

AN

**- ADDRESS -**

**DELIVERED AT CASTLE GARDEN, FEB. 22, 1854,**

**BEFORE THE**

**ORDER OF UNITED AMERICANS**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR CELEBRATION OF THE**

**ONE HUNDRED & TWENTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY**

**OF THE**

**BIRTHDAY OF WASHINGTON,**

**BY**

**JACOB BROOM, Esq.,**

**G. S. OF PENNSYLVANIA.**

**PUBLISHED BY THE CHANCERY O. U. A. STATE OF NEW-YORK.**

**NEW-YORK:**

**BRO. WM. B. WEISS, PRINTER, No. 18 SPRUCE STREET.**

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No tribute of the tongue, my countrymen, nor pageantry, however imposing, can equal the occasion on which this vast concourse is assembled; and dead, indeed, to every genuine impulse of rational freedom must be that heart which is not touched by its sacred inspiration. With one accord and one purpose, American patriots have paused in their affairs of business, and with a spirit mightier than ever characterized a "*Genoese feast of union*," have yielded to the irresistible impulse of devotional gratitude to God, and unwavering fidelity to the land of their birth.

Other nations, in all ages, have had their days of festival and jubilee in commemoration of events which have added glory or renown to their career, or heightened the general prosperity of their people. The birthdays of sovereigns, and days which have been marked by a mere amelioration of the servile condition of subjects, have been observed in a spirit far more than commensurate with the occasions which called for them. But, in our own hallowed country, in whose every page of history is witnessed the Omnipotent Finger guiding and directing the course of ancestral events, dispelling the gloom of servility and pouring upon man the day-spring of rational freedom, we recognize a grandeur, which, superadded to an exuberance of heart, is calculated to hush the power of utterance and inspire our nature with reverential awe; leading us to exclaim in the language of the Psalmist: \*

*"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.*

*"For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither*

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*did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favor unto them.*

*"Through thee will we push down our enemies; through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us."*

Among our national days stands pre-eminently the 22d day of February, 1732, seeming to bear upon it the peculiar impress of Providential design. Difficulties with the mother country had not then arisen—the strong arm of power had not oppressed the Colonies—no stamp act, nor tax on tea, were to be found on the statute book of parliament, nor had a military system of bondage characterized the time. Yet they were all, and more, involved in the issues of future years, and would require one especially adapted to those operations necessary for the establishment of a nation wherein the glory of God should be made manifest, and the rights of man exist untrammelled by arbitrary or despotic power. The old world was no cradle for republican freedom. Its genius would have been strangled in its infancy, and its spirit crushed by the allied powers of monarchy. When, therefore, we contemplate the character of Washington, and the events in his history, as well as the condition of the old world, we are constrained reverentially to acknowledge the gracious designs of Providence in the seasonable birth of Washington and the establishment of the liberties of our nation.

It cannot be uninteresting, nor I trust unprofitable at this time, when assembled to commemorate the peculiar virtues and services of the immortal "Father of his Country," to look upon the antecedent condition of man through the night of political servitude, and trace those events which finally broke the spell of absolutism and opened the dawn of that great freedom which Washington was destined to perfect.

His birth found man, as he had been for centuries, under monarchical subjection. The oppressor heard not that a mighty man had been ushered into life, whose arm, nerved with strength from on high, was destined to redeem the majesty of human freedom from the dominion of temporal power. He felt no shock to his throne, nor did he behold the handwriting on the wall of his banqueting hall. Yet with the continuance of monarchy grew the "male child" in strength and wisdom. The events of the eighteenth century were destined to ripen at the time when he should be in the full vigor of manhood; and *his* history became the history of a change in government, by which the world should be taught that monarchy was incompatible with the condition to which man had been created.

God had placed no monarch over Adam in the primeval day, neither had He commanded that Adam should be king. But to man he gave the earth and "the fulness thereof," creating and establishing no supremacy in one



over another. All men were created equal. Temporal government belonged to them alike.

In the progress of time convenience, undoubtedly, required that government should be instituted among men, the earliest being, perhaps, the Patriarchal. This was for the purposes of society. Man was created a social being; and it became necessary, as the population of the earth increased, that there should be established certain rules or laws which should regulate his intercourse and transactions with his fellow-man;—that the weak should be protected against the powerful;—that right should be cherished and wrong eschewed, and that harmony, peace and happiness should prevail among them. Separate communities were established necessarily for the common weal, in each of which grew up peculiar customs and particular laws, the execution of which devolved on certain heads created by common consent.

The ambition of man has been ever powerful, as exemplified in all history of government. A Cæsar or a Cataline, a Cromwell or a Burr has been found in almost every nation which has flourished on earth. The mere taste of authority has served in many instances but to whet the appetite of ambition and lead to acts of aggression upon natural rights, and thus step by step, through individual ambition, first crept over the condition of mankind those odious features of absolutism which finally enslaved the governed and made them subject to the caprice of the governor. The serpent of old made not a more insidious progress in corrupting our first parents and bringing them from their high estate.

The condition of man became debased. The force of his genius became cramped by the servile labor required for the heavy operations of a courtly power. The mind had neither time nor opportunity for cultivation, and the more degenerate it became, the more easily did monarchy rivet itself on the eastern continent, until it had extended its power over its entire surface.

The hand of God is nowhere visible on the page of history in the establishment of temporal monarchy, unless in the time of Savi, when in displeasure He granted to the Israelites the experiment at their own request. The term *king*, as used in the books of Moses, signified merely the chief or head of a tribe or city, for not less than three score and ten of them were defeated by Adonizedec, and a score and a half by Joshua; to say nothing of the five kings of the Amorites, on whose *necks* Joshua commanded his people to put their *feet*, and afterwards slew and hanged on as many trees in the vale of Makkedah. Even Noah, the only favorite of God of the antediluvian race, acquired no regal authority over the postdiluvians.

The necessity for government arose from the increase of mankind. Its



history is imperfect and unsatisfactory; yet, enough is known to justify the belief that its officers were first elective, and afterwards, through the specious pretext of mischief arising from elections, became hereditary. Royalty grew ambitious of enlarged dominions, and ideas of conquest led to interminable wars for that purpose. The history of government through a long period of time was the history of blood, civil war, oppression and anarchy, which continued to disgrace mankind even after the genius of republicanism had broken the imperial scepter.

Nations acquired dominion and glory but to lose them in conflict with a stronger power. The Argonautic expedition of Greece, for instance, which was designed as well for commerce as for glory; her sieges of Thebes and Troy—the war of the Heraclidæ—her conquest of Persia—set her in a blaze of glory, which was afterwards eclipsed by the greater glory of Rome when Greece, by conquest, became a province of the Roman Empire.

The prowess of Rome aimed after universal dominion. Her power and glory arose to a degree of splendor unequalled by any other nation. The people felt their glory, but they were not satisfied. The system of government was obnoxious to them, and a change in its form was, in the course of time, effected by their intelligence and republican disposition. The consular dignity was easily substituted for that of the regal, and gradually, by changes in the constitution, she progressed to the democratic form.

Republicanism began to attract the attention of mankind. Sparta, Athens, Thebes and the Grecian States of Sicily threw off the restraints of monarchical power and became republics. Some flourished long, and under wise administration of laws. Others were short-lived, owing to wars, corruption and intestine commotion. Surrounded by the power and influences of monarchical government, ever jealous of the germ and spread of republican freedom, it is not to be wondered at that they so soon fell under the poisons infused into them. Rational liberty had not room for its growth that it might acquire strength for its own protection. The political atmosphere of the eastern continent was fatal to its vigor and beauty. It flourished but for a while, and through individual ambition, whereby the virtue of the people was destroyed and they taught to believe that the imperial form of government was best adapted to the masses, it withered and fell: and thus ended the prospect of the establishment of the liberty of mankind on the oriental continent:

“What could Cato do  
Against a world, a base, degenerate world,  
Which courts the yoke, and bows the neck to Cæsar?”

Turn now to *our* ancient progenitors, the Anglo Saxons.



The history of England presents, through a long succession of reigns, the struggles of the people for freedom, at least from those maxims of absolutism under which they had long suffered. From the time of Egbert, when the kingdoms of the Saxon Heptarchy were united, and the career of England began, to the reign of John, the people were under subjection to a despotic power. By the Magna Charta of that reign their liberties were far from being allowed to them. That instrument secured to them only certain rights, but did not relieve them from the oppression of the power of the crown, as the subsequent history of that nation exemplifies.

The opening of the seventeenth century found the spirit of liberty still sleeping under the influences of monarchical power. All ideas of human rights were hushed in the stillness of implicit obedience to royal mandates, and every aspiration subdued in its incipency by the utterly hopeless prospect of being able to burst through the impenetrable power which restrained it. Nevertheless, the dawn of rational liberty was at hand; and although the darkest hour, which is said to precede the dawn, had not yet involved the people in its gloom, yet the change, or rather its immediate cause, was about to commence in the extinction of the Tudor family, by the demise of Elizabeth, and the accession of the Scottish branch of the royal family, in the person of James, the first of the Stuarts.

At that period there existed what was termed an English Constitution, which, in its provisions, was somewhat more liberal than a more ancient one, both to the king and the subject. By it the power of the barons over the king was taken away, and the privileges of the people were in some measure enlarged, which, although unworthy of the sacred name of liberty, was yet a relaxation of that absolutism which had characterized the government under a still more ancient constitution, whereby neither the barons nor the people had any defined or regular liberties or privileges whatever. And although the reign of Elizabeth has been extolled as the "*good old days of Queen Bess*," and unbounded panegyrics have been showered on her wisdom and virtues, yet the only merit she actually possessed was in the non-infringement of any established right of the people. It was not that the liberty of the subject was full or even satisfactory; for that could not be under the oppressive instruments of power then existing, such as the Star-Chamber and the Court of High Commissions, possessing discretionary powers, and the judges holding their offices during the pleasure of the crown, which, of course, gave to them no alternative but to pander to the will of the monarch, or lose their positions and probably their heads. Superadded to this was also the arbitrary exercise of *martial law*, and even the *rack*, which, although not in general use, was not unfrequently employed upon the mere warrant of the secretary of state or the privy council.



In this enlightened age, to a people intelligent and free, such a view of the condition of mankind is well calculated to excite amazement, and almost to create a doubt whether such a state of things could have existed in reality. But the page of history is the record of time. Its chronicled events have no affinity with *fiction's fancied facts*. They stand forth in the sublimity of truth, giving rather the outline than the picture.

Deplorable though it may seem, man has been, and in some parts of the world is yet, the subject of arbitrary power; bending before the rod of despotism—a slave to the iron will of a temporal master—cowering under the exercise of a monarch's volition.

Such, indeed, was nearly the condition of the Anglo Saxon race at the opening of the seventeenth century in the Christian era. Their rights as men were narrowly circumscribed by the absurd claim of the monarch to absolute power.

The predecessors of Elizabeth had asserted and maintained their almost unlimited prerogatives, and had exercised powers incompatible with even the liberties accorded by the constitution. But Elizabeth, although she enjoyed her prerogatives without restraint, and abated not at any time the exercise of her authority, was exact in the observance of all the rights the people could claim under the constitution. She allowed them no more; and while thus particular respecting their very limited privileges, she exacted of them implicit obedience to her regal power. In this she was as firm as any of her royal predecessors; and for the purpose of enforcing it, and for the speedy punishment of offenders, would frequently resort to the exercise of martial law in all its most arbitrary plenitude.

The prerogatives of the sovereign were nearly, if not quite, absolute, and totally at variance with any idea of the liberty of the subject. Parliament itself was exposed to them, and Elizabeth exercised them so far as to expressly prohibit parliamentary interference with either state matters or ecclesiastical causes; and numerous instances occurred during her reign of the honorable members of that body having been openly sent to prison by her for presuming to exercise their own judgment in matters of legislation. The dispensing power gave to her absolute authority over them; for thereby even acts of parliament were invalidated, and rendered of no effect. Her proclamations were law, and the Star-Chamber, odious in its every feature to the principles of liberty, was the instrument for their most rigorous enforcement.

Under this absolute authority the people appeared, by their submission, to be content so long as the sovereign exceeded not the tyranny of the predecessor; but on the accession of James, the Anglo Saxon blood, so long quiescent, was, under his enormities, aroused to a sense of its servility; and the



spirit of liberty, as if regenerated by oppression, awoke from its slumber to newness of life and freshness of vigor. Even the commons participated in the general spirit of resistance, and seemed determined to guard their inalienable rights and the privileges of their fellow subjects against the tyrannous encroachments of the crown. The true spirit in the hearts of the people was touched, and, like the giant awaking from his deep slumber, it began slowly to manifest the moving principle by which it ultimately broke through the restraints of monarchy, and alighting upon this continent, planted itself upon the immovable rock of virtue and intelligence, and reflected back its light upon the gloomy condition of the old world.

The reign of James continued for more than twenty years, during which time, although much benefit resulted to mankind by the opening of a new era in the Christian world, which, in the end, accelerated the advancement of freedom, yet the bondage of his people became more and more oppressive by reason of his claim to unlimited prerogatives. Discontent was fast gathering its strength wherewith to resist openly the evils which seemed to be thickening beyond endurance, when he was "gathered to his fathers," and was succeeded by his son Charles.

Under the new reign the people looked in vain for a peaceful redress of their grievances, for Charles had no sooner ascended the throne than he gave unmistakable intimations of his intention to pursue the way which his father had paved. Under the intrigues of Buckingham, his prime favorite, perhaps because of his corruption, he became involved in difficulties, as well with the peers of the realm as with the House of Commons, by which the spirit of freedom was more fairly aroused and began to *act* in resistance to oppression. The morning star had arisen, and now penetrated the sullen gloom which shrouded the majesty of man, and it could be eclipsed only by the dawn of that light which radiates in the intellect of man and teaches him his capacity to participate in the action of human government.

But no visible effect upon the tyrannous disposition of Charles was discernible. On the contrary, his struggle became more and more vexatious, until the people, no longer willing to submit to a heartless master, bent their determination to the overthrow of monarchy and the establishment of republicanism.

Such was the character of the reign of Charles I., by which noble spirits were aroused to resistance and to the consideration of the principle of rational freedom. The monarch, infatuated with the idea of prerogatives, and urged on by the wicked and ambitious counsellors who surrounded him, abated not his encroachments upon right, justice and law. His continued warfare with the House of Commons; his arbitrary and oppressive action



towards the people ; the manly resistance of parliament, and the awakened spirit of the Anglo-Saxon, but foreshadowed the mighty advent of civil and religious liberty. Submission no longer characterized the condition of the realm. The parliament, true to their own prerogatives, and moved by the interests of the people at large, boldly resisted the usurpations of the crown, and civil discord with all its sanguinary horrors began to peep from the curtain of futurity.

But oppression in civil government was not the only evil which beset the people. A church government, also, exercised high handed measures under the direction of Laud, Archbishop of London, an obsequious promoter of the pretensions of Charles, and the sacred right of conscience was invaded by his intolerant and despotic action. The Puritans became the object of his most unrelenting persecutions, and were compelled to fly for escape. The old world presented no prospect of freedom in civil or religious affairs, and fitting up their frail bark, many of them crowded under its sails, and committing themselves to the stormy and tempestuous bosom of the mighty deep, under the guidance of that same Power which had once before hushed its loud roaring, and commanded, "PEACE, BE STILL," they found at length that security among the savages and wild beasts of the forests of America,—the heaven-designed home of freedom—which had been denied them in the land of their birth.

Those who remained where not idle in resisting kingly power on the one hand, and priestcraft on the other. Human rights and freedom of conscience attracted the attention of all classes, and champions arose openly to assert and resolutely to maintain the rightful independence of the people. The people, themselves, animated and encouraged by the increasing manifestations of the spirit of freedom, persisted in their noble stand until the proud monarch, resolutely refusing to abate his claim, was brought into open collision, and the realm plunged in the gory depths of civil war.

The cause of human rights, after a sanguinary strife, was triumphant. The barbarous king was forced to abdicate his throne, and, seeking protection from the Scots, was betrayed and surrendered into the hands of the English government, by which he was convicted of maladministration and beheaded in the sight of his own palace.

Thus ended the career of a monarch who sought to extinguish the spark of freedom—to fetter the majesty of man—and bind him in slavish submission to the throne of power. His extravagances were useful, however, to the human race. They led to the consideration of the means whereby the condition of man might be ameliorated. Human rights began to be discussed ; the principles of government were examined, and the gloom of submission began consequently to wear away before the dawning light, which increased



in proportion to the progress of their enquiries, until the beautiful morning of freedom, here in our own land, opened fully upon man, redeemed by the irrepressible majesty of his nature, and elevated to his rightful position of rational independence and uninterrupted communion with his God.

Thus by a glance at the history of England, and particularly the reigns of Elizabeth, James I. and his son Charles, we discover those causes which awakened the attention of man to the affairs of government—the fountain whence sprung those noble principles which operated in turn upon our fathers in the day of their oppression, and caused them to spurn the old spirit of monarchy, which still seemed to be lurking around the throne on which it had reigned of yore.

Although the ultimate settlement of the affairs of England into a mixed government secured to the people of that realm a degree of happiness and liberty theretofore unknown, it was reserved to the land of America, whose shores are washed by the two great oceans of the world, to put into practical operation the full theory of rational liberty. Here, only, they could flourish beyond the reach of despotic influences, and, if faithfully adhered to, bid defiance to time or event.

The colonial history of our own country is too well understood to require an extended notice on this occasion. It has been the theme of anniversary addresses for more than half of a century, and nearly all that is interesting may be found floating in the tide of the literary productions of the age. Indeed, it may be objected that historical details have been already too elaborate for this occasion. But as they involved so much of interest, connected as they are with that race from whom Washington and our forefathers mostly descended, I have ventured to introduce them, principally with the view to direct the mind of the American patriot to a most deplorable state of misgovernment in striking contrast with the happy system devised by our fathers: believing, that when he learns to feel for the condition of those who have undergone the indescribable oppression of power, and contemplates the great difficulties which beset them in their noble efforts to throw off unnatural restraints of government, to burst the bonds of despotic sway and assert the natural rights of man, he will become the more sensible of his imperative duty to devote his earnest exertions to uphold the grand system which is reared in the land of his birth, and to exercise unwearied vigilance against every species of danger and every possible chance of evil.

The eighteenth century opened a new era in the history of human government, and brought upon the stage of action a band of men with heads to comprehend and hearts to execute. A new world had been peopled—a land of wealth had presented its resources to the old world. Crowned heads and peasants had been attracted by its allurements. Hardy pioneers had paved.



the way for the adventurer, and arts and civilization had followed in the train. The rude wigwam of the aborigines had given place to architectural skill, and the virgin soil of their hunting grounds had been broken by the ploughshare of agriculture. The genius of art and science had spread its expansive wings over the new domain of the forest land. Towns and communities freely dotted the surface of the country, and the population had begun to wax strong.

The kingdom of Great Britain had kept upon Columbia an avaricious eye. It had looked to it for the means of exoneration from heavy national liabilities, and exercised over the settlers a vigilance falling not short of tyranny. Governors of arbitrary disposition were commissioned by the crown, whose individual ambition for wealth, and love of power, superadded to the grasping policy of government, weighed sorely upon natural rights, and reduced the colonists far below the condition of those who had remained at home. The presumption of such governors, even in the early settlement of the colonies, met with rebuke, and they were sent by the people back to the king, who saw fit to pardon their tyranny and restore them to their positions.

The determination of the kingdom was manifestly to secure to itself all the advantages of commerce and manufacture, and for that purpose to hold in servile bondage those by whose capital and labor the rich resources of the country were to be developed. This mistaken policy had been continued from the first. Parliament undertook to legislate for the colonies—to impose taxes and devise systems of revenue. Remonstrance was received with contempt, and public meetings declared to be “TREASON.” Governors dissolved provincial assemblies for *daring* to protest against the “*omnipotence* of parliament,” and asserted the prerogatives of the crown—menacingly assuring the people “that the king was determined to maintain *his* sovereignty over the provinces, and whoever should persist in usurping any of the rights of them would repent *his* rashness.”

The government and the people were brought into perpetual collision, the former endeavoring to repress the spirit of freedom, and the latter asserting their rights, and even turning out unarmed against the bayonet and balls of the military quartered upon them. They regarded the whole course of the British government as a designed system of bondage, opposed to true principles, and resolved to submit to it no longer.

The declaration of July 4, '76, accordingly proclaimed to mankind that another nation had sprung into existence:—that the bonds of tyranny could no longer bind Americans in slavish submission to the throne of power—and that these United States should be free and independent. The world stood amazed at the boldness of the position, and looked with doubt



upon the ability of our fathers to contend with the power of so formidable a nation. But the blood of their brethren had been spilled on the plains of Lexington and Bunker Hill, and nobly they determined that *all* of the best blood of the country should be poured out like water before it should be debased by servility. "The generals of despotism," said they, "are now drawing the lines of circumvallation around our bulwarks of liberty, and nothing but unity, resolution and perseverance can save ourselves and posterity from what is worse than death—Slavery."

The unanimous choice of Congress fell on a quiet, unpretending citizen, who had many years before retired from the public notice of his countrymen. Without ostentation he presented himself at the head of the American forces, asking counsel of the God of Nations, and calling on the Congress to abstain from any interference with him in the discharge of the duties he had assumed.

The conflict was long, and to human view doubtful. Events were discouraging. Want of means and great suffering were endured for years almost without a hope of ultimate triumph. But the character of the men was the safety of their cause. They fought to defend the rights of man. They contended for freedom and the right of conscience. The spark of liberty had electrified the nation, and the citizen, the statesman, and the soldier alike felt the shock, and yielded implicit obedience to its impulse. They gathered on the field of deadly combat, determined to support the noble resolution to live free or die. Their bosoms burned with impatience to repel the proud invaders of their country, and their arms were nerved as freemen's arms are wont to be who strike for liberty. Their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor were pledged on the altar of their country's freedom. They might have been cut to pieces, but such men could never have been conquered.

Unsullied by vice, nobly disinterested, and with no ambition but their country's welfare, they defended their country's cause. They made not war upon virtue and unoffending innocence, but exercised their valor against the enemies of freedom, rearing the standard of independence, and catching the pure hues of heaven, they stamped them upon the banner of the free. The blast of the trumpet awakened the echoes of forest and dale, and the clang of arms denoted that the grand contest for human rights marked the age. Death and carnage stalked abroad amid the contending ranks, and many a youthful hero, full of promise and hope, fell in the struggle, whose blood hallowed the soil of freedom's home, and whose ashes intermingled with the land which is now our birthright. The strong battlements of power were finally made to yield before the match-



less intrepidity of American valor, and the proud hopes of America were filled to the brim.

Such men ! who can weary in the contemplation of their character, or ever cease to admire their noble assertion of the rights of man, and their valorous struggle to maintain them for posterity ?

But there was one in that band on whom all eyes rested—one who gave life to hope and nerve to his country, whose placid disposition, unwavering fidelity and firmness of action inspired confidence in the hearts of his countrymen—one who, in the silent watches of the night as in the day-solitude of the forest recesses, communed with the God of Nations, and invoked the blessing of Heaven upon the cause, and of whom it has been beautifully said, “Nature had cast him in her finest mould ; Virtue gave him her maternal benediction ; Wisdom blushed not to call him her own ; Patriotism with rapture pressed him to her bosom, and Valor by her side smiling at her caresses, resolved to complete the man.”

How shall we utter *his* name amid the deep emotions of the grateful heart—how manifest due reverence to the memory of the hero and statesman whose name is made by fame immortal ? Let the hearts of our countrymen ever unite in one impulse, and as the heart of one man, in reverence to God for his high favor to the land of our birth, breathe our solemn, united vows of fidelity to the memory of “GEORGE WASHINGTON, THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY.”

In memory of our illustrious hero and sage we are now, on the anniversary of his birth, convened. With universal assent this day should be annually observed as a day of national reflection. The mad career of partizan strife, as well as the busy hum of industrial life, should alike be hushed before the breathing of that same spirit which kindled republican liberty, as though the whole multitude of the spirits of our fathers, with Washington in their midst, were hovering over the scene of their former glory whispering to us of their severe trials and fervent hopes, of their glorious reward and anxious solicitude. We should on this day derive fresh impulse in our patriotism, and imbibe largely of their spirit. In the contemplation of their character, and the character of their times, we should learn lessons of imperative duty. They have all been gathered to the mansions of rest. They have passed away, but “*the bright track of their fiery car*” is ever visible to the eye of the patriot, and while the mantle which falls from them rests upon us, a new generation, we cannot be insensible of the weight of responsibility to which we were born. The preservation of the institutions which they founded is the great, patriotic work of the true-hearted American for all time to come.

But there is, unfortunately, in our country a spirit which for years has



interfered too largely with patriotic considerations. It is the same spirit against which Washington earnestly cautioned his countrymen when bidding them his eternal farewell, "Let me warn you *in the most solemn manner*," said he, "against the effects of *the spirit of party*, generally." "It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, *and is truly their worst enemy*." "It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself, through the channels of party passions."

Alas! how prophetic were his words!! The mad conflict of party of late years has grown wilder and more desperate. It has swept like the hurricane over the peaceful domain of our republic, causing every thing to bend before the fierceness of its motion. The most unpatriotic means have been resorted to for the attainment of its objects. Personal vituperation, destruction of individual character, prostration of the meritorious, abuse of the freedom of the press and of speech, personal conflict, resulting in loss of limb and life, are concomitant partizan evils. But the greatest of all, and from which the most fearful consequences are threatened, is the gross abuse of that humane provision of our fathers made for the relief of the oppressed of other climes, the system of naturalization of aliens. Under that provision nearly a million are annually added to our population, who are too eagerly caught up by the baneful spirit of party, and without education or knowledge of government, soon involved in political affairs, and have an important bearing upon questions which require the exercise of the best judgment and soundest patriotism of Americans. They have increased to such an extent as to cause the most unworthy sycophancy on the part of political leaders (including even some of our most prominent men) to secure their numerical power for party aggrandizement or the promotion of individual ambition.

Thus have partizans widely departed from the path of patriotism and the counsels of Washington, and, instead of appealing to the patriotic integrity of their countrymen for the exercise of reason upon measures of policy, their attention seems almost exclusively to be directed to the best means of obtaining the foreign vote, and exciting foreigners to a wild enthusiasm utterly incompatible with the nature of free government.

In this there is involved a hidden danger vast and direful, which evokes from the past a powerful admonition in the awakened groans of myriads who have suffered and fallen under most excruciating persecutions proceeding from a temporal power which seeks to grasp the reins of civil government over all the earth. The elements of its strength are fast accumulating upon our soil; its resources are active and its emissaries energetic; it is a



power which has crushed and destroyed republicanism wherever it has been able to concentrate its means: and yet, in this enlightened age, through the wildness of *party spirit*, we behold it made the sport of politicians, if not the extinguisher of their patriotism. It vests itself in the garb of religion and approaches its object, step by step, in the most insinuating manner, lulling apprehension with winning smiles, praising what it detests and offering persuasions of safety while seeking usurpation. It is the power of Jesuitism seeking to advance the interests of the Roman Hierarchy, whose doctrines are far from being in accordance with republican institutions, and under the supremacy of which history teaches us that republican liberty cannot exist.

The doctrine of a union of Church and State was emphatically disavowed by our fathers as destructive of the happiness and liberties of a nation. Their doctrines Americans should revere and adopt as their own. They were wise and patriotic men, and unless we claim to be more so we should adhere to their principles as our rule of action—as the chart, indeed, by which to advance among mankind the noble doctrines of the civil and religious rights of man.

It was well known to them that no civil government could, or, of right, ought to control individual conscience in man's accountability to his Maker; and on the other hand they believed that man, as an intelligent and reasonable being, with capacity for free government, could better direct the affairs of state than that the same should be at the dictation of an ecclesiastical power, which could not be otherwise than sectarian. Hence, the sages of that revolution, which redeemed unborn generations, as well from the prospect of servility to a temporal throne, as from the domination of the power of church, whether under favor of the crown or claiming to be superior in power, established the two-fold liberty of this country in utter repudiation of the monstrous doctrine of a union of Church and State.

This character of government—freedom in civil and religious matters—as may be well supposed, met with no approbation either on the part of crowned heads or mitred prelates; the former regarding the system of free government as experimental, with an irresistible tendency to downfall, while the latter looked with jealous apprehension to its effect, if successful, upon the future destiny of the world-renowned hierarchy. This was to our patriot sires a source of inquietude. They understood the feeble position of their infant republic, and the snares and dangers to which it would be continually exposed, and guarded with an eagle's eye what they had won with valiant hearts; and, in departing, enjoined on us, their descendants and successors, that wise maxim for the observance of posterity,

“THE PRICE OF LIBERTY IS ETERNAL VIGILANCE.”



Brethren ! the events of the last ten or twelve years within the limits of our confederacy have been of most startling character. They have been deemed sufficient to arouse the apprehension, as well as the vigilance, of the patriotic, and have conduced to the formation of various systems of American brotherhood in many of the States of the Union. The character of those events, although transpiring in the cities of different States, is identical, and while we witness in each a like effect in the organization of a counter influence, it is in vain that its cause can be denied.

The principles on which those organizations are based are broad and comprehensive. They have arisen from no narrow views either of the nature of man, nor of past or passing events, but have their origin in the natural affection of man for the land of his birth. In their tendencies they are patriotic, and in close character with those of our fathers when, in earlier days, "*The sons of Liberty*," under the motto "*Join or die*," were organized to resist foreign influence on American affairs.

The necessity for them grows out of the peculiar and exposed nature of our government. The people form the great source of political action, which is controlled and guided by the principle of a majority. The majority vote may change the whole nature and character of our government. It may entirely abolish the present system, and establish the most odious despotism that ever existed. Our institutions are, therefore, based on the idea of universal intelligence, and are designed to operate through the exercise of sound reason. It is not enough that those only who are selected to administer the affairs of government should be educated, but that general intelligence should pervade the mass of the people. Hence provision for a public system of education was urged by the immortal Washington and his compeers as imperiously requisite. Such provision has been accordingly made, and should be preserved by Americans *under one law*, in the spirit of the command of God to Moses, \* "*Ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.*" No idea or demand of *any* sect, in religion or politics, must be entertained or allowed to interfere with that provision. It is the main stay of our liberties, and our keenest vigilance must guard it and our purest patriotism sustain it. He is an enemy to the liberty of mankind who looks upon it with indifferent eye, and a wilful traitor to the memory of Washington who would dare upon our soil to stigmatize it as "godless and immoral," or as "a sink of iniquity."

Brethren, we have organized to sustain a unity of law, education and government against the encroachments of foreign prejudices "through the

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channels of party passions." We do not seek to interfere with any religious sect, nor to withdraw the right hand of fellowship from those who seek our shores, and with sincerity cherish their new home and our free institutions, but energetically to guard against the dangerous operations of foreign influences of whatever kind upon the social or political affairs of our land. Individual aspiration, and the blind zeal of *party*, have alike rendered our organization necessary. Partizans, for party purposes, have yielded to foreign emissaries a portion of the patronage of government, and have also manifested a disposition to aid them in their effort to procure a system of legislation which shall accelerate their progress, and finally break down the pillars of our freedom. They have been emboldened to *demand* the removal of the Bible of our fathers from our institutions, and to seek at the hands of government special legislation, whereby to weaken and impair the provision which has been made for public education. Already in their zeal have they spilled the blood of our brother-freemen in the streets of Philadelphia, and insulted and trampled upon the pride of our fathers—the star-spangled banner—the flag of the free.

American men—representatives of those valorous heroes who achieved the liberties of this country—wherein consists the peace and safety of our country when such scenes as those enacted in Kensington and Southwark, and in other places, where the arm of ruthless violence was outstretched against the liberty and life of the American, is permitted by *party* men and *party* government to transpire unnoticed? Wherein shall be found our boasted freedom after *party* shall have yielded by degrees the noble institutions of our fathers to the systematic efforts of foreign design. Freemen awake! Let the wild spirit of party be signally rebuked by the matchless genius of American patriotism. Let us remember the heart-inspiring incidents of the American revolution, and let every foreign power which shall seek to prejudice or subvert our liberties, find a Brutus in every freeman. Let us rally in our strength and pride as *American* men with *American* hearts, resolved to guard and uphold the *American* system of education, and to preserve the elective franchise free from foreign influence or control. Our own great and immortal Washington *conjured* us to believe him when he said: "Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake." He was not satisfied with merely warning his countrymen, but his noble spirit, groaning with apprehension, entreated, *conjured* them to *believe* it—"to keep closed all avenues against its approach to our government, and to resist with care *the spirit of innovation upon its principles*, however specious the pretexts."

Thank heaven! the American spirit is awake in our land, and the irresistible impulse of patriotism is warning the breasts of our countrymen.



The generous glow of liberty, the grateful recollection of the heroes and sages of the revolution, and the high appreciation of their invaluable legacy, all conspire to arouse true freemen to a sense of duty and action. Party spirit, through the operation of American association, will yet be restrained, and American freedom, the glorious monument of the valor and wisdom of our forefathers, shall be preserved to stand through untold ages the admiration of mankind ; then,

“ Firm, united, let us be  
Rallying 'round our liberty ;  
And as a band of brothers join'd,  
Peace and safety we shall find.”