

AN

ORATION,

DELIVERED ON THE

FOURTH DAY OF JULY, 1839,

BEFORE

THE CITIZENS OF NASHUA,

WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF PARTY.

By SAMUEL OSGOOD.

PUBLISHED BY RE VEST.

NASHUA:

PUBLISHED BY ALBIN BEARD.

1839.

NOTE.— It may perhaps be well to state, that this oration is published, as prepared for the occasion. Several passages, omitted in the delivery for want of time, are here inserted.

CAMBRIDGE PRESS :
METCALF, TORRY, AND BALLOJ.

TO THE
MECHANICS AND MANUFACTURERS OF NASHUA

THIS ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THEIR INVITATION,

AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,

Is Respectfully Inscribed.

ORATION.

I FEEL myself most happy, Fellow Citizens, to stand among you at this time on the broad ground of American Citizenship, and by your invitation to speak of those principles, that have made this festival so sacred to patriotism and humanity. We owe the day to our country : to our country let us give it, and own no narrower interest. No party passions, no social jealousies, no sectional or sectarian prejudices shall mar our harmony or chill our enthusiasm. This sixty-third anniversary of our national independence finds us an united, happy Republic. United, happy, all Republicans, let us hail the return of this day with joy, and turn our thoughts to those principles, that have made us as a people what we are, and whose continuance is our only national hope.

What, Fellow Citizens, is the nature of the occasion which we commemorate? We meet not to commemorate the shedding of human blood, nor to give vent to hatred of any past or present enemies. The great festal day of our nation does not fall upon the anniversary of some trying battle, or

even glorious victory. It is not the early struggles at Lexington and Concord, not the brilliant victories of Saratoga and Yorktown, that we now celebrate. It is a calm and determined declaration of principles, that has made this day sacred in our annals. We do not assemble to declare our hatred against any men or nation, or to revive old animosities. We are at peace with the world, we would be at peace with all men. George the Third has long been in his grave, and a fourth George and a fourth William have followed him. Peace to their ashes. We will not disturb them. Peace and a happy and righteous reign to the young queen now on their throne. The struggle with foreign enemies is over, and with the struggle let all enmities be gone. But although the wars for our liberties are over, and the anniversaries of battles are falling into neglect, the interest of this day passes not away, but must increase, as fleeting time reveals to us the value of the rights, of whose declaration this is the anniversary. The discussion of those rights is every day becoming more and more important, now that dangers from abroad no longer unite us in defending them against a common foe, and the time has come for vindicating by civic wisdom and virtue against internal dangers the liberties, that the invader sought in vain to destroy. Instead of seeking some new theme, that might gratify curiosity, let us, Fellow Citizens, give our minds to the old subject of American Freedom; let us trace its origin, consider its vital principles and its perpetuity.

Truth can never be dull and hackneyed to them, that are of the Truth. Surely we must all feel to-day, that the rights guaranteed by our Constitution are of the truths, that cannot lose their interest, any more than their being.

“ Truths, which wake — to perish never,
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Can utterly destroy.”

And while we speak of the rights, declared by the sages, authors of that instrument, and vindicated by years of fearful struggle, we shall not suffer our enthusiasm to evaporate in noisy hurrahs, but shall be willing to reflect solemnly upon the duties, which rights never fail to bring with them.

Notwithstanding so much has been said of our glorious Independence, it is not common to appreciate it at its full value, or acknowledge the long train of causes, that prepared its way. It is too common to suppose, that our independence originated with the Congress, that framed the Declaration, and to attribute to a few men the origin of those principles, which the Colonies had always in some degree maintained, and for which the people were already prepared.

Whence came the freedom, that we enjoy, the independence, that we now celebrate? Not from any one man, or set of men. The illustrious Jefferson might indeed have framed the Declaration, the illustrious Adams might have supported it in debate, the sages and patriots of Congress might

have unanimously signed it; but had not the people been ready for it, had not the principles found a mighty response in their hearts, the Declaration would have come to nought; the parchment, however written, and however signed, would have been added to the host of documents, that the dust covers and the worm gnaws. But the people did respond. Deep answered unto deep. The Declaration, that asserted their rights, proved by the universal sympathy it excited, that those rights had long been felt and cherished.

To trace the lineage of American freedom is a noble task, as noble a task, as the historian can pursue. We are not accustomed to do honor enough to our national birthright, and rightly to value the long line of ancestry from whom we have received our liberties. For centuries the work had been going on, that led to our freedom. The great glory of the Declaration of Independence is not that it was the first statement of the rights of man, for these have been felt in some degree in all ages, but that it was the first national declaration of those rights. For ages and ages, liberty had its champions, and its champions had become its martyrs. But the time was to come for brighter triumphs even than the martyr's robe of flame. As the night of the dark ages was passing away, a general awakening throughout Europe appeared. Genius first to hail the brightening morn boldly investigated nature, and by signal inventions and discoveries in art and science put into the hands of the people the instru-

ments of their emancipation. For the last three centuries especially, the cause of freedom has made steady advances. The invention of printing led men to read and to think, and reading and thinking led them to doubt the infallibility of their rulers, and to question the sovereignty of king and priest. The use of the mariner's compass opened the seas and the broad ocean to the enterprising sailor, and those,

“ Whose path was o'er the mountain wave,
Whose home was on the deep,”

bore to their native shores a spirit, that could not brook tyranny, and a wealth that won the respect even of prince and noble. America was discovered, and this greatest event in modern history woke the old world from her apathy, and prepared for her freer spirits a home in a new world. The century after the discovery of America was a period of singular commotion throughout Europe. The tendency was general towards revolution both in government and religion. But it was not in Europe, that these tendencies were as yet to reach their happy results. For many centuries, the liberties even of England were to be kept down, or rising were only to fall again. King and priest were too strong against human right. But just at the time when liberal opinions were to break forth in our mother country, only to be crushed, our forefathers crossed the ocean, and planted the seeds of freedom here. For two centuries, that seed has

been putting forth its stalk and leaves, and on July Fourth, 1776, it bore its fair and perfect flower.

Our fathers brought with them from the old world the elements of our present national character and institutions. They did not come, like the Spaniards, to seek for mines of gold, and to murder all, who stood in the way of their rapacity; nor were they, like too many emigrants, restless adventurers, with whom any change of situation could not but be an improvement upon present want and discontent. They sought a refuge from oppression, and brought with them a strong sense of the rights, that had been trampled upon. Whether we consider the Puritans of New England, the oppressed Catholics of Maryland, or the defeated loyalists, who colonized Virginia, we find the same determination to insist upon their rights, and never acquiesce in the demands of a government, in which they had no share. So long ago as 1619, a representative assembly convened at Jamestown, in Virginia, and was the prelude to that system of popular government, that has finally swallowed up every other.

All the principal colonies were founded by men of virtue and piety: hence the element of morality and religion, which is so incorporated with our civilization. Their founders were of various religions, and had suffered persecution; and hence in spite of early intolerance, the need of that perfect toleration, which we now enjoy. They were men of intelligence; hence the care for general education, which our country has ever shown. In short, no

matter what part of our free institutions we consider, we shall find, that it had its origin in the character and institutions which our fathers brought with them, and established on these shores. We ought to glory, Fellow Citizens, in taking this view of our liberties, to glory in believing that our freedom was not the creature of yesterday, or even of sixty-three years, but that it has been growing for centuries. When men talk timidly about the experiment of a republic, let it be felt, that it is no experiment, but that for more than two hundred years, a government essentially democratic has existed in our land. Our institutions are not the creatures of mere theory. They grew out of the character and history of the people, and in this they are distinguished from the many modern constitutions, which theorists, like the French and South American legislators, have sought to impose upon nations, and which, not being the native product of the nations, have had no more success, than the attempt to make grapes grow upon a pear tree, or pears upon a grape vine.

All circumstances of position tended to increase the democratic spirit of the colonies, to unite them together, and to prepare them for final union and independence. Their hardy and daring life, their struggle with the difficulties of an unexplored country and a savage foe, nerved their energies, and provoked in them a spirit, that could not brook thralldom.

The colonial wars with the Indians and the

French, were the school in which the soldiers of the revolution learned to meet the foe, and in which the whole people were taught to sympathize with each other, and unite for the defence of all the colonies. And when finally the tyrannical blow was struck, and Great Britain showed her fixed determination to deprive the colonists of their birth-right, and to tax them without their consent, they rose at once, a united nation. The Congress of 1774 proved their union, the blood spilt at Lexington and Concord, and on the heights of Charlestown, was as the blood of brethren crying from the ground, and the declaration of independence, when it came, was what all felt and wished, though none had said or could say it with the fire of the youthful Jefferson. His burning words were but as the signal flame, that kindled the beacon fires, already prepared on a thousand heights.

This declaration is by far the noblest political document the world can show. It is a national declaration of human rights and human brotherhood. The voice of him, who stood on Mars Hill, and proclaimed to corrupt Athens, that God had made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell together on the face of the earth, found its mightiest echo in a world unknown to the Athenian, and became the rallying cry of a mighty people. The doctrines, so eloquently stated in the Declaration of Independence, animated the temporary government under the Articles of Confederation, and were virtually incorporated into the Constitution, which was

adopted thirteen years later, and are the life-blood of our political system. Times have changed and men have changed, but those principles have not changed. Our country has gone through the hard ordeal of adversity, and the equally hard ordeal of prosperity. But war has not robbed her of her freedom, nor peace and plenty stolen away her energies. The governments of the old world, that boast so much of their strength and permanence, have been shaken to their centres. Ours has stood firm. The patriots and sages, who in a trying hour gave their names to the Declaration, and pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to maintain its principles, have all been swept away. But their spirit has not died with them. A nation does them reverence. The star-spangled banner that floats from a thousand hill tops is waved by the breezes, that sweep over a mighty empire, and bear from state to state the glad shouts of millions of happy, and industrious freemen. At this very hour millions are listening with joy to the very words, which they signed in an hour of trial and anguish. I said the signers of the Declaration were all dead. But not so. There were those, who signed that document not with pen, and in quiet hall of legislation, but with a sterner instrument, and amid more fearful scenes. These grey-haired men, to whom you have given the most honored places in this assembly, were such signers. When the Declaration reached them in their village homes, they said amen to its principles; their response was shown, as they

marched to the war of liberty; it was echoed on the battle fields of the revolution, and now, that the agony has long been over, and peace and plenty smile throughout our land, these grey-haired men have come here to join in our festival, and here with us to repeat their response to the charter of our freedom. We all join with them. Let all the people say, amen.

But, Fellow Citizens, on this Jubilee of our independence, a solemn duty is ever binding upon us. It is our duty to examine seriously into the vital principle of our government, and consider the true means of preserving it.

What is the vital principle of our republic? Upon what is our government based? Let us consider this question warily, for it is often answered unworthily. It is not unusual for it to be said, that the great charter of our liberties lies in the absolute sovereignty of the people. But such is not the doctrine of the Declaration of Independence. That declaration does not base the right of freedom, or any of the rights of man, upon the power of the people, or any other human power, whether of priest, king, noble, or legislature. It regards the rights of man as not given by any charter or any grant, but as natural, divine, and unalienable. Justice, eternal justice is the great charter of human freedom. The people themselves hold their liberties on this basis. Their power is not justly absolute; their will, although the highest human authority, is not sovereign. Whenever any human

power arrogates to itself absolute sovereignty, it becomes a tyranny, no matter what its name, whether monarchy, aristocracy, or republic. What gratitude do we owe our fathers, that in the very time when it was most needful to magnify the powers of the people, they still owned a power above the people, not the power of king, or priest, but the majesty of right and the God of right. Right, that is the highest power acknowledged by our government. The most important rights are placed by our Constitution entirely beyond the power of legislation. And those rights, which are subject to legal regulation, are made so upon principles of justice, that are equally applicable to all. Noble doctrine, righteous principle, supremacy of equal justice. I am proud, Fellow Citizens, standing before you on this day, that celebrates the freedom and power of the people, to renew the solemn declaration of our fathers, that there is a power above you, and you are not absolute sovereigns. Your votes cannot make wrong to be right; and should the time ever be, when the majority of this people should vote to deprive the humblest citizen of his equal rights, they would strike a blow at the very charter of their own rights, and commit high treason against their blood-bought liberties, and against the majesty of justice.

Now at this Jubilee of her glory, nobly may our country bow to the power above her. Instead of saying, like the Assyrian king, "By the strength of my hand I have done it," let her bend reverently to justice, which is the charter of her liberties, and to

the God in whose bosom justice has her eternal throne.

The sovereignty of the people is indeed the principle of our republic; but their sovereignty is but relative—they are above all other political power, but are bound to exert their power only in a limited way, and always in subordination to justice. The people are our rulers, but only because they are the power, through whom eternal justice on the whole best rules. The great conservative principle of our republic is the very principle that timid minds have regarded with so much alarm. If the doctrine of our republic be, that every citizen has rights, and is entitled to political equality, it follows of course, that tyranny, whether of ruler or people, is at an end in our land, so long as we are true to our government, since not even the largest majority is privileged to take from the minority its equal rights. If trouble does ever darken our liberties, and the sacred rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are taken from even the small minority, it will not be because we live under a government, that has generously given equal rights to every citizen, but because the sanctity of those equal rights has been sacrilegiously violated.

We declare therefore, that the true democratic principle of the equal rights of every citizen is no destructive principle, as so many in the old world, and not a few croakers in the new world declare, but it is the true conservative principle. It is the principle to which our government has been tend-

ing for more than two hundred years—it is the only principle that can guard liberty effectually against the tyranny of rulers, and rulers against the vengeance of an insulted people—the only principle, that can protect all men. This very doctrine of equal rights, that some have thought so very dangerous to property, is the only principle that can preserve the right of property inviolate. It protects the poor man in the use of his earnings, and the rich man in the enjoyment of his lawful wealth. The broad *Ægis* of the constitution is over all. Rich and poor, learned and unlearned, clergy and laity, merchant, mechanic, farmer, manufacturer, may there find equal protection. It requires no great wisdom to see, that the least act, whether of legislation or violence, that infringes on the right of the poorest citizen, endangers the estate of the wealthiest; and on the other hand, whatever takes a dollar wrongly from the coffers of justly earned affluence, destroys also the security of the great majority in the enjoyment of their earnings, and does not leave a cent safe in the pocket of the laborer.

A great hue and cry has been raised in the Tory journals of the old world about the dangerous levelling spirit prevalent in the United States, and this hue and cry has sometimes found an echo in our own land. A great deal has been said about Agrarianism, as if our people were likely to seize the property of the more favored, and divide it among the masses. But if there is a country in the world, where Agrarianism is unpopular, it is in these United

States. Even the party, whose democratic tendencies claim to be the strongest, despise the doctrine ; and any party, that adopts it for its motto, pronounces its own doom. They may talk of Agrarianism with some show of danger among the ignorant and wretched masses of the old world, who are made to support from their own earnings the extravagance of a pampered few, who eat the bread they never earned, but which they stole from others. But never insult the mass of people in this country by trying to raise the agrarian panic. The great majority in this country are industrious workingmen, who earn an honorable living for themselves and their families. Thus the great middling-interest—the greatest *power* of our nation, is interested in preserving the great *principle* of our republic. What folly in any one to suppose, that they would favor such an arbitrary division of property as must make the lazy equally well off with the industrious. I ask you mechanics, for there have been those who have coupled mechanics and agrarians together, whether you are in any danger of advocating doctrines that must destroy the sacred right of property, and share your industrious earnings with the loafer and the drunkard? No ; the working classes are the true conservatives of our country. All they ask is for legislation, that shall bear equally upon all. Equal laws, a free field, and fair play, and the best prizes to him, that can fairly win them.

There is indeed much disposition in our country to level away the artificial distinctions of society.

And this is well, so long as rights are not interfered with. It is very well that the day has come, in which men meet each other as men, and pay less deference to the trappings of rank and fortune. But so far as there is a disposition to level down true excellence to the standard of mediocrity, the disposition is bad, and should be execrated. But surely the wish to improve the common mind, and to raise all to a high standard is a noble wish. And when we hear that our people are levellers, let us remember and rejoice, that their great aim has always been for universal education, that shall raise all to respectability. God grant, that such levelling may prevail. For instead of reducing society to a dull plain or barren waste, it will best preserve every natural elevation, and develop every natural variety.

American society ought to be the most fresh and various in the world, for here every talent has full opportunity to expand. The same doctrine of equal right, that has guarded our liberties, shall also ensure the free development of every talent. With us every art and science shall flourish. Let it be part of our national pride to wish success to every worthy calling, and let every man respect his own and his neighbor's vocation. Farmer and mechanic, merchant and manufacturer, respect your occupations; you are all useful, and all are of use to each other, and depend upon each other. Thank God and your country for liberty to pursue your own business, and to gain an honorable and honored

livelihood. Lawyer, clergyman, physician, respect your calling, but do not think that your occupation will hold you up; you must hold it up, and by your own usefulness keep your place among the true working-men of the land. American mechanics! the occasion, that brings you here, shows your own self-respect. Cherish the feeling,—you cannot have too much of it. To you, this day means something. The principles, which hallow it, have raised the mechanic arts from the low place which they hold under aristocratic governments, have given dignity to labor, and have made the worthy mechanic as honorable as any in the land. Respect the charter of your rights, and respecting that, you will respect yourselves and all men.

You have been accused of lack of respect for other men, especially of other professions. The aristocrats of the old world, and some in the new, delight to dwell upon the disposition of mechanics, to sneer at those, who in learning, or in other respect, are superior to them. They talk about Jack Cade, as having many followers among us, who would like to shut up our colleges, put down all distinguished learning, if not hang every man, that can read and write well. This is vile calumny; and the few in this country, who by their sneers at learning and the liberal arts have given any occasion for such calumny, deserve the same execration as the despots, who rejoice in such calumny. The mechanics are the staunch friends of learning, and have always been the great champions of popular

education. They are friends to the learned professions, and will honor them in their due place, although perhaps they may have the independence not to bow down to the professions merely as such, and honor a driveller merely because he has a parchment, that certifies he is a professional man. They respect colleges and all the higher seminaries of learning, and many a father has given to his sons a collegiate education, from the proceeds of his hard earnings in the workshop. But still, they are not disposed to honor every booby that has passed through college, without gaining any more good than the horse, that went in at one door and out at the other. They are ready to honor learning and wisdom wherever they find it, whether in a college-bred man, or in one who has been obliged to educate himself. Let it always be so. On this day, when we have listened to the Declaration of Independence, that bears the signatures of Franklin, the printer, and Sherman, the shoemaker, let the mechanics do honor to worth and talent wherever found; and while they cheer the names of this printer and this shoemaker, let them also rejoice in the names of an Adams and Jefferson, who, if not mechanics, were yet first-rate workmen, and have built an edifice, that sixty-three years of storm have not shaken. Whenever from your own ranks talent shall arise, and any of your companions in the workshop shall be raised to posts of public honor, you will give them God speed, and disdain all envy, and ever hail an honest man as alike “the

noblest work of God," whether he stands by you at the loom, or bench, or sits in the chair of state. Be this our doctrine, alike in its application to political privileges, and to our business and professions; equal rights to all. Let all trades and professions live. Let all honorable talent thrive, and whenever one man can distinguish himself above others, be it in farming or mechanics, in letters or eloquence, in the useful or the fine arts, let us all, instead of trying to pull him down, cry, "God speed him." This is republicanism.

It is glorious to believe, that in this free land, all those arts and sciences that refine and elevate the soul, will have the same success as has attended those arts and sciences, that relate more immediately to the animal wants. Here poetry and eloquence, history and philosophy shall flourish, freed from the shackles, that cramp their development in the old world. Here poetry shall speak and sing no laureate lay to the vanities of courts, but strains, that the soul of MAN shall echo. Here the historian shall record the lessons of experience, not such a record of folly as history usually is, a chronicle of court-gossip, or battle statistics, telling nothing of what took place in the homes of the people, or what was the relation of their wages to their wants, or what their opinions and feelings, but a true record of man as he has been in past time, and in the several stages of his education until the present era. Here the orator shall speak, and shall have the people for his audience; and he shall speak no set form

of words, carefully addressed to cold and fastidious ears, but burning words to souls, that true eloquence from the heart and to the heart, will always inspire and inflame. Even within a few years American literature has taken a new start, and, more true than of old to American principle, it bids fair to equal, by its own independent course, that European literature, which it could only caricature by servile imitation. Already we have poets, orators, historians, who are proud of the American name, and of whom the American name is proud. Even from the workshops, where the mechanic arts are followed, many distinguished artists have risen, and promise to do something towards giving our country the name, claimed by republics of old, of the home of the beautiful arts.

Little more than two years since, I visited the shop of a stone-cutter in a Western city, where I understood a workman of rare genius was employed. I found him at his task, chiselling some cherubs' heads on a grave stone. Ranged on the side of the shop, on a rough bench, were four or five heads of different citizens, that he had sculptured, and all of singular accuracy. Two years passed, and his genius rose from his obscurity, and now he is taking the busts of the distinguished men of our country, and is soon to sail for Italy, and finish in that land of the beautiful arts, the education begun in cutting grave stones. Should his name be ever enrolled among the renowned artists, that have given almost a soul to the lifeless

marble, he will doubtless fondly remember the little shop, where once, in paper cap and leather apron, he worked with his companions. Should they meet him in his prosperous days, they will doubtless give him joy in his successes, and he will give them as hearty a hand, as when all toiled side by side at the chisel.

Equal rights we trust shall make all arts flourish, and each to aid and favor the other. Even now the masses with us enjoy privileges, that are confined to the favored few in the old world, and many an American mechanic has time and means not only to gain his daily bread, and provide against future want, but also to cultivate literature and refine his tastes. Even the beautiful arts are now brought within reach of the great majority, and for a comparative trifle, the working-man may adorn his parlor with the choice productions of the engraver's skill, and thereby of the painter's genius. Highly favored indeed is the New England mechanic. One of the noblest exhibitions of art the world has ever witnessed came from the work of his hand, and is soon to be renewed in the neighboring metropolis. We trust the mechanics of this town will be as proudly remembered there as before. Some of the most illustrious inventions bear the mechanic's name to immortality. The institutions of education and religion number him among their best benefactors. May it ever be thus, and New England be ever proud of her mechanics, and her mechanics proud of her. Walking a few weeks

since with a gentleman of a distant state in the cemetery, that so adorns our town, we saw a spectacle, which struck his attention at once, and led him to contrast the favored lot of New England with other lands. "What a commentary on New England!" said he. "In many places mechanics are so ground down, as to think only of daily bread. But there, you tell me, is a blacksmith erecting a handsome enclosure around the grave of his daughter in that consecrated grove, and by that work of his own hands, he shows that taste, parental affection, and religious faith dwell in his soul, and that labor need not cramp or materialize the spirit."

Foreign lands own the skill of the American mechanic. Every steam-vessel honors the name of Fulton: farthest India in her demand for American cottons celebrates the name of Whitney, and praises also the American operative. The best ships in the world bear to remotest lands the glory of the American ship-builder. The Sultan of Turkey cares more for Mr. Rhodes, the Yankee in charge of his ship-yard, than for his grand vizier and a dozen pachas into the bargain.

But we wander from our subject. Speaking of the equal rights of all, as being at the basis of our government, and the principle that is to protect property, encourage industry, and inspire competition in every useful, as well as elegant art, I have been so engrossed by the topic, that I must turn somewhat abruptly to another train of remark, and

consider, in the last place, the prospect of the continuance of our present institutions.

Will our free institutions, that have been growing for more than two centuries, and have existed more than half a century in their present form, which are founded on the unalienable rights of man, and the sovereignty of the people, in subordination to those rights, which give equal protection to every citizen, and equal encouragement to every trade, profession, art, and science, will these free institutions continue? Or shall we believe those would-be prophets, who predict the speedy ruin of our republic? This is the most interesting question that an American can ask. It is the most interesting question to the European, whether to him, who is looking for the emancipation of his own country, or to him, who seeks to strengthen the bands, which bind the people to their lords. If our republic succeeds, then freedom in the old world can raise her head with joy; if our republic fails, then the cause of free institutions in the old world receives a fatal blow, and tyrants will rejoice in the fulfilment of their wishes and predictions. Already free principles are advancing with mighty pace throughout the governments of the old world, and far more surely from their silent march, than in the shock of reckless revolution. The creed of despots has changed. No longer professing to rule the state for their own selfish passions, they profess to have the good of the people at heart, and proclaim as their creed "everything for the people—nothing by the people." How soon the

people are to enjoy their rights by a surer safeguard than the monarch's will, depends in no small degree on the next half century of our experience.

Dangers without number have been pointed out as threatening our stability, and often with some candor and wisdom, although generally with great spite and ignorance. While but a single mind, like De Tocqueville, has given a fair view of our republic, its excellences and dangers, there have been hosts of Halls, Hamiltons, Fiddlers, and Trollopes to belie the institutions, which they could never understand.

Some have predicted, that party spirit would be our ruin, and a war of rival factions would give the command to some military leader, whose triumph would change democracy into despotism, and make America realize the fate of France. But no such wars have broken out. Rival parties merely vent their animosities through the newspapers, and the frequent recurrence of elections will not allow party spirit to be very desperate. Parties have proved often a salutary watch upon each other, and as they are doubtless the offspring of freedom, they ought to prove its safeguard. In this town, although elections have been vehemently contested, there has been very little personal rancor among partisans. It is the duty of us all to seek to promote peace and good neighborhood yet more. And, Fellow Citizens of the Artillery, let me tell you, that your cannon at sunrise this morning had a far better sound than often they have had. Let us hope

you will keep them for occasions of public rejoicing, and not again allow rival parties to fire them in triumph over each other at every changing election in this or other states. We ought to deprecate the violence of party spirit, and to remember that our Washington has called it the "worst enemy" of a popular government, and "that the effort ought to be by the force of public opinion to mitigate and assuage it." What better time, brethren, than the present to resolve, that, so far as in you lies, you will soothe the violence of party strife, and, while you express your own opinions manfully, give the same right to others, and give even your bitterest opponent his due. This done, and the worst foe of our country will become a blessing, and party spirit instead of a destructive will be a truly conservative principle. This done, and the two great tendencies that are the cause of the party differences upon almost all subjects—the tendency to keep things as they are, and the tendency to change, shall prove mutually beneficial tendencies. They, who are for keeping things as they are, shall serve to check the haste of the movement party, and the movement party shall spur up the sluggishness of the stationary party; and between the two, right measures shall be adopted, and soon all factious virulence shall disappear, and the great body of the people avoiding both extremes shall be eager to preserve what is valuable in old institutions, and at the same time to adopt every worthy reform. No party is always right, none always wrong. Both the old

Federalist and Democratic parties, which are now so mixed up, were a great blessing to our country and to each other. Each has advocated measures, whose adoption has been universally allowed to promote the national good. Whatever may have been the correctness or error of the old Federal party, it is not the place now to discuss, but surely all must allow in the language of a great foreign jurist, that "their early predominance at least allowed the new republic time to become quiet and settled, and permitted it to bear subsequently without inconvenience the rapid development of doctrines, which they had before opposed. A great number of their principles were finally introduced into the creed of their opponents, and the Federal Constitution, which survives to our time, is a durable monument of their patriotism and their wisdom." The opposite or Democratic party, it must be granted even by their opponents, has originated and carried through many measures, that had else been lost to the public good. There will be in all countries two parties, that will represent pretty nearly the same principles. It is well that it is so; well for both sides of the truth; well for true reform and careful movement. Let them argue on, then; but let them never fight.

It is said that sectional jealousies, as well as party spirit, threaten the stability of our government, and that already animosities have broken forth, that herald the doom of our Union. No more violent sectional prejudice can spring up, than that which

divides North and South. Yet there is not near the danger there has been of a separation of the Union on this account. The panic of Nullification has already passed away, and even the exciting subject of Abolition does not appear to threaten to destroy our harmony with the South so much, as some time since. So long as the North confines its political action on the subject of slavery to proper constitutional limits, there is little fear, that our southern countrymen will so far sink their interests in their passions, as to break that union, which is as important to their safety and prosperity, as it is hallowed by the patriotism of their fathers. Let it be remembered, moreover, what is too often forgotten, that the continuance of the Union is one thing, and the success of republican institutions another thing. Should our country so increase in population, or be so divided in its interests, as to render a division necessary, which Heaven avert, let us not fear that freedom will perish by such division, or that kindly feeling will die out among the sister states of our confederacy. The United States have tasted too much of liberty to exchange it for servitude. The states will be free at any rate. The distinguished Frenchman, M. de Tocqueville, has said, that the union of our states is becoming stronger, while the Federal government is becoming weaker. But however this may be, the republican cause need not fear.

Time would fail me to speak of the other dangers in detail, which are spoken of as threatening

our institutions. I might speak of the reckless ambition of politicians, the rage for office, the fear of losing the balance between the three great branches of our government, the legislative, executive, and judicial, the love of money, the growth of luxury, the danger of great wealth in the few leading to the dependance and servility of the many, or on the other hand provoking the many to tumult and rapine, the influx of immigrants, bringing with them the feelings and the vices of the old world. That our country has great dangers, we must allow, for nothing is perfect or free from prospect of evil. But we will not give the hours of this Jubilee to dark omens of ill, but rather dwell upon those auspicious signs, which alike kindle hope and inspire activity. Even while we think of the wrongs of the African and the Indian, we will hope for their regeneration, and pray for the day when the chains of the one shall be broken, and the sorrows of the other shall cease, and the black man and the red man, although their destiny is so veiled in doubt, shall find in the white man a brother, and shall be blessed by an undisturbed home.

The great preservative principle of our republic must be sought in the wisdom and virtue of her citizens. If, as that political sage, Montesquieu, said, the fundamental principle of a monarchy is *honor*, and the basis of a despotism is *fear*, but the only foundation of a republic is *virtue*, it behoves our people to improve every means of cherishing the manly virtues, as alike the safeguard of private

happiness and national security. Our government is not a machine by which the people are governed, but it is an expression of what the people are, and must take its character from them; and of course, when freedom and virtue die out of their hearts, our free government becomes a mere name. That freedom and virtue shall not die, many causes now in activity fully promise.

Light is shining abroad over our land. Education is an almost universal blessing; and unless the people are singularly dead to the truth now laid before them, ere long a sufficient education will be within reach of every citizen, even in our remotest borders; and the child of the laborer shall have better opportunities of knowledge, than were enjoyed of old by the most favored. The press in America, while it is freer, is more active, than any in the world. There are more daily journals in the United States, than in the world beside. The most important public documents make their way into every cottage in our land. Light is shining, and shining with more and more brightness. There are indeed many, who are afraid of the light, and who seem to think that free inquiry is going to destroy everything valuable in old opinions and institutions. Poor creatures these! Timid champions of truth! Bats, disturbed in their caves by the torch-flame, and beating their brains out against their den. The republican hails the light. His cry, like that of the Grecian hero, is, —

“Give but to see, and Ajax asks no more.”

He is a champion of education, — the education of the whole people, in knowledge and virtue. The croaking Tory of the old world may mourn over the spread of light among the people; he may say, like a late writer in the London Quarterly, that China has had schools in abundance for more than a thousand years, and still is the most stupid of nations. But the republican does not join in such strains. The Chinese, he knows, learns ignorance at school, learns to give up his own power of thought, and to cramp his mind with the forms, and creeds of an abject despotism. The republican vindicates education, as expanding the mind, and giving it the full exercise of its natural powers. The more of this' in our country the better. To distrust in light would be to distrust truth, and to distrust truth is treason against God and our souls. Nobly has one of our own poets, whose heart is his country's as well as his name, said; —

“ Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again,
 The eternal years of God are hers,
 But error, wounded, writhes in pain,
 And dies amid her worshippers.”

Liberty is sister of Light, and with her a preservative principle of our republic. Liberty is the great soother of all animosities. A free press gives vent to every opinion and passion, that might else lead to destructive revolts. The privilege enjoyed by every man, to follow his own will, so long as he does not interfere with another's rights, quiets the discontents, that, in older countries, break forth in

revolutions. The apparently discordant elements, that immigration brings to our shores from the old world, are harmonized by the power of our free institutions, and the stranger even from monarchical countries is soon made a warm republican. Law, moreover, is implied in the very being of Liberty. Without law, there is no liberty, and the truth, which our people are more and more feeling, taught as they have been by the sad example of mob violence, the truth of the identity of liberty and law, is now throughout our land, even in its most wild and lawless borders, hailed as the guardian principle of our government. Liberty and Law! Liberty, speaking through the harmony of Law! Law, the voice of Liberty, uttering the Truths of Eternal Justice! Liberty and Law! What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. If there be a baseness more degrading in a citizen, than any other, it is the baseness of the mobocrat; him, who is willing to enjoy all the advantages of our government, and yet, as soon as any law provokes his passions or takes from him a dollar, is ready to commit high treason against his country, violate the majesty of justice, and insult the tribunal, which is the enthroned majesty of the people, and which the people have sworn to protect. May you, citizen soldiers, who now join in this festival, show, if need shall ever be, that you regard law and liberty as one, and as you value liberty, you will defend the laws, against civil violence, even if it be at the bayonet's point and the cannon's mouth. I can urge this

duty on you by mentioning a single name, more potent, than any harangue of mine. Washington, the citizen-soldier, the citizen-soldier's glory and his pattern! First in war, first in peace; glorious at the head of his army, — glorious in his calmness as of an angel, in the cannon storm, and iron rain of the battle-field; but more glorious, when the wars were over, his country's liberties achieved, and the hero laid aside the sword of the soldier, and, like the humblest citizen, bowed to the majesty of the law. His example is the noblest heritage our history affords. Best exemplar of republican virtue, sternest rebuke of republican vices, his name has found no higher praise, than from the pen of a noble of the nation, which sought to crush him. "This," says Lord Brougham, "is the consummate glory of the great American; a triumphant warrior, where the most sanguine had a right to despair; a successful ruler in all the difficulties of a course wholly untried; but a warrior, whose sword only left its sheath when the first law of our nature commanded it to be drawn; and a ruler, who, having tasted of supreme power, gently and unostentatiously desired, that the cup might pass from him, nor would suffer more to wet his lips than the most solemn and sacred duty to his country and his God required!

"To his latest breath did this great patriot maintain the noble character of a captain, the patron of peace, and a statesman, the friend of justice. Dying, he bequeathed to his heirs the sword, which he

had worn in the war for liberty, charging them never to take it from the scabbard but in self defence, or in defence of their country and her freedom; and commanding them, that when it should thus be drawn, they should never sheathe it nor ever give it up, but prefer falling with it in their hands to the relinquishment thereof, — words, the majesty and simple eloquence of which are not surpassed in the oratory of Athens and Rome. It will be the duty of the historian and the sage in all ages to omit no occasion of commemorating this illustrious man; and until time shall be no more, will a test of the progress, which our race has made in civilization and virtue, be derived from the veneration paid to the immortal name of Washington.”

We might be proud of this tribute to the memory of the Father of our Country from the pen of a British Peer, if any praise of genius or eloquence could add to our pride in Washington.

I would gladly leave speaking with the name of Washington on my lips and his memory in our hearts, and trust his name to finish this humble plea in freedom's behalf. But one topic more must be presented to you. Light and liberty have been spoken of as preservative principles of our institutions. But light and liberty without love, without a kindly affection between citizen and citizen, will avail little. There is alas far too little good feeling among fellow republicans, not only too much party and sectarian animosity, but far more social jealousy. There is far too much merely negative republicanism, the re-

publicanism that hates tyrants and scorns restraint, without respecting the fellow-citizen, or honoring the law. There is so much vile political abuse, that a writer in a late German paper has said, that judging from our journals, one would think the two rival candidates for the presidency of the Union were the two greatest scoundrels in the country. Men do not meet each other courteously as men. There is too much arrogance—far too much envy. Envy is truly called the great vice of republics; for, where all are politically equal, the distinctions of wealth and talent are jealously watched. Let us declare war against this envy, this arrogance, this jealousy. Let us strive to have the spirit and the manners, that become republicans. Let our bearing be such as to show, not so much that we think ourselves as good as others, but that we think others as good as we are. Then society will be newly modelled among us. A government truly fraternal shall prevail, and shall be as strong as the patriarchal governments, that have passed away. There will be less arrogance among those whom fortune has most favored. There will be far less of that contemptible envy, that is so often seen among the less favored in fortune—that envy, which pays the vilest homage to the fancied superiority it affects to despise. We shall meet as fellow citizens, as human brethren, and whether in the street, in the civil assembly, or by the altars of God, we shall have that courteous dignity which becomes a free people; nay more, that brotherly kindness which becomes Christian

men. Our social principle shall be, "courteous to all, cringing to none, trampling upon none, civil ever, servile never: to light and liberty we will ever add love." In politics, society, religion, our motto shall be — Light, Liberty, Love.

Fellow Citizens! my task is done. I have sought to lay before you the origin and principles of our government, and the means of its perpetuity. The past is fixed, and its blessings cannot be destroyed. The future is uncertain. But the All-seeing One, who alone foreknows the future, has given to us rules of guidance, which, if followed, will always lead to good. It is a time of hope. Fancy cannot in her visions of the future anticipate greater changes than the last half century has shown in nation and in village. Since the adoption of the present Constitution, the thirteen states have become twenty-six, and the three millions more than sixteen millions. In fifty years more, at the same rate of increase, our population will be fifty millions, and in an hundred years two hundred millions. Sixty-three years ago, and an old man now present passed through this town, then a wilderness, and found not a single habitation on the site of this flourishing village. And now what a change! An industrious population of six thousand is ours. Eight churches prove that religion is not a creation of the despot, but best thrives in free hearts, and its altars most abound in free lands. Their ministers do not, as in some places, need a missionary to be

sent among them to teach good feeling and decent conduct. Though differing in faith, socially they are brethren. The temple, in which we meet to keep this festival, and which has rung with the glad hymn of freedom, is a witness of the union of liberty and religion. Mechanics and manufactures thrive; and they, through you, Fellow Citizens, speak their debt to our country. An industrious farming population brings to us the produce of the adjoining country, which has been transformed from a wild forest to fruitful fields. An iron road bears us in two hours to the ocean. In a single fortnight, fire and water, obeying the mechanic's control, can place us in our mother country across the Atlantic. Two well conducted presses scatter two able weekly papers through the State. Free schools thrive and open their doors to the children of the poorest. Even now our Sabbath school children celebrate this day in yonder grove, and a thousand voices there praise the God of nations. What a change! How full of hope of more glorious change. Ere long we shall be gathered to our fathers, and the sun that ushered in, this morn, the Jubilee of our independence, shall shine upon our graves. Let us believe that it shall even then, and through years unnumbered, dawn on a free and happy country; let us believe that it shall still shine on our country's banner, and shall show new stars upon its honored folds. Let us believe, let us more than believe, let us trust, that a nation, such as the world has not known, mighty in numbers, mighty in industry and

virtue, strong against despotism, strong against anarchy, shall rejoice in the return of this anniversary, and celebrate it as the Jubilee not only of COUNTRY, but of MAN.