

On the outer circle sat Henry Clay, with his impetuous and ardent nature untamed by age, and exhibiting in the Senate the same vehement patriotism and passionate eloquence that of yore electrified the House of Representatives and the country. His extraordinary personal endowments, his courage, all his noble qualities, invested him with an individuality and a charm of character which in any age would have made him a favorite of history. He loved his country above all earthly objects. He loved liberty in all countries. Illustrious man!—orator, patriot, philanthropist—whose light, at its meridian, was seen and felt in the remotest parts of the civilized world; and whose declining sun as it hastened down the west threw back its level beams in hues of mellowed splendor, to illuminate and to cheer the land he loved and served so well. . . .

And now, senators, we leave this memorable chamber, bearing with us unimpaired the constitution we received from our forefathers. Let us cherish it with grateful acknowledgments to the Divine Power who controls the destinies of empires and whose goodness we adore. The structures reared by men yield to the corroding tooth of time. These marble walls must molder into ruin; but the principles of constitutional liberty, guarded by wisdom and virtue, unlike material elements, do not decay. Let us devoutly trust that another Senate, in another age, shall bear to a new and larger chamber this constitution vigorous and inviolate, and that the last generation of posterity shall witness the deliberations of the representatives of American States still united, prosperous, and free.

## REV. DR. STORRS

**R**ICHARD SALTER STORRS, eminent American clergyman and notable pulpit orator, was born at Braintree, Mass., Aug. 21, 1821, and died at Brooklyn, N. Y., June 5, 1900. He was the son of a Congregationalist minister, for sixty-two years pastor at Braintree. Educated at Amherst College, and after studying law for a short time with Rufus Choate relinquished it for the study of theology, which he pursued at Andover Theological Seminary, receiving his degree in 1845. After a year's pastorate at Brookline, Mass., he accepted a call to the newly organized Church of the Pilgrims at Brooklyn, N. Y., of which he was pastor for over fifty years. As a pulpit orator he was known far beyond the limits of his own denomination, and as a speaker on public occasions attained great popularity, his influence, both as clergyman and layman, having been of the most salutary and inspiring character. His sermons and addresses, which are noted for their thought and finish, were delivered without notes. His writings include: "The Constitution of the Human Soul" (1856); "Conditions of Success in Preaching without Notes" (1875); "Early American Spirit and the Genesis of It" (1875); "John Wycliffe and the First English Bible" (1880); "Recognition of the Supernatural in Letters and Life" (1881); "Manliness in the Scholar" (1883); "Divine Origin of Christianity Indicated by Its Historical Effects" (1884); "The Prospective Advance of Christian Missions" (1885); "Bernard of Clairvaux" (1892); "Forty Years of Pastoral Life"; and "Foundation Truths of American Missions" (1897). Dr. Storrs was one of the founders of the N. Y. "Independent."

### THE RISE OF CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTY

CENTENNIAL ORATION DELIVERED AT THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC,  
NEW YORK, JULY 4, 1876

**M**R. PRESIDENT, FELLOW CITIZENS,—The long-expected day has come, and passing peacefully the impalpable line which separates ages, the Republic completes its hundredth year. The predictions in which affectionate hope gave inspiration to political prudence are fulfilled. The fears of the timid, and the hopes of those to whom our national existence is a menace, are alike disappointed. The fable of the physical world becomes the fact of the political; and after alternate sunshine and storm, after heavings of the earth which only

deepened its roots, and ineffectual blasts of lightning whose lurid threat died in the air, under a sky now raining on it benignant influence, the century-plant of American independence and popular government bursts into this magnificent blossom of a joyful celebration illuminating the land!

With what desiring though doubtful expectation those whose action we commemorate looked for the possible coming of this day, we know from the records which they have left. With what anxious solicitude the statesmen and the soldiers of the following generation anticipated the changes which might take place before this centennial year should be reached, we have heard ourselves, in their great and fervent admonitory words. How dim and drear the prospect seemed to our own hearts fifteen years since, when, on the Fourth of July, 1861, the thirty-seventh Congress met at Washington with no representative in either House from any State south of Tennessee and western Virginia, and when a determined and numerous army, under skilful commanders, approached and menaced the capital and the government — this we surely have not forgotten; nor how, in the terrible years which followed, the blood and fire, and vapor of smoke, seemed oftentimes to swim as a sea, or to rise as a wall, between our eyes and this anniversary.

“It cannot outlast the second generation from those who founded it,” was the exulting conviction of the many who loved the traditions and state of monarchy, and who felt them insecure before the widening fame in the world of our prosperous Republic. “It may not reach its hundredth year,” was the deep and sometimes the sharp apprehension of those who felt, as all of us felt, that their own liberty, welfare, hope, with the brightest political promise of the world, were bound up with the unity and the life of our

nation. Never was solicitude more intense, never was prayer to Almighty God more fervent and constant — not in the earliest beginnings of our history, when Indian ferocity threatened that history with a swift termination; not in the days of supremest trial amid the Revolution — than in those years when the nation seemed suddenly split asunder, and forces which had been combined for its creation were clinched and rocking back and forth in bloody grapple on the question of its maintenance.

The prayer was heard. The effort and the sacrifice have come to their fruitage, and to-day the nation — still one, as at the start, though now expanded over such immense spaces, absorbing such incessant and diverse elements from other lands, developing within it opinions so conflicting, interests so various, and forms of occupation so novel and manifold — to-day the nation, emerging from the toil and the turbulent strife, with the earlier and the later clouds alike swept out of its resplendent stellar arch, pauses from its work to remember and rejoice; with exhilarated spirit to anticipate its future, with reverent heart to offer to God its great *Te Deum*.

Not here alone, in this great city, whose lines have gone out into all the earth, and whose superb progress in wealth, in culture, and in civic renown is itself the most illustrious token of the power and beneficence of that frame of government under which it has been realized; not alone in yonder — I had almost said adjoining — city, whence issued the paper that first announced our national existence, and where now rises the magnificent exposition, testifying for all progressive States to their respect and kindness toward us, the radiant clasp of diamond and opal on the girdle of the sympathies which interweave their peoples with ours; not alone in Boston, the historic town, first in resistance to

British aggression and foremost in plans for the new and popular organization, one of whose citizens wrote his name, as if cutting it with a plowshare, at the head of all on our great charter, another of whose citizens was its intrepid and powerful champion, aiding its passage through the Congress; not there alone, nor yet in other great cities of the land, but in smaller towns, in villages and hamlets, this day will be kept, a secular Sabbath, sacred alike to memory and to hope.

Not only, indeed, where men are assembled, as we are here, will it be honored. The lonely and remote will have their parts in this commemoration. Where the boatman follows the winding stream or the woodman explores the forest shades; where the miner lays down his eager drill beside rocks which guard the precious veins, or where the herdsman, along the sierras, looks forth on the seas which now reflect the rising day, which at our midnight shall be gleaming like gold in the setting sun; there also will the day be regarded as a day of memorial. The sailor on the sea will note it, and dress his ship in its brightest array of flags and bunting. Americans dwelling in foreign lands will note and keep it.

London itself will to-day be more festive because of the event which a century ago shadowed its streets, incensed its Parliament, and tore from the crown of its obstinate King the chiefest jewel. On the boulevards of Paris, in the streets of Berlin, and along the levelled bastions of Vienna, at Marseilles, and at Florence, upon the silent liquid ways of stately Venice, in the passes of the Alps, under the shadow of church and obelisk, palace and ruin, which still prolong the majesty of Rome; yet, farther east, on the Bosphorus and in Syria; in Egypt which writes on the front of its compartment in the great exhibition: "The oldest people

of the world sends its morning greeting to the youngest nation;" along the heights behind Bombay, in the foreign hongs of Canton, in the "Islands of the Morning," which found the dawn of their new age in the startling sight of an American squadron entering their bays — everywhere will be those who have thought of this day, and who join with us to greet its coming.

No other such anniversary, probably, has attracted hitherto such general notice. You have seen Rome, perhaps, on one of those shining April days when the traditional anniversary of the founding of the city fills its streets with civic processions, with military display, and the most elaborate fireworks in Europe; you may have seen Holland in 1872, when the whole country bloomed with orange on the three hundredth anniversary of the capture by the sea-beggars of the City of Briel, and of the revolt against Spanish domination which thereupon flashed on different sides into sudden explosion. But these celebrations, and others like them, have been chiefly local. The world outside has taken no wide impression from them. This of ours is the first of which many lands, in different tongues, will have had report. . . .

It cannot certainly be affirmed that we in America, any more than persons or peoples elsewhere, have reached as yet the ideal state of private liberty combined with a perfect public order, or of culture complete and a supreme character. The political world, as well as the religious, since Christ was on earth, looks forward, not backward, for its millennium. That golden age is still to come which is to shine in the perfect splendor reflected from him who is ascended; and no proph-

ey tells us how long before the advancing race shall reach and cross its glowing marge, or what long effort, or what tumults of battle, are still to precede.

In this country, too, there have been immense special impediments to hinder wide popular progress in things which are highest. Our people have had a continent to subdue. They have been from the start in constant migration. Westward, from the counties of the Hudson and the Mohawk, around the lakes, over the prairies, across the great river, westward still, over alkali plains, across terrible cañons, up gorges of the mountains where hardly the wild goat could find footing; westward always, till the Golden Gate opened out on the sea which has been made 10,000 miles wide, as if nothing less could stop the march — this has been the popular movement from almost the day of the great Declaration. Tomorrow's tents have been pitched in new fields, and last year's houses await new possessors.

With such constant change, such wide dislocation of the mass of the people from early and settled home associations, and with the incessant occupation of the thoughts by the great physical problems presented — not so much by any struggle for existence as by harvests for which the prairies waited, by mills for which the rivers clamored, by the coal and the gold which offered themselves to the grasp of the miner — it would not have been strange if a great and dangerous decadence had occurred in that domestic and private virtue of which home is the nursery, in that generous and reverent public spirit which is but the effluence of its combined rays. It would have been wholly too much to expect that, under such influences, the highest progress should have been realized in speculative thought, in artistic culture, or in the researches of pure science.

Accordingly, we find that in these departments not enough has been accomplished to make our progress signal in them, though here and there the eminent souls, "that are like stars and dwell apart," have illumined themes highest with their high interpretations. But history has been cultivated among us with an enthusiasm, to an extent hardly I think to have been anticipated among a people so recent and expectant; and Prescott, Motley, Irving, Ticknor, with him upon whose splendid page all American history has been amply illustrated, are known as familiarly and honored as highly in Europe as here. We have had, as well, distinguished poets, and have them now, to whom the nation has been responsive, through whom the noblest poems of the Old World have come into the English tongue, rendered in fit and perfect music, and some of whose minds, blossoming long ago in the solemn and beautiful fancies of youth, with perennial energy still ripen to new fruit as they near or cross their four score years. In medicine and law, as well as in theology, in fiction, biography, and the vivid narrative of exploration and discovery, the people whose birthday we commemorate has added something to the possession of men. Its sculptors and painters have won high places in the brilliant realm of modern art. Publicists like Wheaton, jurists like Kent, have gained a celebrity reflecting honor on the land; and if no orator so vast in knowledge, so profound and discursive in philosophical thought, so affluent in imagery, and so glorious in diction as Edmund Burke has yet appeared, we must remember that centuries were needed to produce him elsewhere, and that any of the great parliamentary debaters, aside from him, have been matched or surpassed in the hearing of those who have hung with rapt sympathetic attention on the lips of Clay or of Rufus Choate, or have felt themselves listening to the

mightiest mind which ever touched theirs when they stood beneath the imperial voice in which Webster spoke.

In applied science there has been much done in the country, for which the world admits itself our grateful debtor. I need not multiply illustrations of this from locomotives, printing presses, sewing machines, revolvers, steam reapers, bank locks. One instance suffices, most signal of all. When Morse, from Washington, thirty-two years ago, sent over the wires his word to Baltimore, "What hath God wrought," he had given to all the nations of mankind an instrument the most sensitive, expansive, quickening, which the world yet possesses. He had bound the earth in electric network.

England touches India to-day, and France, Algeria, while we are in contact with all the continents upon these scarcely perceptible nerves. The great strategist like Von Moltke, with these in his hands, from the silence of his office directs campaigns, dictates marches, wins victories; the statesman in the Cabinet inspires and regulates the distant diplomacies; while the traveller in any port or mart is by the same marvel of mechanism in instant communication with all centres of commerce. It is certainly not too much to say that no other invention of the world in this century has so richly deserved the medals, crosses, and diamond decorations, the applause of Senates, the gifts of Kings, which have been showered upon its author, as did this invention, which finally taught and utilized the lightnings whose nature a signer of the great Declaration had made apparent.

But after all it is not so much in special inventions, or in eminent attainments made by individuals, that we are to find the answer to the question, "What did that day, a hundred years since, accomplish for us?" Still less is it found in the progress we have made in outward wealth and mate-

rial success. This might have been made, approximately at least, if the British supremacy had here continued. The prairies would have been as productive as now, the mines of copper and silver and gold as rich and extensive, the coal-beds as vast, and the cotton-fields as fertile, if we had been born the subjects of the Georges or of Victoria. Steam would have kept its propulsive force, and sea and land have been theatres of its triumph. The river would have been as smooth a highway for the commerce which seeks it; and the leap of every mountain stream would have given as swift and constant a push to the wheels that set spindles and saws in motion. Electricity itself would have lost no property, and might have become as completely as now the fire-winged messenger of the thought of mankind.

But what we have now, and should not have had except for that paper which the Congress adopted, is the general and increasing popular advancement in knowledge, vigor, as I believe in moral culture, of which our country has been the arena, and in which lies its hope for the future. The independence of the nation has acted with sympathetic force on the personal life which the nation includes. It has made men more resolute, aspiring, confident, and more susceptible to whatever exalts. The doctrine that all by creation are equal—not in respect of physical force or of mental endowment, of means for culture or inherited privilege, but in respect of immortal faculty, of duty to each other, of right to protection, and to personal development—this has given manliness to the poor, enterprise to the weak, a kindling hope to the most obscure. It has made the individuals of whom the nation is composed more alive to the forces which educate and exalt.

There has been incessant motive, too, for the wide and

constant employment of these forces. It has been felt that, as the people is sovereign here, that people must be tuned in mind and spirit for its august and sovereign function. The establishment of common schools for a needful primary secular training has been an instinct of society, only recognized and repeated in provisions of statutes. The establishment of higher schools, classical and general, of colleges, scientific and professional seminaries, has been as well the impulse of the nation, and the furtherance of them a care of government. The immense expansion of the press in this country has been based fundamentally upon the same impulse; and has wrought with beneficent general force in the same direction. Religious instruction has gone as widely as this distribution of secular knowledge.

It used to be thought that a Church dissevered from the State must be feeble. Wanting wealth of endowments and dignity of titles—its clergy entitled to no place among the peers, its revenues assured by no legal enactments—it must remain obscure and poor, while the absence of any external limitations, of parliamentary rubrics and a legal creed, must leave it liable to endless division, and tend to its speedy disintegration into sects and schisms. It seemed as hopeless to look for strength, wealth, beneficence, for extensive educational and missionary work, to such churches as these, as to look for aggressive military organization to a company of farmers, or for the volume and thunder of Niagara to a thousand sinking and separate rills.

But the work which was given to be done in this country was so great and momentous, and has been so constant that matching itself against that work the Church, under whatever name, has realized a strength, and developed an activity, wholly fresh in the world in modern times. It has not

been antagonized by that instinct of liberty which always awakens against its work, where religion is required by law. It has seized the opportunity. Its ministers and members have had their own standards, leaders, laws, and sometimes have quarrelled, fiercely enough, as to which were the better. But in the work which was set them to do, to give to the sovereign American people the knowledge of God in the Gospel of his Son, their only strife has been one of emulation—to go the farthest, to give the most, and to bless most largely the land and its future. The spiritual incentive has of course been supreme; but patriotism has added its impulse to the work. It has been felt that Christianity is the basis of republican empire, its bond of cohesion, its life-giving law; that the ancient manuscript copies of the Gospels sent by Gregory to Augustine at Canterbury, and still preserved on sixth century parchments at Oxford and Cambridge—more than Magna Charta itself these are the roots of English liberty; that Magna Charta and the Petition of Right with our completing Declaration, were possible only because these had been before them. And so in the work of keeping Christianity prevalent in the land, all Christian churches have eagerly striven. Their preachers have been heard where the pioneer's fire scarce was kindled. Their schools have been gathered in the temporary camp, not less than in the hamlet or town. They have sent their books with lavish distribution, they have scattered their Bibles like leaves of Autumn, where settlements were hardly more than prophesied. In all languages of the land they have told the old story of the law and the cross, a present redemption and a coming tribunal. The highest truths, most solemn and inspiring, have been the truths most constantly in hand. It has been felt that, in the best sense, a muscular Christianity was indispensable where

men lifted up axes upon the thick trees. The delicate speculations of the closet and the schools were too dainty for the work; and the old confessions of councils and reformers, whose undecaying and sovereign energy no use exhausts, have been those always most familiar where the trapper on his stream or the miner in his gulch has found priest or minister on his track.

Of course not all the work has been fruitful. Not all God's acorns come to oaks, but here and there one. Not all the seeds of flowers germinate, but enough to make some radiant gardens. And out of all this work and gift has come a mental and moral training to the nation at large such as it certainly would not have had except for this effort, the effort for which would not have been made on a scale so immense except for the incessant aim to fit the nation for its great experiment of self-regulation. The Declaration of Independence has been the great charter of public education; has given impulse and scope to this prodigious missionary work.

The result of the whole is evident enough. I am not here as the eulogist of our people beyond what facts justify. I admit, with regret, that American manners sometimes are coarse, and American culture very imperfect; that the noblest examples of a consummate training imply a leisure which we have not had, and are perhaps most easily produced where social advantages are more permanent than here, and the law of heredity has a wider recognition. We all know too well how much of even vice and shame there has been in our national life; how corruption has entered high places in the government, and the blister of its touch has been upon laws, as well as on the acts of prominent officials. And we know the reckless greed and ambition, the fierce party spirit, the personal wrangles and jealous animosities, with which our

Congress has been often dishonored; at which the nation — sadder still — has sometimes laughed in idiotic unreason.

But knowing all this, and with the impression of it full on our thoughts, we may exult in the real, steady, and prophesying growth of a better spirit toward dominance in the land. I scout the thought that we, as a people, are worse than our fathers! John Adams, at the head of the War Department, in 1776, wrote bitter laments of the corruption which existed in even that infant age of the Republic, and of the spirit of venality, rapacious and insatiable, which was then the most alarming enemy of America. He declared himself ashamed of the age he lived in! In Jefferson's day all Federalists expected the universal dominion of French infidelity. In Jackson's day all Whigs thought the country gone to ruin already, as if Mr. Biddle had had the entire public hope locked up in the vaults of his terminated bank. In Polk's day the excitements of the Mexican War gave life and germination to all seeds of rascality. There has never been a time — not here alone but in any country — when the fierce light of incessant inquiry blazing on men in public life would not have brought out such forces of evil as we have seen, or when the condemnation which followed the discovery would have been sharper. And it is among my deepest convictions that, with all which has happened to debase and debauch it, the nation at large was never before more mentally vigorous or morally sound than it is to-day.

Gentlemen, the demonstration is around us. This city, if any place on the continent, should have been the one where a reckless wickedness should have had sure prevalence, and reforming virtue the least chance of success. Starting in 1790 with a white population of less than 30,000 — growing steadily for forty years, till that population has multiplied