

AN  
ORATION,

DELIVERED

BY THEIR APPOINTMENT.

BEFORE

THE WASHINGTON SOCIETY,

IN

CHARLESTON, SOUTH-CAROLINA,

ON THE

6th. of July, 1839.

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BY BENJAMIN FANEUIL HUNT.

A MEMBER

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The Oration was introduced by Reading the first and last  
Clauses of the Declaration of Independence, promulgated by  
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## ORATION.

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This day 1776 formed an epoch in the history of mankind, which must in after ages be a subject of deep reflection and high moment. The antagonist principles of hereditary power and the sovereignty of the people were on this day put directly in competition. Our fathers, believing with religious faith in the ability of the people to govern themselves, resolved, smarting as they were under recent instances of injustice and misrule, to sever at once the ties that united them to a distant monarchy, and trusting to that providence which had guided their ancestors over the dark waters of the mighty deep, and protected their infant settlements, to try the experiment of republican government and bid defiance hereafter to the dictate of foreign rule.

On the recurrence of this anniversary it has been usual to analyze the moral influences which led the men of that day to dare the most powerful nation of Europe,—flushed with recent victory, old in all the usages of war, exhaustless in resources, and exasperated by a resistance which added a sense of filial ingratitude to national hostility—of rebellion and treason to the bitterness of ordinary conflicts: and the day has been celebrated as a festival to commemorate the martial virtues, the patriotic devotion and noble daring of the armies and revolutionary assemblies of that eventful period.

Our citizens absorbed in the pursuits of industry and enterprize, too seldom stop to contemplate the peculiar blessings they enjoy, or the sources whence they emanated. The emigrant who has left behind him governments based on the divine right of kings, with all their attendants of standing armies, established hierarchies, hereditary legislators, the insolent prerogative of birth, landed aristocracy, and all those appliances by which the peace, the rights and happiness of the many are made to minister to the pride and luxury of the few; it is the emigrant, traversing our wide empire, who regards with wonder and admiration a people enjoying equal rights, religious freedom and an abundance of all the good things of life at no higher cost than honest industry—a people who appoint their own rulers and change them at will, under written constitutions framed in their primitive assemblies to protect the minority against any sudden burst of popular feeling—where every office is open to the humblest citizen, with no other title than his own merits—where wealth is the reward of enterprize, industry and integrity; no armed guards, no praetorian cohorts, no Janissary bands to control the people and protect their rulers from responsibility, and still the equal laws of society quietly administered, private rights perfectly protected, and public order rigidly maintained. He sees and admires these results of the great experiment begun this day sixty-three years ago. It is fitting then in us, who are in the actual fruition of all these blessings, to devote this day to the contemplation of an enterprize fruitful in consequences so precious to us, so important to the world. It is meet on this day to

wreath with garlands and bind with laurels the monuments and statues of those ancestors, who lived in renown or died the champions of a nation's freedom. On this day, too, it becomes us as dependants on that providence in which our parents trusted, to remember him in whose hands are the destinies of nations. This is the day of our national passover, on which the God of our fathers watched over and spared our people from the scourge of a foreign and exasperated foe, prepared the way for final delivery from a foreign yoke, and gave us a name and a place among the nations of the earth. It is fitting, then, now to go up to his holy habitation and offer in his temple the sacrifice of pious thanksgiving and praise for all the good things which this day's action have so profusely scattered over our fair inheritance, and bow down and worship before him. Permit me, then, this duty paid, to call your attention to subjects connected with this solemn occasion. I propose to investigate the causes and character of this signal revolution, to trace its effect, actual and prospective, upon the old world, and finally, the change which it has already produced and is destined still to work in the political condition of this continent, and its influences on the moral and intellectual features of this people, which are to constitute the peculiarities of the national character of the citizens of the United States of America, and I trust the picture, true to nature, will inspire us with a love and veneration for the institutions of our country, and a firm determination to preserve, protect and defend them, and to this resolve to pledge our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor, as our fathers before us did.

This day has too often been desecrated by pouring forth the phials of political wrath and exasperating the ferocity of party animosities. The American people have too often exhibited the revolting spectacle of converting the temple into an arena for sectarian strife, and the birthday of national freedom into an occasion for mutual reproaches and vituperation. The day, the place are suited to other and higher themes. The American Revolution is the instrument by which Providence is accomplishing the destinies of the world. Its practical results are just beginning to dawn upon the astonished view of statesmen and philosophers, and I fear that in attempting to direct your minds forward to the light, it is destined to pour upon the whole face of the earth, I may be reproached with an imagination unchastened by the rigid restraints of cautious prophecy, yet I will endeavor so to lay my foundations in solid truth with such materials as well established facts afford, that by reasoning from what has been to what may fairly be expected, you will find however gorgeous, however grand and ennobling the future looms in this morning of our national existence, its noon of glory is within the hopes of rational and sound anticipation.

Next to the Christian Revelation, no event in the history of the world promises so much for the amelioration of the moral, intellectual and social condition of mankind, as the event to whose contemplation our whole country devotes this day. Enough has already been accomplished both here and in Europe to excite our special wonder. But sixty-three years have rolled round, and already the principle of self-government is in the full tide of successful experiment over

a vast and fertile country, and seventeen millions of freemen scattered over its extended surface, on this day are renewing their vows, and strengthening their fidelity to a purely republican form of government. To us, whose term of life is threescore and ten or fourscore years, the lapse of time from the infancy of the world to the present period, seems a vast duration; and that there is any important change not yet already worked, is deemed inconsistent with the power and benevolence of the Creator; yet when we look upon the wonderful changes which the world has really undergone, and consider how little each generation has contributed to them, we realize the truth that time, though its footsteps are so silent as not to disturb the ordinary avocations of men, is bringing round the most vital changes in all that relates to human happiness and improvement. By turning our attention to the nature of the American Revolution, and tracing the effect it has already produced, the wonder will be that so much has been accomplished in a space so short compared with past events. To fully comprehend its vast importance, we must look back to the history of our country, and the character of its first colonists. This whole continent was chiefly an uncultivated forest. If the arts of life, especially in that portion which comprehends the United States of America, ever had been known, all memory of the period when they flourished had passed away, occasional relicts seem to point to a time when civilization and its accompanying refinement, arts and monuments may have flourished on this continent, but if this be true, the people who then possessed the soil, must have passed away—ages on

ages gone by—their bodies had long since returned to their primitive elements—a deep and virgin soil lay upon their graves, and a primeval forest of gigantic growth had long ago converted their haunts into a pathless wilderness roamed through by savages ignorant of agriculture, commerce or manufactures beyond the rudest implements, destitute of permanent habitations, and dependant upon the precarious fruits of the chase for a scanty subsistence. This singular race, it has been found utterly impracticable to imbue with a taste for the habits, usages and mode of life of Europeans. They have gradually retired on the approach of the white man, or perished in the contact; and Providence for its own good purposes, has destined the colonists from the old world, to come in and possess the land, driving before them the aboriginal inhabitants, like the Canaanites of old, that it may be held by a peculiar people fated to work out a mighty problem in the political and moral destinies of mankind. Thus it has been ordered, that the theatre for the great experiment in republican government should be a vast, fertile, uncultivated wild, where every thing was new and untouched, yet abounding in all the elements of future greatness, with nothing yet moulded into form—nothing old but its woods and its streams—no superstitions to conquer—no temples sacred to some time honored faith—no institutions venerable for their antiquity and hallowed by immemorial usage, but reason and truth were offered an unoccupied field.

Hitherto republics were either military communities or small and turbulent associations, too limited in territory to possess great national strength, and sub-



ject to all the outbreaks and violent revolutions, which beset small states where personal influence or family combinations can disturb the public harmony, and direct the power of the State to the ends of personal aggrandisement. Sparta was little better than a camp, and her institutions only a modification of martial law. Greece in her palmyest days, was but a collection of licentious mobs, although luxury unchastened by a spiritual religion, did for a time spread a sickly halo of refinement over her corrupt but elegant society.

Rome, originally a monarchy, was never a Republic but in name, her history is but a series of contests between the patricians and plebians, terminating at last in the usurpation of imperial power by successful military leaders. It was reserved for America to begin with a people highly imbued with the true spirit of freedom, with no hereditary distinction, no cast or class of society pretending to peculiar privileges, or possessed of exclusive power or wealth, and at the same time, a territory too extensive to be swayed by local or family combinations. It was, indeed, the fullness of time when the first emigrants left Europe, to seek on these shores an assylum from the persecution of the old world. The Puritans of England—the Hugonots of France—the injured sons of Ireland—they had felt the evils of misrule, and learned to appreciate the advantages of freedom. The future destinies of our country are in no small degree affected by the characteristic peculiarities of those who were the parent stock of its future inhabitants. The colonists were almost exclusively of the European variety of the Caucasian

race—the race of white men. They too, possessed the virtues, which at the period of the first colonization, distinguished the people of Great Britain and Ireland; a love of liberty, a spirit of adventure, and industry, and a practical wisdom that enabled them to out-work and out-fight every other people on earth. They did not unite with, but extirpated the aborigines, whereas the colonies from Spain and Portugal are almost lost in their intimate admixture with the native tribes of South-America, thus producing a motley mass, whose march to national greatness is so fitful and devious, as to engender well grounded fears of their ultimate success. To whatever cause philosophy may ascribe it, the fact is well established, that the mongolian or mixed races do not possess, the hardy enterprize and steady perseverance—the stern resolve and straight forward good sense which marks the European white man. Although the Southern Continent was first settled, yet the Spaniards and Portuguese had scarcely penetrated beyond a few hundred miles into the interior, and at their expulsion, had rather taught the native population their vices than the arts of civilized and educated Europeans. Had the United States been colonized by the descendants of the Moorish races of the peninsula, instead of the white men of the North of Europe—the Narraganset—the Mohawk, and the Yemassee, would at this day have kindled their council fires in the land of their fathers, and however a sickly humanity, might rejoice at the apparent justice of their preservation, the world would have lost the opportunity of spreading civilization and true religion over this vast continent, by the only class of

men whom nature has impelled to those enterprizes, which result in a high state of refinement and cultivation—and it is perfectly consistent with the great purposes of Providence, that the aboriginals of this country should give place to a generation, who have already converted their hunting grounds and forests into a populous and cultivated region, and substituted for their rude barbarous and bloody code, in which private revenge was inculcated as a virtue and stealthy assassination held for courage—a free Republic and mild and equal laws—and a system of warfare ameliorated by all the usages of civilized nations—the wilderness has been made to “blossom as the rose,” and the Christian temple is reared on the spot where the altars of a blind superstition once smoked with human sacrifices.

The colonists left Europe at a period when the champions of truth had already roused the world to a full contemplation of the injustice and impolicy of religious persecution and political intolerance. They brought to our shores, not only devoted hearts, but understandings deeply impressed with the sublime principles of equal rights and self-government. They comprehended and vindicated their rights with a wisdom and learning so profound and extensive, and defended them with a courage so resolute and persevering, that the world looked on with equal wonder and admiration at their glorious resolve and gallant bearing. From the first settlement of the country, the colonists maintained a strenuous and firm determination to resist the attempt of the mother country to engraft her monarchical and aristocratic institutions upon their stock. They claimed and maintain-

ed a practical democracy, and were perseveringly maturing the resolve, and the means to secure an entire independence of any power; but to use a revolutionary phrase, "God and the Continental Congress." With an infatuation which seemed to be the instinct inevitable fate, Great Britain persevered in a series of measures, calculated to wound the pride and alarm the spirit of independence, which animated the colonists, and thus precipitated an event at some time inevitable. Already the theory of self-government was well understood, the utter absence of all right in a monarchy three thousand miles off, to enact laws for a people of a different climate, manners, circumstances, wants and habits, was strongly felt and fearlessly uttered. To be taxed or ruled, except by themselves, through their own immediate representatives, was known to be tyranny under any form or modification which casuistry could devise. It is not strange that such a people so situated, imbued with the true spirit of freedom, educated, persecuted, with a whole continent for their assylum, and liberty for their prize, should have embraced the first opportunity for successful revolt. The people, too, at that period, were admirably fitted to undertake a dangerous and bloody struggle. They did not tremble at the roar of battle—"the spirit stirring drum—the ear piercing fife—and all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war"—found in them congenial spirits, for her youth had been trained to feats of arms along the lake frontier, and had joined in deadly conflict on the plains of Abraham, and beneath the walls of Quebec. The "old French war," had brought them often in fearful

contact with the remorseless savage, and the disciplined troops of France; and the first hostile gun fired by the foreign mercenaries, sent to awe them into submission, was a signal for every yeoman to clean and repair his faithful "king's arms," with which he had fought the battles of a nation, who threatened to reward his services by reducing him to the abject condition of a disfranchised colonist. The frequent call on the early settler to protect his home from desolation by his own right arm, had created a military feeling, a promptness for conflict, which distinguished the American Colonists. No equal population could produce so great a proportion of brave, hardy and resolute soldiers. A people who placed sentinels to protect the ploughman while he was tilling his fields, and habitually attended church with loaded muskets, was not likely to pale at the sound of a drum, or fail to return the fire of a foe.

Already the thirteen Colonies had for the council and the field, ADAMS, OTIS, FRANKLIN and JEFFERSON—MOULTRIE, RUTLEDGE, GREENE and WASHINGTON, indeed, a galaxy of talent, learning, conduct and courage fully equal to the gigantic effort of laying the foundations of a mighty empire of freemen. The various fortune with which they accomplished their design, from the first gun which was fired at Lexington—the dreadful carnage of Bunker Hill—whose roar of battle was so promptly and gallantly seconded from the ramparts of the old Palmetto Fort, thus pledging the North and the South to stand by each other in the coming conflict—down through all the ensuing struggles to the eventful day, on which the

white ensign floated on the lines of Yorktown, and CORNWALLIS and his vanquished army, the meteor flag of Britain folded in token of submission, marched from their entrenchments, and surrendered to the American army, is familiar, as household words, to every American. This last triumph left the British too powerless to attempt another conflict. The eagle soared in triumph above the cowering lion, and our glorious stars and stripes, the gorgeous banner of our infant nation floated over a liberated continent in undisputed supremacy. These things are present to the minds, and engraven upon the hearts of every one, in whose veins the blood of '76 holds its course. Every section our country felt by turns the scourge of war, and contributed its share to that vast renown with which our fathers vindicated their solemn Declaration of American Independence.

After the excitement of the conflict was past, and the victors were left in the quiet possession of a country rescued from its invaders, came the severest trial of their virtue. A victorious army surrendered their commission to a liberated people, and united in building up a national government, which while it presents to foreign countries an unbroken front of consolidated strength, bidding proud defiance to aggression from abroad, secures to each State the full and uncontrolled exercise of every sovereign power necessary for the protection of the rights of individuals and the vindication of its domestic institutions;—a contrivance of such singular wisdom as to excite the astonishment and puzzle the comprehension of the profoundest statesmen of the old world, who have been taught to consider the absolute authority of

monarchy essential to the successful government of a great and powerful nation. Those temporary and partial jarrings of our political machine, incident to all that is new and untried, but which are always adjusted by the great regulating principle of the Constitution, are hailed by European sceptics as presages of approaching dissolution, who take occasion to call on the disciples of monarchy to strengthen their faith and renew their allegiance to regal institutions to which they ascribe the exclusive virtues of permanence and strength, while we who witness these occasional irregularities and experience how surely they yield at last to the venerated rules of the Constitution, see in them only instances to admire and wonder at the simplicity and irresistible power of the great conservative principles of the Constitution—mutual justice—mutual concession—and the unimpaired exercise of those “rights reserved to the States respectively and to the people.”

Let us now examine into the state of Europe, and see how far the contagion of our example has spread throughout the body politic of the old world. The armies of France which shared in our struggle for freedom, could not mingle so intimately with the patriot bands of the Revolution without catching the enthusiasm which animated them—their brave associates, they could not fail to kindle in the common blaze which warmed and animated the devoted soldiers of the Revolution. They inquired—they understood, and ardently espoused the principles which they so generously united to vindicate. They had bled and conquered in the cause of freedom—could they ever cease to be her disciples and vindicate her rights?

LAFAYETTE was the pupil and companion of WASHINGTON—his followers were the comrades of the men of the Revolution. Their blood mingled in a common conflict—they toiled together in a mutual struggle, and united in kindred acclamations on their joint victory—the victory of an injured people, striving to shake off the yoke of arbitrary, self-constituted authority—the victory of republicans over royalty—of the people over their rulers. It was natural they should carry back to Europe hearts warmed with a love of liberty, and minds strongly imbued with those principles they had aided to vindicate with a gallant bearing, which has won for them forever a place in the annals of our nation and the hearts of our people. At the return of the army from America, the people of France were suffering under the accumulated wrongs of centuries. The legislative power was practically in an absolute monarch, whose throne was supported by an aristocracy that monopolized the commissions in the army, and held vast estates which contributed little or nothing to the public revenue. The clergy too was wealthy and corrupt. The houses of the people were subject to midnight searches, and few dared to inquire into the fate of a state prisoner when the door of the Bastille once closed upon him. A licentious philosophy had weakened the religious faith of the community, without substituting any other efficient guard against moral delinquency; and the reasoning of her casuists could not fail to teach the people that their own strength was ample to break their chains, and with their fragments to wreak a terrible retribution upon the heads of their oppressors. The suc-



cess of our revolutionary struggle—the participation of her own soldiers, and above all the free and frequent avowal by them of the principles on which that conflict was waged, could not fail to diffuse through the whole mass of the French people, the influences of our example. Ages had amassed a fearful account of misrule against the reigning powers, and however humanity may weep over the excesses of the Revolution, it is not unnatural that maddened by the contrast of sudden emancipation they should have inflicted an indiscriminate vengeance upon all who were connected with those, who opposed their efforts, or attempted to interrupt their progress. Long and bloody as the Revolutionary conflict was, the very opposition of the established governments only contributed to spread still further, to scatter still more widely the seeds of Revolution over all Europe. Wherever the armies of the Republic moved, they carried with them the principles of the sovereignty of the people. The very storm which raged with such awful violence, bore upon its wings the germ of democracy, and it will remain ready to spring up whenever the weight of military power is removed, by the successful efforts of the people. France has already secured for herself national blessings, which are enough to compensate for the long agony of her struggle, although far removed from the final accomplishment of her just and laudable aspirations. As she was the first to adopt the principles of our Revolution, so has she accomplished most by her enterprize. She is no longer the inheritance of a family. Her King belongs to France, not France to him. The people called him to the throne—he does not claim it by divine

right, but holds it under a charter from the people. Her hereditary nobility—her hierarchy are suppressed. Her legislature comes from the people, and sympathize with them. The more equal distribution and minute division of landed estates—the elevated character of her artizans and peasantry—the extended influence of her merchants—the trial by jury—the right of the people organized as a national guard, to bear arms, above all the sense of freedom that animates this well organized militia, are all sure guarantees against a return to the age of absolute monarchy and hereditary nobility—a pampered and corrupt clergy—what France has done in three days, she stands ready again to achieve, and once more take in her own hands the power delegated to her rulers if they abuse their trust, and for this is she indebted under God to the principles promulgated on the 4th of July. 1776, Over the rest of Continental Europe, the spirit of liberty is silently, but surely making its way. The spread of education throughout Germany, is fast preparing that people to vindicate their consanguinity to the sturdy race, from which so many of the apostles of freedom boast their descent. In tracing the progress of free principles, nothing cheers the heart with such delightful hopes as the unquestionable fact, that education is always the handmaid and companion of liberty. Rejected and persecuted by the brutal and ignorant soldiery, she finds a welcome and a shelter in the secluded shades of the universities of Germany, and among their students her most devoted disciples—her bravest defenders—and it is remarkable that in our own country the first advocates of American indepen-

dence were men whose acquirements as philosophers, and profound learning, threw around the struggle a light so bright and glorious as to challenge the respect and admiration of the most accomplished statesmen of the age. No class of our citizens contributed more zealous and unflinching advocates of the great cause than the members of the learned professions. How triumphant a rebuke is this well known fact to the pitiful pretence that democracy is essentially vulgar—its disciples ignorant Jack Cades; and that the patronage of a monarchy is essential to refinement and the cultivation of letters. How ennobling the conviction that the spread of learning will keep pace with our institutions, and that a nation enlightened and educated is in truth alone capable of perpetuating regulated liberty. American statesmen—go on in the great and honorable effort to train up the future men of the republic in her paths. Scatter in bounteous profusion over our fair land the light of education, so that like the light of heaven, it may shine on every citizen of the republic—for then will liberty be armed with a shield, brilliant as the ægis of Minerva, and girded with a zone lovely as the Cestus of Venus.

The masses of Germany are preparing to demand and vindicate the rights of the people, notwithstanding the stern policy of its present rulers. Yet there is a gigantic combination to arrest the progress of democracy and prop the decaying thrones of Europe. Her leading potentates unite in repressing every effort to innovate upon the established sway of hereditary monarchy, by alliances cemented by the blood of the martyrs of liberty, and protected by the bayonets

of a hired soldiery. The hard earnings of the peasant are wrung from him to pay the mercenary who points a bayonet at his throat if he dares to whisper of violated rights and arbitrary rule. The resources of the nations of Europe, now wasted in the maintenance of her vast standing armies and her aristocracy and priesthood, if devoted to the improvement of the means of general comfort and convenience, in ten years would connect every city with railroads, crowd every river with steamboats, place a school in every village, and bring plenty and ease to every habitation. Agriculture, commerce and manufactures would elevate the moral and intellectual standard of her whole population, and equalize in a great degree those blessings which providence intended to be accessible to all, who by their virtues and their industry deserved to possess them. Man, elevated to his native dignity, would become again the being his maker formed him. The chains of the prisoner would fall off—the dreadful dungeons, where wretches have groaned away in hopeless solitude years of misery, would be levelled to their foundations—the secret places of inquisitorial torment would cease to be the shelter for cruelty and murder—religion, too, would no longer be disgraced by fanatical persecutions, or supported by extortion—no wars waged to gratify individual revenge, or settle a disputed succession, would force from the cottage the reluctant conscript—the palace would no longer overshadow the squalid abode of wretchedness and want; but man, left to the free exercise of his faculties, would acquire the means and contract a taste for that honorable independence which already distinguishes our own citizens. Such

is the prize for which the people of Europe are destined to contend. The conflict must be as dreadful as the issue is momentous. The powers that be will not yield without a death struggle. It is no easy task to strip royalty of its allurements, patronage of its influence, and power of its attractions. Mankind are divided between the disciples of the sovereignty of the people, and the divine right of hereditary rulers. One or the other must be admitted as the basis of lawful government: they cannot exist together. Placed in the van in this great contest for human rights, the attitude of our own country is at once grand and awful; and our sympathy as well as our own hopes of success induce us to look on with deep interest, while the battle is preparing on the other side of the water. The power which is busy in the old world to sustain its ancient institutions is of fearful extent:—vast armies of mercenaries, commanded by the aristocracy—hereditary fidelity, long cherished habits and venerable prejudices, present formidable impediments to the progress of truth, unaided and unsupported. If left to the exercise of their unbiassed judgment, nature has infused into the mass of mankind an intuitive perception of right and wrong, which directs them with unerring sagacity to pursue their own interests. But ignorance is obnoxious to the delusions of prejudice, and in all ages, a love of power and its appendages has influenced the bold, active and persevering to employ fraud or force to gain the co-operation of the multitude, to aggrandize, at their own expense, the master spirits of the age. The past history of Europe presents the degra-

ing spectacle of the mass of the people busy in the task of forging their own fetters.

In theory, man has both the capacity and the right of self-government; yet the past is a series of intrigues and crimes, planned and perpetrated to rob him of this precious prerogative. The American Revolution was the last and the greatest recuperative struggle for the restoration of the rights of man—and final success depends on the extended influence of our example. The rest of the world will be our allies or our adversaries, so that every effort for freedom affects our interest and enlists our warmest sympathies; and we look to the continent of Europe to vindicate the character of a people, whose descendants on this side the Atlantic are in the complete fruition of that liberty, the love of which is their well known characteristic. At the close of the American war, liberty strode over France, Germany, and indeed all Europe, with the steps of a giant. But her career has been checked by the wars which grew out of the French Revolution. The stupendous power of large armies trained and conducted by hereditary leaders, has thrown mountains upon her, to crush if it could not extinguish her;—still the frequent struggles which shake and totter the thrones of her monarchs, give warning, that though subdued, she is not annihilated—that the vital principle yet survives—and may with an earthquake-throw shake off the load that oppresses her, tear every throne from its foundation, and whelm their possessors in irretrievable ruin.

The course of freedom is onward. Europe has already learned too much to retrograde. The art of printing securely hands down to each succeeding

generation the knowledge and the sentiments of the past. Nature is persevering to demand her rights, and, sooner or later, the sovereignty of the people—that elementary truth of political science—must triumph over the artificial and unnatural contrivances which have for so long opposed its sway. England, too, that stepmother who so harshly drove us from her, by treatment which her own spirit taught us not to bear, is destined yet to profit by the development and vindication of the principles of our Revolution. The fixed character of her people, their faithful attachment to her ancient establishments, but above all, their deep rooted regard for the really great and noble features in her laws and constitution, all contribute to extreme caution and hesitancy in pushing on the work of reform, from the apprehension, that the throes and struggles which attend the effort, may shake and loosen the solid and cherished foundations of English liberty. But although the caution be commendable, it may be too slow for the spirit of the age. The reluctant justice which led to Catholic emancipation was but the beginning of that retribution due to Ireland for centuries of misrule, and was robbed of half its grace by the tardy and surly acquiescence of the hereditary councillors of England. The vast landed estates held by the nobility, who in their capacity of legislators, secure to themselves by oppressive corn laws and other enactments, vast incomes out of the scanty earnings of the laboring poor—a clergy, too, enjoying princely revenues and legislative power, independent of their congregations—the unequal representation of decayed municipalities—and the denial even to voters of the independence of

the ballot box, are all so much at war with the deep sense of right, the profound reverence of the English people for the principles of liberty and equality, that the entire mass of her people are in a state of irritation, so inflammable that any unpopular succession, any rash act may excite a spirit that will not be laid until the nobility and clergy are reduced to their natural level—until the popular voice is heard and obeyed—until her laborers are permitted to obtain food for their families where they can procure it cheapest, and thus be relieved from that intolerable weight of unceasing toil, which wears out their bodies, and maddens, degrades and brutalizes their minds. Ireland, too, with seven millions of sturdy and brave but deeply injured people, have a long arrear of wrong to settle. The maintenance of a clergy imposed upon them against their consent, and paid through the odious levies of the tythe proctor—the forcible privation of a local legislature—are a few among the items of account which await the day of reckoning, which however long postponed, must one day come. Erin will yet write the melancholy but noble epitaph upon the tomb of her martyred **EMMETT**. Yes—the people of England and Ireland look with a steady gaze on the progress of our experiment in self-government. They see us—able to cope with them in the deadly conflicts of war, and emulating them in all the enterprises of peaceful industry—contented at home, with all the necessaries of life—and respected abroad for our power, our good faith and national justice; with no hereditary nobility—no irresponsible clergy—no unequally selected legislature—no crown—no sceptre—no laws prohibiting the poor from buying food,



except at a price so high as to secure princely incomes to the landed aristocracy: and when they see all this consistent with peace at home and national greatness abroad, they ask themselves the momentous question, whether England should longer continue to endure them? Nay, all Europe is inoculated with the principles this day proclaimed to the world as "self evident truths"—and the thrones of her princes are literally held at sufferance. A conviction of the unsafe foundations on which they are built is constantly leading to alternate relaxation to soothe, and undue severity to awe their subjects. Their governments are all artificial and unnatural, based partly on force, partly on the prejudices and superstitions of the governed. But as these last give way to the lights of learning and the bright example of our own government, the body of the people will learn that their own physical force, when properly directed, can sweep away the artificial barriers which impede the full enjoyment of equal rights with an irresistible torrent, and conaign those who raised them to irreversible overthrow.

Governments founded upon a violation of the inalienable rights of man, are necessarily liable to violent convulsions. There is a constant struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed. Whereas, those which are based upon the democratic principle have all the stability of truth. The people have then no motive to change their government, for it is their own—no usurper to dethrone, for they are themselves the only sovereign—no oppressive laws to shake off, for they alone can make and repeal them. All that was necessary to put these simple elements of rational

government into successful operation, was to steady the action of the people and provide against the fluctuations of the popular will; and this our wise and virtuous ancestors have accomplished by the means of fundamental written constitutions, and a legislature composed of representatives, bound by those charters, and responsible to their constituents through the ballot box. Our own is now the most stable government on the face of the globe, and the least liable to convulsion and revolution. It is founded on the rock of truth—it leaves the governed nothing to regret, nothing to rescue. The power is all their own, and their interest learns them to use it for the general good; and the day is fast approaching when capitalists on the other side of the water will be eager to place their treasures where they will be safe from civil convulsions; and those who seek for security and repose, will find it beneath the broad shadow of our own liberty tree, where they may securely sit down with “none to molest or make afraid.” But the thrones of Europe are seated over a volcano, whose elements are constantly boiling and rumbling beneath, and every tremor fills them with foreboding fears of an explosion that will engulf them all. If the dungeons of Austria could speak of the wretches who linger incarcerated for no other crime than the open avowal of the very principles upon which our own Declaration of Independence is based, we should see motives strong enough to rouse the vengeance of outraged humanity. Or let us traverse the desert steeps of Siberia, and descend thousands of feet into the deep, cold, dark caverns of her rocky mountains, and there behold in her dreary mines of the Ural, the

wasted forms of miserable wretches in the human shape—men grizzled and cadaverous, over whose countenances rage and despair have united to cast an unearthly hue; look, too, at half starved and shivering women crowded into some nook of naked rock, with tangled tresses, pale and haggard, until they seem not things of this earth, deprived not only of every necessary means of happiness, but shut out from the light of day—buried far beneath its surface, condemned to toil among the bowels of the earth in silence and in misery—their very names no longer permitted to greet their ears, but numbered like beasts and subjected to the irresponsible cruelty of task-masters, with hearts hard as the cavernous rocks that imprison them. This mass of human wretchedness—these hopeless prisoners—what dreadful crimes have they committed that they should suffer more than infernal torments, inflicted by their own fellow beings? Oh, my countrymen, these are the gallant patriots of Poland, who fought in a kindred cause with our own WASHINGTON—and their wives and sisters and mothers, reared with all the tenderness of refinement, are the wretched sufferers who bear them company. Such are the fruits of monarchy—such are the rewards which tyrants hold out to the champions of their country's freedom. How long will an avenging God stay his red right arm? Why the impious wretch at whose nod these things are done dwells in palaces, and feasting and revelry are called into requisition to solace and rejoice him. But the day of dreadful retribution must come at last. And the 4th of July, 1776, is destined to become not only the jubilee of a nation, but of a liberated world!

Let us now return to our father land, and pass a few moments in viewing the effects of the Revolution upon the political, moral and domestic propensities of our own citizens, and endeavor to trace out its influences in rearing the national character; and I trust that the time devoted to the investigation will lead every one to strengthen his attachment to the laws and constitution of the republic, and confirm his veneration, by enabling us all to give "a reason for the faith that is in us." The first remarkable effect of the successful struggle to shake off the yoke of foreign dominion, and assume an equal station among the nations of the earth, was the entire emancipation of the mind, the spirit of free inquiry, and an intrepid reliance on elementary truths, which became a settled rule of action, both in relation to moral and physical investigations, and which has exercised a decided influence both upon our laws and institutions, and upon the arts and sciences as cultivated among us.

The Revolution itself was based upon abstract theory, the practical application of which to the actual purposes of life was held to be wild and visionary, by the political philosophers of Europe—yet it has succeeded so far; and so congenial is it to the most cherished feelings of our nature, that the temptation to persevere is irresistible. Success has given confidence, and our people are resolved that they will receive nothing upon faith—that that which is false in principle cannot be true in practice—and what is consistent with the dictates of common sense, is at least worth a fair trial. In Europe, the minute division of labor confines each operative to a department so limited, and his attention is so fixed upon perfecting his own exclusive share, that his mind is not call-

ed on to compare and combine. His whole attention is directed to perfect his own peculiar work. He has no comprehension of the mechanical philosophy which is applied to the entire machine. His ingenuity is not stimulated to invent, to improve—nay, he is rebuked if he make the attempt—and he is taught that to innovate savors of disaffection. In countries whose institutions are based upon errors which long acquiescence have rendered venerable, to improve is dangerous—it is a kind of disloyalty. The mind insensibly habituates itself rather to palliate evils than to correct them. But here at the Revolution all was new—our country—our institutions—our very liberty—all unfettered by any usage grown into a cherished habit; no institutions venerable from early associations, or hallowed by traditionary recollections. Like our first parents going forth from the garden of Eden,

“The world was all before them where to choose  
Their place of rest and Providence their guide.”

with this striking peculiarity, that the men of that day had been reared in the school of adversity, and had gotten by heart its hard but useful lessons: a combination so peculiar never yet distinguished the founders of a nation. Profound in learning, chastened by experience, refined and cultivated, and yet wholly untrammelled. Resorting confidently to elementary truth, they submitted every thing to its severe, unerring test. In the mechanic arts we are distinguished by boldness and originality of invention, and a peculiar adaptation to the wants of a young and growing country, abounding in all the materials of improvement—and the demand for labor excites an ambition so universal, that every workman becomes a critic, and improves as an inventor. They contrive and ex-

periment, so that the entire intellect of the whole body of our mechanics is at work projecting and inventing the means of saving time and labor.

In politics and morals the same independence of intellect is producing similar results. As the perfection of machinery is simplicity, so in morals, we hold nothing so old as to be too venerable for scrutiny—nothing so sacred as not to be submitted to the test of enlightened and respectful investigation. It is the habit of our people to expose every institution, and every rule of action to the touchstone of common sense—so that improvement consists not as in other countries, in proping and supporting a decayed fabric reared by error, and hitherto maintained by blind superstition, but in pulling down whatever is useless and out of proportion, we improve by dispensing with every part of our institutions which cannot stand firm and immovable, based upon the eternal foundation of equal rights. The statesmen of Europe look on with amazement at what they deem our bold and reckless career, and the self-confiding rashness with which we disregard all those appliances which they have been educated to believe essential to the peace, the prosperity, and the power of a nation. They ask in wonder how we get along without an hereditary aristocracy, to give stability to our laws, by constituting a permanent portion of the legislative power, or an established church to preserve the religion of the state a standing army to restrain the turbulence of the mob, and they are lost in mingled pity and astonishment at the desperate and anarchical reply—that our aristocracy is composed of the most worthy among the body of the people, who find their way to the halls of legislation,

with no other patent of nobility than their own superior wisdom and virtue. That we leave religion to the voluntary support of its sincere votaries, and rely on the armed body of the people to preserve the peace and execute the laws. Our Revolution began a new era. The true nature of political power is thoroughly understood—the sovereignty of the people is not merely admitted, but successfully reduced to practice. Education disseminated through the body of the citizens, the possession and habitual use of arms, constitute Americans a peculiar people.—The coincidence has no parallel, and it needs no precedent to augur well of the future. When learning was the attribute of a select few, and information was extended by oral repetition, the mass of the people were easily imposed upon. But general education and the habit of reading so greatly promoted by the daily press, renders it impracticable long to mislead or delude the majority. That power which depends upon the ignorance of those whose physical energies are essential to its own preservation, can only be maintained by the proscription of general education and a free press. It was reserved to us to resort to first principles—to reject crowns and sceptres as mere baubles, to dazzle the weak and awe the ignorant. Our rulers need no throne but an enfranchised continent—no sceptre but the people's confidence—no crown but the light that is reflected from free and fearless people, upon the heads of faithful public servants.

The experience of Europe constitutes no criterion from which to infer the destinies of our institutions. The national character is essentially unlike. The people here are accustomed to live by their own la-

bor, till their own fields, choose their own rulers, and fight their own battles. They have no institutions so sacred as not to be habitually submitted to the test of principle. No orders who have been so accustomed, the one to rule, the other to submit as to be shocked at any transposition of functions. We have but one order, and that a royal one—the sovereign people. We obey not man, but only the law of the land which no one is so exalted as to violate with impunity, none so humble as not to feel its irresistible protection; neither is it wonderful, that we have a greater portion of men of eminent ability in our public councils since the selection, instead of being confined to privileged orders, reaches the whole body of the people. Some of the leading statesmen and military officers of the Revolution were laboring mechanics. **SHERMAN** and **GREENE** owed their elevation to nature alone. To this cause we owe the fact that young America has been able both in diplomacy and war, to cope with the most adroit statesmen and accomplished leaders of the old world; and to this cause the world will hereafter attribute in no small degree the wonderful progress of this country in all that enlightens, and elevates the political and moral character of a people. The abrogation of all birthright tenures of office, even the highest, if in other countries and among an uneducated mass, it leads to turbulence and conflict, produces entirely different effects upon us—it unfetters the intellect of the whole people, rouses the talent of the nation, by holding out the bright reward of persevering industry and elevated action to every aspirant, and suffers nothing of the national mind to languish in obscurity for want of stimulus. The most exalted station is equally the



birthright of the humblest citizen, if he will win it by his superior merit. Not only our laws, but what is still more important, the practice under them is to disregard every other title to office, but individual personal character; ours is a practical democracy, and our motto—

*“Palmas ferat qui meruit.”*

So thoroughly is this principle disseminated, that every aspiring mother whispers it into the ear of her son, when she would rouse him to exertion and give him thus “a motive and a cue to action,”

Our country is distinguished from most civilized nations, by the abundance of the necessaries of life, which every where prevails. The very literature of Europe seems filled with incredible fable. The wretched abodes of squalid poverty, beneath the very shadow of abounding wealth, stories of educated men and females reared in all the luxuries of life, for want of employment, pining in an obscure garret, shivering with cold, and perishing from starvation, cease to excite sympathy from the conviction that intrudes itself upon the reader—that it is impossible. So accustomed are we to consider at least the necessaries of life a matter of course, that when we peruse accounts of whole districts of people wasted by pestilence, brought on by starvation and unwholesome food, we have no experience by which to estimate the extent of the misery which pinching want inflicts; and almost relieve ourselves from painful sympathy by the suggestion—this must be fictitious sorrow. Yet such scenes are awful realities which swell the mass of human wretchedness, in many of the civilized and refined nations of the old world. Behold the contrast in this land of liberty—where

food is so abundant, that the very felons who inhabit our penitentiaries, are better fed than the laboring poor in most of the nations of Europe. Throughout our wide domain, every human being not afflicted with disease, by the most moderate exertion, obtains not merely the means of sustaining life, but that abundance which enables the strong and robust to extend a liberal charity to the unfortunate. Such is the mighty bounty of heaven to this fair land, that her sons may "eat the fat and drink the sweat, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared." Crimes against property are rare and always without excuse. A tythe of the ingenuity and labor which it would cost a thief to acquire his precarious plunder, would support him as an honest man.

The immediate effect of this facility in supplying the absolute wants of life, is to afford to the laborer time to think, to read, to feel—his knowledge is extended, his mind expanded, his heart purified, his sentiments refined, his self-respect established. Brutality and vice is the characteristic of an overworked population. They are callous to the refined and better feelings of their nature. Absorbed in the single object of procuring food, they sink below even the brute creation. Excessive labor bows down and wears out the body, and degrades the whole man, his pride is humbled, his hopes crushed by an unceasing round of toil, leaving scarce time for wasted nature to recruit her energies, and this continues till he crawls into an obscure grave, cursing in the bitterness of his heart the day that he was born, leaving too, to his poor children no inheritance but the same routine of incessant labor. Nothing but institutions founded upon a fraudulent inequality of rights could

compel man to such degradation. The contrast in our own America, should fill every bosom with honest pride—here there is not a more enlightened and intelligent class of society than our operative mechanics—none who more diligently scan and scrutinize every measure, which bears upon the welfare of the public; and the right of suffrage, and their enrolment in the militia, render them able in every way to preserve those free institutions, under which they assume their equal standing in society. They have time to contemplate their native dignity as freemen, to educate and direct their children, to participate in the government of their country, and when called on, their arms are able and their hearts ready to defend it. A new country thus abounding in the necessaries of life, was the fit theatre on which to display in all their perfection the genuine principles of democracy—for here alone, the people are independent and enlightened.

The uniformity of language which is destined to prevail over so vast a country, capable of sustaining a population almost without limit, is an important element in forming a national character. The general education carried with them by the settlers of our wild lands, preserves the purity, and the press confirms the use of one language in every quarter. This is itself a bond of union—as nothing makes us feel more at home than to meet with persons who speak our native language. It is a fraternal tie that makes us feel they are our fellow-citizens.

The physical character of our country is also well calculated to co-operate with other influences in moulding our national character. Its immense ex-

panse—stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with every variety of climate, from the rocky shores of New-England, to the sunny wilds of Florida, traversed by mighty rivers that roll on through untrodden forests—wide prairies and vallies teeming with all the luxurience of primal fertility. Mountains that touch the skies—cateracts that thunder and shake the solid earth, and throw back the broken waters to the heavens, reflecting all the glories of the rainbow. This grand outline filled with magnificent harbors—cities where commerce spreads her sails, cultivated fields, delightful villages, a population refined and enlightened—proudly confiding in their ability to maintain this rich inheritance against a world in arms, and busy in all the arts and pursuits of civilized life. Already our great waters traversed by steamers that stem their sweeping currents, and roads of commerce and travel, fast constructing, which will enable our people to pass from its extremities so rapidly, that our domain will unite compactness and consolidated strength, with all the advantages of an extended empire; and by frequent intercourse, and mutual protection bind together every quarter in the indissoluble bonds of fraternal good will and perpetual union.

With such a country it is not to be wondered at, that our citizens should present a manliness, a self-confiding, self-poised character, which a superficial observer mistakes for rudeness, and our language acquire a boldness and freedom so unlike the humility and deference of the lower classes of Europe. Our citizens know and feel that they possess a great and noble country, and that it is all their own—that they

hold it by no other tenure than their own stout hearts and strong arms, and they are proud of it. Our very boys catch the enthusiasm, and seem impatient of protracted childhood, and eager to join the throng of enterprizing, busy men. The wants of life inspire no dread, its vicissitudes no apprehension: confiding in their own energies, and attracted by the extended field of action open to them, they bound forward in the career of life with no hesitating fears, no paltering forebodings. The poor, friendless boy soon becomes the valued man of business, the accomplished orator or statesman, and looks back without a blush to his humble origin. Young men of my country—it is to the event we now commemorate, you owe these bright destinies. A Republic is the kind nurse of manly enterprize and honorable emulation. Love the great commonwealth your fathers this day founded, and be faithful to it in every variety of its fortunes. Already has our character as a nation become so fixed that Europeans who seek, as our progenitors in their day did, an asylum, and a scope and verge of action in this new and growing empire, easily assimilate themselves to our habits, and soon sympathize in all our peculiar predilections and national characteristics, and thus increase the strength and extend the cultivation of our wide spread and fertile land. It is just, that we who already have a home in this holy land of liberty, should imitate the hospitable knights of St. John at Jerusalem, and welcome every pilgrim that journeys to her dwelling place and would worship at her altars, as a companion and a brother—open our gates to the way worn traveller, and bid him welcome to our shores. The nature of our in-

stitutions has been manifested to the world in our intercourse with foreign nations. A firm determination to do no wrong, and to submit to none, has not failed to command admiration and respect, while our gallant army and navy have afforded to foreigners the most conclusive arguments, that the same spirit that won our freedom is ever prompt to vindicate and protect it. In truth, the habits and pursuits of our people from the first settlement of these shores, have made them a bold and hardy race. They were on the first occupation of the soil compelled to meet a savage and cruel foe, unrestrained by the usages of honorable warfare. The path of the white man through the forest was waylaid by a wily enemy, and midnight was made horrible by the conflagration of his dwelling. Always exposed, the settler learned to be prompt and decisive in action; and the annals of chivalry afford no parallel to the feats of noble daring which graced our unpretending ancestors. They grew to be emphatically a brave and gallant band.

Their early pursuits, too, made them familiar with privation and danger. On shore they encountered the fatigues of the chase, and on the main they pursued Leviathan from pole to pole, and braved him in his own element. Thus habituated to look death in the face, they lost all unworthy fears of his approach, and left to their posterity an example which they must never forget.

Of all the moral influences which have resulted from the Declaration of American Independence, none are more obvious or more cherished than the change it has worked in the condition and character

of women. As rational beings, subject to all the ills of life, and constituting a moiety of mankind, every revolution in human affairs affects them for good or for evil.

To see in full relief the mighty change which this event is fated to work in all that concerns the well being of women, we must contrast their situation and character in other climes and under other institutions. History justifies the remark, that every advance in civilization tends to ameliorate their condition.— Among savages, the strength of man enables him to restrain them within the humblest sphere, and consign them to the most menial offices. Each being uncultivated, those sympathies which give to companionship its charms are neither felt or cherished. The first advances of civilization divide the men into haughty tyrants and abject menials—and beauty becomes the spoil of the conquerors, who deck themselves with it with the same heartless pride with which they wear their other ornaments, and value it no more—and like their jewels, they lock their women up from the rest of the world, where they pine in listless luxury; their best affections wither and decay for want of that mutual sensibility that alone can awaken and develope them. What is the queen of the harem fed on dainties, clothed with splendor, but a poor bird fluttering in a golden cage, and longing for that liberty which itself is happiness. The gorgeous trappings of eastern luxury but cloak bosoms heaving with concealed attachments, or hearts withering in the blight of suppressed emotions. A youth of tasteless folly and an age of apathy is the fate of woman, in countries where they are treated only as beautiful

appendages to their imperious masters. The Spartan mother was valued rather for those attributes which are peculiar to the belles of Patagonia, and their children were taken from them in their infancy lest they should imbibe the weakness of domestic affections, which it was held a duty rather to suppress than cultivate. Women were deemed unworthy to develop the hearts or direct and cultivate the minds of their sons. Even the Athenian women became rather corrupted than refined, in an age in which the mysteries of the Elusinia were substituted for a spiritual religion. In the heroic ages, when errant knights wandered about to rescue imprisoned damsels from the blue beards of the day, what was the real condition of high born maidens or the proud dames who sat in castle halls! Their marriages were heartless bargains, negotiated by haughty barons, to strengthen some clan, or heal some wasting feud, or obtain some coveted domain. When first torn from its parent stem, it gratified the pride and pleased the fancy of its rude possessor; but its freshness once withered, the loveliest flower was thrown away with coldest apathy. She was comparatively fortunate who carried to the altar a vacant heart, as she escaped the keenest pangs of compulsory wedlock, where every smile is a wound, every caress an insult. The victims of avarice or pride, their murmurs were hushed by the terrors of the donjon. Education and religion have always been auspicious to the fate of women. It is now more than three thousand five hundred years since there commenced a race, who by a wonderful Providence preserve to this day a knowledge of the true God, and



have, through all the vicissitudes of the world, read one book, whose historic lore and sublime poetry, are united with the moral precepts of the Decalogue. In the gloomiest ages which have intervened, in the darkest night of ignorance and barbarism, this chosen people have cherished and transmitted the precepts written by the finger of God upon the tables of Sinai. The fire that burned on Horeb thirty centuries ago, has been preserved with more than vestal vigilance, and has lighted their path through ages of dreary wanderings and persecution—and the uniform character of this people in every vicissitude has been a kind and respectful regard for their daughters, their sisters, and their wives—from the day when Jacob courteously rolled the stone from the mouth of the well of Haran, that Rachel might water the flocks of Laban, the daughters of Israel have always been treated by their brethren with that consideration and regard which comports with the injunctions of their venerable creed. The poet, true to nature, has not failed to throw a flood of heavenly light over the half civilized chivalry of the middle ages, in the character and virtues of the highsouled, but lovely Rebecca. If the effect of education and religion has done so much for one portion of mankind, what may not woman hope for in a land, where the diffusion of learning is 'the very passion of the age—where our institutions are based upon right and justice, and where the acquisition of abundance and honor is the reward of talent and perseverance, and may and often does raise the humble maiden to become the honored wife or mother of the first citizens of the Republic, and their cherished companions and associates. It

must not be forgotten too, that the equal distribution of fortune exempts all, even the poorest women of our country from that hard and continued toil which mars the fair proportions of their frames, and imparts to their features that grossness which marks the peasantry of Europe; compare the women who labor in the fields of France, Germany and Italy, or drag out their wretched days in the workshops of England, living in confined and unwholesome factories by day, and huddled into crowded cellars or garrets by night; look at their ill shaped forms, their squalid dress and haggard countenances—and compare them with the bright faces, and agile, and symmetrical forms of the daughters of the American farmer, and no doubt can remain that every generation will go on to improve in beauty and refinement, and in after times our Republic will display among other blessings, it will bestow upon its citizens, woman decked in all the charms of native beauty, and refined by the influences which a generous confidence and equal station in society are calculated to create and sustain, while the equality in fortune and rank, which must continue to prevail, affords neither the means or temptation to waste their lives in unmeaning frivolities, and neglect those domestic avocations, which preserve and purify their best affections, and elevate them both in morals and intellectual acquirements, and give to home its chief endearments. There is no era in human history, which deserves to be more gratefully remembered, and appropriately honored by them than the 4th of July, '76, when those principles were solemnly promulgated, in whose application to the affairs of life, they are so deeply interested.

With all these elements of national greatness, all these means forming a national character, free from the disturbing influences of the old world, and all this prospect of spreading our empire over this continent, still America stands alone. Our own is the only Republic on earth that possesses the physical power to defend itself from abroad, and give to the democratic principle a fair and full scope for its practical development. The majority of the world is against us. Monarchy still holds its sway over Europe. The hundreds of millions who swarm over Asia are still the slaves of despots—and freedom is a stranger even to their most remote aspirations. Africa has not advanced in civilization since the days of Hannibal—her people are ruled by petty despots, and education is absolutely unknown. Indeed, throughout most of the nations of the East, the modern traveller is astonished to find the accounts of remote history so exactly verified by present appearances. The Arab still wanders over the desert—the sons of Ishmael still dwell in the tents of Kedar. The white race seem destined by Providence to develop the faculties, and ameliorate the character and elevate the condition of mankind—and in this great march of mind the United States of America are placed in front. The eyes of the whole world are upon us. If with all the peculiar advantages which have combined to give the experiment of self-government a full and fair opportunity of proving its perfect adaptation to the peace, prosperity and refinement of the world, we should fail at last of signal success, to what event can the friends of freedom look for another trial? No my countrymen—you are the chosen instruments of Providence to re-

generate mankind—to break down the strong holds of oppression—to elevate man to his native dignity—to raze the altars of despotism to their foundations, and erect upon their ruins the glorious temple of freedom. Already the educated portion of Europe has caught the contagion—already the three millions of patriots, who this day, 1776, proclaimed our national independence, have subdued the Western wilderness, and number seventeen millions, still going forward conquering and to conquer in this glorious conflict for the rights of man. Five thousand years look down upon us from the thrones and high places where tyrants have trodden on the prostrate necks of their suffering fellow beings, and bid us not to falter in the battle—and heaven itself, by its frequent kind providences in our eventful career, seems to say to us, “Fear not, nor be dismayed: be strong, and of good courage.” Sixty-three years ago and the sovereignty of the people had scarce a solitary advocate beyond the closet of the philosopher—and this day a great nation is gathered together in their temples to sing anthems of praise to God, and to renew at his altars the vows of their fathers, to maintain our free Constitution. Our sister republics, too, have shaken off their dependence on foreign monarchs, and although they are destined to pass through a fiery ordeal before they are sufficiently purged from the vices of their former rulers, still our example and their own dear bought experience must ultimately lead them to the establishment of permanent republics.

But on this our day of our jubilee, let us not forget the first-born of our own Republic—bone of our

bone and flesh of our flesh—her germ of population transplanted from our own bosom—Texas starts in her career with every advantage which characterized the commencement of our own. An educated people—a successful war—a fertile and extended domain—she can command her destinies, and gives the cause of self-government another vote in the council of nations. And we this day hail with fraternal congratulations her bright star just emerging from the political horizon, and bid it God speed to its zenith of national renown. Although it be a single star, we view its advent to the firmament without an emotion of jealous fear, or one pang of painful regret—for it is no erratic body shot madly from its sphere; it leaves our own glorious constellation undiminished: and so may they shine on in brightness and in harmony together through all time to come.