupied the thoughts and filled up the conversation in the circles in which he then moved; and the interesting questions at that time just arising could not but seize on a mind like his, ardent, sanguine, and patriotic. A letter, fortunately preserved, written by him at Worcester, so early as the 12th of October, 1755, is a proof of very comprehensive views, and uncommon depth of reflection, in a young man not yet quite twenty. In this letter he predicted the transfer of power, and the establishment of a new seat of empire in America; he predicted, also, the increase of population in the Colonies; and anticipated their naval distinction, and foretold that all Europe combined could not subdue them. All this is said, not on a public occasion or for effect, but in the style of sober and friendly correspondence, as the result of his own thoughts. "I sometimes retire," said he, at the close of the letter, "and, laying things together, form some reflections pleasing to myself. The produce of one of these reveries you have read above." This prognostication so early in his own life, so early in the history of the country, of independence, of vast increase of numbers, of naval force, of such augmented power as might defy all Europe, is remarkable. It is more remarkable that its author should live to see fulfilled to the letter what could have seemed to others, at the time, but the extravagance of youthful fancy. His earliest political feelings were thus strongly American, and from this ardent attachment to his native soil he never departed.

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While still living at Quincy, and at the age of twenty-four, Mr. Adams was present, in this town, at the argument before the Supreme Court respecting Writs of Assistance,^[16] and heard the celebrated and patriotic speech of James Otis. Unquestionably, that was a masterly performance. No flighty declamation about liberty, no superficial discussion of popular topics, it was a learned, penetrating, convincing, constitutional argument, expressed in a strain of high and resolute patriotism. He grasped the question then pending between England and her Colonies with the strength of a lion; and if he sometimes sported, it was only because the lion himself is sometimes playful. Its success appears to have been as great as its merits, and its impression was widely felt. Mr. Adams himself seems never to have lost the feeling it produced, and to have entertained constantly the fullest conviction of its important effects. "I do say," he observes, "in the most solemn manner, that Mr. Otis's Oration against Writs of Assistance breathed into this nation the breath of life."

James Otis.

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In 1765 Mr. Adams laid before the public, anonymously, a series of essays, afterwards collected in a volume in London, under the title of "A Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law." The object of this work was to show that our New England ancestors, in consenting to exile themselves from their native land, were actuated mainly by the desire of delivering themselves from the power of the hierarchy, and from the monarchical and aristocratical systems of the other continent; and to make this truth bear with effect on the politics of the times. Its tone is uncommonly bold and animated for that period. He calls on the people, not only to defend, but to study and understand, their rights and privileges; urges earnestly the necessity of diffusing general knowledge; invokes the clergy and the bar, the colleges and academies, and all others who have the ability and the means to expose the insidious designs of arbitrary power, to resist its approaches, and to be persuaded that there is a settled design on foot to enslave all America. "Be it remembered," says the author, "that liberty must, at all hazards, be supported. We have a right to it, derived from our Maker. But if we had not, our fathers have earned and bought it for us, at the expense of their ease, their estates, their pleasure, and their blood. And liberty cannot be preserved without a general knowledge among the people, who have a right, from the frame of their nature, to knowledge, as their great Creator, who does nothing in vain, has given them understandings and a desire to know. But, besides this, they have a right, an indisputable, unalienable, indefeasible, divine right, to that most

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James Otis.

dreaded and envied kind of knowledge, I mean of the characters and conduct of their rulers. Rulers are no more than attorneys, agents, and trustees for the people; and if the cause, the interest and trust, is insidiously betrayed, or wantonly trifled away, the people have a right to revoke the authority that they themselves have deputed, and to constitute abler and better agents, attorneys, and trustees."

The citizens of this town conferred on Mr. Adams his first political distinction, and clothed him with his first

Adams first public office.

political trust, by electing him one of their representatives, in 1770. Before this time he had become extensively known throughout the Province, as well by the part he had acted in relation to public affairs, as by the exercise of his professional ability. He was among those who took the deepest interest in the controversy with England, and, whether in or out of the legislature, his time and talents were alike devoted to the cause. In the years 1773 and 1774 he was chosen a Councillor by the members of the General Court, but rejected by Governor Hutchinson

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in the former of those years, and by Governor Gage in the latter.

The time was now at hand, however, when the affairs of the Colonies urgently demanded united counsels throughout the country. An open rupture with the parent state appeared inevitable, and it was but the dictate of prudence that those who were united by a common interest and a common danger should protect that interest and guard against that danger by united efforts. A general Congress of Delegates from all the

Election to the Congress of Delegates.

Colonies having been proposed and agreed to, the House of Representatives, on the 17th of June, 1774, elected James Bowdoin, Thomas Cushing, Samuel Adams, John Adams, and Robert Treat Paine delegates from Massachusetts. This appointment was made at Salem, where the General Court had been convened by Governor Gage, in the last hour of the existence of a House of Representatives under the Provincial Charter. While engaged in this important business, the Governor, having been informed of what was passing, sent his secretary with a message dissolving the General Court. The secretary, finding the door locked, directed the messenger to go in and inform the Speaker that the secretary was at the door with a message from the Governor. The messenger returned, and informed the secretary that the orders of the House were that the doors should be kept fast; whereupon the secretary soon after read upon the stairs a proclamation dissolving the General Court. Thus terminated, forever, the actual exercise of the political power of England in or over Massachusetts. The four last-named delegates accepted their appointments, and took their seats in Congress the first day of its meeting, the 5th of September, 1774, in Philadelphia.

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Independence Hall, Philadelphia.

The proceedings of the first Congress are well known, and have been universally admired. It is in vain that we would look for superior proofs of wisdom, talent, and patriotism. Lord Chatham said that, for himself, he must declare that he had studied and admired the free states of antiquity, the master states of the world, but that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, no body of men could stand in preference to this Congress. It is hardly inferior praise to say that no production of that great man himself can be pronounced superior to several of the papers published as the proceedings of this most able, most firm, most patriotic assembly. There is, indeed, nothing superior to them in the range of political disquisition. They not only embrace, illustrate, and enforce everything which political philosophy, the love of liberty, and the spirit of free inquiry had antecedently produced, but they add new and striking views of their own, and apply the whole, with irresistible force, in support of the cause which had drawn them together.

The First Continental Congress.

Mr. Adams was a constant attendant on the deliberations of this body, and bore an active part in its important measures. He was of the committee to state the rights of the Colonies, and of that also which reported the Address to the King.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, descended from ancestors who had been settled in Virginia for some generations, was born near the spot on which he died, in the county of Albemarle, on the 2d of April (Old Style), 1743. His youthful studies were pursued in the neighborhood of his father's residence until he was removed to the College of William and Mary, the highest honors of which he in due time received. Having left the college with reputation, he applied himself to the study of the law under the tuition of George Wythe, one of the highest judicial names of which that State can boast. At an early age he was elected a member of the legislature, in which he had no sooner appeared than he distinguished himself by knowledge, capacity, and promptitude.

The author of the Declaration of Independence.

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Thomas Jefferson.

Mr. Jefferson appears to have been imbued with an early love of letters and science, and to have cherished a strong disposition to pursue these objects. To the physical sciences, especially, and to ancient classic literature, he is understood to have had a warm attachment, and never entirely to have lost sight of them in the midst of the busiest occupations. But the times were times for action rather than for contemplation. The country was to be defended and to be saved, before it could be enjoyed. Philosophic leisure and literary pursuits, and even the objects of professional attention, were all necessarily postponed to the urgent calls of the public service. The exigency of the country made the same demand on Mr. Jefferson that it made on others who had the ability and the disposition to serve it; and he obeyed the call.

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Entering with all his heart into the cause of liberty, his ability, patriotism, and power with the pen naturally drew upon him a large participation in the most important concerns. Wherever he was, there was found a soul devoted to the cause, power to defend and maintain it, and willingness to incur all its hazards. In 1774 he published a "Summary View of the Rights of British America," a valuable production among those intended to show the dangers which threatened the liberties of the country, and to encourage the people in their defence. In June, 1775, he was elected a member of the Continental Congress, as successor to Peyton Randolph, who had resigned his place on account of ill health, and took his seat in that body on the 21st of the same month.

And now, fellow-citizens, without pursuing the biography of these illustrious men further, for the present, let us turn our attention to the most prominent act of their lives, their participation in the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration of Independence.

Preparatory to the introduction of that important measure, a committee, at the head of which was Mr. Adams, had reported a resolution, which Congress adopted on the 10th of May, recommending, in substance, to all the Colonies which had not already established governments suited to the exigencies of their affairs, *to adopt such government as would, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular, and America in general.*

This significant vote was soon followed by the direct proposition which Richard Henry Lee had the honor to submit to Congress, by resolution, on the seventh day of June. The published journal does not expressly state it, but there is no doubt, I suppose, that this resolution was in the same words, when originally submitted by Mr. Lee, as when finally passed. Having been discussed on Saturday, the 8th, and Monday, the 10th of June, this resolution was on the last-mentioned day postponed for further consideration to the first day of July; and at the same time it was voted, that a committee be appointed to prepare a Declaration to the effect of the resolution. This

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committee was elected by ballot, on the following day, and consisted of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston.



THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

It is usual, when committees are elected by ballot, that their members should be arranged in order, according to the number of votes which each has received. Mr. Jefferson, therefore, had received the highest, and Mr. Adams the next highest number of votes. The difference is said to have been but of a single vote. Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Adams, standing thus at the head of the committee, were requested by the other members to act as a subcommittee to prepare the draft; and Mr. Jefferson drew up the paper. The original draft, as brought by him from his study, and submitted to the other members of the committee, with interlineations in the handwriting of Dr. Franklin, and others in that of Mr. Adams, was in Mr. Jefferson's possession at the time of his death. The merit of this paper is Mr. Jefferson's. Some changes were made in it at the suggestion of other members of the committee, and others by Congress while it was under discussion. But none of them altered the tone, the frame, the arrangement, or the general character of the instrument. As a composition, the Declaration is Mr. Jefferson's. It is the production of his mind, and the high honor of it belongs to him, clearly and absolutely.

The original draft.

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It has sometimes been said, as if it were a derogation from the merits of this paper, that it contains nothing new; that it only states grounds of proceeding, and presses topics of argument, which had often been stated and pressed before. But it was not the object of the Declaration to produce anything new. It was not to invent reasons for independence, but to state those which governed the Congress. For great and sufficient causes, it was proposed to declare independence; and the proper business of the paper to be drawn was to set forth those causes, and justify the authors of the measure, in any event of fortune, to the country and to posterity. The cause of American independence, moreover, was now to be presented to the world in such manner, if it might so be, as to engage its sympathy, to command its respect, to attract its admiration; and in an assembly of most able and distinguished men, Thomas Jefferson had the high honor of being the selected advocate of this cause. To say that he performed his great work well, would be doing him injustice. To say that he did excellently well, admirably well, would be inadequate and halting praise. Let us rather say, that he so discharged the duty assigned him, that all Americans may well rejoice that the work of drawing the title-deed of their liberties devolved upon him.

The Declaration having been reported to Congress by the committee, the resolution itself was taken up and debated on the first day of July, and again on the 2d, on which last day it was agreed to and adopted, in these words:—

The debate on the Declaration.

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Resolved, That these united Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."

Having thus passed the main resolution, Congress proceeded to consider the reported draft of the Declaration. It was discussed on the second and third and fourth days of the month in committee of the whole; and on the last of those days, being reported from that committee, it received the final approbation and sanction of Congress. It was ordered, at the same time, that copies be sent to the several States, and that it be proclaimed at the head of the army. The Declaration thus published did not bear the names of the members, for as yet it had not been signed by them. It was authenticated, like other papers of the Congress, by the signatures of the President and Secretary. On the 19th of July, as appears by the secret journal, Congress *Resolved*, That the

July 4, 1776.

Declaration, passed on the fourth, be fairly engrossed on parchment, with the title and style of 'The unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America;' and that the same, when engrossed, be signed by every member of Congress." And on the second day of August following, "the Declaration, being engrossed and compared at the table, was signed by the members." So that it happens, fellow-citizens, that we pay these honors to their memory on the anniversary of that day (2d of August) on which these great men actually signed their names to the Declaration. The Declaration was thus made, that is, it passed and was adopted as an act of Congress, on the 4th of July; it was then signed, and certified by the President and Secretary like other acts. The Fourth of July, therefore, is the anniversary of the Declaration. But the signatures of the members present were made to it, being then engrossed on parchment, on the second day of August. Absent members afterwards signed, as they came in; and indeed it bears the names of some who were not chosen members of Congress until after the 4th of July. The interest belonging to the subject will be sufficient, I hope, to justify these details.

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The Congress of the Revolution, fellow-citizens, sat with closed doors, and no report of its debates was ever made. The discussion, therefore, which accompanied this great measure, has never been preserved, except in memory and by tradition. But it is, I believe, doing no injustice to others to say, that the general opinion was, and uniformly has been, that in debate, on the side of independence, John Adams had no equal. The great author of the Declaration himself has expressed that opinion uniformly and strongly. "John Adams," said he, in the hearing of him who has now the honor to address you, "John Adams was our colossus on the floor. Not graceful, not elegant, not always fluent, in his public addresses, he yet came out with a power, both of thought and of expression, which moved us from our seats."

For the part which he was here to perform, Mr. Adams doubtless was eminently fitted. He possessed a bold spirit, which disregarded danger, and a sanguine reliance on the goodness of the cause, and the virtues of the people, which led him to overlook all obstacles. His character, too, had been formed in troubled times. He had been rocked in the early storms of the controversy, and had acquired a decision and a hardihood proportioned to the severity of the discipline which he had undergone.

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He not only loved the American cause devoutly, but had studied and understood it. It was all familiar to him. He had tried his powers on the questions which it involved, often and in various ways; and had brought to their consideration whatever of argument or illustration the history of his own country, the history of England, or the stores of ancient or of legal learning could furnish. Every grievance enumerated in the long catalogue of the Declaration had been the subject of his discussion, and the object of his remonstrance and reprobation. From 1760 the Colonies, the rights of the Colonies, the liberties of the Colonies, and the wrongs inflicted on the Colonies, had engaged his constant attention; and it has surprised those who have had the opportunity of witnessing it, with what full remembrance and with what prompt recollection he could refer, in his extreme old age, to every act of Parliament affecting the Colonies, distinguishing and stating their respective titles, sections, and provisions; and to all the colonial memorials, remonstrances, and petitions, with whatever else belonged to the intimate and exact history of the times from that year to 1775. It was, in his own judgment, between these years that the American people came to a full understanding and thorough knowledge of their rights, and to a fixed resolution of maintaining them; and bearing himself an active part in all important transactions,—the controversy with England being then in effect the business of his life,—facts, dates, and particulars made an impression which was never effaced. He was prepared, therefore, by education and discipline, as well as by natural talent and natural temperament, for the part which he was now to act.

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The eloquence of Mr. Adams resembled his general character, and formed, indeed, a part of it. It was bold, manly, and energetic; and such the crisis required. When public bodies are to be addressed on momentous occasions, when great interests are at stake, and strong passions excited, nothing is valuable in speech farther than as it is connected with high intellectual and moral endowments. Clearness, force, and earnestness are the qualities which produce conviction. True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech. It cannot be brought from far. Labor and learning may toil for it, but they will toil in vain. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must exist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion. Affected passion, intense expression, the pomp of declamation, all may aspire to it; they cannot reach it. It comes, if it come at all, like the outbursting of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments and studied contrivances of speech, shock and disgust men, when their own lives, and the fate of their wives, their children, and their country, hang on the decision of the hour. Then words have lost their power, rhetoric is vain, and all elaborate oratory contemptible. Even genius itself then feels rebuked and subdued, as in the presence of higher qualities. Then patriotism is eloquent; then self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception, outrunning the deductions of logic, the high purpose, the firm resolve, the dauntless spirit, speaking on the tongue, beaming from the eye, informing every feature, and urging the whole man onward, right onward to his object,—this, this is eloquence; or rather, it is something greater and higher than all eloquence,—it is action, noble, sublime, godlike action.

The nature of true eloquence.

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In July, 1776, the controversy had passed the stage of argument. An appeal had been made to force, and opposing armies were in the field. Congress, then, was to decide whether the tie which had so long bound us to the parent state was to be severed at once, and severed forever. All the Colonies had signified their resolution to abide by this decision, and the people looked for it with

the most intense anxiety. And surely, fellow-citizens, never, never were men called to a more important political deliberation. If we contemplate it from the point where they then stood, no question could be more full of interest; if we look at it now, and judge of its importance by its effects, it appears of still greater magnitude.

Let us, then, bring before us the assembly which was about to decide a question thus big with the fate of empire. Let us open their doors and look in upon their deliberations. Let us survey the anxious and careworn countenances, let us hear the firm-toned voices, of this band of patriots.

Hancock presides over the solemn sitting; and one of those not yet prepared to pronounce for absolute independence is on the floor, and is urging his reasons for dissenting from the Declaration.



John Hancock.

“Let us pause! This step, once taken, cannot be retraced. This resolution, once passed, will cut off all hope of reconciliation. If success

An imaginary speech in opposition to the Declaration.

attend the arms of England, we shall then be no longer Colonies with charters and with privileges; these will all be forfeited by this act; and we shall be in the condition of other conquered people, at the mercy of the conquerors. For ourselves, we may be ready to run the hazard; but are we ready to carry the country to that length? Is success so probable as to justify it? Where is the military, where the naval power, by which we are to resist the whole strength of the arm of England,—for she will exert that strength to the utmost? Can we rely on the constancy and perseverance of the people? or will they not act as the people of other countries have acted, and, wearied with a long war, submit, in the end, to a worse oppression? While we stand on our old ground, and insist on redress of grievances, we know we are right, and are not answerable for consequences. Nothing, then, can be imputed to us. But if we now change our object, carry our pretensions farther, and set up for absolute independence, we shall lose the sympathy of mankind. We shall no longer be defending what we

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possess, but struggling for something which we never did possess, and which we have solemnly and uniformly disclaimed all intention of pursuing, from the very outset of the troubles. Abandoning thus our old ground of resistance only to arbitrary acts of oppression, the nations will believe the whole to have been mere pretence, and they will look on us, not as injured, but as ambitious subjects. I shudder before this responsibility. It will be on us, if, relinquishing the ground on which we have stood so long, and stood so safely, we now proclaim independence, and carry on the war for that object, while these cities burn, these pleasant fields whiten and bleach with the bones of their owners, and these streams run blood. It will be upon us, it will be upon us, if, failing to maintain this unseasonable and ill-judged declaration, a sterner despotism, maintained by military power, shall be established over our posterity, when we ourselves, given up by an exhausted, a harassed, a misled people, shall have expiated our rashness and atoned for our presumption on the scaffold.”

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It was for Mr. Adams to reply to arguments like these. We know his opinions, and we know his character. He would commence with his accustomed directness and earnestness.

“Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote. It is true, indeed, that in the beginning we aimed not at independence. But there’s a divinity which shapes our ends. The injustice of England has driven us to arms; and, blinded to her own interest for our good, she has obstinately persisted, till independence is now within our grasp. We have but to reach forth to it, and it is ours. Why, then, should we defer the Declaration? Is any man so weak as now to hope for a reconciliation with England which shall leave either safety to the country and its liberties, or safety to his own life and his own honor? Are not you, Sir, who sit in that chair,—is not he, our venerable colleague near you,—are you not both already the proscribed and predestined objects of punishment and of vengeance? Cut off from all hope of royal clemency, what are you, what can you be, while the power of England remains, but outlaws? If we postpone independence, do we mean to carry on, or to give up, the war? Do we mean to submit to the measures of Parliament, Boston Port Bill^[17] and all? Do we mean to submit, and consent that we ourselves shall be ground to powder, and our country and its rights trodden down in the dust? I know we do not mean to submit. We never shall submit. Do we intend to violate that most solemn obligation ever entered into by men, that plighting, before God, of our sacred honor to Washington, when, putting him forth to incur the dangers of war, as well as the political hazards of the times, we promised to adhere to him, in every extremity, with our fortunes and our lives? I know there is not a man here who would not rather see a general conflagration sweep over the land, or an earthquake sink it, than one jot or tittle of that plighted faith fall to the ground. For myself, having, twelve months ago, in this place, moved you that George Washington be appointed commander of the forces raised, or to be raised, for defence of

Supposed speech of John Adams in favor of the Declaration.

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American liberty, may my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I hesitate or waver in the support I give him.

“The war, then, must go on. We must fight it through. And if the war must go on, why put off longer the Declaration of Independence? That measure will strengthen us. It will give us character abroad. The nations will then treat with us, which they never can do while we acknowledge ourselves subjects, in arms against our sovereign. Nay, I maintain that England herself will sooner treat for peace with us on the footing of independence, than consent, by repealing her acts, to acknowledge that her whole conduct towards us has been a course of injustice and oppression. Her pride will be less wounded by submitting to that course of things which now predestinates our independence, than by yielding the points in controversy to her rebellious subjects. The former she would regard as the result of fortune; the latter she would feel as her own deep disgrace. Why then, why then, Sir, do we not as soon as possible change this from a civil to a national war? And since we must fight it through, why not put ourselves in a state to enjoy all the benefits of victory, if we gain the victory?”

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“If we fail, it can be no worse for us. But we shall not fail. The cause will raise up armies; the cause will create navies. The people, the people, if we are true to them, will carry us, and will carry themselves, gloriously through this struggle. I care not how fickle other people have been found. I know the people of these Colonies, and I know that resistance to British aggression is deep and settled in their hearts and cannot be eradicated. Every Colony, indeed, has expressed its willingness to follow, if we but take the lead. Sir, the Declaration will inspire the people with increased courage. Instead of a long and bloody war for the restoration of privileges, for redress of grievances, for chartered immunities, held under a British king, set before them the glorious object of entire independence and it will breathe into them anew the breath of life. Read this Declaration at the head of the army; every sword will be drawn from its scabbard, and the solemn vow uttered, to maintain it, or to perish on the bed of honor. Publish it from the pulpit; religion will approve it, and the love of religious liberty will cling round it, resolved to stand with it or fall with it. Send it to the public halls; proclaim it there; let them hear it who heard the first roar of the enemy’s cannon; let them see it who saw their brothers and their sons fall on the field of Bunker Hill, and in the streets of Lexington and Concord, and the very walls will cry out in its support.

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“Sir, I know the uncertainty of human affairs, but I see, I see clearly, through this day’s business. You and I, indeed, may rue it. We may not live to the time when this Declaration shall be made good. We may die; die colonists; die slaves; die, it may be, ignominiously and on the scaffold. Be it so. Be it so. If it be the pleasure of Heaven that my country shall require the poor offering of my life, the victim shall be ready, at the appointed hour of sacrifice, come when that hour may. But while I do live, let me have a country, or at least the hope of a country, and that a free country.

“But whatever may be our fate, be assured, be assured that this Declaration will stand. It may cost treasure, and it may cost blood; but it will stand, and it will richly compensate for both. Through the thick gloom of the present, I see the brightness of the future, as the sun in heaven. We shall make this a glorious, an immortal day. When we are in our graves, our children will honor it. They will celebrate it with thanksgiving, with festivity, with bonfires, and illuminations. On its annual return they will shed tears, copious, gushing tears, not of subjection and slavery, not of agony and distress, but of exultation, of gratitude, and of joy. Sir, before God, I believe the hour is come. My judgment approves this measure, and my whole heart is in it. All that I have, and all that I am, and all that I hope, in this life, I am now ready here to stake upon it; and I leave off as I begun, that live or die, survive or perish, I am for the Declaration. It is my living sentiment, and by the blessing of God it shall be my dying sentiment, Independence *now*, and Independence forever.”

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And so that day shall be honored, illustrious prophet and patriot! so that day shall be honored, and as often as it returns, thy renown shall come along with it, and the glory of thy life, like the day of thy death, shall not fail from the remembrance of men.

It would be unjust, fellow-citizens, on this occasion, while we express our veneration for him who is the immediate subject of these remarks, were we to omit a most respectful, affectionate, and grateful mention of those other great men, his colleagues, who stood with him, and with the same spirit, the same devotion, took part in the interesting transaction. Hancock, the proscribed Hancock, exiled from his home by a military governor, cut off by proclamation from the mercy of the crown,—Heaven reserved for him the distinguished honor of putting this great question to the vote, and of writing his own name first, and most conspicuously, on that parchment which spoke defiance to the power of the crown of England. There, too, is the name of that other proscribed patriot, Samuel Adams, a man who hungered and thirsted for the independence of his country, who thought the Declaration halted and lingered, being himself not only ready, but eager for it, long before it was proposed; a man of the deepest sagacity, the clearest foresight, and the profoundest judgment in men. And there is Gerry, himself among the earliest and the foremost of the patriots, found when the battle of Lexington summoned them to common counsels, by the side of Warren; a man who lived to serve his country at home and abroad, and to die in the second place in the government. There, too, is the inflexible, the upright, the Spartan character, Robert Treat Paine. He also lived to serve his country through the struggle, and then withdrew from her councils, only that he might give his labors and his life to his native State, in another relation. These names, fellow-citizens, are the treasures of the Commonwealth; and they are treasures which grow

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Samuel Adams.

brighter by time.

Tributes to John Hancock, Samuel Adams, and Robert Treat Paine.

It is now necessary to resume the narrative, and to finish with great brevity the notice of the lives of those whose virtues and services we have met to commemorate.

Adams appointed Minister to France.

Mr. Adams remained in Congress from its first meeting till November, 1777, when he was appointed Minister to France. He proceeded on that service in the February following, embarking in the frigate "Boston," from the shore of his native town, at the foot of Mount Wollaston. The year following, he was appointed commissioner to treat of peace with England. Returning to the United States, he was a delegate from Braintree in the Convention for framing the Constitution of this Commonwealth, in 1780. At the latter end of the same year, he again went abroad in the diplomatic service of the country, and was employed at various courts, and occupied with various negotiations, until 1788. The particulars of these interesting and important services this occasion does

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not allow time to relate. In 1782 he concluded our first treaty with Holland. His negotiations with that republic, his efforts to persuade the States-General^[18] to recognize our independence, his incessant and indefatigable exertions to represent the American cause favorably on the Continent, and to counteract the designs of its enemies, open and secret, and his successful undertaking to obtain loans on the credit of a nation yet new and unknown, are among his most arduous, most useful, most honorable services. It was his fortune to bear a part in the negotiation for peace with England, and in something more than six years from the Declaration which he had so strenuously supported, he had the satisfaction of seeing the minister plenipotentiary of the crown subscribe his name to the instrument which declared that his "Britannic Majesty acknowledged the United States to be free, sovereign, and independent." In these important transactions, Mr. Adams's conduct received the marked approbation of Congress and of the country.

Returning to the United States in 1788, he found the new government about going into operation, and was himself elected the first Vice-President,^[19] a situation which he filled with reputation for eight years, at the expiration of which he was raised to the Presidential chair, as immediate successor to the immortal Washington. In this high station he was succeeded by Mr. Jefferson, after a memorable controversy between their respective friends, in 1801; and from that period his manner of life has been known to all who hear me. He has lived, for five-and-twenty years, with every enjoyment that could render old age happy. Not inattentive to the occurrences of the times, political cares have yet not materially, or for any long time, disturbed his repose. In 1820 he acted as Elector of President and Vice-President, and in the same year we saw him, then at the age of eighty-five, a member of the Convention of this Commonwealth called to revise the Constitution. Forty years before, he had been one of those who formed that Constitution; and he had now the pleasure of witnessing that there was little which the people desired to change. Possessing all his faculties to the end of his long life, with an unabated love of reading and contemplation, in the centre of interesting circles of friendship and affection, he was blessed in his retirement with whatever of repose and felicity the condition of man allows. He had, also, other enjoyments. He saw around him that prosperity and general happiness which had been the object of his public cares and labors. No man ever beheld more clearly, and for a longer time, the great and beneficial effects of the services rendered by himself to his country. That liberty which he so early defended, that independence of which he was so able an advocate and supporter, he saw, we trust, firmly and securely established. The population of the country thickened around him faster, and extended wider, than his own sanguine predictions had anticipated; and the wealth, respectability, and power of the nation sprang up to a magnitude which it is quite impossible he could have expected to witness in his day. He lived also to behold those principles of civil freedom which had been developed, established, and practically applied in America, attract attention, command respect, and awaken imitation, in other regions of the globe; and well might, and well did, he exclaim, "Where will the consequences of the American Revolution end?"

Vice-President, 1789-1797; President, 1797-1801.

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If anything yet remain to fill this cup of happiness, let it be added, that he lived to see a great and intelligent people bestow the highest honor in their gift where he had bestowed his own kindest parental affections and lodged his fondest hopes.^[20] Thus honored in life, thus happy at death, he saw the jubilee,^[21] and he died; and with the last prayers which trembled on his lips was the fervent supplication for his country, "Independence forever!"

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Mr. Jefferson, having been occupied in the years 1778 and 1779 in the important service of revising the laws of Virginia,



Patrick Henry.

was elected Governor of that State, as successor to Patrick Henry, and held the situation when the State was invaded by the British arms. In 1781 he published his "Notes on Virginia," a work which attracted attention in Europe as well as America, dispelled many misconceptions respecting this continent, and gave its author a place among men distinguished for science. In November, 1783, he again took his seat in the Continental Congress, but in the May following was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary, to act abroad, in the negotiation of commercial treaties, with Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams. He proceeded to France, in execution of this mission, embarking at Boston; and that was the only occasion on which he ever visited this place. In 1785 he was appointed Minister to France, the duties of which situation he continued to perform until October, 1789, when he obtained leave to retire, just on the eve of that tremendous revolution

Jefferson elected Governor of Virginia.

Minister to France.

Is made Secretary of State by Washington.

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which has so much agitated the world in our times. Mr. Jefferson's discharge of his diplomatic duties was marked by great ability, diligence, and patriotism; and while he resided at Paris, in one of the most interesting periods, his character for intelligence, his love of knowledge and of the society of learned men, distinguished him in the highest circles of the French capital. No court in Europe had at that time in Paris a representative commanding or enjoying higher regard, for political knowledge or for general attainments, than the minister of this then infant republic. Immediately on his return to his native country, at the organization of the government under the present Constitution, his talents and experience recommended him to President Washington for the first office in his gift. He was placed at the head of the Department of State. In this situation, also, he manifested conspicuous ability. His correspondence with the ministers of other powers residing here, and his instructions to our own diplomatic agents abroad, are among our ablest state papers. A thorough knowledge of the laws and usages of nations, perfect acquaintance with the immediate subject before him, great felicity, and still greater facility, in writing, show themselves in whatever effort his official situation called on him to make. It is believed by competent judges, that the diplomatic intercourse of the government of the United States, from the first meeting of the Continental Congress in 1774 to the present time, taken together, would not suffer, in respect to the talent with which it has been conducted, by comparison with anything which other and older governments can produce; and to the attainment of this respectability and distinction Mr. Jefferson has contributed his full part.

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On the retirement of General Washington from the Presidency, and the election of Mr. Adams to that office in 1797, he was chosen Vice-President. While presiding in this capacity over the deliberations of the Senate, he compiled and published a Manual of Parliamentary Practice, a work of more labor and more merit than is indicated by its size. It is now received as the general standard by which proceedings are regulated, not only in both Houses of Congress, but in most of the other legislative bodies in the country. In 1801 he was elected President, in opposition to Mr. Adams, and re-elected in 1805, by a vote approaching towards unanimity.

Vice-President, 1797-1801; President, 1801-1809.



Benjamin Franklin.

From the time of his final retirement from public life, in 1809, Mr. Jefferson lived as became a wise man. Surrounded by affectionate friends, his ardor in the pursuit of knowledge undiminished, with uncommon health and unbroken spirits, he was able to enjoy largely the rational pleasures of life, and to partake in that public prosperity which he had so much contributed to produce. His kindness and hospitality, the charm of his conversation, the ease of

his manners, the extent of his acquirements, and, especially, the full store of Revolutionary incidents which he had treasured in his memory, and which he knew when and how to dispense, rendered his abode in a high degree attractive to his admiring countrymen, while his high public and scientific character drew towards him every intelligent and educated traveller from abroad. Both Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson had the pleasure of knowing that the respect which they so largely received was not paid to their official stations. They were not men made great by office; but great men, on whom the country for its own benefit had conferred office. There was that in them which office did not give, and which the relinquishment of office did not, and could not,

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take away. In their retirement, in the midst of their fellow-citizens, themselves private citizens, they enjoyed as high regard and esteem as when filling the most important places of public trust.

There remained to Mr. Jefferson yet one other work of patriotism and beneficence, the establishment of a university in his native State. To this object he devoted years of incessant and anxious attention, and by the enlightened liberality of the Legislature of Virginia, and the co-operation of other able and zealous friends, he lived to see it accomplished. May all success attend this infant seminary; and may those who enjoy its advantages, as often as their eyes shall rest on the neighboring height, recollect what they owe to their disinterested and indefatigable benefactor; and may letters honor him who thus labored in the cause of letters!^[22]

Establishes the University of Virginia.

Thus useful, and thus respected, passed the old age of Thomas Jefferson. But time was on its ever-ceaseless wing, and was now bringing the last hour of this illustrious man. He saw its approach with undisturbed serenity. He counted the moments as they passed, and beheld that his last sands were falling. That day, too, was at hand which he had helped to make immortal. One wish, one hope, if it were not presumptuous, beat in his fainting breast. Could it be so, might it please God, he would desire once more to see the sun, once more to look abroad on the scene around him, on the great day of liberty. Heaven, in its mercy, fulfilled that prayer. He saw that sun; he enjoyed its sacred light; he thanked God for this mercy, and bowed his aged head to the grave. "Felix, non vitæ tantum claritate, sed etiam opportunitate mortis."^[23]

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The last public labor of Mr. Jefferson naturally suggests the expression of the high praise which is due, both to him and to Mr. Adams, for their uniform and zealous attachment to learning, and to the cause of general knowledge. Of the advantages of learning, indeed, and of literary accomplishments, their own characters were striking recommendations and illustrations. They were scholars, ripe and good scholars; widely acquainted with ancient as well as modern literature, and not altogether uninstructed in the deeper sciences. Their acquirements, doubtless, were different, and so were the particular objects of their literary pursuits; as their tastes and characters, in these respects, differed like those of other men. Being, also, men of busy lives, with great objects requiring action constantly before them, their attainments in letters did not become showy or obtrusive. Yet I would hazard the opinion that if we could now ascertain all the causes which gave them eminence and distinction in the midst of the great men with whom they acted, we should find not among the least their early acquisitions in literature, the resources which it furnished, the promptitude and facility which it communicated, and the wide field it opened for analogy and illustration; giving them thus, on every subject, a larger view and a broader range, as well for discussion as for the government of their own conduct.

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Fellow-citizens, I will detain you no longer by this faint and feeble tribute to the memory of the illustrious dead. Even in other hands adequate justice could not be done to them, within the limits of this occasion. Their highest, their best praise is your deep conviction of their merits, your affectionate gratitude for their labors and their services. It is not my voice, it is this cessation of ordinary pursuits, this arresting of all attention, these solemn ceremonies, and this crowded house, which speak their eulogy. Their fame, indeed, is safe. That is now treasured up beyond the reach of accident. Although no sculptured marble should rise to their memory, nor engraved stone bear record of their deeds, yet will their remembrance be as lasting as the land they honored. Marble columns may, indeed, moulder into dust; time may erase all impress from the crumbling stone; but their fame remains; for with American Liberty it rose, and with American Liberty only can it perish. It was the last swelling peal of yonder choir: "Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth evermore." I catch that solemn song, I echo that lofty strain of funeral triumph, "Their name liveth evermore."

Of the illustrious signers of the Declaration of Independence there now remains only Charles Carroll. He seems an aged oak, standing alone on the plain, which time has spared a little longer after all its contemporaries have been levelled with the dust. Venerable object! we delight to gather round its trunk, while yet it stands, and to dwell beneath its shadow. Sole survivor of an assembly of as great men as the world has witnessed, in a transaction one of the most important that history records, what thoughts, what interesting reflections, must fill his elevated and devout soul! If he dwell on the past, how touching its recollections; if he survey the present, how happy, how joyous, how full of the fruition of that hope which his ardent patriotism indulged; if he glance at the future, how does the prospect of his country's advancement almost bewilder his weakened conception! Fortunate, distinguished patriot! Interesting relic of the past! Let him know that, while we honor the dead, we do not forget the living; and that there is not a heart here which does not fervently pray that Heaven may keep him yet back from the society of his companions.

Charles Carroll, in 1826 the last of the signers of the Declaration.

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And now, fellow-citizens, let us not retire from this occasion without a deep and solemn conviction of the duties which have devolved upon us. This lovely land, this glorious liberty, these benign institutions, the dear purchase of our fathers, are ours; ours to enjoy, ours to preserve, ours to transmit. Generations past and generations to come hold us responsible for this sacred trust. Our fathers, from behind, admonish us, with their anxious paternal voices; posterity calls out to us,

America's debt to the fathers.

from the bosom of the future; the world turns hither its solicitous eyes; all, all conjure us to act wisely, and faithfully, in the relation which we sustain. We can never, indeed, pay the debt which is upon us; but by virtue, by morality, by religion, by the cultivation of every good principle and every good habit, we may hope to enjoy the blessing, through our day, and to leave it unimpaired to our children. Let us feel deeply how much of what we are and of what we possess we owe to this liberty, and to these institutions of government. Nature has, indeed, given us a soil which yields bounteously to the hand of industry; the mighty and fruitful ocean is before us; and the skies over our heads shed health and vigor. But what are lands, and seas, and skies to civilized man, without society, without knowledge, without morals, without religious culture; and how can these be enjoyed, in all their extent and all their excellence, but under the protection of wise institutions and a free government? Fellow-citizens, there is not one of us, there is not one of us here present, who does not, at this moment, and at every moment, experience, in his own condition, and in the condition of those most near and dear to him, the influence and the benefits of this liberty and these institutions. Let us then acknowledge the blessing, let us feel it deeply and powerfully, let us cherish a strong affection for it, and resolve to maintain and perpetuate it. The blood of our fathers, let it not have been shed in vain; the great hope of posterity, let it not be blasted.

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The striking attitude, too, in which we stand to the world around us, a topic to which, I fear, I advert too often and dwell on too long, cannot be altogether omitted here. Neither individuals nor nations can perform their part well until they understand and feel its importance, and comprehend and justly appreciate all the duties belonging to it. It is not to inflate national vanity, nor to swell a light and empty feeling of self-importance, but it is that we may judge justly of our situation, and of our own duties, that I earnestly urge upon you this consideration of our position and our character among the nations of the earth. It cannot be denied, but by those who would dispute against the sun, that with America, and in America, a new era commences in human affairs. This era is distinguished by free representative governments, by entire religious liberty, by improved systems of national intercourse, by a newly awakened and an unconquerable spirit of free inquiry, and by a diffusion of knowledge through the community, such as has been before altogether unknown and unheard of. America, America, our country, fellow-citizens, our own dear and native land, is inseparably connected, fast bound up, in fortune and by fate, with these great interests. If they fall, we fall with them; if they stand, it will be because we have maintained them. Let us contemplate, then, this connection, which binds the prosperity of others to our own; and let us manfully discharge all the duties which it imposes. If we cherish the virtues and the principles of our fathers, Heaven will assist us to carry on the work of human liberty and human happiness. Auspicious omens cheer us. Great examples are before us. Our own firmament now shines brightly upon our path. Washington is in the clear, upper sky. These other stars have now joined the American constellation; they circle round their centre, and the heavens beam with new light. Beneath this illumination let us walk the course of life, and at its close devoutly commend our beloved country, the common parent of us all, to the Divine Benignity.^[24]

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THE MURDER OF CAPTAIN JOSEPH WHITE^[25]

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FROM AN ARGUMENT ON THE TRIAL OF JOHN FRANCIS KNAPP,
AT SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS, AUG. 3, 1830

Gentlemen, it is a most extraordinary case. In some respects, it has hardly a precedent anywhere; certainly none in our New England history. This bloody drama exhibited no suddenly excited, ungovernable rage. The actors in it were not surprised by any lion-like temptation springing upon their virtue, and overcoming it, before resistance could begin. Nor did they do the deed to glut savage vengeance, or satiate long-settled and deadly hate. It was a cool, calculating, money-making murder. It was all "hire and salary, not revenge." It was the weighing of money against life; the counting out of so many pieces of silver against so many ounces of blood.

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An aged man, without an enemy in the world, in his own house, and in his own bed, is made the victim of a butcherly murder, for mere pay. Truly, here is a new lesson for painters and poets. Whoever shall hereafter draw the portrait of murder, if he will show it as it has been exhibited, where such example was last to have been looked for, in the very bosom of our New England society, let him not give it the grim visage of Moloch, the brow knitted by revenge, the face black with settled hate, and the bloodshot eye emitting livid fires of malice. Let him draw, rather, a decorous, smooth-faced, bloodless demon; a picture in repose, rather than in action; not so much an example of human nature in its depravity, and in its paroxysms of crime, as an infernal being, a fiend, in the ordinary display and development of his character.

The deed was executed with a degree of self-possession and steadiness equal to the wickedness with which it was planned. The circumstances now clearly in evidence spread out the whole scene before us. Deep sleep had fallen on the destined victim, and on all beneath his roof. A healthful old man, to whom sleep was sweet, the first sound slumbers of the night held him in their soft but strong embrace. The assassin enters, through the window already prepared, into an unoccupied apartment. With noiseless foot he paces the lonely hall, half lighted by the moon; he winds up the ascent of the stairs, and reaches the door of the chamber. Of this, he moves the lock, by soft and continued pressure, till it turns on its hinges without noise; and he enters, and

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beholds his victim before him. The room is uncommonly open to the admission of light. The face of the innocent sleeper is turned from the murderer, and the beams of the moon, resting on the gray locks of his aged temple, show him where to strike. The fatal blow is given! and the victim passes, without a struggle or a motion, from the repose of sleep to the repose of death! It is the assassin's purpose to make sure work; and he plies the dagger, though it is obvious that life has been destroyed by the blow of the bludgeon. He even raises the aged arm, that he may not fail in his aim at the heart, and replaces it again over the wounds of the poniard! To finish the picture, he explores the wrist for the pulse! He feels for it, and ascertains that it beats no longer! It is accomplished. The deed is done. He retreats, retraces his steps to the window, passes out through it as he came in, and escapes. He has done the murder. No eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The secret is his own, and it is safe!

Ah! gentlemen, that was a dreadful mistake. Such a secret can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner where the guilty can bestow it, and say it is safe. Not to speak of that eye which pierces through all disguises, and beholds everything as in the splendor of noon, such secrets of guilt are never safe from detection, even by men. True it is, generally speaking, that "murder will out." True it is, that Providence hath so ordained, and doth so govern things, that those who break the great law of Heaven by shedding man's blood seldom succeed in avoiding discovery. Especially, in a case exciting so much attention as this, discovery must come, and will come, sooner or later. A thousand eyes turn at once to explore every man, every thing, every circumstance, connected with the time and place; a thousand ears catch every whisper; a thousand excited minds intensely dwell on the scene, shedding all their light, and ready to kindle the slightest circumstance into a blaze of discovery. Meantime the guilty soul cannot keep its own secret. It is false to itself; or, rather, it feels an irresistible impulse of conscience to be true to itself. It labors under its guilty possession, and knows not what to do with it. The human heart was not made for the residence of such an inhabitant. It finds itself preyed on by a torment, which it dares not acknowledge to God or man. A vulture is devouring it, and it can ask no sympathy or assistance, either from heaven or earth. The secret which the murderer possesses soon comes to possess him; and, like the evil spirits of which we read, it overcomes him, and leads him whithersoever it will. He feels it beating at his heart, rising to his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears its workings in the very silence of his thoughts. It has become his master. It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence. When suspicions from without begin to embarrass him, and the net of circumstance to entangle him, the fatal secret struggles with still greater violence to burst forth. It must be confessed, it will be confessed; there is no refuge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession.

"Murder will out."

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THE REPLY TO HAYNE

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FROM THE SECOND SPEECH ON FOOT'S RESOLUTION,
DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, JAN. 26
AND 27, 1830^[26]

MR. PRESIDENT,—When the mariner has been tossed for many days in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course. Let us imitate this prudence, and, before we float farther on the waves of this debate, refer to the point from which we departed, that we may at least be able to conjecture where we now are. I ask for the reading of the resolution before the Senate.

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[The Secretary read the resolution, as follows:—

"Resolved, That the Committee on Public Lands be instructed to inquire and report the quantity of public lands remaining unsold within each State and Territory, and whether it be expedient to limit for a certain period the sales of the public lands to such lands only as have heretofore been offered for sale, and are now subject to entry at the minimum price. And, also, whether the office of Surveyor-General, and some of the land offices, may not be abolished without detriment to the public interest; or whether it be expedient to adopt measures to hasten the sales and extend more rapidly the surveys of the public lands."*]*

The resolution which caused the debate.

We have thus heard, Sir, what the resolution is which is actually before us for consideration; and it will readily occur to every one, that it is almost the only subject about which something has not been said in the speech, running through two days, by which the Senate has been entertained by the gentleman from South Carolina. Every topic in the wide range of our public affairs, whether past or present,—everything, general or local, whether belonging to national politics or party politics,—seems to have attracted more or less of the honorable member's attention, save only the resolution before the Senate. He has spoken of everything but the public lands; they have escaped his notice. To that subject, in all his excursions, he has not paid even the cold respect of a passing glance.

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When this debate, Sir, was to be resumed, on Thursday morning, it so happened that it would have been convenient for me to be elsewhere. The honorable member, however, did not incline to put off the discussion to

Hayne's "return-shot."

another day. He had a shot, he said, to return, and he wished to discharge
it. That shot, Sir, which he thus kindly informed us was coming, that we might stand out of the way, or prepare ourselves to fall by it and die with decency, has now been received. Under all advantages, and with expectation awakened by the tone which preceded it, it has been discharged, and has spent its force. It may become me to say no more of its effect than that, if nobody is found, after all, either killed or wounded, it is not the first time, in the history of human affairs, that the vigor and success of the war have not quite come up to the lofty and sounding phrase of the manifesto.

The gentleman, Sir, in declining to postpone the debate, told the Senate, with the emphasis of his hand upon his heart, that there was something rankling *here*, which he wished to relieve. [Mr. Hayne rose, and disclaimed having used the word *rankling*.] It would not, Mr. President, be safe for the honorable member to appeal to those around him, upon the question whether he did in fact make use of that word. But he may have been unconscious of it. At any rate, it is enough that he disclaims it. But still, with or without the use of that particular word, he had yet something *here*, he said, of which he wished to rid himself by an immediate reply. In this respect, Sir, I have a great advantage over the honorable gentleman. There is nothing *here*, Sir, which gives me the slightest uneasiness; neither fear, nor anger, nor that which is sometimes more troublesome than either, the consciousness of having been in the wrong. There is nothing, either originating *here*, or now received *here* by the gentleman's shot. Nothing originating here, for I had not the slightest feeling of unkindness towards the honorable member. Some passages, it is true, had occurred since our acquaintance in this body, which I could have wished might have been otherwise; but I had used philosophy and forgotten them. I paid the honorable member the attention of listening with respect to his first speech; and when he sat down, though surprised, and I must even say astonished, at some of his opinions, nothing was farther from my intention than to commence any personal warfare. Through the whole of the few remarks I made in answer, I avoided, studiously and carefully, everything which I thought possible to be construed into disrespect. And, Sir, while there is thus nothing originating *here* which I have wished at any time, or now wish, to discharge, I must repeat, also, that nothing has been received *here* which *rankles*, or in any way gives me annoyance. I will not accuse the honorable member of violating the rules of civilized war; I will not say that he poisoned his arrows. But whether his shafts were or were not dipped in that which would have caused rankling if they had reached their destination, there was not, as it happened, quite strength enough in the bow to bring them to their mark. If he wishes now to gather up those shafts, he must look for them elsewhere; they will not be found fixed and quivering in the object at which they were aimed.

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THE REPLY TO HAYNE

The honorable member complained that I had slept on his speech. I must have slept on it, or not slept at all. The moment the honorable member sat down, his friend from Missouri rose, and, with much honeyed commendation of the speech, suggested that the impressions which it had produced were too charming and delightful to be disturbed by other sentiments or other sounds, and proposed that the Senate should adjourn. Would it have been quite amiable in me, Sir, to interrupt this excellent good feeling? Must I not have been absolutely malicious, if I could have thrust myself forward, to destroy sensations thus pleasing? Was it not much better and kinder, both to sleep upon them myself, and to allow others also the pleasure of sleeping upon them? But if it be meant, by sleeping upon his speech, that I took time to prepare a reply to it, it is quite a mistake. Owing to other engagements, I could not employ even the interval between the adjournment of the Senate and its meeting the next morning, in attention to the subject of this debate. Nevertheless, Sir, the mere matter of fact is undoubtedly true. I did sleep on the gentleman's speech, and slept soundly. And I slept equally well on his speech of yesterday, to which I am now replying. It is quite possible that in this respect, also, I possess some advantage over the honorable member, attributable, doubtless, to a cooler temperament on my part; for, in truth, I slept upon his speeches remarkably well.

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But the gentleman inquires



Thomas H. Benton.

why *he* was made the object of such a reply. Why was *he* singled out? If an attack has been made on the East, he, he assures us, did not begin it; it was made by the gentleman from Missouri. Sir, I answered the gentleman's speech because I happened to hear it; and because, also, I chose to give an answer to that speech, which, if unanswered, I thought most likely to produce injurious impressions. I did not stop to inquire who was the original drawer of the bill. I found a responsible indorser before me, and it was my purpose to hold him liable, and to bring him to his just responsibility, without delay. But, Sir, this interrogatory of the honorable member was only introductory to another. He proceeded to ask me whether I had turned upon him, in this debate, from the consciousness that I should find an overmatch, if I ventured on a contest with his friend from Missouri. If, Sir, the honorable member, *modestiae gratia*, had chosen thus to defer to his friend, and to pay him a compliment, without intentional disparagement to others, it would have been quite according to the friendly courtesies of debate, and not at all ungrateful to my own feelings. I am not one of those, Sir, who

Thomas H. Benton's part in the debate.

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esteem any tribute of regard, whether light and occasional, or more serious and deliberate, which may be bestowed on others, as so much unjustly withholden from themselves. But the tone and manner of the gentleman's question forbid me thus to interpret it. I am not at liberty to consider it as nothing more than a civility to his friend. It had an air of taunt and disparagement, something of the loftiness of asserted superiority, which does not allow me to pass it over without notice. It was put as a question for me to answer, and so put as if it were difficult for me to answer, whether I deemed the member from Missouri an overmatch for myself in debate here. It seems to me, Sir, that this is extraordinary language, and an extraordinary tone, for the discussions of this body.

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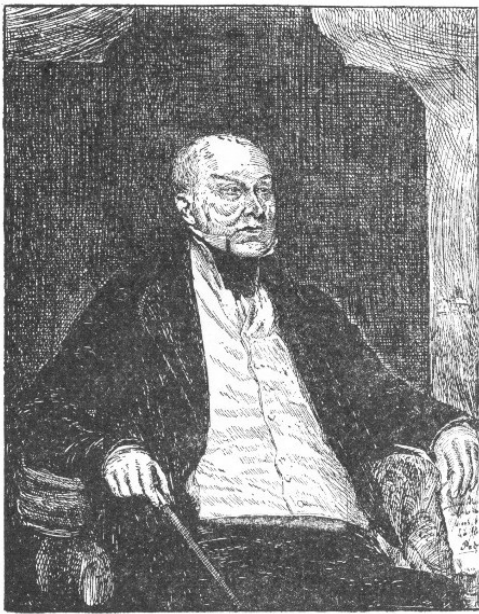
Matches and overmatches! Those terms are more applicable elsewhere than here, and fitter for other assemblies than this. Sir, the gentleman seems to forget where and what we are. This is a Senate, a Senate of equals, of men of individual honor and personal character, and of absolute independence. We know no masters, we acknowledge no dictators. This is a hall for mutual consultation and discussion; not an arena for the exhibition of champions. I offer myself, Sir, as a match for no man; I throw the challenge of debate at no man's feet. But then, Sir, since the honorable member has put the question in a manner that calls for an answer, I will give him an answer; and I tell him, that, holding myself to be the humblest of the members here, I yet know nothing in the arm of his friend from Missouri, either alone or when aided by the arm of *his* friend from South Carolina, that need deter even me from espousing whatever opinions I may choose to espouse, from debating whenever I may choose to debate, or from speaking whatever I may see fit to say, on the floor of the Senate. Sir, when uttered as matter of commendation or compliment, I should dissent from nothing which the honorable member might say of his friend. Still less do I put forth any pretensions of my own. But when put to me as matter of taunt, I throw it back, and say to the gentleman that he could possibly say nothing less likely than such a comparison to wound my pride of personal character. The anger of its tone rescued the remark from intentional irony, which otherwise, probably, would have been its general acceptation. But, Sir, if it be imagined that, by this mutual quotation and commendation; if it be supposed that, by casting the characters of the drama, assigning to each his part,—to one the attack, to another the cry of onset; or if it be thought that, by a loud and empty vaunt of anticipated victory, any laurels are to be won here; if it be imagined, especially, that any or all these things will shake any purpose of mine, I can tell the honorable member, once for all, that he is greatly mistaken, and that he is dealing with one of whose temper and character he has yet much to learn. Sir, I shall not allow myself, on this occasion, I hope on no occasion, to be betrayed into any loss of temper; but if provoked, as I trust I never shall be, into crimination and recrimination, the honorable member may perhaps find, that, in that contest, there will be blows to take as well as blows to give; that others can state comparisons as significant, at least, as his own; and that his impunity may possibly demand of him whatever powers of taunt and sarcasm he may possess. I commend him to a prudent husbandry of his resources.

A Senate of equals.

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But, Sir, the Coalition!^[27] The Coalition! Ay, "the murdered Coalition!" The gentleman asks if I were led or frightened into this debate by the spectre of the Coalition. "Was it the ghost of the murdered Coalition," he exclaims, "which haunted the member from Massachusetts; and which, like the ghost of Banquo, would never down?" "The murdered Coalition!" Sir, this charge of a coalition, in reference to the late administration, is not original with the honorable member. It did not spring up in the Senate. Whether as a fact, as an argument, or as an embellishment, it is all borrowed. He adopts it, indeed, from a very low origin, and a still lower present condition. It is one of the thousand calumnies with which the press teemed, during an excited political canvass. It was a charge, of which there was not only no proof or probability, but which was in itself wholly impossible to be true. No man of common information ever believed a syllable of it. Yet it was of that class of falsehoods

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John Quincy Adams.

which, by continued repetition, through all the organs of detraction and abuse, are capable of misleading those who are already far misled, and of further fanning passion already kindling into flame. Doubtless it served in its day, and in greater or less degree, the end designed by it. Having done that, it has sunk into the general mass of stale and loathed calumnies. It is the very cast-off slough of a polluted and shameless press. Incapable of further mischief, it lies in the sewer, lifeless and despised. It is not now, Sir, in the power of the honorable member to give it dignity or decency, by attempting to elevate it, and to introduce it into the Senate. He cannot change it from what it is, an object of general disgust and scorn. On the contrary, the contact, if he choose to touch it, is more likely to drag him down, down, to the place where it lies itself.

The "Coalition".

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But, Sir, the honorable member was not, for other reasons, entirely happy in his allusion to the story of

An infelicitous allusion by Hayne.

Banquo's murder and Banquo's ghost. It was not, I think, the friends, but the enemies of the murdered

Banquo, at whose bidding his spirit would not down. The honorable gentleman is fresh in his reading of the English classics, and can put me right if I am wrong; but, according to my poor recollection, it was at those who had begun with caresses and ended with foul and treacherous murder that the gory locks were shaken. The ghost of Banquo, like that of Hamlet, was an honest ghost. It disturbed no innocent man. It knew where its appearance would strike terror, and who would cry out, A ghost! It made itself visible in the right quarter, and compelled the guilty and the conscience-smitten, and none others, to start, with,

"Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo!
If I stand here, I saw him!"^[28]

Their eyeballs were seared (was it not so, Sir?) who had thought to shield themselves by concealing their own hand, and laying the imputation of the crime on a low and hireling agency in wickedness; who had vainly attempted to stifle the workings of their own coward consciences by ejaculating through white lips and chattering teeth, "Thou canst not say I did it!" I have misread the great poet if those who had no way partaken in the deed of the death, either found that they were, or feared that they should be, pushed from their stools by the ghost of the slain, or exclaimed to a spectre created by their own fears and their own remorse, "Avaunt! and quit our sight!"

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There is another particular, Sir, in which the honorable member's quick perception of resemblances might, I should think, have seen something in the story of Banquo, making it not altogether a subject of the most pleasant contemplation. Those who murdered Banquo, what did they win by it? Substantial good? Permanent power? Or disappointment, rather, and sore mortification,—dust and ashes, the common fate of vaulting ambition overleaping itself? Did not evenhanded justice ere-long commend the poisoned chalice to their own lips? Did they not soon find that for another they had "filed their mind"? that their ambition, though apparently for the moment successful, had but put a barren sceptre in their grasp? Ay, Sir,

"a barren sceptre in their gripe,
*Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,
No son of theirs succeeding."*

Sir, I need pursue the allusion no farther. I leave the honorable gentleman to run it out at his leisure, and to derive from it all the gratification it is calculated to administer. If he finds himself pleased with the associations, and prepared to be quite satisfied, though the parallel should be entirely completed, I had almost said, I am satisfied also; but that I shall think of. Yes, Sir, I will think of that.

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I spoke, Sir, of the Ordinance of 1787,^[29] which prohibits slavery, in all future times, northwest of the Ohio, as a measure of great wisdom and foresight, and one which had been attended with highly beneficial and permanent consequences. I supposed that on this point no two gentlemen in the Senate could entertain different opinions. But the simple expression of this sentiment has led the gentleman not only into a labored defence of slavery, in the abstract, and on principle, but also into a warm accusation against me, as having attacked the system of domestic slavery now existing in the Southern States. For all this, there was not the slightest foundation in anything said or intimated by me. I did not utter a single word which any ingenuity could torture into an attack on the slavery of the South. I said, only, that it was highly wise and useful, in legislating for the Northwestern country while it was yet a wilderness, to prohibit the introduction of slaves; and I added that I presumed there was no reflecting and intelligent person, in the neighboring

The Ordinance of 1787.

What Webster said, and did not say, about slavery.

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State of Kentucky, who would doubt that, if the same prohibition had been extended, at the same early period, over that commonwealth, her strength and population would, at this day, have been far greater than they are. If these opinions be thought doubtful, they are nevertheless, I trust, neither extraordinary nor disrespectful. They attack nobody and menace nobody. And yet, Sir, the gentleman's optics have discovered, even in the mere expression of this sentiment, what he calls the very spirit of the Missouri question! He represents me as making an onset on the whole South, and manifesting a spirit which would interfere with, and disturb, their domestic condition!

Sir, this injustice no otherwise surprises me, than as it is committed here, and committed without the slightest pretence of ground for it. I say it only surprises me as being done here; for I know full well that it is, and has been, the settled policy of some persons in the South, for years, to represent the people of the North as disposed to interfere with them in their own exclusive and peculiar concerns. This is a delicate and sensitive point in Southern feeling; and of late years it has always been touched, and generally with effect, whenever the object has been to unite the whole South against Northern men or Northern measures. This feeling, always carefully kept alive, and maintained at too intense a heat to admit discrimination or reflection, is a lever of great power in our political machine. It moves vast bodies, and gives to them one and the same direction. But it is without adequate cause, and the suspicion which exists is wholly groundless. There is not, and never has been, a disposition in the North to interfere with these interests of the South. Such interference has never been supposed to be within the power of government; nor has it been in any way attempted. The slavery of the South has always been regarded as a matter of domestic policy, left with the States themselves, and with which the Federal government had nothing to do. Certainly, Sir, I am, and ever have been, of that opinion. The gentleman, indeed, argues that slavery, in the abstract, is no evil. Most assuredly I need not say I differ with him, altogether and most widely, on that point. I regard domestic slavery as one of the greatest evils, both moral and political. But whether it be a malady, and whether it be curable, and if so, by what means; or, on the other hand, whether it be the *vulnus immedicabile* of the social system, I leave it to those whose right and duty it is to inquire and to decide. And this I believe, Sir, is, and uniformly has been, the sentiment of the North.

Slavery a matter of domestic policy, left with the States.

But a great evil.

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We approach, at length, Sir, to a more important part of the honorable gentleman's observations. Since it does not accord with my views of justice and policy to give away the public lands altogether, as a mere matter of gratuity, I am asked by the honorable gentleman on what ground it is that I consent to vote them away in particular instances. How, he inquires, do I reconcile with these professed sentiments, my support of measures appropriating portions of the lands to particular roads, particular canals, particular rivers, and particular institutions of education in the West? This leads, Sir, to the real and wide difference in political opinion between the honorable gentleman and myself. On my part, I look upon all these objects as connected with the common good, fairly embraced in its object and its terms; he, on the contrary, deems them all, if good at all, only local good. This is our difference. The interrogatory which he proceeded to put at once explains this difference. "What interest," asks he, "has South Carolina in a canal in Ohio?" Sir, this very question is full of significance. It develops the gentleman's whole political system; and its answer expounds mine. Here we differ. I look upon a road over the Alleghanies, a canal round the falls of the Ohio, or a canal or railway from the Atlantic to the Western waters, as being an object large and extensive enough to be fairly said to be for the common benefit. The gentleman thinks otherwise, and this is the key to his construction of the powers of the government. He may well ask what interest has South Carolina in a canal in Ohio. On his system, it is true, she has no interest. On that system, Ohio and Carolina are different governments, and different countries; connected here, it is true, by some slight and ill-defined bond of union, but in all main respects separate and diverse. On that system, Carolina has no more interest in a canal in Ohio than in Mexico. The gentleman, therefore, only follows out his own principles; he does no more than arrive at the natural conclusions of his own doctrines; he only announces the true results of that creed which he has adopted himself, and would persuade others to adopt, when he thus declares that South Carolina has no interest in a public work in Ohio.

The public lands.

Webster's broad view of national relations to internal improvements.

Public works are bonds of union.

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Sir, we narrow-minded people of New England do not reason thus. Our notion of things is entirely different. We look upon the States, not as separated, but as united. We love to dwell on that union, and on the mutual happiness which it has so much promoted, and the common renown which it has so greatly contributed to acquire. In our contemplation, Carolina and Ohio are parts of the same country; States, united under the same general government, having interests common, associated, intermingled. In whatever is within the proper sphere of the constitutional power of this government, we look upon the States as one. We do not impose geographical limits to our patriotic feeling or regard; we do not follow rivers and mountains, and lines of latitude, to find boundaries, beyond which public improvements do not benefit us. We who come here, as agents and representatives of these narrow-minded and selfish men of New England, consider ourselves as bound to regard with an equal eye the good of the whole, in whatever is within our powers of legislation. Sir, if a railroad or canal, beginning in South Carolina and ending in South Carolina, appeared to me to be of national importance and national magnitude, believing, as I do, that the power of government extends to the encouragement of works of that description, if I were to

The States are one.

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stand up here and ask, What interest has Massachusetts in a railroad in South Carolina? I should not be willing to face my constituents. These same narrow-minded men would tell me that they had sent me to act for the whole country, and that one who possessed too little comprehension, either of intellect or feeling, one who was not large enough, both in mind and in heart, to embrace the whole, was not fit to be intrusted with the interest of any part.

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Sir, I do not desire to enlarge the powers of the government by unjustifiable construction, nor to exercise any not within a fair interpretation. But when it is believed that a power does exist, then it is, in my judgment, to be exercised for the general benefit of the whole. So far as respects the exercise of such a power, the States are one. It was the very object of the Constitution to create unity of interests to the extent of the powers of the general government. In war and peace we are one; in commerce, one; because the authority of the general government reaches to war and peace, and to the regulation of commerce. I have never seen any more difficulty in erecting light-houses on the lakes than on the ocean; in improving the harbors of inland seas, than if they were within the ebb and flow of the tide; or in removing obstructions in the vast streams of the West, more than in any work to facilitate commerce on the Atlantic coast. If there be any power for one, there is power also for the other; and they are all and equally for the common good of the country.

The powers of the government to be used for the general benefit of the whole.

One in war, in peace, and in commerce.

There are other objects, apparently more local, or the benefit of which is less general, towards which, nevertheless, I have concurred with others to give aid by donations of land. It is proposed to construct a road, in or through one of the new States, in which this government possesses large quantities of land. Have the United States no right, or, as a great and untaxed proprietor, are they under no obligation to contribute to an object thus calculated to promote the common good of all the proprietors, themselves included? And even with respect to education, which is the extreme case, let the question be considered. In the first place, as we have seen, it was made matter of compact with these States, that they should do their part to promote education. In the next place, our whole system of land laws proceeds on the idea that education is for the common good; because in every division a certain portion is uniformly reserved and appropriated for the use of schools. And, finally, have not these new States singularly strong claims, founded on the ground already stated, that the government is a great untaxed proprietor, in the ownership of the soil? It is a consideration of great importance, that probably there is in no part of the country, or of the world, so great call for the means of education, as in these new States, owing to the vast numbers of persons within those ages in which education and instruction are usually received, if received at all. This is the natural consequence of recency of settlement and rapid increase. The census of these States shows how great a proportion of the whole population occupies the classes between infancy and manhood. These are the wide fields, and here is the deep and quick soil for the seeds of knowledge and virtue; and this is the favored season, the very spring-time for sowing them. Let them be disseminated without stint. Let them be scattered with a bountiful hand, broadcast. Whatever the government can fairly do towards these objects, in my opinion, ought to be done.

The government a great untaxed proprietor.

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These, Sir, are the grounds, succinctly stated, on which my votes for grants of lands for particular objects rest; while I maintain, at the same time, that it is all a common fund, for the common benefit. And reasons like these, I presume, have influenced the votes of other gentlemen from New England. Those who have a different view of the powers of the government, of course, come to different conclusions, on these, as on other questions. I observed, when speaking on this subject before, that if we looked to any measure, whether for a road, a canal, or anything else, intended for the improvement of the West, it would be found that if the New England *ayes* were struck out of the lists of votes, the Southern *noes* would always have rejected the measure. The truth of this has not been denied, and cannot be denied. In stating this, I thought it just to ascribe it to the constitutional scruples of the South, rather than to any other less favorable or less charitable cause. But no sooner had I done this, than the honorable gentleman asks if I reproach him and his friends with their constitutional scruples. Sir, I reproach nobody. I stated a fact, and gave the most respectful reason for it that occurred to me. The gentleman cannot deny the fact; he may, if he choose, disclaim the reason. It is not long since I had occasion, in presenting a petition from his own State, to account for its being intrusted to my hands, by saying that the constitutional opinions of the gentleman and his worthy colleague prevented them from supporting it. Sir, did I state this as matter of reproach? Far from it. Did I attempt to find any other cause than an honest one for these scruples? Sir, I did not. It did not become me to doubt or to insinuate that the gentleman had either changed his sentiments, or that he had made up a set of constitutional opinions accommodated to any particular combination of political occurrences. Had I done so, I should have felt that, while I was entitled to little credit in thus questioning other people's motives, I justified the whole world in suspecting my own. But how has the gentleman returned this respect for others' opinions? His own candor and justice, how have they been exhibited towards the motives of others, while he has been at so much pains to maintain, what nobody has disputed, the purity of his own? Why, Sir, he has asked *when*, and *how*, and *why* New England votes were found going for measures favorable to the West. He has demanded to be informed whether all this did not begin in 1825, and while the election of President was still pending.

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Sir, to these questions retort would be justified; and it is both cogent and at hand. Nevertheless, I will answer the inquiry, not by retort, but by facts. I will tell the gentleman *when*, and *how*, and *why* New England has

New England's aid to Western

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supported measures favorable to the West. I have already referred to the early history of the government, to the first acquisition of the lands, to the original laws for disposing of them, and for governing the territories where they lie; and have shown the influence of New England men and New England principles in all these leading measures. I should not be pardoned were I to go over that ground again. Coming to more recent times, and to measures of a less general character, I have endeavored to prove that everything of this kind, designed for Western improvement, has depended on the votes of New England; all this is true beyond the power of contradiction. And now, Sir, there are two measures to which I will refer, not so ancient as to belong to the early history of the public lands, and not so recent as to be on this side of the period when the gentleman charitably imagines a new direction may have been given to New England feeling and New England votes. These measures, and the New England votes in support of them, may be taken as samples and specimens of all the rest.

improvements.

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Robert Y. Hayne.

In 1820 (observe, Mr. President, in 1820) the people of the West besought Congress for a reduction in the price of lands. In favor of that reduction, New England, with a delegation of forty members in the other house, gave thirty-three votes, and one only against it. The four Southern States, with more than fifty members, gave thirty-two votes for it, and seven against it. Again, in 1821 (observe again, Sir, the time), the law passed for the relief of the purchasers of the public lands. This was a measure of vital importance to the West, and more especially to the Southwest. It authorized the relinquishment of contracts for lands which had been entered into at high prices, and a reduction in other cases of not less than thirty-seven and a half per cent on the purchase-money. Many millions of dollars, six or seven, I believe, probably much more, were relinquished by this law. On this bill, New England, with her forty members, gave more affirmative votes than the four Southern States, with their fifty-two or fifty-three members. These two are far the most important general measures respecting the public lands which have been adopted within the last twenty years. They took place in 1820 and 1821. That is the time *when*.

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As to the manner *how*, the gentleman already sees that it was by voting in solid column for the required relief; and, lastly, as to the cause *why*, I tell the gentleman it was because the members from New England thought the measures just and salutary; because they entertained towards the West neither envy, hatred, nor malice; because they deemed it becoming them, as just and enlightened public men, to meet the exigency which had arisen in the West with the appropriate measure of relief; because they felt it due to their own characters, and the characters of their New England predecessors in this government, to act towards the new States in the spirit of a liberal, patronizing, magnanimous policy. So much, Sir, for the cause *why*; and I hope that by this time, Sir, the honorable gentleman is satisfied; if not, I do not know *when*, or *how*, or *why* he ever will be.

Professing to be provoked by what he chose to consider a charge made by me against South Carolina, the honorable member, Mr. President, has taken up a new crusade against New England. Leaving altogether the subject of the public lands, in which his success, perhaps, had been neither distinguished nor satisfactory, and letting go, also, of the topic of the tariff, he sallied forth in a general assault on the opinions, politics, and parties of New England, as they have been exhibited in the last thirty years. This is natural. The "narrow policy" of the public lands had proved a legal settlement in South Carolina, and was not to be removed. The "accursed policy" of the tariff, also, had established the fact of its birth and parentage in the same State. No wonder, therefore, the gentleman wished to carry the war, as he expressed it, into the enemy's country. Prudently willing to quit these subjects, he was, doubtless, desirous of fastening on others, which could not be transferred south of Mason and Dixon's line.^[30] The politics of New England became his theme; and it was in this part of his speech, I think, that he menaced me with such sore discomfiture. Discomfiture! Why, Sir, when he attacks anything which I maintain, and overthrows it, when he turns the right or left of any position which I take up, when he drives me from any ground I choose to occupy, he may then talk of discomfiture, but not till that distant day. What has he done? Has he maintained his own charges? Has he proved what he alleged? Has he sustained himself in his attack on the government, and on the history of the North, in the matter of the public lands? Has he disproved a fact, refuted a proposition, weakened an argument, maintained by me? Has he come within beat of drum of any position of mine? Oh, no; but he has "carried the war into the enemy's country"! Carried the war into the enemy's country! Yes, Sir, and what sort of a war has he made of it? Why, Sir, he has stretched a drag-net over the whole surface of perished pamphlets, indiscreet sermons, frothy paragraphs, and fuming popular addresses,—over whatever the pulpit in its moments of alarm, the press in its heats, and parties in their extravagance, have severally thrown off in times of general excitement and violence. He has thus swept together a mass of such things as, but that they are now old and cold, the public

Hayne's attack on New England.

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health would have required him rather to leave in their state of dispersion. For a good long hour or two we had the unbroken pleasure of listening to the honorable member while he recited with his usual grace and spirit, and with evident high gusto, speeches, pamphlets, addresses, and all the *et cæteras* of the political press, such as warm heads produce in warm times; and such as it would be “discomfiture” indeed for any one, whose taste did not delight in that sort of reading, to be obliged to peruse. This is his war. This it is to carry war into the enemy’s country. It is in an invasion of this sort that he flatters himself with the expectation of gaining laurels fit to adorn a Senator’s brow!

Mr. President, I shall not—it will not, I trust, be expected that I should—either now or at any time, separate this farrago into parts, and answer and examine its components. I shall barely bestow upon it all a general remark or two. In the run of forty years, Sir, under this Constitution, we have experienced sundry successive violent party contests. Party arose, indeed, with the Constitution itself, and, in some form or other, has attended it through the greater part of its history. Whether any other constitution than the old Articles of Confederation was desirable, was itself a question on which parties divided; if a new constitution were framed, what powers should be given to it was another question; and when it had been formed, what was, in fact, the just extent of the powers actually conferred was a third. Parties, as we know, existed under the first administration, as distinctly marked as those which have manifested themselves at any subsequent period. The contest immediately preceding the political change in 1801, and that, again, which existed at the commencement of the late war, are other instances of party excitement of something more than usual strength and intensity. In all these conflicts there was, no doubt, much of violence on both and all sides. It would be impossible, if one had a fancy for such employment, to adjust the relative *quantum* of violence between these contending parties. There was enough in each, as must always be expected in popular governments. With a great deal of popular and decorous discussion, there was mingled a great deal, also, of declamation, virulence, crimination, and abuse. In regard to any party, probably, at one of the leading epochs in the history of parties, enough may be found to make out another inflamed exhibition, not unlike that with which the honorable member has edified us. For myself, Sir, I shall not rake among the rubbish of bygone times to see what I can find, or whether I cannot find something by which I can fix a blot on the escutcheon of any State, any party, or any part of the country. General Washington’s administration was steadily and zealously maintained, as we all know, by New England. It was violently opposed elsewhere. We know in what quarter he had the most earnest, constant, and persevering support, in all his great and leading measures. We know where his private and personal character was held in the highest degree of attachment and veneration; and we know, too, where his measures were opposed, his services slighted, and his character vilified. We know, or we might know, if we turned to the journals, who expressed respect, gratitude, and regret, when he retired from the chief magistracy, and who refused to express either respect, gratitude, or regret. I shall not open those journals. Publications more abusive or scurrilous never saw the light, than were sent forth against Washington and all his leading measures, from presses south of New England. But I shall not look them up. I employ no scavengers; no one is in attendance on me, furnishing such means of retaliation; and if there were, with an ass’s load of them, with a bulk as huge as that which the gentleman himself has produced, I would not touch one of them. I see enough of the violence of our own times, to be no way anxious to rescue from forgetfulness the extravagances of times past.

Party contests under the Constitution.

Political attacks upon Washington.

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Besides, what is all this to the present purpose? It has nothing to do with the public lands, in regard to which the attack was begun; and it has nothing to do with those sentiments and opinions which, I have thought, tend to disunion, and all of which the honorable member seems to have adopted himself, and undertaken to defend. New England has, at times, so argues the gentleman, held opinions as dangerous as those which he now holds. Suppose this were so; why should *he* therefore abuse New England? If he finds himself countenanced by acts of hers, how is it that, while he relies on these acts, he covers, or seeks to cover, their authors with reproach? But, Sir, if, in the course of forty years, there have been undue effervescences of party in New England, has the same thing happened nowhere else? Party animosity and party outrage, not in New England, but elsewhere, denounced President Washington, not only as a Federalist, but as a Tory, a British agent, a man who, in his high office, sanctioned corruption. But does the honorable member suppose, if I had a tender here who should put such an effusion of wickedness and folly into my hand, that I would stand up and read it against the South? Parties ran into great heats again in 1799 and 1800. What was said, Sir, or rather what was not said, in those years, against John Adams, one of the committee that drafted the Declaration of Independence, and its admitted ablest defender on the floor of Congress? If the gentleman wishes to increase his stores of party abuse and frothy violence, if he has a determined proclivity to such pursuits, there are treasures of that sort south of the Potomac, much to his taste, yet untouched. I shall not touch them.

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The parties which divided the country at the commencement of the late war were violent. But then there was violence on both sides, and violence in every State. Minorities and majorities were equally violent. There was no more violence against the war in New England than in other States; nor any more appearance of violence, except that, owing to a dense population, greater facility of assembling, and more presses, there may have been more in quantity spoken and printed there than in some other places. In the article of sermons, too, New England is somewhat more abundant than South Carolina; and for that reason the chance of finding here and there an

Political parties in 1812.

exceptionable one may be greater. I hope, too, there are more good ones. Opposition may have been more formidable in New England, as it embraced a larger portion of the whole population; but it was no more unrestrained in principle, or violent in manner. The minorities dealt quite as harshly with their own State governments as the majorities dealt with the administration here. There were presses on both sides, popular meetings on both sides, ay, and pulpits on both sides also. The gentleman's purveyors have only catered for him among the productions of one side. I certainly shall not supply the deficiency by furnishing samples of the other. I leave to him, and to them, the whole concern.

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It is enough for me to say that if, in any part of this their grateful occupation, if, in all their researches, they find anything in the history of Massachusetts, or New England, or in the proceedings of any legislative or other public body, disloyal to the Union, speaking slightingly of its value, proposing to break it up, or recommending non-intercourse with neighboring States, on account of difference of political opinion, then, Sir, I give them all up to the honorable gentleman's unrestrained rebuke; expecting, however, that he will extend his buffetings in like manner *to all similar proceedings, wherever else found.*

The eulogium pronounced by the honorable gentleman on the character of the State of South Carolina, for her Revolutionary and other merits, meets my hearty concurrence. I shall not acknowledge that the honorable member goes before me in regard for whatever of distinguished talent, or distinguished character, South Carolina has produced. I claim part of the honor, I partake in the pride, of her great names. I claim them for countrymen, one and all, the Laurenses, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the Sumpters, the Marions, Americans all, whose fame is no more to be hemmed in by State lines, than their talents and patriotism were capable of being circumscribed within the same narrow limits. In their day and generation they served and honored the country, and the whole country; and their renown is of the treasures of the whole country. Him whose honored name the gentleman himself bears,—does he esteem me less capable of gratitude for his patriotism, or sympathy for his sufferings, than if his eyes had first opened upon the light of Massachusetts, instead of South Carolina? Sir, does he suppose it in his power to exhibit a Carolina name so bright as to produce envy in my bosom? No, Sir, increased gratification and delight, rather. I thank God that, if I am gifted with little of the spirit which is able to raise mortals to the skies, I have yet none, as I trust, of that other spirit, which would drag angels down. When I shall be found, Sir, in my place here in the Senate, or elsewhere, to sneer at public merit, because it happens to spring up beyond the little limits of my own State or neighborhood; when I refuse, for any such cause or for any cause, the homage due to American talent, to elevated patriotism, to sincere devotion to liberty and the country; or, if I see an uncommon endowment of Heaven, if I see extraordinary capacity and virtue, in any son of the South, and if, moved by local prejudice or gangrened by State jealousy, I get up here to abate the tithe of a hair from his just character and just fame, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!

Tribute to South Carolina.

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Sir, let me recur to pleasing recollections; let me indulge in refreshing remembrance of the past; let me remind you that, in early times, no States cherished greater harmony, both of principle and feeling, than Massachusetts and South Carolina. Would to God that harmony might again return! Shoulder to shoulder they went through the Revolution, hand in hand they stood round the administration of Washington, and felt his own great arm lean on them for support. Unkind feeling, if it exist, alienation, and distrust are the growth, unnatural to such soils, of false principles since sown. They are weeds, the seeds of which that same great arm never scattered.

Massachusetts and South Carolina in the Revolution.

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THE BATTLE OF LEXINGTON

From an engraving. By permission of Mr. O. G. Seeley

Mr. President, I shall enter on no encomium upon Massachusetts; she needs none. There she is. Behold her, and judge for yourselves. There is her history; the world knows it by heart. The past, at least, is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington, and Bunker Hill; and there they will remain forever. The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for Independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State from New England to Georgia; and there they will lie forever. And, Sir, where American Liberty raised its first voice, and where its youth was nurtured and sustained, there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it, if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk at and tear it, if folly and madness, if uneasiness under salutary and necessary restraint, shall succeed in separating it from that Union by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand, in the end, by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked; it will stretch forth its arm with whatever of vigor it may still retain over the friends who gather round it; and it will fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the proudest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin.

Defence of Massachusetts.

There yet remains to be performed, Mr. President, by far the most grave and important duty which I feel to be devolved on me by this occasion. It is to state, and to defend, what I conceive to be the true principles of the Constitution under which we are here assembled. I might well have desired that so weighty a task should have fallen into other and abler hands. I could have wished that it should have been executed by those whose character and experience give weight and influence to their opinions, such as cannot possibly belong to mine. But, Sir, I have met the occasion, not sought it; and I shall proceed to state my own sentiments, without challenging for them any particular regard; with studied plainness, and as much precision as possible.

The true principles of the Constitution.

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I understand the honorable gentleman from South Carolina to maintain that it is a right of the State legislatures to interfere, whenever, in their judgment, this government transcends its constitutional limits, and to arrest the operation of its laws.

May State legislatures arrest national laws?

I understand him to maintain this right, as a right existing *under* the Constitution, not as a right to overthrow it on the ground of extreme necessity, such as would justify violent revolution.

I understand him to maintain an authority, on the part of the States, thus to interfere, for the purpose of correcting the exercise of power by the general government, of checking it, and of compelling it to conform to their opinion of the extent of its powers.

I understand him to maintain, that the ultimate power of judging of the constitutional extent of its own authority is not lodged exclusively in the general government, or any branch of it; but that, on the contrary, the States may lawfully decide for themselves, and each State for itself, whether, in a given case, the act of the general government transcends its power.

Are the States the final judges of the acts of the general government?

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I understand him to insist that if the exigency of the case, in the opinion of any State government, require it, such State government may, by its own sovereign authority, annul an act of the general government which it deems plainly and palpably unconstitutional.

This is the sum of what I understand from him to be the South Carolina doctrine, and the doctrine which he maintains. I propose to consider it, and compare it with the Constitution. Allow me to say, as a preliminary remark, that I call this the South Carolina doctrine only because the gentleman himself has so denominated it. I do not feel at liberty to say that South Carolina, as a State, has ever advanced these sentiments. I hope she has not, and never may. That a great majority of her people are opposed to the tariff laws, is doubtless true. That a majority, somewhat less than that just mentioned, conscientiously believe these laws unconstitutional, may probably also be true. But that any majority holds to the right of direct State interference at State discretion, the right of nullifying acts of Congress by acts of State legislation, is more than I know, and what I shall be slow to believe.

The South Carolina doctrine.

That there are individuals besides the honorable gentleman who do maintain these opinions is quite certain. I recollect the recent expression of a sentiment which circumstances attending its utterance and publication justify us in supposing was not unpremeditated: "The sovereignty of the State,—never to be controlled, construed, or decided on, but by her own feelings of honorable justice."

[Mr. Hayne here rose and said that for the purpose of being clearly understood, he would state that his proposition was in the words of the Virginia resolution, as follows:—

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"That this assembly doth explicitly and peremptorily declare, that it views the powers of the Federal government as resulting from the compact to which the States are parties, as limited by the plain sense and intention of the instrument constituting that compact, as no farther valid than they are authorized by the grants enumerated in that compact; and that, in case of a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of other powers not granted by the said compact, the States who are parties thereto have the right, and are in duty bound, to interpose, for arresting the progress of the evil, and for maintaining within their respective limits the authorities, rights, and liberties appertaining to them."^[31]

Mr. Webster resumed:—]

I am quite aware, Mr. President, of the existence of the resolution which the gentleman read, and has now repeated, and that he relies on it as his authority. I know the source, too, from which it is understood to have proceeded. I need not say that I have much respect for the constitutional opinions of Mr. Madison; they would weigh greatly with me always. But before the authority of his opinion be vouched for the gentleman's proposition, it will be proper to consider what is the fair interpretation of that resolution, to which Mr. Madison is understood to have given his sanction. As the gentleman construes it, it is an authority for him. Possibly he may not have adopted the right construction. That resolution declares that *in the case of the dangerous exercise of powers not granted by the general government, the States may interpose to arrest the progress of the evil*. But how interpose, and what does this declaration purport? Does it mean no more than that there may be extreme cases, in which the people, in any mode of assembling, may resist usurpation, and relieve themselves from a tyrannical government? No one will deny this. Such resistance is not only acknowledged to be just in America, but in England also Blackstone admits as much, in the theory, and practice, too, of the English constitution. We, Sir, who oppose the Carolina doctrine, do not deny that the people may, if they choose, throw off any government when it becomes oppressive and intolerable, and erect a better in its stead. We all know that civil institutions are established for the public benefit, and that when they cease to answer the ends of their existence they may be changed. But I do not understand the doctrine now contended for to be that which, for the sake of distinction, we may call the right of revolution. I understand the gentleman to maintain that without revolution, without civil commotion, without rebellion, a remedy for supposed abuse and transgression of the powers of the general government lies in a direct appeal to the interference of the State governments.

Webster admits the right of revolution.

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[Mr. Hayne here rose and said that he did not contend for the mere right of revolution, but for the right of constitutional resistance. What he maintained was, that in case of a plain, palpable violation of the Constitution by the general government, a State may interpose; and that this interposition is constitutional.

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Mr. Webster resumed:—]

So, Sir, I understood the gentleman, and am happy to find that I did not misunderstand him. What he contends for is that it is constitutional to interrupt the administration of the Constitution itself, in the hands of those who are chosen and sworn to administer it, by the direct interference, in form of law, of the States, in virtue of their sovereign capacity. The inherent right in the people to reform their government I do not deny; and they have another right, and that is to resist unconstitutional laws, without overturning the government. It is no doctrine of mine that unconstitutional laws bind the people. The great question is, Whose prerogative is it to decide on the constitutionality or unconstitutionality of the laws? On that the main debate hinges. The proposition that, in case of a supposed violation of the Constitution by Congress, the States have a constitutional right to interfere and annul the law of Congress, is the proposition of the gentleman. I do not admit it. If the gentleman had intended no more than to assert the right of revolution for justifiable cause, he would have said only what all agree to. But I cannot conceive that there can be a middle course, between submission to the laws, when regularly pronounced constitutional, on the one hand, and open resistance, which is revolution or rebellion, on the other. I say the right of a State to annul a law of Congress cannot be maintained, but on the ground of the inalienable right of man to resist oppression; that is to say, upon the ground of revolution. I admit that there is an ultimate violent remedy, above the Constitution and in defiance of the Constitution, which may be resorted to when a revolution is to be justified. But I do not admit that, under the Constitution and in conformity with it, there is any mode in which a State government, as a member of the Union, can interfere and stop the progress of the general government, by force of her own laws, under any circumstances whatever.

No middle course between revolution and submission to constitutional laws.

A concise statement of Webster's whole argument.

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This leads us to inquire into the origin of this government and the source of its power. Whose agent is it? Is it the creature of the State legislatures, or the creature of the people? If the government of the United States be the agent of the State governments, then they may control it, provided they can agree in the manner of controlling it; if it be the agent of the people, then the people alone can control it, restrain it, modify, or reform it. It is observable enough that the doctrine for which the honorable gentleman contends leads him to the necessity of maintaining, not only that this general government is the creature of the States, but that it is the creature of each of the States severally, so that each may assert the power for itself of determining whether it acts within the limits of its authority. It is the servant of four-and-twenty masters, of different wills and different purposes, and yet bound to obey all. This absurdity (for it seems no less) arises from a misconception as to the origin of this government and its true character. It is, Sir, the people's Constitution, the people's government, made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people. The people of the United States have declared that this Constitution shall be the supreme law. We must either admit the proposition, or dispute their authority. The States are,

The source of the power of the government of the United States.

The people's government.

The Constitution declared by the people to be the supreme law.

The general government and the State governments derive their authority from the people.

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unquestionably, sovereign, so far as their sovereignty is not affected by this supreme law. But the State legislatures, as political bodies, however sovereign, are yet not sovereign over the people. So far as the people have given power to the general government, so far the grant is unquestionably good, and the government holds of the people, and not of the State governments. We are all agents of the same supreme power, the people. The general government and the State governments derive their authority from the same source. Neither can, in relation to the other, be called primary, though one is definite and restricted, and the other general and residuary. The national government possesses those powers which it can be shown the people have conferred on it, and no more. All the rest belongs to the State governments, or to the people themselves. So far as the people have restrained State sovereignty, by the expression of their will, in the Constitution of the United States, so far, it must be admitted, State sovereignty is effectually controlled. I do not contend that it is, or ought to be, controlled farther. The sentiment to which I have referred propounds that State sovereignty is only to be controlled by its own "feeling of justice"; that is to say, it is not to be controlled at all, for one who is to follow his own feelings is under no legal control. Now, however men may think this ought to be, the fact is, that the people of the United States have chosen to impose control on State sovereignties. There are those, doubtless, who wish they had been left without restraint; but the Constitution has ordered the matter differently. To make war, for instance, is an exercise of sovereignty; but the Constitution declares that no State shall make war. To coin money is another exercise of sovereign power; but no State is at liberty to coin money. Again, the Constitution says that no sovereign State shall be so sovereign as to make a treaty. These prohibitions, it must be confessed, are a control on the State sovereignty of South Carolina, as well as of the other States, which does not arise "from her own feelings of honorable justice." The opinion referred to, therefore, is in defiance of the plainest provisions of the Constitution.

General powers as over against State powers.

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There are other proceedings of public bodies which have already been alluded to, and to which I refer again for the purpose of ascertaining more fully what is the length and breadth of that doctrine, denominated the Carolina doctrine, which the honorable member has now stood up on this floor to maintain. In one of them I find it resolved, that "the tariff of 1828, and every other tariff designed to promote one branch of industry at the expense of others, is contrary to the meaning and intention of the Federal compact; and such a dangerous, palpable, and deliberate usurpation of power, by a determined majority, wielding the general government beyond the limits of its delegated powers, as calls upon the States which compose the suffering minority, in their sovereign capacity, to exercise the powers which, as sovereigns, necessarily devolve upon them, when their compact is violated."

The "sovereign" States.

Observe, Sir, that this resolution holds the tariff of 1828, and every other tariff designed to promote one branch of industry at the expense of another, to be such a dangerous, palpable, and deliberate usurpation of power, as calls upon the States, in their sovereign capacity, to interfere by their own authority. This denunciation, Mr. President, you will please to observe, includes our old tariff of 1816, as well as all others; because that was established to promote the interest of the manufacturers of cotton, to the manifest and admitted injury of the Calcutta cotton trade. Observe, again, that all the qualifications are here rehearsed and charged upon the tariff, which are necessary to bring the case within the gentleman's proposition. The tariff is a usurpation; it is a dangerous usurpation; it is a palpable usurpation; it is a deliberate usurpation. It is such a usurpation, therefore, as calls upon the States to exercise their right of interference. Here is a case, then, within the gentleman's principles, and all his qualifications of his principles. It is a case for action. The Constitution is plainly, dangerously, palpably, and deliberately violated; and the States must interpose their own authority to arrest the law. Let us suppose the State of South Carolina to express this same opinion, by the voice of her legislature. That would be very imposing; but what then? Is the voice of one State conclusive? It so happens that, at the very moment when South Carolina resolves that the tariff laws are unconstitutional, Pennsylvania and Kentucky resolve exactly the reverse. *They* hold those laws to be both highly proper and strictly constitutional. And now, Sir, how does the honorable member propose to deal with this case? How does he relieve us from this difficulty, upon any principle of his? His construction gets us into it; how does he propose to get us out?

Are protective tariffs unconstitutional usurpations?

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In Carolina, the tariff is a palpable, deliberate usurpation; Carolina, therefore, may nullify it, and refuse to pay the duties. In Pennsylvania, it is both clearly constitutional and highly expedient; and there the duties are to be paid. And yet we live under a government of uniform laws, and under a Constitution too, which contains an express provision, as it happens, that all duties shall be equal in all the States. Does not this approach absurdity?

Nullification would make uniform laws impossible.

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If there be no power to settle such questions, independent of either of the States, is not the whole Union a rope of sand? Are we not thrown back again, precisely, upon the old Confederation?

It is too plain to be argued. Four-and-twenty interpreters of constitutional law, each with a power to decide for itself, and none with authority to bind anybody else, and this constitutional law the only bond of their union! What is such a state of things but a mere connection during pleasure, or, to use the phraseology of the times, *during feeling*? And that feeling, too, not the feeling of the people, who established the

The Union, with nullification, a mere connection during pleasure.

The gentleman has found no case, he can find none, to support his own opinions by New England authority. New England has studied the Constitution in other schools and under other teachers. She looks upon it with other regards, and deems more highly and reverently both of its just authority and its utility and excellence. The history of her legislative proceedings may be traced. The ephemeral effusions of temporary bodies, called together by the excitement of the occasion, may be hunted up; they have been hunted up. The opinions and votes of her public men, in and out of Congress, may be explored. It will all be in vain. The Carolina doctrine can derive from her neither countenance nor support. She rejects it now; she always did reject it; and till she loses her senses, she always will reject it. The honorable member has referred to expressions on the subject of the embargo law, made in this place, by an honorable and venerable gentleman,^[32] now favoring us with his presence. He quotes that distinguished Senator as saying that, in his judgment, the embargo law was unconstitutional, and that therefore, in his opinion, the people were not bound to obey it. That, Sir, is perfectly constitutional language. An unconstitutional law is not binding; *but then it does not rest with a resolution or a law of a State legislature to decide whether an act of Congress be or be not constitutional.* An unconstitutional act of Congress would not bind the people of this District, although they have no legislature to interfere in their behalf;^[33] and, on the other hand, a constitutional law of Congress does bind the citizens of every State, although all their legislatures should undertake to annul it by act or resolution. The venerable Connecticut Senator is a constitutional lawyer, of sound principles and enlarged knowledge; a statesman practised and experienced, bred in the company of Washington, and holding just views upon the nature of our governments. He believed the embargo unconstitutional, and so did others; but what then? Who did he suppose was to decide that question? The State legislatures? Certainly not. No such sentiment ever escaped his lips.

New England rejects the South Carolina doctrine.

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Let us follow up, Sir, this New England opposition to the embargo laws; let us trace it, till we discern the principle which controlled and governed New England throughout the whole course of that opposition. We shall then see what similarity there is between the New England school of constitutional opinions and this modern Carolina school. The gentleman, I think, read a petition from some single individual addressed to the legislature of Massachusetts, asserting the Carolina doctrine, that is, the right of State interference to arrest the laws of the Union. The fate of that petition shows the sentiment of the legislature. It met no favor. The opinions of Massachusetts were very different. They had been expressed in 1798, in answer to the resolutions of Virginia, and she did not depart from them, nor bend them to the times. Misgoverned, wronged, oppressed, as she felt herself to be, she still held fast her integrity to the Union. The gentleman may find in her proceedings much evidence of dissatisfaction with the measures of government, and great and deep dislike to the embargo; all this makes the case so much the stronger for her; for, notwithstanding all this dissatisfaction and dislike, she still claimed no right to sever the bonds of the Union. There was heat, and there was anger in her political feeling. Be it so; but neither her heat nor her anger betrayed her into infidelity to the government. The gentleman labors to prove that she disliked the embargo^[34] as much as South Carolina dislikes the tariff, and expressed her dislike as strongly. Be it so; but did she propose the Carolina remedy? did she threaten to interfere, by State authority, to annul the laws of the Union? That is the question for the gentleman's consideration.

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No doubt, Sir, a great majority of the people of New England conscientiously believed the embargo law of 1807 unconstitutional; as conscientiously, certainly, as the people of South Carolina hold that opinion of the tariff. They reasoned thus: Congress has power to regulate commerce; but here is a law, they said, stopping all commerce, and stopping it indefinitely. The law is perpetual; that is, it is not limited in point of time, and must of course continue until it shall be repealed by some other law. It is as perpetual, therefore, as the law against treason or murder. Now, is this regulating commerce, or destroying it? Is it guiding, controlling, giving the rule to commerce, as a subsisting thing, or is it putting an end to it altogether? Nothing is more certain than that a majority in New England deemed this law a violation of the Constitution. The very case required by the gentleman to justify State interference had then arisen. Massachusetts believed this law to be "a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of a power not granted by the Constitution." Deliberate it was, for it was long continued; palpable she thought it, as no words in the Constitution gave the power, and only a construction, in her opinion most violent, raised it; dangerous it was, since it threatened utter ruin to her most important interests. Here, then, was a Carolina case. How did Massachusetts deal with it? It was, as she thought, a plain, manifest, palpable violation of the Constitution, and it brought ruin to her doors. Thousands of families, and hundreds of thousands of individuals, were beggared by it. While she saw and felt all this, she saw and felt also, that, as a measure of national policy, it was perfectly futile; that the country was no way benefited by that which caused so much individual distress; that it was efficient only for the production of evil, and all that evil inflicted on ourselves. In such a case, under such circumstances, how did Massachusetts demean herself? Sir, she remonstrated, she memorialized, she addressed herself to the general government, not exactly "with the concentrated energy of passion," but with her own strong sense, and the energy of sober conviction. But she did not

New England attitude toward the embargo of 1807.

The government has power of deciding ultimately on the just extent of its own authority.

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interpose the arm of her own power to arrest the law, and break the embargo. Far from it. Her principles bound her to two things; and she followed her principles, lead where they might. First, to submit to every constitutional law of Congress; and secondly, if the constitutional validity of the law be doubted, to refer that question to the decision of the proper tribunals. The first principle is vain and ineffectual without the second. A majority of us in New England believed the embargo law unconstitutional; but the great question was, and always will be in such cases, Who is to decide this? Who is to judge between the people and the government? And, Sir, it is quite plain that the Constitution of the United States confers on the government itself, to be exercised by its appropriate department, and under its own responsibility to the people, this power of deciding ultimately and conclusively upon the just extent of its own authority. If this had not been done, we should not have advanced a single step beyond the old Confederation.

Sir, the human mind is so constituted that the merits of both sides of a controversy appear very clear, and very palpable, to those who respectively espouse them; and both sides usually grow clearer as the controversy advances. South Carolina sees unconstitutionality in the tariff; she sees oppression there also, and she sees danger. Pennsylvania, with a vision not less sharp, looks at the same tariff, and sees no such thing in it; she sees it all constitutional, all useful, all safe. The faith of South Carolina is strengthened by opposition, and she now not only sees, but *resolves*, that the tariff is palpably unconstitutional, oppressive, and dangerous; but Pennsylvania, not to be behind her neighbors, and equally willing to strengthen her own faith by a confident asseveration, *resolves*, also, and gives to every warm affirmative of South Carolina, a plain, downright, Pennsylvania negative. South Carolina, to show the strength and unity of her opinion, brings her assembly to a unanimity, within seven voices; Pennsylvania, not to be outdone in this respect any more than in others, reduces her dissentient fraction to a single vote. Now, Sir, again I ask the gentleman, What is to be done? Are these States both right? Is he bound to consider them both right? If not, which is in the wrong? or rather, which has the best right to decide? And if he, and if I, are not to know what the Constitution means, and what it is, till those two State legislatures, and the twenty-two others, shall agree in its construction, what have we sworn to, when we have sworn to maintain it? I was forcibly struck, Sir, with one reflection, as the gentleman went on in his speech. He quoted Mr. Madison's resolutions, to prove that a State may interfere, in a case of deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of a power not granted. The honorable member supposes the tariff law to be such an exercise of power; and that consequently a case has arisen in which the State may, if it see fit, interfere by its own law. Now, it so happens, nevertheless, that Mr. Madison deems this same tariff law quite constitutional. Instead of a clear and palpable violation, it is, in his judgment, no violation at all. So that, while they use his authority for a hypothetical case, they reject it in the very case before them. All this, Sir, shows the inherent futility, I had almost used a stronger word, of conceding this power of interference to the State, and then attempting to secure it from abuse by imposing qualifications of which the States themselves are to judge. One of two things is true: either the laws of the Union are beyond the discretion and beyond the control of the States; or else we have no constitution of general government, and are thrust back again to the days of the Confederation.

The vexed question of the tariff.

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The laws of the Union beyond the control of the States.

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I must now beg to ask, Sir, Whence is this supposed right of the States derived? Where do they find the power to interfere with the laws of the Union? Sir, the opinion which the honorable gentleman maintains is a notion founded in a total misapprehension, in my judgment, of the origin of this government, and of the foundation on which it stands. I hold it to be a popular government, erected by the people; those who administer it responsible to the people; and itself capable of being amended and modified, just as the people may choose it should be. It is as popular, just as truly emanating from the people, as the State governments. It is created for one purpose; the State governments for another. It has its own powers; they have theirs. There is no more authority with them to arrest the operation of a law of Congress, than with Congress to arrest the operation of their laws. We are here to administer a Constitution emanating immediately from the people, and trusted by them to our administration. It is not the creature of the State governments. It is of no moment to the argument, that certain acts of the State legislatures are necessary to fill our seats in this body. That is not one of their original State powers, a part of the sovereignty of the State. It is a duty which the people, by the Constitution itself, have imposed on the State legislatures; and which they might have left to be performed elsewhere, if they had seen fit. So they have left the choice of President with electors; but all this does not affect the proposition that this whole government, President, Senate, and House of Representatives, is a popular government. It leaves it still all its popular character. The governor of a State (in some of the States) is chosen, not directly by the people, but by those who are chosen by the people, for the purpose of performing, among other duties, that of electing a governor. Is the government of the State, on that account, not a popular government? This government, Sir, is the independent offspring of the popular will. It is not the creature of State legislatures; nay, more, if the whole truth must be told, the people brought it into existence, established it, and have hitherto supported it, for the very purpose, amongst others, of imposing certain salutary restraints on State sovereignties. The States cannot now make war; they cannot contract alliances; they cannot make, each for itself, separate regulations of commerce; they cannot lay imposts; they cannot coin money. If this Constitution, Sir, be the creature of State legislatures, it must be admitted that it has obtained a strange control over the volitions of its creators.

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The people, then, Sir, erected this government. They gave it a

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Constitution, and in that Constitution they have enumerated the powers which they bestow on it. They have made it a limited government. They have defined its authority. They have restrained it to the exercise of such powers as are granted; and all others, they declare, are reserved to the States or the people. But, Sir, they have not stopped here. If they had, they would have accomplished but half their work. No definition can be so clear as to avoid possibility of doubt; no limitation so precise as to exclude all uncertainty. Who, then, shall construe this grant of the people? Who shall interpret their will, where it may be supposed they have left it doubtful? With whom do they repose this ultimate right of deciding on the powers of the government? Sir, they have settled all this in the fullest manner. They have left it with the government itself, in its appropriate branches. Sir, the very chief end, the main design, for which the whole Constitution was framed and adopted, was to establish a government that should not be obliged to act through State agency, or depend on State opinion and State discretion. The people had had quite enough of that kind of government under the Confederation. Under that system, the legal action, the application of law to individuals, belonged exclusively to the States. Congress could only recommend; their acts were not of binding force till the States had adopted and sanctioned them. Are we in that condition still? Are we yet at the mercy of State discretion and State construction? Sir, if we are, then vain will be our attempt to maintain the Constitution under which we sit.

The people erected the government.

A constitution with enumerated powers.

The main design of the Constitution to free the government from State agency.

The failure of the Confederation the cause of the Constitution.

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But, Sir, the people have wisely provided, in the Constitution itself, a proper, suitable mode and tribunal for settling questions of constitutional law. There are in the Constitution grants of powers to Congress, and restrictions on these powers. There are, also, prohibitions on the States. Some authority must, therefore, necessarily exist, having the ultimate jurisdiction to fix and ascertain the interpretation of these grants, restrictions, and prohibitions. The Constitution has itself pointed out, ordained, and established that authority. How has it accomplished this great and essential end? By declaring, Sir, that "*the Constitution, and the laws of the United States, made in pursuance thereof, shall be the supreme law of the land, any thing in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.*"

This, Sir, was the first great step. By this the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of the United States is declared. The people so will it. No State law is to be valid which comes in conflict with the Constitution, or any law of the United States passed in pursuance of it. But who shall decide this question of interference? To whom lies the last appeal? This, Sir, the Constitution itself decides also, by declaring, "*that the judicial power shall extend to all cases arising under the Constitution and laws of the United States.*" These two provisions cover the whole ground. They are, in truth, the keystone of the arch! With these it is a government; without them it is a confederation. In pursuance of these clear and express provisions, Congress established, at its very first session, in the judicial act, a mode for carrying them into full effect, and for bringing all questions of constitutional power to the final decision of the Supreme Court. It then, Sir, became a government. It then had the means of self-protection; and but for this, it would, in all probability, have been now among things which are past. Having constituted the government, and declared its powers, the people have further said, that, since somebody must decide on the extent of these powers, the government shall itself decide; subject, always, like other popular governments, to its responsibility to the people. And now, Sir, I repeat, how it is that a State legislature acquires any power to interfere? Who, or what, gives them the right to say to the people, "We, who are your agents and servants for one purpose, will undertake to decide that your other agents and servants, appointed by you for another purpose, have transcended the authority you gave them!" The reply would be, I think, not impertinent, "Who made you a judge over another's servants? To their own masters they stand or fall."

The supremacy of the Constitution.

The final decision of the Supreme Court.

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Sir, I deny this power of State legislatures altogether. It cannot stand the test of examination. Gentlemen may say that in an extreme case a State government might protect the people from intolerable oppression. Sir, in such a case the people might protect themselves without the aid of the State governments. Such a case warrants revolution. It must make, when it comes, a law for itself. A nullifying act of a State legislature cannot alter the case, nor make resistance any more lawful. In maintaining these sentiments, Sir, I am but asserting the rights of the people. I state what they have declared, and insist on their right to declare it. They have chosen to repose this power in the general government, and I think it my duty to support it, like other constitutional powers.

Revolution a law to itself.

The people have reposed power in the general government.

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For myself, Sir, I do not admit the competency of South Carolina, or any other State, to prescribe my constitutional duty; or to settle, between me and the people, the validity of laws of Congress for which I have voted. I decline her umpirage. I have not sworn to support the Constitution according to her construction of its clauses. I have not stipulated, by my oath of office or otherwise, to come under any responsibility, except to the people, and those whom they have appointed to pass upon the question, whether laws, supported by my votes, conform to the Constitution of the country. And, Sir, if we look to the general nature of the case, could anything have been more preposterous than to make a government for the whole Union, and yet leave its powers subject, not to one interpretation, but to thirteen or twenty-four interpretations? Instead

of one tribunal, established by all, responsible to all, with power to decide for all, shall constitutional questions be left to four-and-twenty popular bodies, each at liberty to decide for itself, and none bound to respect the decisions of others,—and each at liberty, too, to give a new construction on every new election of its own members? Would anything, with such a principle in it, or rather with such a destitution of all principle, be fit to be called a government? No, Sir. It should not be denominated a Constitution. It should be called, rather, a collection of topics for everlasting controversy; heads of debate for a disputatious people. It would not be a government. It would not be adequate to any practical good, or fit for any country to live under.

To avoid all possibility of being misunderstood, allow me to repeat again, in the fullest manner, that I claim no powers for the government by forced or unfair construction. I admit that it is a government of strictly limited powers; of enumerated, specified, and particularized powers; and that whatsoever is not granted, is withheld. But notwithstanding all this, and however the grant of powers may be expressed, its limit and extent may yet, in some cases, admit of doubt; and the general government would be good for nothing, it would be incapable of long existing, if some mode had not been provided in which those doubts, as they should arise, might be peaceably, but authoritatively, solved.

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And now, Mr. President, let me run the honorable gentleman's doctrine a little into its practical application. Let us look at his probable *modus operandi*. If a thing can be done, an ingenious man can tell how it is to be done, and I wish to be informed how this State interference is to be put in practice, without violence, bloodshed, and rebellion.

We will take the existing case of the tariff law. South Carolina is said to have made up her opinion upon it. If we do not repeal it, (as we probably shall not,) she will then apply to the case the remedy of her doctrine. She will, we must suppose, pass a law of her legislature, declaring the several acts of Congress usually called the tariff laws null and void, so far as they respect South Carolina, or the citizens thereof. So far, all is a paper transaction, and easy enough. But the collector at Charleston is collecting the duties imposed by these tariff laws. He, therefore, must be stopped. The collector will seize the goods if the tariff duties are not paid. The State authorities will undertake their rescue, the marshal, with his posse, will come to the collector's aid, and here the contest begins. The militia of the State will be called out to sustain the Nullifying Act. They will march, Sir, under a very gallant leader; for I believe the honorable member himself commands the militia of that part of the State. He will raise the Nullifying Act on his standard, and spread it out as his banner! It will have a preamble, setting forth that the tariff laws are palpable, deliberate, and dangerous violations of the Constitution! He will proceed, with this banner flying, to the custom-house in Charleston,

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“All the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds.”

Arrived at the custom-house, he will tell the collector that he must collect no more duties under any of the tariff laws. This he will be somewhat puzzled to say, by the way, with a grave countenance, considering what hand South Carolina herself had in that of 1816. But, Sir, the collector would not probably desist, at his bidding. He would show him the law of Congress, the treasury instruction, and his own oath of office. He would say, he should perform his duty, come what come might.

Here would ensue a pause; for they say that a certain stillness precedes the tempest. The trumpeter would hold his breath awhile, and before all this military array should fall on the custom-house, collector, clerks, and all, it is very probable some of those composing it would request of their gallant commander-in-chief to be informed a little upon the point of law; for they have, doubtless, a just respect for his opinions as a lawyer, as well as for his bravery as a soldier. They know he has read Blackstone^[35] and the Constitution, as well as Turenne^[36] and Vauban.^[37] They would ask him, therefore, something concerning their rights in this matter. They would inquire whether it was not somewhat dangerous to resist a law of the United States. What would be the nature of their offence, they would wish to learn, if they, by military force and array, resisted the execution in Carolina of a law of the United States, and it should turn out, after all, that the law *was constitutional*? He would answer, of course, Treason. No lawyer could give any other answer. John Fries,^[38] he would tell them, had learned that, some years ago. How, then, they would ask, do you propose to defend us? We are not afraid of bullets, but treason has a way of taking people off that we do not much relish. How do you propose to defend us? “Look at my floating banner,” he would reply; “see there the *nullifying law*!” Is it your opinion, gallant commander, they would then say, that, if we should be indicted for treason, that same floating banner of yours would make a good plea in bar? “South Carolina is a sovereign State,” he would reply. That is true; but would the judge admit our plea? “These tariff laws,” he would repeat, “are unconstitutional, palpably, deliberately, dangerously.” That may all be so; but if the tribunal should not happen to be of that opinion, shall we swing for it? We are ready to die for our country, but it is rather an awkward business, this dying without touching the ground! After all, that is a sort of hemp tax worse than any part of the tariff.

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Mr. President, the honorable gentleman would be in a dilemma, like that of another great general. He would have a knot before him which he could not untie. He must cut it with his sword. He must say to his followers, “Defend yourselves with your bayonets;” and this is war,—civil war.

Direct collision, therefore, between force and force, is the unavoidable result of that remedy for the revision of unconstitutional laws which the gentleman contends for. It must happen in the very first case to which it is

**Nullification leads to
disunion.**

applied. Is not this the plain result? To resist by force the execution of a law, generally, is treason. Can the courts of the United States take notice of the indulgence of a State to commit treason? The common saying that a State cannot commit treason herself, is nothing to the purpose. Can she authorize others to do it? If John Fries had produced an act of Pennsylvania, annulling the law of Congress, would it have helped his case? Talk about it as we will, these doctrines go the length of revolution. They are incompatible with any peaceable administration of the government. They lead directly to disunion and civil commotion; and therefore it is, that at their commencement, when they are first found to be maintained by respectable men, and in a tangible form, I enter my public protest against them all.

The honorable gentleman argues, that, if this government be the sole judge of the extent of its own powers, whether that right of judging be in Congress or the Supreme Court, it equally subverts State sovereignty. This the gentleman sees, or thinks he sees, although he cannot perceive how the right of judging in this matter, if left to the exercise of State legislatures, has any tendency to subvert the government of the Union. The gentleman's opinion may be that the right *ought not* to have been lodged with the general government; he may like better such a constitution as we should have under the right of State interference; but I ask him to meet me on the plain matter of fact. I ask him to meet me on the Constitution itself. I ask him if the power is not found there, clearly and visibly found there?

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But, Sir, what is this danger, and what are the grounds of it? Let it be remembered that the Constitution of the United States is not unalterable. It is to continue in its present form no longer than the people who established it shall choose to continue it. If they shall become convinced that they have made an injudicious or inexpedient partition and distribution of power between the State governments and the general government, they can alter that distribution at will.

The Constitution alterable by the people, not by the States.

But, Sir, although there are fears, there are hopes also. The people have preserved this, their own chosen Constitution, for forty years, and have seen their happiness, prosperity, and renown grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength. They are now, generally, strongly attached to it. Overthrown by direct assault it cannot be; evaded, undermined, *nullified*, it will not be, if we and those who shall succeed us here, as agents and representatives of the people, shall conscientiously and vigilantly discharge the two great branches of our public trust, faithfully to preserve, and wisely to administer it.

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Mr. President, I have thus stated the reasons of my dissent to the doctrines which have been advanced and maintained. I am conscious of having detained you and the Senate much too long. I was drawn into the debate with no previous deliberation, such as is suited to the discussion of so grave and important a subject. But it is a subject of which my heart is full, and I have not been willing to suppress the utterance of its spontaneous sentiments. I cannot, even now, persuade myself to relinquish it, without expressing once more my deep conviction, that, since it respects nothing less than the Union of the States, it is of most vital and essential importance to the public happiness. I profess, Sir, in my career hitherto, to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the preservation of our Federal Union. It is to that Union we owe our safety at home, and our consideration and dignity abroad. It is to that Union that we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country. That Union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues in the severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce, and ruined credit. Under its benign influences, these great interests immediately awoke, as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life. Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread farther and farther, they have not outrun its protection or its benefits. It has been to us all a copious fountain of national, social, and personal happiness.

The preservation of the Union.

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I have not allowed myself, Sir, to look beyond the Union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counsellor in the affairs of this government, whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the Union may be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it should be broken up and destroyed. While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that, in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise! God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind! When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured, bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as "What is all this worth?" nor those other words of delusion and folly, "Liberty first and Union afterwards"; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true

Webster's final prayer.

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EXECUTIVE PATRONAGE AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

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FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN
CONVENTION HELD AT WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS,
OCTOBER 12, 1832

The same party selfishness which drives good men out of office will push bad men in. Political proscription leads necessarily to the filling of offices with incompetent persons, and to a consequent mal-execution of official duties. And in my opinion, Sir, this principle of claiming a monopoly of office by the right of conquest, unless the public shall effectually rebuke and restrain it, will entirely change the character of our government. It elevates party above country; it forgets the common weal in the pursuit of personal emolument; it tends to form, it does form, we see that it has formed, a political combination, united by no common principles or opinions among its members, either upon the powers of the government, or the true policy of the country; but held together simply as an association, under the charm of a popular head; seeking to maintain possession of the government by a vigorous exercise of its patronage; and for this purpose agitating, and alarming, and distressing social life by the exercise of a tyrannical party proscription. Sir, if this course of things cannot be checked, good men will grow tired of the exercise of political privileges. They will have nothing to do with popular elections. They will see that such elections are but a mere selfish contest for office; and they will abandon the government to the scramble of the bold, the daring, and the desperate.

THE CHARACTER OF WASHINGTON

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A SPEECH DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC DINNER IN THE CITY OF
WASHINGTON, FEB. 22, 1832, THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY
OF WASHINGTON'S BIRTH



George Washington.

We are met to testify our regard for him whose name is intimately blended with whatever belongs most

The power of the name of Washington.

essentially to the prosperity, the liberty, the free institutions, and the renown of our country. That name was of power to rally a nation, in the hour of thick-thronging public disasters and calamities; that name shone, amid the storm of war, a beacon light, to cheer and guide the country's friends; it flamed, too, like a meteor, to repel her foes. That name, in the days of peace, was a loadstone, attracting to itself a whole people's confidence, a whole people's love, and the whole world's respect. That name, descending with all time, spreading over the whole earth, and uttered in all the languages belonging to the tribes and races of men, will forever be pronounced with affectionate gratitude by every one in whose breast there shall arise an aspiration for human rights and human liberty.

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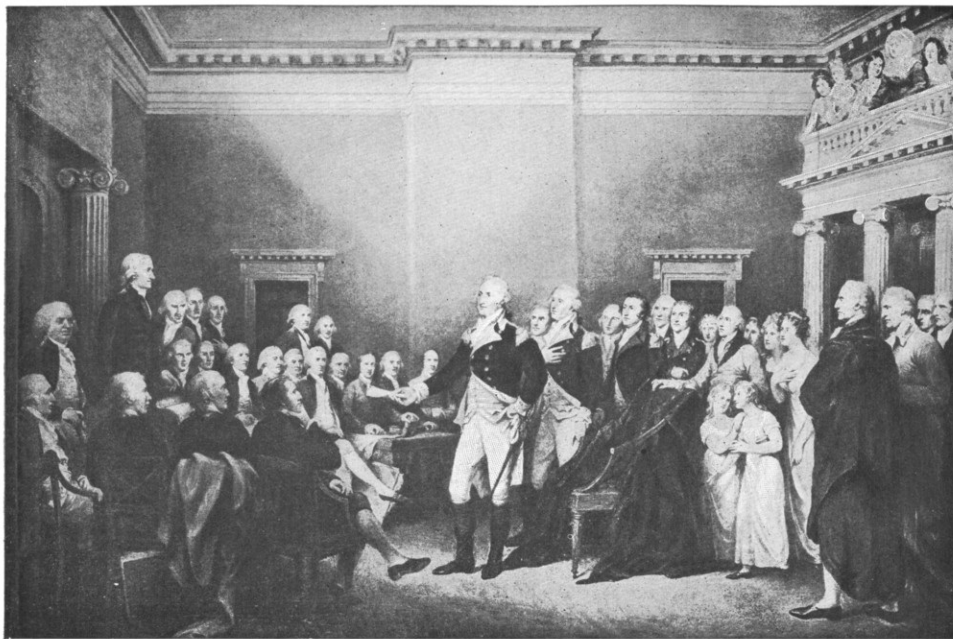
We perform this grateful duty, Gentlemen, at the expiration of a hundred years from his birth, near the place, so cherished and beloved by him, where his dust now reposes, and in the capital which bears his own immortal name.

All experience evinces that human sentiments are strongly influenced by associations. The recurrence of anniversaries, or of longer periods of time, naturally freshens the recollection, and deepens the impression, of events with which they are historically connected. Renowned places, also, have a power to awaken feeling, which all acknowledge. No American can pass by the fields of Bunker Hill, Monmouth, and Camden, as if they were ordinary spots on the earth's surface. Whoever visits them feels the sentiment of love of country kindling anew, as if the spirit that belonged to the transactions which have rendered these places distinguished still hovered round, with power to move and excite all who in future time may approach them.

But neither of these sources of emotion equals the power with which great moral examples affect the mind. When sublime virtues cease to be abstractions, when they become embodied in human character, and exemplified in human conduct, we should be false to our own nature if we

Washington's great moral example to the youth of America.

did not indulge in the spontaneous effusions of our gratitude and our admiration. A true lover of the virtue of patriotism delights to contemplate its purest models; and that love of country may be well suspected which affects to soar so high into the regions of sentiment as to be lost and absorbed in the abstract feeling, and becomes too elevated or too refined to glow with fervor in the commendation or the love of individual benefactors. All this is unnatural. It is as if one should be so enthusiastic a lover of poetry as to care nothing for Homer or Milton; so passionately attached to eloquence as to be indifferent to Tully^[40] and Chatham; or such a devotee to the arts, in such an ecstasy with the elements of beauty, proportion, and expression, as to regard the masterpieces of Raphael and Michael Angelo with coldness or contempt. We may be assured, Gentlemen, that he who really loves the thing itself; loves its finest exhibitions. A true friend of his country loves her friends and benefactors, and thinks it no degradation to commend and commemorate them. The voluntary outpouring of the public feeling, made to-day, from the north to the south, and from the east to the west, proves this sentiment to be both just and natural. In the cities and in the villages, in the public temples and in the family circles, among all ages and sexes, gladdened voices to-day bespeak grateful hearts and a freshened recollection of the virtues of the Father of his Country. And it will be so, in all time to come, so long as public virtue is itself an object of regard. The ingenuous youth of America will hold up to themselves the bright model of Washington's example, and study to be what they behold; they will contemplate his character till all its virtues spread out and display themselves to their delighted vision; as the earliest astronomers, the shepherds on the plains of Babylon, gazed at the stars till they saw them form into clusters and constellations, overpowering at length the eyes of the beholders with the united blaze of a thousand lights.



THE RESIGNATION OF WASHINGTON

Gentlemen, we are at a point of a century from the birth of Washington; and what a century it has been! During its course, the human mind has seemed to proceed with a sort of geometric velocity, accomplishing for human intelligence and human freedom more than had been done in fives or tens of centuries preceding. Washington stands at the commencement of a new era, as well as at the head of the New World. A century from the birth of Washington has changed the world. The country of Washington has been the theatre on which a great part of that change has been wrought, and Washington himself a principal agent by which it has been accomplished. His age and his country are equally full of wonders; and of both he is the chief.

A wonderful age and country.

If the poetical prediction, uttered a few years before his birth, be true; if indeed it be designed by Providence that the grandest exhibition of human character and human affairs shall be made on this theatre of the Western world; if it be true that,

“The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last”;^[41]

how could this imposing, swelling, final scene be appropriately opened, how could its intense interest be adequately sustained, but by the introduction of just such a character as our Washington?

Washington had attained his manhood when that spark of liberty was struck out in his own country which has since kindled into a flame and shot its beams over the earth. In the flow of a century from his birth, the world has changed in science, in arts, in the extent of commerce, in the improvement of navigation, and in all that relates to the civilization of man. But it is the spirit of human freedom, the new elevation of individual man, in his moral, social, and political character, leading the whole long train of other improvements, which has most remarkably distinguished the era. Society, in this century, has not made its progress, like Chinese skill, by a greater

The spirit of human freedom.

acuteness of ingenuity in trifles; it has not merely lashed itself to an increased speed round the old circles of thought and action; but it has assumed a new character; it has raised itself from *beneath* governments to a participation *in* governments; it has mixed moral and political objects with the daily pursuits of individual men; and, with a freedom and strength before altogether unknown, it has applied to these objects the whole power of the human understanding. It has been the era, in short, when the social principle has triumphed over the feudal principle; when society has maintained its rights against military power, and established, on foundations never hereafter to be shaken, its competency to govern itself.

It was the extraordinary fortune of Washington, that, having been intrusted, in revolutionary times, with the supreme military command, and having fulfilled that trust with equal renown for wisdom and for valor, he should be placed at the head of the first government in which an attempt was to be made on a large scale to rear the fabric of social order on the basis of a written constitution and of a pure representative principle. A government was to be established, without a throne, without an aristocracy, without castes, orders, or privileges; and this government, instead of being a democracy existing and acting within the walls of a single city, was to be extended over a vast country of different climates, interests, and habits, and of various communions of our common Christian faith. The experiment certainly was entirely new. A popular government of this extent, it was evident, could be framed only by carrying into full effect the principle of representation or of delegated power; and the world was to see whether society could, by the strength of this principle, maintain its own peace and good government, carry forward its own great interests, and conduct itself to political renown and glory. By the benignity of Providence, this experiment, so full of interest to us and to our posterity forever, so full of interest, indeed, to the world in its present generation and in all its generations to come, was suffered to commence under the guidance of Washington. Destined for this high career, he was fitted for it by wisdom, by virtue, by patriotism, by discretion, by whatever can inspire confidence in man toward man. In entering on the untried scenes, early disappointment and the premature extinction of all hope of success would have been certain, had it not been that there did exist throughout the country, in a most extraordinary degree, an unwavering trust in him who stood at the helm.

A new governmental experiment.

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I remarked, Gentlemen, that the whole world was and is interested in the result of this experiment. And is it not so? Do we deceive ourselves, or is it true that at this moment the career which this government is running is among the most attractive objects to the civilized world? Do we deceive ourselves, or is it true that at this moment that love of liberty and that understanding of its true principles which are flying over the whole earth, as on the wings of all the winds, are really and truly of American origin?

The world interested in the experiment.

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At the period of the birth of Washington there existed in Europe no political liberty in large communities, except in the provinces of Holland, and except that England herself had set a great example, so far as it went, by her glorious Revolution of 1688. Everywhere else, despotic power was predominant, and the feudal or military principle held the mass of mankind in hopeless bondage. One-half of Europe was crushed beneath the Bourbon sceptre, and no conception of political liberty, no hope even of religious toleration, existed among that nation which was America's first ally. The king was the state, the king was the country, the king was all. There was one king, with power not derived from his people, and too high to be questioned; and the rest were all subjects, with no political right but obedience. All above was intangible power, all below quiet subjection. A recent occurrence in the French chamber shows us how public opinion on these subjects is changed. A minister had spoken of the "king's subjects." "There are no subjects," exclaimed hundreds of voices at once, "in a country where the people make the king!"

Importance of the English Revolution of 1688.

Gentlemen, the spirit of human liberty and of free government, nurtured and grown into strength and beauty in America, has stretched its course into the midst of the nations. Like an emanation from Heaven, it has gone forth, and it will not return void. It must change, it is fast changing, the face of the earth. Our great, our high duty is to show, in our own example, that this spirit is a spirit of health as well as a spirit of power; that its benignity is as great as its strength; that its efficiency to secure individual rights, social relations, and moral order, is equal to the irresistible force with which it prostrates principalities and powers. The world, at this moment, is regarding us with a willing, but something of a fearful admiration. Its deep and awful anxiety is to learn whether free States may be stable, as well as free; whether popular power may be trusted, as well as feared; in short, whether wise, regular, and virtuous self-government is a vision for the contemplation of theorists, or a truth established, illustrated, and brought into practice in the country of Washington.

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Gentlemen, for the earth which we inhabit, and the whole circle of the sun, for all the unborn races of mankind, we seem to hold in our hands, for their weal or woe, the fate of this experiment. If we fail, who shall venture the repetition? If our example shall prove to be one not of encouragement, but of terror, not fit to be imitated, but fit only to be shunned, where else shall the world look for free models? If this great *Western Sun* be struck out of the firmament, at what other fountain shall the lamp of liberty hereafter be lighted? What other orb shall emit a ray to glimmer, even, on the darkness of the world?

The United States a Western Sun.

There is no danger of our overrating or overstating the important part which we are now acting

in human affairs. It should not flatter our personal self-respect, but it should reanimate our patriotic virtues, and inspire us with a deeper and more solemn sense both of our privileges and of our duties. We cannot wish better for our country, nor for the world, than that the same spirit which influenced Washington may influence all who succeed him; and that the same blessing from above, which attended his efforts, may also attend theirs.

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The principles of Washington's administration are not left doubtful. They are to be found in the Constitution itself, in the great measures recommended and approved by him, in his speeches to Congress, and in that most interesting paper, his Farewell Address to the people of the United States. The success of the government under his administration is the highest proof of the soundness of these principles. And, after an experience of thirty-five years, what is there which an enemy could condemn? What is there which either his friends, or the friends of the country, could wish to have been otherwise? I speak, of course, of great measures and leading principles.

**Washington's
Farewell Address.**

In the first place, all his measures were right in their intent. He stated the whole basis of his own great character, when he told the country, in the homely phrase of the proverb, that honesty is the best policy. One of the most striking things ever said of him is, that "*he changed mankind's ideas of political greatness.*"^[42] To commanding talents, and to success, the common elements of such greatness, he added a disregard of self, a spotlessness of motive, a steady submission to every public and private duty, which threw far into the shade the whole crowd of vulgar great. The object of his regard was the whole country. No part of it was enough to fill his enlarged patriotism. His love of glory, so far as that may be supposed to have influenced him at all, spurned everything short of general approbation. It would have been nothing to him that his partisans or his favorites outnumbered, or outvoted, or outmanaged, or outclamored, those of other leaders. He had no favorites; he rejected all partisanship; and, acting honestly for the universal good, he deserved, what he has so richly enjoyed, the universal love.

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His principle it was to act right, and to trust the people for support; his principle it was not to follow the lead of sinister and selfish ends, nor to rely on the little arts of party delusion to obtain public sanction for such a course. Born for his country and for the world, he did not give up to party what was meant for mankind. The consequence is, that his fame is as durable as his principles, as lasting as truth and virtue themselves. While the hundreds whom party excitement, and temporary circumstances, and casual combinations, have raised into transient notoriety, sink again, like thin bubbles, bursting and dissolving into the great ocean, Washington's fame is like the rock which bounds that ocean, and at whose feet its billows are destined to break harmlessly forever.

The maxims upon which Washington conducted our foreign relations were few and simple. The first was an entire and indisputable impartiality towards foreign States.^[43] He adhered to this rule of public conduct, against very strong inducements to depart from it, and when the popularity of the moment seemed to favor such a departure. In the next place, he maintained true dignity and unsullied honor in all communications with foreign States. It was among the high duties devolved upon him to introduce our new government into the circle of civilized States and powerful nations. Not arrogant or assuming, with no unbecoming or supercilious bearing, he yet exacted for it from all others entire and punctilious respect. He demanded, and he obtained at once, a standing of perfect equality for his country in the society of nations; nor was there a prince or potentate of his day, whose personal character carried with it, into the intercourse of other States, a greater degree of respect and veneration.

**His conduct of
America's foreign
relations.**

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He regarded other nations only as they stood in political relations to us. With their internal affairs, their political parties and dissensions, he scrupulously abstained from all interference; and, on the other hand, he repelled with spirit all such interference by others with us or our concerns. His sternest rebuke, the most indignant measure of his whole administration, was aimed against such an attempted interference. He felt it as an attempt to wound the national honor, and resented it accordingly.

The reiterated admonitions in his Farewell Address show his deep fears that foreign influence would insinuate itself into our counsels through the channels of domestic dissension, and obtain a sympathy with our own temporary parties. Against all such dangers he most earnestly entreats the country to guard itself. He appeals to its patriotism, to its self-respect, to its own honor, to every consideration connected with its welfare and happiness, to resist, at the very beginning, all tendencies towards such connection of foreign interests with our own affairs. With a tone of earnestness nowhere else found, even in his last affectionate farewell advice to his countrymen, he says, "Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens,) the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government."

**Foreign influence a
foe of republican
government.**

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Lastly, on the subject of foreign relations, Washington never forgot that we had interests peculiar to ourselves. The primary political concerns of Europe, he saw, did not affect us. We had nothing to do with her balance of power, her family compacts, or her successions to thrones. We were placed in a condition favorable to neutrality during European wars, and to the enjoyment of all the great advantages of that relation. "Why, then," he asks us, "why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our

**The advantages of
American isolation.**

destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?"

Indeed, Gentlemen, Washington's Farewell Address is full of truths important at all times, and particularly deserving consideration at the present. With a sagacity which brought the future before him, and made it like the present, he saw and pointed out the dangers that even at this moment most imminently threaten us. I hardly know how a greater service of that kind could now be done to the community, than by a renewed and wide diffusion of that admirable paper, and an earnest invitation to every man in the country to reperuse and consider it. Its political maxims are invaluable; its exhortations to love of country and to brotherly affection among citizens, touching; and the solemnity with which it urges the observance of moral duties, and impresses the power of religious obligation, gives to it the highest character of truly disinterested, sincere, parental advice.

The domestic policy of Washington found its pole-star in the avowed objects of the Constitution itself. He sought so to administer that Constitution as to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty. These were objects interesting, in the highest degree, to the whole country, and his policy embraced the whole country.

Washington's domestic policy.

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Among his earliest and most important duties was the organization of the government itself, the choice of his confidential advisers, and the various appointments to office. This duty, so important and delicate, when a whole government was to be organized, and all its offices for the first time filled, was yet not difficult to him, for he had no sinister ends to accomplish, no clamorous partisans to gratify, no pledges to redeem, no object to be regarded but simply the public good. It was a plain, straightforward matter, a mere honest choice of good men for the public service.

His own singleness of purpose, his disinterested patriotism, were evinced by the selection of his first cabinet, and by the manner in which he filled the seats of justice, and other places of high trust. He sought for men fit for offices; not for offices which might suit men. Above personal considerations, above local considerations, above party considerations, he felt that he could only discharge the sacred trust which the country had placed in his hands, by a diligent inquiry after real merit, and a conscientious preference of virtue and talent. The whole country was the field of his selection. He explored that whole field, looking only for whatever it contained most worthy and distinguished. He was, indeed, most successful, and he deserved success for the purity of his motives, the liberality of his sentiments, and his enlarged and manly policy.

His first cabinet.

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Washington's administration established the national credit, made provision for the public debt, and for that patriotic army whose interests and welfare were always so dear to him; and, by laws wisely framed, and of admirable effect, raised the commerce and navigation of the country, almost at once, from depression and ruin to a state of prosperity. Nor were his eyes open to these interests alone. He viewed with equal concern its agriculture and manufactures, and, so far as they came within the regular exercise of the powers of this government, they experienced regard and favor.

Important measures of his administration.

It should not be omitted, even in this slight reference to the general measures and general principles of the first President, that he saw and felt the full value and importance of the judicial department of the government. An upright and able administration of the laws he held to be alike indispensable to private happiness and public liberty. The temple of justice, in his opinion, was a sacred place, and he would profane and pollute it who should call any to minister in it, not spotless in character, not incorruptible in integrity, not competent by talent and learning, not a fit object of unhesitating trust.

Among other admonitions, Washington has left us, in his last communication to his country, an exhortation against the excesses of party spirit. A fire not to be quenched, he yet conjures us not to fan and feed the flame. Undoubtedly, Gentlemen, it is the greatest danger of our system and of our time. Undoubtedly, if that system should be overthrown, it will be the work of excessive party spirit, acting on the government, which is dangerous enough, or acting in the government, which is a thousand times more dangerous; for government then becomes nothing but organized party, and, in the strange vicissitudes of human affairs, it may come at last, perhaps, to exhibit the singular paradox of government itself being in opposition to its own powers, at war with the very elements of its own existence. Such cases are hopeless. As men may be protected against murder, but cannot be guarded against suicide, so government may be shielded from the assaults of external foes, but nothing can save it when it chooses to lay violent hands on itself.

His opinion of the dangers of party spirit.

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Finally, Gentlemen, there was in the breast of Washington one sentiment so deeply felt, so constantly uppermost, that no proper occasion escaped without its utterance. From the letter which he signed in behalf of the Convention when the Constitution was sent out to the people, to the moment when he put his hand to that last paper in which he addressed his countrymen, the Union,—the Union was the great object of his thoughts. In that first letter he tells them that to him and his brethren of the Convention, union appears to be the greatest interest of every true American; and in that last paper he conjures them to regard that unity of government which constitutes them one people as

His love of the Union.

the very palladium of their prosperity and safety, and the security of liberty itself. He regarded the union of these States less as one of our blessings, than as the great treasure-house which contained them all. Here, in his judgment, was the great magazine of all our means of prosperity; here, as he thought, and as every true American still thinks, are deposited all our animating prospects, all our solid hopes for future greatness. He has taught us to maintain this union, not by seeking to enlarge the powers of the government, on the one hand, nor by surrendering them, on the other; but by an administration of them at once firm and moderate, pursuing objects truly national, and carried on in a spirit of justice and equity.

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The extreme solicitude for the preservation of the Union, at all times manifested by him, shows not only the opinion he entertained of its importance, but his clear perception of those causes which were likely to spring up to endanger it, and which, if once they should overthrow the present system, would leave little hope of any future beneficial reunion. Of all the presumptions indulged by presumptuous man, that is one of the rashest which looks for repeated and favorable opportunities for the deliberate establishment of a united government over distinct and widely extended communities. Such a thing has happened once in human affairs, and but once; the event stands out as a prominent exception to all ordinary history; and unless we suppose ourselves running into an age of miracles, we may not expect its repetition.

**The American nation
unique.**

Washington, therefore, could regard, and did regard, nothing as of paramount political interest but the integrity of the Union itself. With a united government, well administered, he saw that we had nothing to fear; and without it, nothing to hope. The sentiment is just, and its momentous truth should solemnly impress the whole country. If we might regard our country as personated in the spirit of Washington, if we might consider him as representing her, in her past renown, her present prosperity, and her future career, and as in that character demanding of us all to account for our conduct, as political men or as private citizens, how should he answer him who has ventured to talk of disunion and dismemberment? Or how should he answer him who dwells perpetually on local interests, and fans every kindling flame of local prejudice? How should he answer him who would array State against State, interest against interest, and party against party, careless of the continuance of that unity of government which constitutes us one people?

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The political prosperity which this country has attained, and which it now enjoys, has been acquired mainly through the instrumentality of the present government. While this agent continues, the capacity of attaining to still higher degrees of prosperity exists also. We have, while this lasts, a political life capable of beneficial exertion, with power to resist or overcome misfortunes, to sustain us against the ordinary accidents of human affairs, and to promote, by active efforts, every public interest. But dismemberment strikes at the very being which preserves these faculties. It would lay its rude and ruthless hand on this great agent itself. It would sweep away, not only what we possess, but all power of regaining lost, or acquiring new possessions. It would leave the country not only bereft of its prosperity and happiness, but without limbs, or organs, or faculties, by which to exert itself hereafter in the pursuit of that prosperity and happiness.

Other misfortunes may be borne, or their effects overcome. If disastrous war should sweep our commerce from the ocean, another generation may renew it; if it exhaust our treasury, future industry may replenish it; if it desolate and lay waste our fields, still, under a new cultivation, they will grow green again, and ripen to future harvests. It were but a trifle even if the walls of yonder Capitol were to crumble, if its lofty pillars should fall, and its gorgeous decorations be all covered by the dust of the valley. All these might be rebuilt. But who shall reconstruct the fabric of demolished government? Who shall rear again the well-proportioned columns of constitutional liberty? Who shall frame together the skilful architecture which unites national sovereignty with State rights, individual security, and public prosperity? No, if these columns fall, they will be raised not again. Like the Coliseum and the Parthenon, they will be destined to a mournful, a melancholy immortality. Bitterer tears, however, will flow over them than were ever shed over the monuments of Roman or Grecian art; for they will be the remnants of a more glorious edifice than Greece or Rome ever saw, the edifice of constitutional American liberty.

**Dismemberment of
the United States the
greatest of evils.**

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But let us hope for better things. Let us trust in that gracious Being who has hitherto held our country as in the hollow of his hand. Let us trust to the virtue and the intelligence of the people, and to the efficacy of religious obligation. Let us trust to the influence of Washington's example. Let us hope that that fear of Heaven which expels all other fear, and that regard to duty which transcends all other regard, may influence public men and private citizens, and lead our country still onward in her happy career. Full of these gratifying anticipations and hopes, let us look forward to the end of that century which is now commenced. A hundred years hence, other disciples of Washington will celebrate his birth, with no less of sincere admiration than we now commemorate it. When they shall meet, as we now meet, to do themselves and him that honor, so surely as they shall see the blue summits of his native mountains rise in the horizon, so surely as they shall behold the river on whose banks he lived, and on whose banks he rests, still flowing on toward the sea, so surely may they see, as we now see, the flag of the Union floating on the top of the Capitol; and then, as now, may the sun in his course visit no land more free, more happy, more lovely, than this our own country!

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FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, MARCH 7, 1850^[44]



Henry Clay.

Mr. President,—I wish to speak to-day, not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a Northern man, but as an American, and a member of the Senate of the United States. It is fortunate that there is a Senate of the United States; a body not yet moved from its propriety, not lost to a just sense of its own dignity and its own high responsibilities, and a body to which the country looks, with confidence, for wise, moderate, patriotic, and healing counsels. It is not to be denied that we live in the midst of strong agitations, and are surrounded by very considerable dangers to our institutions and government. The imprisoned winds are let loose. The East, the North, and the stormy South combine to throw the whole sea into commotion, to toss its billows to the skies, and disclose its profoundest depths. I do not affect to regard myself, Mr. President, as holding, or as fit to hold, the helm in this combat with the political elements; but I have a duty to perform, and I mean to perform it with fidelity, not without a sense of existing dangers, but not without hope. I have a part to act, not for my own security or safety, for I am looking out for no fragment upon which to float away from the wreck, if wreck there must be, but for the good of the

For the preservation of the Union.

whole, and the preservation of all; and there is that which will keep me to my duty during this struggle, whether the sun and the stars shall appear, or shall not appear, for many days. I speak to-day for the preservation of the Union. "Hear me for my cause." I speak to-day, out of a solicitous and anxious heart, for the restoration to the country of that quiet and that harmony which make the blessings of this Union so rich, and so dear to us all. These are the topics that I propose to myself to discuss; these are the motives, and the sole motives, that influence me in the wish to communicate my opinions to the Senate and the country; and if I can do anything, however little, for the promotion of these ends, I shall have accomplished all that I expect.

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Mr. President, I should much prefer to have heard from every member on this floor declarations of opinion that this Union could never be dissolved, than the declaration of opinion by anybody that, in any case, under the pressure of any circumstances, such a dissolution was possible.

Peaceable secession impossible.

I hear with distress and anguish the word "secession," especially when it falls from the lips of those who are patriotic, and known to the country, and known all over the world, for their political services. Secession! Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. The dismemberment of this vast country without convulsion! The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep without ruffling the surface! Who is so foolish—I beg everybody's pardon—as to expect to see any such thing? Sir, he who sees these States now revolving in harmony around a common centre, and expects to see them quit their places and fly off without convulsion, may look the next hour to see the heavenly bodies rush from their spheres, and jostle against each other in the realms of space, without causing the wreck of the universe. There can be no such thing as a peaceable secession. Peaceable secession is an utter impossibility. Is the great Constitution under which we live, covering this whole country,—is it to be thawed and melted away by secession, as the snows on the mountain melt under the influence of a vernal sun, disappear almost unobserved, and run off? No, Sir! No, Sir! I will not state what might produce the disruption of the Union; but, Sir, I see as plainly as I see the sun in heaven what that disruption itself must produce; I see that it must produce war, and such a war as I will not describe, in its twofold character.

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Peaceable secession! Peaceable secession! The concurrent agreement of all the members of this great republic to separate? A voluntary separation, with alimony on one side and on the other! Why, what would be the result? Where is the line to be drawn? What States are to secede? What is to remain American? What am I to be? An American no longer? Am I to become a sectional man, a local man, a separatist, with no country in common with the gentlemen who sit around me here, or who fill the other house of Congress? Heaven forbid! Where is the flag of the republic to remain? Where is the eagle still to tower? or is he to cower, and shrink, and fall to the ground? Why, Sir, our ancestors, our fathers and our grandfathers, those of them that are yet living amongst us with prolonged lives, would rebuke and reproach us; and our children and our grandchildren would cry out shame upon us, if we of this generation should dishonor these ensigns of the power of the government and the harmony of that Union which is every day felt among us with so much joy and gratitude. What is to become of the army? What is to become of

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the navy? What is to become of the public lands? How is each of the thirty States to defend itself?

I know, although the idea has not been stated distinctly, there is to be, or it is supposed possible that there will be, a Southern Confederacy. I do not mean, when I allude to this statement, that any one seriously contemplates such a state of things. I do not mean to say that it is true, but I have heard it suggested elsewhere that the idea has been entertained, that, after the dissolution of this Union, a Southern Confederacy might be formed. I am sorry, Sir, that it has ever been thought of, talked of, or dreamed of, in the wildest flights of human imagination. But the idea, so far as it exists, must be of a separation assigning the slave States to one side and the free States to the other. Sir, I may express myself too strongly, perhaps, but there are impossibilities in the natural as well as in the physical world, and I hold the idea of a separation of these States, those that are free to form one government, and those that are slave-holding to form another, as such an impossibility. We could not separate the States by any such line, if we were to draw it. We could not sit down here to-day and draw a line of separation that would satisfy any five men in the country. There are natural causes that would keep and tie us together, and there are social and domestic relations which we could not break if we would, and which we should not if we could.

The idea of a Southern Confederacy.

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Instead of speaking of the possibility or utility of secession, instead of dwelling in those caverns of darkness, instead of groping with those ideas so full of all that is horrid and horrible, let us come out into the light of day; let us enjoy the fresh air of Liberty and Union; let us cherish those hopes which belong to us; let us devote ourselves to those great objects that are fit for our consideration and our action; let us raise our conceptions to the magnitude and the importance of the duties that devolve upon us; let our comprehension be as broad as the country for which we act, our aspirations as high as its certain destiny; let us not be pygmies in a case that calls for men. Never did there devolve on any generation of men higher trusts than now devolve upon us, for the preservation of this Constitution and the harmony and peace of all who are destined to live under it. Let us make our generation one of the strongest and brightest links in that golden chain which is destined, I fondly believe, to grapple the people of all the States to this Constitution for ages to come. We have a great popular, constitutional government, guarded by law and by judicature, and defended by the affections of the whole people. No monarchical throne presses these States together, no iron chain of military power encircles them; they live and stand under a government popular in its form, representative in its character, founded upon principles of equality, and so constructed, we hope, as to last forever. In all its history it has been beneficent; it has trodden down no man's liberty; it has crushed no State. Its daily respiration is liberty and patriotism; its yet youthful veins are full of enterprise, courage, and honorable love of glory and renown. Large before, the country has now, by recent events, become vastly larger. This republic now extends, with a vast breadth, across the whole continent. The two great seas of the world wash the one and the other shore. We realize, on a mighty scale, the beautiful description of the ornamental border of the buckler of Achilles:—

Liberty and Union.

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“Now, the broad shield complete, the artist crowned
With his last hand, and poured the ocean round;
In living silver seemed the waves to roll,
And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole.”^[45]

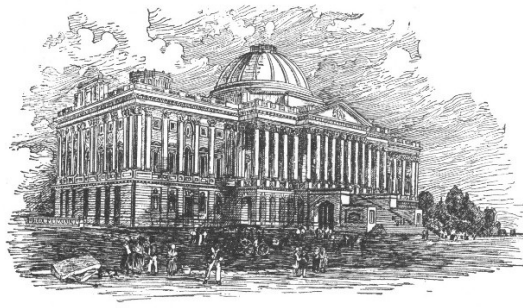
THE ADDITION TO THE CAPITOL

[Pg 200]

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER
STONE OF THE ADDITION TO THE CAPITOL OF THE UNITED
STATES, AT WASHINGTON, JULY 4, 1851

Fellow-Citizens,—I greet you well; I give you joy on the return of this anniversary; and I felicitate you, also, on the more particular purpose of which this ever-memorable day has been chosen to witness the fulfilment. Hail! all hail! I see before and around me a mass of faces glowing with cheerfulness and patriotic pride. I see thousands of eyes turned towards other eyes, all sparkling with gratification and delight. This is the New World! This is America! This is Washington! and this the Capitol of the United States! And where else, among the nations, can the seat of government be surrounded, on any day of any year, by those who have more reason to rejoice in the blessings which they possess? Nowhere, fellow-citizens! assuredly, nowhere! Let us, then, meet this rising sun with joy and thanksgiving!

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The Capitol at Washington.

This is that day of the year which announced to mankind the great fact of American Independence. This fresh and brilliant morning blesses our vision with another beholding of the birthday of our nation; and we see that nation, of recent origin, now among the most considerable and powerful, and spreading over the continent from sea to sea.

Among the first colonists from Europe to this part of America there were some, doubtless, who contemplated the distant consequences of their undertaking, and who saw a great futurity. But, in general, their hopes were limited to the enjoyment of a safe asylum from tyranny, religious and civil, and to respectable subsistence by industry and toil. A thick veil hid our times from their view. But the progress of America, however slow, could not but at length awaken genius, and attract the attention of mankind.

In the early part of the second century of our history, Bishop Berkeley, who, it will be remembered, had resided for some time in Newport, in Rhode Island, wrote his well-known "Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America." The last stanza of this little poem seems to have been produced by a high poetical inspiration:—

**Bishop Berkeley's
prophecy.**

"Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day:
Time's noblest offspring is the last."

This extraordinary prophecy may be considered only as the result of long foresight and uncommon sagacity; of a foresight and sagacity stimulated, nevertheless, by excited feeling and high enthusiasm. So clear a vision of what America would become was not founded on square miles, or on existing numbers, or on any common laws of statistics. It was an intuitive glance into futurity; it was a grand conception, strong, ardent, glowing, embracing all time since the creation of the world, and all regions of which that world is composed, and judging of the future by just analogy with the past. And the inimitable imagery and beauty with which the thought is expressed, joined to the conception itself, render it one of the most striking passages in our language.

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On the day of the Declaration of Independence our illustrious fathers performed the first scene in the last great act of this drama; one in real importance infinitely exceeding that for which the great English poet invokes

Independence Day.

"—a muse of fire,...
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!"^[46]

The Muse inspiring our fathers was the Genius of Liberty, all on fire with a sense of oppression, and a resolution to throw it off; the whole world was the stage, and higher characters than princes trod it; and, instead of monarchs, countries and nations and the age beheld the swelling scene. How well the characters were cast, and how well each acted his part, and what emotions the whole performance excited, let history, now and hereafter, tell.

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On the 4th of July, 1776, the Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, declared that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES.

This Declaration, made by most patriotic and resolute men, trusting in the justice of their cause and the protection of Heaven, and yet made not without deep solicitude and anxiety, has now stood for seventy-five years, and still stands. It was sealed in blood. It has met dangers, and overcome them; it has had enemies, and conquered them; it has had detractors, and abashed them all; it has had doubting friends, but it has cleared all doubts away; and now, to-day, raising its august form higher than the clouds, twenty millions of people contemplate it with hallowed love, and the world beholds it, and the consequences which have followed from it, with profound admiration.

This anniversary animates and gladdens and unites all American hearts. On other days of the year we may be party men, indulging in controversies more or less important to the public good; we may have likes and dislikes, and we may maintain our political differences, often with warm, and sometimes with angry, feelings. But to-day we are Americans all; and all nothing but Americans. As the great luminary over our heads, dissipating mists and fogs, now

**Liberty the
inheritance of every
American.**

cheers the whole hemisphere, so do the associations connected with this day disperse all cloudy and sullen weather in the minds and hearts of true Americans. Every man's heart swells within him; every man's port and bearing become somewhat more proud and lofty, as he remembers that seventy-five years have rolled away, and that the great inheritance of liberty is still his: his, undiminished and unimpaired; his in all its original glory; his to enjoy, his to protect, and his to transmit to future generations.

Fellow-citizens, this inheritance which we enjoy to-day is not only an inheritance of liberty, but of our own peculiar American liberty. Liberty has existed in other times, in other countries, and in other forms. There has been a Grecian liberty, bold and powerful, full of spirit, eloquence, and fire; a liberty which produced multitudes of great men, and has transmitted one immortal name, the name of Demosthenes, to posterity. But still it was a liberty of disconnected States, sometimes united, indeed, by temporary leagues and confederacies, but often involved in wars between themselves. The sword of Sparta turned its sharpest edge against Athens, enslaved her, and devastated Greece; and, in her turn, Sparta was compelled to bend before the power of Thebes. And let it ever be remembered, especially let the truth sink deep into all American minds, that it was the *want of union* among her several States which finally gave the mastery of all Greece to Philip of Macedon.

Fellow-citizens, fifty-eight years ago Washington stood on this spot to execute a duty like that which has now been performed. He then laid the corner-stone of the original Capitol. He was at the head of the government, at that time weak in resources, burdened with debt, just struggling into political existence and respectability, and agitated by the heaving waves which were overturning European thrones. But even then, in many important respects, the government was strong. It was strong in Washington's own great character; it was strong in the wisdom and patriotism of other eminent public men, his political associates and fellow-laborers; and it was strong in the affections of the people.

The Corner-stone of the original Capitol laid by Washington.

Since that time astonishing changes have been wrought in the condition and prospects of the American people; and a degree of progress witnessed with which the world can furnish no parallel. As we review the course of that progress, wonder and amazement arrest our attention at every step. The present occasion, although allowing of no lengthened remarks, may yet, perhaps, admit of a short comparative statement of important subjects of national interest as they existed at that day, and as they now exist. I have adopted for this purpose the tabular form of statement, as being the most brief and significant.^[47]

COMPARATIVE TABLE

	Year 1793.	Year 1851.	Year 1900.
Number of States	15	31	45
Representatives and Senators in Congress	135	295	476
Population of the United States	3,929,328	23,267,498	76,303,387 ^[48]
Population of Boston	18,038	136,871	560,892
Population of Baltimore	13,503	169,054	508,957
Population of Philadelphia	42,520	409,045	1,293,697
Population of New York (city)	33,121	515,507	3,437,202
Population of Washington	...	40,075	278,718
Population of Richmond	4,000	27,582	85,050
Population of Charleston	16,359	42,983	55,807
Amount of receipts into the Treasury	\$5,720,624	\$52,312,980	\$669,595,431
Amount of expenditures	\$7,529,575	\$48,005,879	\$590,068,371
Amount of imports	\$31,000,000	\$215,725,995	\$849,941,184
Amount of exports	\$26,109,000	\$217,517,130	\$1,370,763,571
Amount of tonnage (tons)	520,764	3,772,440	5,164,839
Area of the United States in square miles	805,461	3,314,365	3,616,484 ^[49]
Rank and file of the	5,120	10,000	67,587

army			
Militia (enrolled)	...	2,006,456	10,149,184 ^[50]
Navy of the United States (vessels)	(None.)	76	140
Navy armament (ordnance)	...	2,012	...
Treaties and conventions with foreign powers	9	90	...
Light-houses and light-boats	12	372	843 ^[51]
Expenditures for ditto	\$12,061	\$529,265	...
Area of the Capitol	½ acre.	4⅓ acres.	3½ acres. ^[52]
Number of miles of railroad in operation	...	10,287	190,833 ^[53]
Cost of ditto	...	\$306,607,954	\$11,692,817,066 ^[54]
Number of miles in course of construction	...	10,092	1,329
Lines of electric telegraph, in miles	...	15,000	210,000 ^[55]
Number of post-offices	209	21,551	76,945
Number of miles of post-route	5,642	196,290	511,808
Amount of revenue from post-offices	\$104,747	\$6,727,867	\$111,631,193
Amount of expenditures of Post-office Department	\$72,040	\$6,024,567	\$115,554,920
Number of miles of mail transportation	...	52,465,724	...
Number of colleges	19	121	484
Public libraries	35	694	5,383 ^[56]
Volumes in ditto	75,000	2,201,632	44,591,851
School libraries	...	10,000	...
Volumes in ditto	...	2,000,000	...
Emigrants from Europe to the United States	10,000	299,610	448,572 ^[57]
Coinage at the Mint	\$9,664	\$52,019,465	\$141,351,960

Who does not feel that, when President Washington laid his hand on the foundation of the first Capitol, he performed a great work of perpetuation of the Union and the Constitution? Who does not feel that this seat of the general government, healthful in its situation, central in its position, near the mountains whence gush springs of wonderful virtue, teeming with Nature's richest products, and yet not far from the bays and the great estuaries of the sea, easily accessible and generally agreeable in climate and association, does give strength to the union of these States? that this city, bearing an immortal name, with its broad streets and avenues, its public squares and magnificent edifices of the general government, erected for the purpose of carrying on within them the important business of the several departments, for the reception of wonderful and curious inventions, for the preservation of the records of American learning and genius, of extensive collections of the products of nature and art, brought hither for study and comparison from all parts of the world; adorned with numerous churches, and sprinkled over, I am happy to say, with many public schools, where all the children of the city, without distinction, have the means of obtaining a good education, and with academies and colleges, professional schools and public libraries,—should continue to receive, as it has heretofore received, the fostering care of Congress, and should be regarded as the permanent seat of the national government?

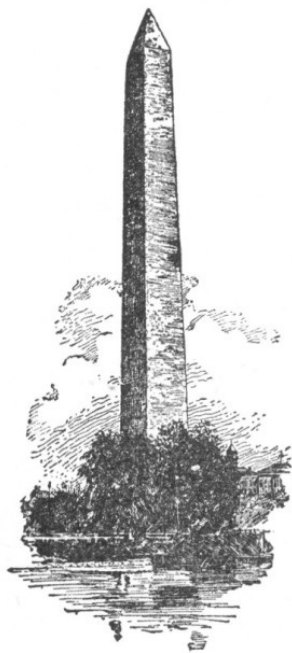
The City of Washington.

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With each succeeding year new interest is added to the spot; it becomes connected with all the historical associations of our country, with her statesmen and her orators; and, alas! its cemetery is annually enriched by the ashes of her chosen sons.

Before us is the broad and beautiful river, separating two of the original thirteen States, which a late President, a man of determined purpose and inflexible will, but patriotic heart, desired to span with arches of ever-enduring granite, symbolical of the firmly cemented union of the North and the South. That President was General

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Washington Monument.

Jackson.

Its associations.

On its banks repose the ashes of the Father of his Country; and at our side, by a singular felicity of position, overlooking the city which he designed, and which bears his name, rises to his memory the marble column, sublime in its simple grandeur, and fitly intended to reach a loftier height than any similar structure on the surface of the whole earth.^[58]

Let the votive offerings of his grateful countrymen be freely contributed to carry this monument higher and still higher. May I say, as on another occasion, "Let it rise; let it rise till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit!"^[59]

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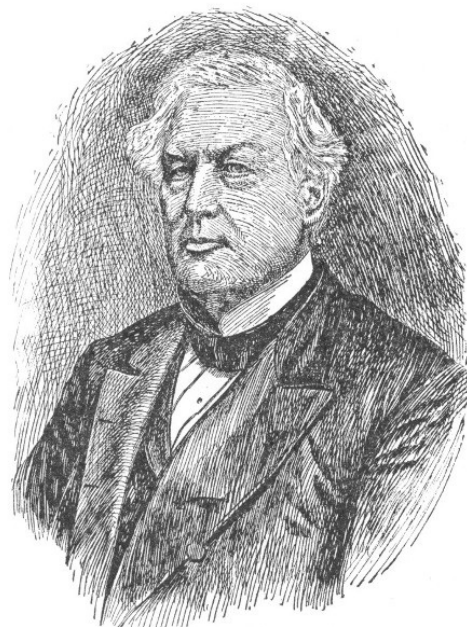
Fellow-citizens, what contemplations are awakened in our minds as we assemble here to re-enact a scene like that performed by Washington! Methinks I see his venerable form now before me, as presented in the glorious statue by Houdon, now in the Capitol of Virginia. He is dignified and grave; but concern and anxiety seem to soften the lineaments of his countenance. The government over which he presides is yet in the crisis of experiment. Not free from troubles at home, he sees the world in commotion and in arms all around him. He sees that imposing foreign powers are half disposed to try the strength of the recently established American government. We perceive that mighty thoughts, mingled with fears as well as with hopes, are struggling within him. He heads a short procession over these then naked fields; he crosses yonder stream on a fallen tree; he ascends to the top of this eminence, whose original oaks of the forest

stand as thick around him as if the spot had been devoted to Druidical worship, and here he performs the appointed duty of the day.

And now, fellow-citizens, if this vision were a reality; if Washington actually were now amongst us, and if he could draw around him the shades of the great public men of his own day, patriots and warriors, orators and statesmen, and were to address us in their presence, would he not say to us: "Ye men of this generation, I rejoice and thank God for being able to see that our labors and toils and sacrifices were not in vain. You are prosperous, you are happy, you are grateful: the fire of liberty burns brightly and steadily in your hearts, while *duty* and the *law* restrain it from bursting forth in wild and destructive conflagration. Cherish liberty, as you love it; cherish its securities, as you wish to preserve it. Maintain the Constitution which we labored so painfully to establish, and which has been to you such a source of inestimable blessings. Preserve the union of the States, cemented as it was by our prayers, our tears and our blood. Be true to God, to your country, and to your duty. So shall the whole Eastern world follow the morning sun to contemplate you as a nation; so shall all generations honor you, as they honor us; and so shall that Almighty Power which so graciously protected us, and which now protects you, shower its everlasting blessings upon you and your posterity."

George Washington's monition.

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Millard Fillmore.

Great Father of your Country! we heed your words; we feel their force as if you now uttered them with lips of

The sacred trust of Americans.

flesh and blood. Your example teaches us, your affectionate addresses teach us, your public life teaches us your sense of the value of the blessings of the Union. Those blessings our fathers have tasted, and we have tasted, and still taste. Nor do we intend that those who come after us shall be denied the same high fruition. Our honor as well as our happiness is concerned. We cannot, we dare not, we will not, betray our sacred trust. We will not filch from posterity the treasure placed in our hands to be transmitted to other generations. The bow that gilds the clouds in the heavens, the pillars that uphold the firmament, may disappear and fall away in the hour appointed by the will of God; but until that day comes, or so long as our lives may last, no ruthless hand shall undermine that bright arch of Union and Liberty which spans the continent from Washington to California. Fellow-citizens, we must sometimes be tolerant to folly, and patient at the sight of the extreme waywardness of men; but I confess that, when I reflect on the renown of our past history, on our present prosperity and greatness, and on what the future hath yet to unfold, and when I see that there

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are men who can find in all this nothing good, nothing valuable, nothing truly glorious, I feel that all their reason has fled away from them, and left the entire control over their judgment and their

actions to insanity and fanaticism; and more than all, fellow-citizens, if the purposes of fanatics and disunionists should be accomplished, the patriotic and intelligent of our generation would seek to hide themselves from the scorn of the world, and go about to find dishonorable graves.

Fellow-citizens, take courage; be of good cheer. We shall come to no such ignoble end. We shall live, and not die. During the period allotted to our several lives we shall continue to rejoice in the return of this anniversary. The ill-omened sounds of fanaticism will be hushed; the ghastly spectres of Secession and Disunion will disappear; and the enemies of united constitutional liberty, if their hatred cannot be appeased, may prepare to have their eyeballs seared as they behold the steady flight of the American eagle, on his burnished wings, for years and years to come.

The preservation of
the Union foretold.

President Fillmore, it is your singularly good fortune to perform an act such as that which the earliest of your predecessors performed fifty-eight years ago. You stand where he stood; you lay your hand on the corner-stone of a building designed greatly to extend that whose corner-stone he laid. Changed, changed is everything around. The same sun, indeed, shone upon his head which now shines upon yours. The same broad river rolled at his feet, and bathes his last resting-place, that now rolls at yours. But the site of this city was then mainly an open field. Streets and avenues have since been laid out and completed, squares and public grounds enclosed and ornamented, until the city which bears his name, although comparatively inconsiderable in numbers and wealth, has become quite fit to be the seat of government of a great and united people.

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And now, fellow-citizens, with hearts void of hatred, envy, and malice towards our own countrymen, or any of them, or towards the subjects or citizens of other governments, or towards any member of the great family of man; but exulting, nevertheless, in our own peace, security, and happiness, in the grateful remembrance of the past, and the glorious hopes of the future, let us return to our homes, and with all humility and devotion offer our thanks to the Father of all our mercies, political, social, and religious.

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] The "Pilgrims" are often confused with the "Puritans," and the words are used interchangeably. Strictly speaking, the former were the English Independents or Congregationalists who came from Holland to Plymouth in 1620; the latter, the immigrants from England to Massachusetts Bay in 1629 and following years, some of whom, at the time of their arrival in New England, retained nominal connection with the Church of England. The church polity of the two parties, however, soon became the same.
- [2] Henry Sargent's "Landing of the Pilgrims," in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth.
- [3] The landing at Plymouth was on Dec. 11, 1620, Old Style, corresponding to December 21 according to the present calendar, though December 22 is generally observed.
- [4] A plain eighteen miles northeast of Athens, between Mount Pentelicus and the sea, where, B. C. 490, 10,000 Greeks and 1,000 Plataeans, under Miltiades, defeated 100,000 Persians, thereby destroying Darius's scheme for subjugating Greece.
- "The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free."
- BYRON, *Don Juan*, canto iii, stanza 86, 3.
- [5] John Robinson, 1575-1625, an influential English Independent (or Congregational) minister, who left the Church of England and joined the "Separatists" in 1604, and was their pastor at Scrooby, England, removing to Amsterdam, Holland, in 1608, and continuing his leadership of Independents there and in Leyden.
- [6] Smithfield is a section of London, north of St. Paul's Cathedral, where alleged heretics were burned at the stake during the reign of Queen Mary, in 1555 and subsequent years.
- [7] The monument, erected by an association which aroused national as well as local interest and support, is a granite obelisk, two hundred and twenty-one feet high, actually standing on Breed's, not Bunker Hill. The two eminences are seven hundred yards apart, and both were scenes of conflict, the American redoubt being on Breed's; but general use has long sanctioned the expression "the battle of Bunker Hill." The monument was finished in 1842.
- [8] Jamestown, Virginia, on the James River, where the first permanent English settlement in the United States was made May 13, 1607.
- [9] It is no part of the purpose of the present edition to undertake to criticise the rhetoric

of Webster. But the use of "him" in the objective case, in the present paragraph, followed by "thy," is so uncommon as to call for mention. Most rhetoricians would employ "he," followed by "his," or "thou," followed by "thy." A use of cases identical with Webster's is found in the well-known second stanza of S.F. Smith's "America":—

"My native country, *thee*,
Land of the noble free,—
Thy name I love."

- [10] The Marquis de la Fayette (1757-1834), a member of a rich and noble French family, equipped a vessel at his own cost, and came to America in 1777, to aid the Revolutionists. At once brave and judicious, he became the friend of Washington, and was made major-general, distinguishing himself as a fighter or strategist at Brandywine, Monmouth, and Yorktown. Returning to France after the war, he took a middle course in the French Revolution, for which he later was subjected to the unwarranted sneers of Carlyle. Imprisoned for years in Austria, he was released by request of Napoleon in 1797. In 1824 he again visited the United States, being everywhere greeted with enthusiasm, and receiving from Congress \$200,000 and a township of land. Four years before his death he was made head of the French National Guard by the party which dethroned the Bourbon, Charles X., and transferred the crown to Louis Philippe.
- [11] Late may you return to the sky.
- [12] The people of Greece, long restive against Turkish oppression, rose under Alexander Ypsilanti in 1820, promulgated a new constitution in 1822, and began a war of revolution. After bloody atrocities on both sides, in 1824 the Greeks began to receive some outside help, including that of Lord Byron, who died at Missolonghi, in that year, from exposure in the field. The jealousies and intrigues of Mahmoud, Sultan of Turkey, and Mehemet Ali, Turkish Viceroy of Egypt, with fears of Russian preponderance in a divided Turkey, led the Great Powers of Europe to interfere in behalf of Greece, as the Turks and Egyptians were working together against her. The Treaty of London (July 6, 1827) founded the new Kingdom of Greece; England, France, and Russia overwhelmed the fleets of Turkey and Egypt at Navarino, October 26 of the same year; and the independent career of the resuscitated Greek nation began.
- [13] "Monument Square is four hundred and seventeen feet from north to south, and four hundred feet from east to west, and contains nearly six acres. It embraces the whole site of the redoubt, and a part of the site of the breastwork. According to the most accurate plan of the town and the battle (Page's), the monument stands where the southwest angle of the redoubt was, and the whole of the redoubt was between the monument and the street that bounds it on the west. The small mound in the northeast corner of the square is supposed to be the remains of the breastwork. Warren fell about two hundred feet west of the monument. An iron fence encloses the square, and another surrounds the monument. The square has entrances on each of its sides, and at each of its corners, and is surrounded by a walk and rows of trees.
- "The obelisk is thirty feet in diameter at the base, about fifteen feet at the top of the truncated part, and was designed to be two hundred and twenty feet high; but the mortar and the seams between the stones make the precise height two hundred and twenty-one feet. Within the shaft is a hollow cone, with a spiral stairway winding round it to its summit, which enters a circular chamber at the top. There are ninety courses of stone in the shaft,—six of them below the ground, and eighty-four above the ground. The capstone, or apex, is a single stone four feet square at the base, and three feet six inches in height, weighing two and a half tons."—FROTHINGHAM'S *Siege of Boston*.
- [14] The old method, established by Julius Cæsar, of counting 365 days in a year, and 366 every fourth year, gave each year about eleven minutes too much, which overplus amounted in 1582 to ten days. In that year Pope Gregory XIII discontinued the "Julian" and established the "Gregorian" calendar, by setting forward the date of a day ten days. This change was adopted (the dropping of an additional day being needed) by the English Parliament in 1751,—September 3, 1752, to be called September 14. At present, the New Style gives 366 days to every year divisible by four, excepting 1800, 1900, etc.
- [15] March 5, 1770, a conflict called the "Boston Massacre" took place between English troops and Bostonians, three of the latter being killed. Samuel Adams, the people's leader in Boston, in consequence compelled the Governor to withdraw the soldiers from the town.
- [16] Documents giving the royal custom-house officers the right to search any house for alleged smuggled goods.
- [17] Parliament closed the port of Boston, in 1774, in retaliation for the destruction of taxed tea by the Colonists in 1773, in the so-called "Boston Tea-party." Under the Port Bill all exports and imports were prohibited save food and fuel.
- [18] The parliament of Holland.
- [19] Prior to 1804 the "presidential electors" voted for two candidates from previous page: for president; the one receiving the highest number to be president, and the one having the next highest vice-president.
- [20] John Quincy Adams was President of the United States, 1825-1829.

[21] The fiftieth anniversary of the independence of the United States. The Jews of the Old Testament celebrated every fiftieth anniversary of their entrance into Canaan. Leviticus xxv. 10.

[22] Mr. Jefferson himself considered his services in establishing the University of Virginia as among the most important rendered by him to the country. In large part he arranged its curriculum, and even designed its buildings. By his direction the following inscription was placed on his monument: "Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, Author of the Declaration of Independence, of the Statutes of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia."

[23] "Happy, not only in the brightness of his life, but also in the circumstance of his death."

[24] The question has often been asked whether the anonymous speech against the Declaration of Independence, and the speech in support of it ascribed to John Adams in the preceding address, are a portion of the debates which actually took place in 1776 in the Continental Congress. Those speeches were composed by Mr. Webster, after the manner of the ancient historians, as embodying the arguments relied upon by the friends and opponents of the measure, respectively. They represent speeches actually made on both sides, but no report of the debates of this period has been preserved, and Mr. Webster had no aid in framing these addresses but what was furnished by tradition and the known line of argument pursued by the speakers and writers of that day for and against the measure of Independence. The first sentence of the speech ascribed to Mr. Adams was suggested by the parting scene with Jonathan Sewall, as described by Mr. Adams himself, in the Preface to the "Letters of Novanglus and Massachusettensis."

The following answer was written by Mr. Webster to one of the letters of inquiry above alluded to.

"WASHINGTON, 22 January, 1846.

"DEAR SIR:—

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant. Its contents hardly surprise me, as I have received very many similar communications.

"Your inquiry is easily answered. The Congress of the Revolution sat with closed doors. Its proceedings were made known to the public from time to time, by printing its journal; but the debates were not published. So far as I know, there is not existing, in print or manuscript, the speech, or any part or fragment of the speech, delivered by Mr. Adams on the question of the Declaration of Independence. We only know, from the testimony of his auditors, that he spoke with remarkable ability and characteristic earnestness.

"The day after the Declaration was made, Mr. Adams, in writing to a friend, declared the event to be one that 'ought to be commemorated, as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore.'

"And on the day of his death, hearing the noise of bells and cannon, he asked the occasion. On being reminded that it was 'Independent day,' he replied, 'Independence forever!' These expressions were introduced into the speech *supposed* to have been made by him. For the rest I must be answerable. The speech was written by me, in my house in Boston, the day before the delivery of the Discourse in Faneuil Hall; a poor substitute, I am sure it would appear to be, if we could now see the speech actually made by Mr. Adams on that transcendently important occasion.

"I am, respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"DANIEL WEBSTER."

[25] Joseph White, an old man of eighty, was found murdered in his bed, in Salem, Massachusetts, on the morning of April 7, 1830. A few weeks later four men—Richard Crowninshield, George Crowninshield, John Francis Knapp, and Joseph J. Knapp, Jr.—were arrested on the charge of murder. On June 15 Richard Crowninshield committed suicide in his cell; George Crowninshield, having proved an alibi, was discharged; and the two Knapps were tried between July 20 and August 20, the former as principal and the latter as accessory. Joseph made a full confession, outside of court, on the government's promise of impunity; but afterwards refused to repeat this testimony on the witness-stand. It was shown that the fatal blow was struck by Richard Crowninshield; that John Francis Knapp, who had bargained with Richard Crowninshield to commit the murder, was lurking in the neighborhood during the commission of the crime; and that Joseph J. Knapp was also an accessory before the fact, having, indeed, projected the murder. The Knapps were executed. A detailed description of the extraordinary network of circumstances, before and after the murder, is given in the volume entitled "Great Speeches and Orations of Daniel Webster."

[26] The "Great Debate" in the Senate, between Webster and Hayne, had an unexpected origin. A resolution had been introduced by Senator Samuel Augustus Foot, of Connecticut, merely ordering an inquiry into the expediency of throwing restrictions around future sales of public lands of the United States. Into the discussion of this resolution, which lasted five months, was brought a large number of partisan pleas, tariff arguments, local jealousies, and questions of the right and wrong of slavery, and of the respective powers of the State and national governments. Recriminations and even personalities were not infrequent; and some of the Southern speakers did not refrain, in defence of the new "nullification" doctrine, from criticism of New England Federalism as

having been essentially selfish, derisive, and unpatriotic. Senator Robert Young Hayne (1791-1840), of South Carolina, who had been a member of the Senate since 1823, was conspicuous, in this debate, for his advocacy of the idea that a State might suspend Federal laws at its discretion; and his assertions to that effect, combined with sharp criticisms of Massachusetts, led Mr. Webster to make his famous reply. Mr. Hayne was subsequently Governor of South Carolina, at the time of the almost armed collision between that State and President Jackson, in 1832, over the nullification of tariff laws. At one time Governor Hayne actually issued a proclamation of resistance to the authority of the general government; but subsequently Congress modified the objectionable tariff provisions and the State repealed its nullification ordinance, which President Jackson's firmness had certainly made "null, void, and no law."

- [27] It had been charged that John Quincy Adams, during his presidency (1825-1829), had sought to purchase the support of Webster by giving offices to members of the old Federalist party, then merging into the "National Republican" or Whig party. Furthermore, the opposition had declared that Adams's bestowal of the Secretaryship of State upon Henry Clay was in accordance with a bargain by which Adams was to be supported by the Clay vote in the House of Representatives.
- [28] Mr. Webster here quotes parts of lines 69 and 74 of *Macbeth*, Act III. Scene 14.
- [29] The Ordinance of July 13, 1787, was an act of the Congress of the Confederation,— prior to the beginning of the constitutional government of the United States in 1789,— which, in its sixth article, said of the "Northwest Territory," organized by this Ordinance: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." Under the provisions of this Ordinance Ohio became a State in 1802. Says Johnston in his "History of American Politics": "The Ordinance of 1787 is noteworthy as an exercise by the Congress of the Confederacy of the right to exclude slavery from the territories. It will be found that the language of this Ordinance was copied in the efforts made in 1819 (Missouri), 1846 (Wilmot Proviso), and 1865 (XIIIth Amendment), to assert and maintain for the Federal Congress under the Constitution this power of regulating and abolishing slavery in the territories of the United States, and finally in the States as the result of civil war."
- [30] The line between Pennsylvania, a free State, and Maryland, a slave State; originally run by two surveyors bearing these names.
- [31] The "Virginia Resolutions of 1798," of which the most important is here quoted, and the similar Kentucky Resolutions of the same year, were protests of the Republican, or Anti-Federalist, legislatures of the two States, against the "Alien and Sedition Laws" passed by the Federalist majority in Congress. These laws were the outgrowth of an almost warlike feeling between the United States and France, due to a variety of causes, for the most part discreditable to France. They authorized the President to order out of the country any foreigner he deemed dangerous; and imposed fines and imprisonment upon alleged conspirators against Government measures, or libellers of Congress or the President. The laws were deemed by the Anti-Federalists to be autocratic and semi-monarchical. The Virginia protesting resolutions were put into form by James Madison, afterwards President.
- [32] James Hillhouse (1754-1832), of Connecticut.
- [33] The District of Columbia is governed directly by Congress, but sends no representative thereto.
- [34] The Embargo Bill of 1807 prohibited American vessels from foreign trade, and foreign vessels from American, only coasting trade being permitted. It was directed against England, and was supported by the Anti-Federalists and bitterly opposed by the Federalists. For the time it almost destroyed American commerce, and bore especially heavily on New England.
- [35] Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780), author of the famous "Commentaries on the Laws of England" (1765-1769).
- [36] Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne (1611-1675) an eminent French general, who left memoirs of his campaigns from 1643 to 1658.
- [37] See note on page xciv.
- [38] John Fries (1764?-1825) was the leader of seven hundred men who forcibly resisted the levying of the "house or window" tax in Northampton, Bucks, and Montgomery counties, Pennsylvania, in 1798-1799. These men liberated prisoners and "arrested" the assessors themselves; and Fries, when marching toward Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, resisted a United States marshal. He was tried for treason in 1799, found guilty, given a new trial in 1800, again found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged; but President John Adams, against the advice of all his cabinet, pardoned him and gave a general amnesty to the rioters. Fries became a well-to-do merchant in Philadelphia.
- [39] Interesting examples of Webster's revision of important passages in this speech may be found by comparing the present standard text with the original versions as preserved

in the Boston Public Library. The eulogium of Massachusetts, beginning "Mr. President, I shall enter on no encomium" and ending with "the very spot of its origin," was spoken thus:

"Sir, I shall be led on this occasion into no eulogium on Massachusetts. I shall paint no portraiture of her merits, original, ancient or modern. Yet, Sir, I cannot but remember that Boston was the cradle of liberty, that in Massachusetts (the parent of this accursed policy so eternally narrow to the West), etc., etc., etc. I cannot forget that Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill *are* in Massachusetts, and that in men and means and money she *did* contribute more than any other State to carry on the Revolutionary war. There was not a State in the Union whose soil was not wetted with Massachusetts blood in the Revolutionary war, and it is to be remembered that of the army to which Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown a majority consisted of New England troops. It is painful to me to recur to these recollections even for the purpose of self-defence, and even to that end, Sir, I will not extol the intelligence, the character and the virtue of the people of New England. I leave the theme to itself, here and everywhere, now and forever."

The first form of the famous concluding passage was as follows:

"When my eyes shall be turned for the last time on the meridian sun, I hope I may see him shining bright upon my united, free, and happy country. I hope I shall not live to see his beams falling upon the dispersed fragments of the structure of this once glorious Union. I hope I may not see the flag of my country with its stars separated or obliterated; torn by commotions, smoking with the blood of civil war. I hope I may not see the standard raised of separate State rights, star against star, and stripe against stripe; but that the flag of the Union may keep its stars and its stripes corded and bound together in indissoluble ties. I hope I shall not see written as its motto, '*First* liberty, and *then* Union.' I hope I shall see no such delusive and deluded motto on the flag of that country. I hope to see, spread all over it, blazoned in letters of light and proudly floating over land and sea, that other sentiment, dear to my heart, '*Union and Liberty*, now and forever, one and inseparable.'"

- [40] At the beginning of the nineteenth century Marcus Tullius Cicero was often called Tully.
- [41] Bishop George Berkeley's (1684-1753) "On the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America."
- [42] A remark by Fisher Ames (1758-1808), of Massachusetts,—perhaps the extremest Federalist of his time.
- [43] The famous phrase "honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none" was not Washington's, but Jefferson's.
- [44] In the debate on Henry Clay's Compromise resolutions.
- [45] Pope's translation of Homer's Iliad, book xviii., lines 701-4. Webster changes the first word, "Thus," to "Now."
- [46] Shakespeare, King Henry the Fifth, Prologue, lines 1-4.
- [47] Mr. Webster's table contained, of course, the figures for 1793 and 1851 only. For the sake of illustration, those for 1900 are now added.
- [48] Including Hawaii, but not the other foreign possessions.
- [49] Including Alaska, but no other possession not contiguous to the United States.
- [50] Male population available for defence.
- [51] Total lighted aids in the year 1893.
- [52] The area given for 1851 was incorrect.
- [53] Exclusive of double tracks and sidings.
- [54] Total liabilities.
- [55] Excluding private lines.
- [56] Including public, society, and school libraries.
- [57] Total from all parts of the world.
- [58] The Washington monument here mentioned had been begun in 1848. Work was continued, by State and other donations, until 1855, when it was abandoned until 1877. But as the unfinished condition of the shaft was felt to be a sort of national disgrace, its construction was resumed in the last-named year, under a Congressional appropriation, and steadily pushed forward until the completion of the noble obelisk in 1884, at a total cost of \$1,300,000. It is built of white Maryland marble, and is 555 feet high—the loftiest

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