

1861

Our Country's Claim: Oration at the Citizens' Celebration of the Eighty-fifth Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the United States Delivered in Norombega Hall, Bangor, July 4th, 1861

Samuel Harris

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ORATION

BY

SAMUEL HARRIS,

JULY 4th, 1861.

OUR COUNTRY'S CLAIM.

ORATION

AT THE

CITIZENS' CELEBRATION

OF THE

EIGHTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

Declaration of Independence

OF THE UNITED STATES,

DELIVERED IN

NOROMBEGA HALL, BANGOR,

JULY 4th, 1861,

BY SAMUEL HARRIS.

BANGOR:
WHEELER & LYNDE, PRINTERS.

1861.

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

- 1.—Music by the BANGOR CORNET BAND, - - - "Hail Columbia."
- 2.—National Hymn—*America*, - - - "My Country! 'tis of thee."
- 3.—Prayer by REV. CHARLES CARROLL EVERETT.
- 4.—Reading of the Declaration of Independence, by F. A. WILSON, Esq.
- 5.—Hymn, - - - - - "Star Spangled Banner."
- 6.—Oration by PROF. SAMUEL HARRIS.
- 7.—Holmes' Army Hymn—"Old Hundred."
- 8.—Music by the Band, - - - - - Patriotic Airs

Committee of Arrangements.

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| ISAIAH STETSON, Mayor of the City, and Presiding Officer, | |
| O. H. INGALLS, | FRANKLIN MUZZY, |
| G. W. MERRILL, | DAVID BUGBEE, |
| N. S. HARLOW, | E. F. DUREN, |
| J. FENNO, | A. D. MANSON. |
| S. WILDER, | |

BANGOR, July 4th, 1861.

Rev. Samuel Harris, D. D.,

DEAR SIR:

In behalf and by request of the Committee of Arrangements for the Citizens' Celebration of the eighty-fifth anniversary of our National Independence, I beg to thank you most heartily for the very able and interesting oration which you kindly consented to deliver before the great audience which filled Norumbega Hall, this day, to overflowing; and to request you to do us—and the large numbers who were unable to hear you upon that occasion—the additional favor of furnishing a copy of the same for publication.

ISAIAH STETSON.

BANGOR, July 12, 1861.

Hon. Isaiah Stetson, Chairman of Committee of Arrangements,

DEAR SIR:

I send a copy of the oration, as requested. I have not been able to remember the words used in its delivery, but have retained them when possible. I believe I have succeeded in presenting every thought which I uttered before the audience, and have aimed to present the thoughts as nearly as practicable in the form in which I uttered them.

Yours Respectfully,

SAMUEL HARRIS.

ORATION.

The present eventful time is restoring their significance to some words and usages. The celebration of this day has been an empty pageant, and Fourth of July oratory but another name for political gasconade. But when this year it seemed likely that there would be no public celebration on account of the obvious propriety of avoiding the customary expense, every one of us felt a hungering of the heart for some patriotic observance of the day. The military has been to us no more than a cap and feather to grace a parade, and we have been taught to say,

"I hate that drum's discordant sound,
Parading round, and round, and round,"

but we have learned the meaning of enthusiasm for a patriot soldiery, and the coldest heart has thrilled at "the loud drum and spirit-stirring life." The very words which express the principles for which our fathers fought, "the rights of man," "the interest of the people," had become counters in the games of politicians. But we have learned their priceless value. History has a new meaning to us. We understand, as never before, the spirit, the principles and the deeds of our forefathers; and our souls tingle and swell in the consciousness that the life of 1776 is flowing into the life of 1861. If our hastily arranged celebration lacks the pomp and circumstance of former years, the lack will be compensated by greater heartiness in our action, and clearer apprehension of its import.

When the ancient Israelites went up to their annual festival, each company, as it first caught sight of the Holy City, was wont to pause and in solemn greeting to sing: "Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces." So on this anniversary of our nation's birth, we pause in the bustle and business of life, and offer her our loyal greeting: HAIL, COLUMBIA! Though betrayed, assaulted and distressed by her own children, yet trusting in our fathers' God, believing still in the excellence of her Constitution, the nobleness of her principles and the grandeur of her destiny, "bating no jot of heart or hope," we greet her to-day in the proud words familiar in happier years,

"Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
The queen of the earth and the child of the skies."

The day and the circumstances under which we celebrate it, impose on me my subject. I can only speak of the claims of our country. I have only to give voice to the patriotism which is already throbbing in your hearts and beaming in your eyes.

At the outset—such is the distemper of the times—we are met by the question, What is our country? A Senator of the United States last winter declared on the floor of the Senate, that he owed allegiance to Virginia, but none to the Federal Government. What, then, is our country the State of Maine, and are our loyalty and patriotic service pent up within its narrow bounds? The State of Maine—we love and honor it—our home—to many of us our birth-place. But our country is the whole domain from Eastern Ocean to Western, and measured by the entire course of the Father of Waters, rich in the products of all the diversified climates of the Temperate Zone, and pouring the resources of a continent into our national life. It is all our country; all one country; fore-ordained to be one by God in the course of mighty rivers and the sweep of continental valleys, bound into one by man, by a network of railroads and telegraphs, through which as through the veins and nerves of a living body, flow the vital blood of a common commerce, the thought, feeling and energy of a common life; one in the common memories of a heroic history, and the common support, at least originally, of a great idea and a glorious cause. It is one, lastly, by a solemn political act, in which, setting aside as inadequate the Confederacy already existing, and for the avowed purpose of forming “a more perfect union,” “the people of the United States” adopted a Constitution, which, alike by its name, Constitution—instead of Articles of Confederacy; by its avowed origin from “the people of the United States,” “for ourselves and our posterity,” and not from the States; by its grant to the Federal Government of the distinctive prerogatives of sovereignty; by its express claim to be “the supreme law of the land,” “anything in the Constitution and laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding;” and by its express denial to the several States of the right to “enter into any treaty, alliance or confederacy,” and of all the greater rights of sovereignty, does establish a sovereign government, and not a mere confederacy of sovereignties. If it is not so, then the very motto of our national escutcheon is a lie. “*E Pluribus Unum*,”—this is the essential law of our national existence—many States constituted into one nation,—“distinct like the billows, yet one like the sea.” This is our country. Its great name ennobles, its great power protects the humblest of its citizens in the farthest lands. Its greatness inspires its citizens—swelling vast within our souls in lofty sentiments, in great hopes, in heroic enterprises for the advancement of mankind. We were born citizens of the United States. This is our birthright. And by every obligation of duty and honor we are bound to transmit this more than royal birthright to our posterity.

I thank God that the people of the North at least have been educated in this faith. It acts in us with the quickness of an instinct; it overrules the differences of party; it overpowers self-interest; it impels to self-consecration to the country. Here is no place for that pride which disdains to stand with the inhabitants of all the States on the common level of American citizenship, but claims a poor superiority on the ground of birth in a particular State; here is no currency for the unnatural doctrine which forbids us to make our patriotism as broad as the continent, and know no South nor North, no East nor West, but everywhere our country, and shuts us up to that intensest Sectionalism, which limits our country and our allegiance to our own State. Only the

diligent teaching of designing men could have given currency to this doctrine at the South. Already it had belittled their statesmen so that, where once were Jackson, Madison, Jefferson, Washington—names powerful in every county of the Union—names to conjure with,—now in their places are politicians whose names and influence, previous to the present troubles, scarcely extended beyond their respective States. And if the new Confederacy shall exist awhile in adherence to this principle, as certainly as the laws of nature will continue the changes of day and night, of summer and winter, so certainly the laws of human society will make its history, the history of petty States, having neither peace among themselves nor dignity among the nations.

It has been argued in favor of allowing the peaceable departure of these States, that a reconstruction of the Union on the basis of the right of secession, by securing to every State freedom from the possibility of oppression by the others, would open to the new nation a long career of peace and prosperity. It reminds me of the sorceries of Medea, in classic fable. Having a spite against Pelias, she persuaded his daughters to cut him in pieces and boil his flesh, promising to reconstruct him in renovated youth. The simple girls obeyed her directions, but no new life issued from the horrid cauldron. So if deluded by the promises of political sorcery we consent to the dismemberment of the Union, the result will be that the fragments will be jostling forever in the bubbling and steaming cauldron of confusion and strife.

Another question here meets us: Why should we love our country? Why do we owe to it our allegiance and service?

I answer, in the first place, we love our country because we cannot help it. Patriotism is an instinct, planted by the Creator in the human soul, spontaneous and irresistible in its action.

This instinct is strengthened by the constant action of life, according to the law of the association of ideas. A man hallows everything that he touches. The home of our childhood, the old school house, a dog's eared book well thumbed when our hands were little, "the old oaken bucket that hung in the well," everything with which we have been in contact has acquired a sacredness in the memory of the past. Our own life has grown over every object which it has touched, covering even things in themselves indifferent or unsightly, with an overgrowth of beauty and tenderness, like a vine running over a stone wall and covering its roughness with green leaves and purple clusters. But our country has been the scene of all that has interested us in life; here we were born, here were our childish sports, here the scene of our young love and our marriage, here the whole struggle of maturer life, here the precious dust of loved ones who have gone before us to the world unseen; all the memories of life cling around our native land and hallow it in our strongest affections. Therefore, since patriotism is a native instinct growing spontaneously with the common action of life, it is no distinctive honor to any one to love his country. But it is infamy to be lacking in patriotism; for it evinces a perversion and corruption of soul which have eaten down to the very roots of human life and deadened the native instincts that are characteristic of a man.

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
 Who never to himself has said,
 'This is my own, my native land?'
 Whose heart has ne'er within him burned
 As home his footsteps he has turned
 From wandering on a foreign strand?
 If such there breathe, go mark him well;
 For him no minstrel raptures swell.
 High though his titles, proud his name,
 Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
 Despite those titles, power and pelf,
 The wretch, concentered all on self,
 Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
 And, doubly dying, shall go down
 To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
 Unwept, unhonored and unsung."

But patriotism is not only an instinct; it is a principle. It needs more than an instinct to insure the consecration of property and life to our country's service, and to sustain that steadfastness and perseverance of effort and sacrifice in her defense which times of peril demand. What, then, are the considerations by which the instinct of patriotism is exalted into a principle of duty?

First, we owe allegiance to government because it is invested by God with authority to govern. There are opposite principles of political truth, like the opposite currents of the electro-magnetic battery—opposite but not antagonistic—moving towards opposite poles yet co-ordinate—both of which in their co-ordinate action are essential to well-ordered freedom. They are the principles of liberty and of law; of individuality and of organization; the inviolable rights of the individual, and the necessity of merging the individual in the organization of the State and making him subject to government.

In the first French Revolution a man smoking a black two-inch pipe entered the basement of a church where they were making cartridges and seated himself on an open barrel of gunpowder. To the remonstrances of the terrified officer in command, he coolly replied, "Are not these the days of liberty? May I not smoke where I will?" And the officer was obliged to buy his pipe for three francs. Liberty without law is suicidal.

The entire course of our history from the beginning has kept the first of these principles always prominent before our people. Thoroughly have they learned it. With such a history it is not strange that, while not overrating its absolute importance, they have given it a disproportionate share of attention, and have not sufficiently considered the co-ordinate principle of the authority of the government. Hence, though we still justly claim to be a law-abiding people, we discover some signs of an incipient decay of subordination. The boys in the streets, while evidently well versed in the doctrine of their own rights, appear sometimes never to have learned the meaning of authority. Men, somewhat confused as to the distinction between their own rights and the rights of man, adopt the great principle of equal rights according to the version in which a swaggering politician once unwittingly let out the self-complacency underlying his volubility in behalf of the people—"One man is as good as another, and I think in fact a little better." A well-known clique

have been diligently propagating disorganizing doctrines; I heard Wendell Phillips say in this hall that we have gone out from the ancient shelter of organized institutions, that we have no institutions, but stand unprotected each in his own individuality beneath the broad and open heavens; and though the great mass of people repudiate the teaching, yet fascinated by the eloquence and inspired by the accompanying noble sentiments of universal justice, they half believe the extravagance for the moment, and but dimly perceive that they are listening to the deadliest principles of disorganization and anarchy.

God is now turning a new leaf and setting us a new lesson, written, as the first lesson was, in blood. It is the lesson that the authority of government is given to it by God and cannot be set aside by man. So sacredly does God guard human rights that he allows no man to govern another, no man to lift a finger of authority over a woman, or a child, or the most helpless human being, excepting as he has given the right to govern. He has given it, for the purpose of education and discipline, to parents over their children; and in its highest sense to government. He that resists the civil government, resists God. Government is by God required to draw the sword and smite the evil doer that resists. No man or body of men can throw off this authority, without equally throwing off the authority of God. The right of revolution accrues only in the extreme case when the government ceases to be a minister of good to the people, and becomes, in the sum total of its influence, a minister of evil; when it is no longer a terror to evil works but to good. Then by the limitations of its divine charter, it ceases to be a minister of God and to be sustained by his authority. These are the principles taught in Paul's brief but comprehensive summary of the philosophy of government: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that doeth evil." This is the lesson which God is now teaching us. And as on the sea-side, through all the clatter of human business and pleasure, we steadily hear the Ocean's roar, so through all the confusion of human affairs we may hear the voice of God declaring to us the inviolable sacredness and divine authority of government.

Therefore allegiance to government is a duty of religion. It is allegiance to God. And that same divine voice, like the voice of many waters, commands us to uphold our government, and to resist and crush the defiant rebellion against it.

But the claim of government to our allegiance does not rest merely on its authority. It also claims our loyalty on the ground of its beneficence.

Foreigners say that we are deficient in loyalty, nay, destitute of it, and seemingly incapable of understanding it. The force of this charge, however, arises from limiting all loyalty to one of its accidental forms. Loyalty to a

person or family because born to reign over us, loyalty to a man irrespective of character, the same to the contemptible voluptuary George IV, and to the good Victoria; of this we are destitute, this we find it hard to understand. But loyalty, even to a man, for his worth and work, we can exercise. What else the national feeling to Washington? What else draws every heart to the commander-in-chief of our army? Nay, with the profoundest homage of our hearts we honor the Queen of Great Britain for her noble womanhood, which in her high position she has made illustrious.

But American loyalty is not directed to a man, but to an institution and an idea, to the Government, the Constitution, the Law. Whether we voted for or against the President who for the time being is the chief magistrate, we are loyal to the Government which he represents and the Constitution which he is sworn to support; we are loyal to the invisible majesty of law. And I must think that loyalty to Government and law, to an institution embodying a great idea, indicates a higher type of national life, a more advanced civilization, a nearer approach to the mature manhood of the race, than loyalty to a person or a family.

And yet we must own that there has been some foundation for this charge of a lack of loyalty. So invisible is our government, so void of all symbols that set forth its presence and its majesty, so rarely have we come in contact with its civil and military officials, so silently fall its blessings like the noiseless sunbeams or the gentle dew, that we have not appreciated its beneficent agency, nor rendered to it the affectionate loyalty which is its due. We had almost forgotten that we had a government, so mild, so beneficent, so protective of our rights, so anticipative of our needs has been its sway. But now, at the first attempt to loosen its invisible bands, business is embarrassed, prosperity withers, the peace of life is disturbed, excitement and alarm agitates the streets, and every face is anxious; and we begin to consider how much we owe to its beneficent care. Its protecting power, though unseen, has been everywhere present. The traveler in Arabian deserts, hoists the Stars and Stripes on his tent pole and lies down to quiet sleep; for the roving Bedouins respect the symbol of the American government. The unarmed ship, loaded with wealth, traverses the vast solitudes of the ocean, where, should a pirate attack her, none could help her and none could report her fate; yet she is safe, because in all those solitudes reigns the invisible majesty of law. It is our government which spreads its protection over the mountain pass and the wild prairie, where the savage still hunts his game; in the great city it awes into stillness the lust which would do violence to beauty, the greed which would do violence to property, and the malice which would do violence to life; in a word it insures to us all that is implied in what Paul teaches us to pray for, as the result of good government, "that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty." Its benign influences are all that Hooker has described; "of law there can no less be acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage; the very least as feeling her care and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels, and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy,"

On the ground of its beneficence, then, our government has a claim to our loyalty and our service. And here is a new aspect of the criminality of the rebellion, which assails the most beneficent government on earth, which destroys our peace and prosperity at home, and is, so far as possible, making the name of American citizen a dishonored name abroad.

Another reason for patriotic devotedness to our government is the fact that it is the representative of the American idea of the equal rights of man.

The country that we love is not broad lands, and towered cities ; it is a nation. Material resources, the heaped products of a continent cannot make a nation. Unity of race cannot. The Bushmen of South Africa, living in caves and digging roots and worms with their crooked claws, are men of one race; but it would be absurd to call them a nation. A nation is a living power, having as really as has a man, an individual unity, character and life. An idea embodied in institutions is essential to a nation. The idea may have little positive force, stagnating, as in China, through thousands of years of national existence. It may be terrible, as with the Saracens. Or it may be beneficent, and then it blooms and is fruitful in a glorious national life.

The national idea must also be embodied in institutions. Thus it becomes a polity. To this every great idea that penetrates a people's life, tends. Did you ever hear of the Yoruba river, and the barbarous names of Lagos and Abbeokuta? They are as familiar to the world as the Tiber and Rome once were. And if the idea of African civilization there opening like a frail blossom, shall set into congenial institutions, it may be the beginning of a great national history. But whether a people is great or small, the only institutions which make the nation happy are the spontaneous out-growth of the national idea and life.

We always admire the wise complications of our government; the sovereignty of each State in its local affairs, (if that can be called a sovereignty which by the terms of the Constitution is stripped of all the greater prerogatives of sovereignty) and the States bound together under the Federal Government, which is clothed with all the greater prerogatives of sovereignty, and gives to the one nation an undisputed standing among the Great Powers; the wonderful combination of perfect security of local rights and the minute attention to local interests characteristic of a small State, with the dignity and power of a great nation and the capacity of continental enlargement. Yet our government was not the invention of man. It grew into this form under the guiding Providence of God ; and as the Patriots of the Revolution did not use their military power and popularity for selfish aggrandizement, there was no obstruction to the spontaneous development of the national life in congenial institutions. In fact, the war of independence did not create nor essentially change the national idea, nor essentially change the existing institutions. It was a crisis in our national growth, as the tasseling and silking are a crisis in the growth of the corn, or the falling of the blossom and the setting of the fruit a crisis in the growth of an apple.

But to attempt to make another people happy by putting on them our institutions, would have no warrant for success. Lash wings to a turtle, but it will not fly.

Thus the constitution of a State, like that of a man, is internal working outward, not external working inward. Hence constitutions are usually unwritten, the precedents established in the growth of the people. If the government is pliable, a people may attain in this way, as the British have, the essentials of constitutional freedom. If the government is unyielding, and does not succeed in killing out the growth of the popular thought and life, there must be unrest and ultimate explosion. Hence paper constitutions in France and elsewhere have been so short-lived. A national constitution cannot be manufactured to order; cut and made like a coat and put upon the people from without. The Constitution of the United States is the first written Constitution that has been successful in its administration. Its framers were wise enough simply to make it an expression of the national life and idea, into which in its previous history the nation had grown. They tried once and did not hit it. They tried again with success as great as can be expected for anything human.*

It is this embodiment of our great American idea into our institutions which constitutes us a nation. This is indeed, the Saviour's teaching, loosely interpreted and applied, that a man is not a Jew because he is descended from Abraham, but only because, whatever his descent, he has the faith of Abraham. He who is not in sympathy with the American idea that breathes in our political institutions, is an alien, unworthy to bear the name of American citizen. But the Irishman, the German, the Frenchman, every foreigner, who seeks the protection of our government, intelligently sympathizing with its idea and spirit, he is an American, a native "to the manor born" by a new political birth, and entitled in due form of law to become a citizen. They belong to a nation who are willing to die for it. There may be difficulties and differences as to the legal provisions bestfitted to carry out this principle; but that it is the true principle all will admit.

But what is the American Idea? It is universal rights and justice, insured by the combined action of distinct States united under the Federal Government.

It is not the love of liberty. The love of liberty is an instinct, stronger, probably in the savage than in the civilized; perhaps stronger in a tiger than in either. Wild and fiery, it is consistent with selfishness. If the person whom it controls is himself free, if his own gains are sure and his own privileges unabridged, the love of liberty has no plea for the rights of others, no voice to rouse that comfortable and prosperous man to vindicate the rights of the oppressed. If it animates an order of nobility, it is only to maintain the privileges of the order. In truth it positively tends to encourage oppression, and aristocratic assumption. If the person whom it animates can enlarge his own privileges by subjugating others, if by standing on the prostrate body of another, he can lift his own feet out of the mire, the more is this instinct gratified.

*Already in the exigencies of the nation's life the letter of the Constitution has been modified both by formal amendment, accepted interpretation and established precedent; other modifications will doubtless be needed hereafter. But they can be safe and lasting only when necessitated in the exigencies of the nation's history, to meet the new developments of the national life and in accordance therewith to express the original spirit and idea of the instrument.

The American idea is the principle of universal justice, a sentiment which, fortified by reason and conscience, and embedded in the eternal distinction of right and wrong, regards the rights of all men. While the person animated by this sentiment will not brook wrong to himself, it makes it equally impossible for him to brook wrong to another.

The difference between the civilization of the North and of the South is precisely here. Of the Southern civilization the love of liberty is the vital force. Hence chivalry, sensitive to personal affront, revengeful of injuries, impatient of restraint, disdainful of labor, but reckless of the rights of others, not ashamed to repudiate debts, reckless of taking life, imperious to equals and inferiors, complacent in the superior elevation attained by standing on prostrate men, and fancying that by virtue of this elevation they are the gentlemen, the aristocracy, the nobility of America. But the vital force of Northern civilization is justice, equal regard to the rights of every man; the opposite of Southern chivalry in its characteristic effects; disdaining to lay weaker men as the mud-sills on which to lift our house; studying so to administer the State as to insure to all men equal privileges of education, an unobstructed career to whatever capacity each one possesses, and equal opportunity to win the advantages of life; and determined that no combination of men, however chivalrous, shall crush the glorious institutions in which our principles are enshrined. This stern principle characterized the Puritans. In itself it is rough as the granite ledges; but it is like them, the solid foundation of a right national character, on which the soil gathers and all the softer graces of culture bloom and fructify in abundance and beauty.

It may be objected that slavery existed among us from the beginning, and that it, as developed in Southern civilization, is the true American idea. History demonstrates the contrary. Slavery was originally forced on the colonists. Until long after the Revolution it was only tolerated, at the North and at the South, as a temporary evil. Vice-President Stephens declares this. The writings of the fathers prove it. You are familiar with Jefferson's words. Yet it is fitting to the day and to the times to repeat them; fitting that on this 4th of July, 1861, his solemn testimony be recited:

"What an incomprehensible machine is man, who can endure toil, famine, stripes, imprisonment and death itself, in vindication of his own liberty, and the next moment be deaf to all those motives which supported him through the trial, and inflict on his fellow-man a bondage, one hour of which is fraught with more misery than ages of that which he rose in rebellion to oppose. But we must wait with patience the workings of an overruling Providence, and hope that that is preparing the deliverance of these, our suffering brethren. When the measure of their tears shall be full, when their tears shall have involved Heaven itself in darkness, doubtless a God of justice will awaken to their distress, and by diffusing light and liberality among their oppressors, or, at length by his exterminating thunder, manifest his attention to things of this world, and that they are not left to the guidance of a blind fatality."

"With what execration should the statesman be loaded, who, permitting one-half the citizens thus to trample on the rights of the other, transforms those into despots, and these into enemies, destroys the morals of the one

part, and the *amor patriæ* of the other. For if a slave can have a country in this world, it must be any other in preference to that in which he is born to live and labor for another, in which he must lock up the faculties of his nature, contribute as far as depends on his individual endeavors to the banishment of the human race, or entail his own miserable condition on the endless generations proceeding from him. With the morals of a people, their industry also is destroyed. For in a warm climate, no man will labor for himself, who can make another labor for him. This is so true, that of the proprietors of slaves, a very small proportion indeed are ever seen to labor. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure, when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I remember that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever; that considering numbers, nature, and natural means only, a revolution of the wheels of fortune, an exchange of situations is among *possible* events; that it may become *probable* by supernatural interference. The Almighty has no attribute that can take side with us in such a contest."

With such principles the nation commenced its life. Under the vigor of this free national life the evil was sloughing off and would have disappeared, had not new causes re-invigorated its waning strength. Then began the modern apostacy from the faith of the fathers, the recognition of slavery as good and right, and as necessary to the best constitution of society, with the accompanying endeavors to gain for it political power in administering the government. In connection with this apostasy, the old, wire-drawn, metaphysical theory of State Rights, with its successive developments of nullification and secession, began to acquire strength—a theory perhaps best answered by Webster in a speech of a single sentence, when in reply to a long speech from a Southern Senator, he said the gentleman had made a long speech defending his theory, which nobody could be expected to understand but either a metaphysician or a fool. Now the nation is brought at last to imminent danger. I can think only of a tumor on the body. At first all the vital action is to throw it off. But when, through untoward influences, it has gained ascendancy, the very processes of life are compelled to nourish it and hasten the body to death. Yet would any one imagine, even then, that the disease is the true life-force of the body, or anything but its deadly antagonist? It is plain, then, that slavery is no part of the American idea. So far as it has laid hold of the life-force of the nation, it has perverted it into a death-force, and brought the nation to the verge of dissolution. The nation's life depends on sending through it its original principle of justice and right in all its original pervasion and power. The nation must not die, however severe the surgery which its preservation demands.

Precisely how this great misery of the land is to be disposed of in the issue of this war, no man foresees. We may best leave it to God, who has evidently taken the disposal of it out of our hands into his own.

Therefore we owe a loving allegiance to our government as the representative and defender of the rights of man; as the embodiment of the American idea; the complicated and living organization into whose life-blood have been

distilled all the great thoughts, the heroic achievements, the noble aspiration of American history; the precious embodiment of all the priceless results for human progress, of the entire and peculiar life of the new continent, and of all human hopes of a happier future from the new institutions of a new world. In the pending controversy is adjudicated, in the presence of the attentive nations, the question whether a Republican government is possible to a great nation; whether it has an inherent tendency to domestic dissension, and order and stability are possible only under a monarchy; whether it offers to man any hope of a better future. The London Times, with unseemly haste, has already declared judgment, "The Great Republic is gone forever." We owe it to all coming generations to prove the judgment false. We owe to them unyielding resistance to the criminal power which is trying to bring this new and grand development of national life to a shameful end, and to close forever all hope from popular government of benefit to man.

This suggests another reason—the last which I shall urge—why we owe love and loyal service to the government; the dependence on it of the hopes of mankind.

In ancient times God had a chosen people—the Jews—chosen to preserve the doctrine and worship of the one God;—chosen, therefore, as the depository of a quickening idea. But the Jews are not the only chosen people that God ever had. The progress of man has never been by the agency of all nations, but of one nation, or perhaps of two or three. What have the Chinese effected for the advancement of mankind? They were long ago acquainted with the Mariner's compass and an art of printing, but what have those inventions, in their hands, effected for human progress? The chosen nations are depositaries of ideas for quickening humanity. Greece gave to the world, philosophy, literary and æsthetic culture. Rome embodied the idea of organization and law.

We have always taken it for granted that the English speaking race was one of these chosen peoples. I say the English speaking race, for, notwithstanding the misrepresentations of the Times, the astonishing slowness of the English to appreciate our position and to give us sympathy, which have, necessarily, rekindled the old animosity, whatever our temporary misunderstandings, our destiny must be to co operate in enterprises for human welfare.

But especially we have been sure that the United States was destined to an extraordinary efficiency in the education and elevation of humanity. We have repeated Berkley's lines without a doubt of their fulfilment:

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

And have we not had reason for this confidence? Who can imagine that this continent was kept hidden till the modern revival of letters and religion, only to awaken hopes forever to be blasted, only to be the grand theatre of a magnificent political abortion? This is the 19th century. This is the year when Italy is redeemed, when Russia emancipates her serfs, when Austria grants and Turkey enforces religious toleration. And is the shadow on the dial of time to go backward in America? Who can believe that at this time

of the world's life, a confederacy can be successfully set up in America—whose corner stone is, according to Mr. Stephens—the inequality of races and the monstrous inference that “slavery is the natural and normal state” of the inferior race? Who can believe that slavery, having floated, like an iceberg into torrid seas, out of the frozen past into the midst of modern light, is thus to impart its own iciness to the season, and turn mid-summer into mid-winter, and noon-day to polar night?

Consider, also, the country's history, the wonderful coincidences, the interlocking of distant agencies and events, the extraordinary deliverances from peril, interpositions of Providence, as every one who has any belief in Providence is compelled to acknowledge; so that “God's hand in America” has been the theme of the press and of the rostrum; so that it has become a current and fixed belief, that God has guided the American people as really as he did the Israelites in the wilderness. And what an education has been forced on the people by their history; so that the doctrine of human rights, dimly known elsewhere, is here the theme of schoolboy declamation. Consider, also, the unprecedented growth of the people, the development of material resources, the growth of wealth and power, the nation's strength to execute its purposes. Is it strange that we trusted this nation was a chosen agency to lift the world to a freer and nobler life?

Yes, and I believe it still. I believe it to-day. I know there is a terrible alternative. For our cupidity, our forgetfulness of the moral and spiritual ideas vital in our national history, for our unfaithfulness to our trust, God may cast us off. It becomes us on this anniversary, beaming on us amid national convulsion and distress, to acknowledge our unfaithfulness. It becomes us to confess, as did Daniel in the day of Israel's distress, which was also the day of approaching deliverance, that unto us belongeth confusion of face as at this day, to our kings, our princes, our fathers and to all the people of the land, because we have sinned. Yet trusting in God we still have faith in our country. Recent events, as marked interpositions of Providence as any in our history, confirm our confidence. This uprising of the people, the sublimest in history—whence was it? Who planned it? Who expected it? Who believed it possible? It is as if God had again “hung forth in heaven his golden scales,” prophetic of the issue.

To day, then, as ever, we believe our country chosen to enlighten the world. Our gorgeous flag is the symbol to us, not of our country only, but of human liberty, of social progress, of universal justice and right, of light from our country to the world; each State a star enlightening the darkness; its three colors, the red, white and blue, the very colors of the morning, the white and rosy light that mingle with heaven's blue at the opening of day. American citizens, say: shall the Star-Spangled Banner fade out of the sky? Shall the hopes which it symbolizes die out of the heart of the world? Shall the dawning of the future fade back again into night?

In the conflict which is upon us, we stand in a Thermopylæ of human liberty. We defend the broad future of mankind from deadly invasion. Like Leonidas and his Spartans, here, if need be, let us die.

In what words, then, can I describe the crime of that power which has flung itself on this nation, and lifted a ferocious hand to crush it back from its great

career, and thwart its beneficent work and its glorious destiny? And shall not the government, in the presence of such an enemy, assert its right to live? Shall a great nation, because assailed, put earth on its head, and sneak away to die? By consenting to its own dismemberment, shall it commit suicide? Shall a great nation bow before imperious rebels, and like a Japanese magistrate in disgrace before his august master, humbly accept the privilege of disemboweling itself? And if such an infamy is to be for the first time in the history of the world, shall it be the infamy of the United States of America? No.

And who would meet such an emergency with the truism that war is a great evil? When the nation, greater than all others in the hopes of mankind, our own nation, which was our fathers' and should be our children's, is in the agony of mortal struggle for its very life, who thinks he can meet the hour by talking of the blessings of peace? Peace! we know its blessings, for we have rejoiced in them all our lives. War! we know its terrors; its anguish is in our hearts, and in the hearts of all our people to-day. But the nation must not die.

Let no man confound war with revenge. A righteous war has nothing in common with malignant revenge. If a criminal is hungry, I must feed him; but I must uphold the government by aiding it to bring him to justice. A personal injury from a personal enemy, I am forbidden by my private act to revenge; but I must uphold the government by aiding it to subdue its enemies; and the act is not revenge. We should allow no malignity towards the Southern people. Whatever punishment justice demands for ambitious men who have misled their countrymen, the Southern people are heirs with us to the American name; and it is only as numbers of them eventually co-operate with us, that our happy Union can be restored. Yet this alters not our duty to the government. It is remarkable that the words which I have quoted, declaring the duty of the magistrate by the sword to execute wrath on the evil doer, are immediately preceded by the words "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, &c.," But these words are at the close of the 12th chapter, and those at the beginning of the 13th. We read the 12th chapter to-day, and shut up our bibles; and we read the 13th to-morrow, and we think that the terrible words about the sword of the magistrate ought not to be mentioned in the same twenty-four hours with the beautiful words: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves." But Paul knew that they were perfectly consistent, and put them side by side. The sword with which the magistrate smites the rebel, is a sword with which God himself has girded him. And when he draws that sword, and at its first gleam thousands of armed men leap, as it were, from the earth to execute the terrific sentence, and the heart of all the people, as if one heart throbbed in eighteen millions, demands that it shall not be sheathed till its work is thoroughly done, and the authority of the government restored, this is not revenge; it is fealty to government; it is duty to family and country, to humanity and to God.

Whether success shall attend our struggle, it is not for us to say. It depends not merely on our greater material resources, so that, as Mr. Russell says, the Southern people find we are "corking them up all frothing and fermenting." If this superiority is all, we have no assurance of success. Much

more does it depend on the moral resources accumulated in the progress of national life; faith in God; consequent deep moral convictions of right and wrong; courage founded on these; consequent confidence of the immortality and sure progress of truth, and of the higher and happier future destined to human society. With these we shall prevail.

How grand the object for which we struggle. A State small in territory may be great in character and power. Greece was a small State, but it gave culture to the world. Palestine was not larger than Massachusetts, and Cicero said the God of Palestine must be a feeble God, since he ruled so small a State. But the God of Palestine is acknowledged the living and the true God by all enlightened nations. If, as was at first threatened, the Union should dissolve, and New England be left alone, New England might be, like Greece and Palestine, great in moral resources, and a power felt throughout the earth. How great, then, the object for which we struggle, that this nation, preserved from dissolution, great in territory, in material resources, in teeming population, may be great also in character and principle, in allegiance to truth, to duty, and to God; the continental bulwark of liberty and justice; the example and teacher of nations.

The words of the fathers in the Declaration of Independence had a new and solemn meaning, as they were read to us to-day. This anniversary is more than a day of pomp and pageant. It is a day of solemn thought and earnest consecration. Here amid the perils of our country, we join our hands and hearts with the Fathers of our Independence; and to our country, theirs and ours, we pledge "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."