

sixfold — taking into itself from that time on such multitudes of emigrants from all parts of the earth that the dictionaries of the languages spoken in its streets would make a library — all forms of luxury coming with wealth, and all means and facilities for every vice — the primary elections being always the seed-bed out of which springs its choice of rulers, with the influence which it sends to the public councils — its citizens so absorbed in their pursuits that oftentimes, for years together, large numbers of them have left its affairs in hands the most of all unsuited to so supreme and delicate a trust — it might well have been expected that while its docks were echoing with a commerce which encompassed the globe, while its streets were thronged with the eminent and the gay from all parts of the land, while its homes had in them uncounted thousands of noble men and cultured women, while its stately squares swept out year by year across new space, while it founded great institutions of beneficence and shot new spires upward toward heaven, and turned the rocky waste to a pleasure-ground famous in the earth, its government would decay, and its recklessness of moral ideas, if not as well of political principles, would become apparent.

Men have prophesied this, from the outset till now. The fear of it began with the first great advance of the wealth, population, and fame of the city; and there have not been wanting facts in its history which served to renew if not to justify the fear.

But when the war of 1861 broke on the land, and shadowed every home within it, this city — which had voted by immense majorities against the existing administration, and which was linked by a million ties with the great communities that were rushing to assail it — flung out its banners from

window and spire, from City Hall and newspaper office, and poured its wealth and life into the service of sustaining the government, with a swiftness and strength and a vehement energy that were never surpassed. When, afterward, greedy and treacherous men, capable and shrewd, deceiving the unwary, hiring the skilful, and molding the very law to their uses, had concentrated in their hands the government of the city, and had bound it in seemingly invincible chains while they plundered its treasury — it rose upon them, when advised of the facts, as Samson rose upon the Philistines; and the two new cords that were upon his hands no more suddenly became as flax that was burned than did those manacles imposed upon the city by the craft of the Ring.

Its leaders of opinion to-day are the men — like him who presides in our assembly — whom virtue exalts and character crowns. It rejoices in a chief magistrate as upright and intrepid in a virtuous cause as any of those whom he succeeds. It is part of a State whose present position, in laws, and officers, and the spirit of its people does no discredit to the noblest of its memories. And from these heights between the rivers, looking over the land, looking out on the earth to which its daily embassies go, it sees nowhere beneath the sun a city more ample in its moral securities, a city more dear to those who possess it, a city more splendid in promise and in hope.

What is true of the city is true, in effect, of all the land. Two things, at least, have been established by our national history, the impression of which the world will not lose. The one is, that institutions like ours, when sustained by a prevalent moral life throughout the nation, are naturally permanent. The other is, that they tend to peaceful relations with other states. They do this in fulfilment of an organic tend-

ency, and not through any accident of location. The same tendency will inhere in them, whosoever established.

In this age of the world, and in all the states which Christianity quickens, the allowance of free movement to the popular mind is essential to the stability of public institutions. There may be restraint enough to guide and keep such movement from premature exhibition. But there cannot be force enough used to resist it, and to reverse its gathering current. If there is, the government is swiftly overthrown, as in France so often, or is left on one side, as Austria has been by the advancing German people; like the Castle of Heidelberg, at once palace and fortress, high-placed and superb, but only the stateliest ruin in Europe, when the rail train thunders through the tunnel beneath it, and the Neckar sings along its near channel as if tower and tournament never had been. Revolution, transformation, organic change, have thus all the time for this hundred years been proceeding in Europe; sometimes silent, but oftener amid thunders of stricken fields; sometimes pacific, but oftener with garments rolled in blood.

In England the progress has been peaceful, the popular demands being ratified by law whenever the need became apparent. It has been vast as well as peaceful in the extension of suffrage, in the ever-increasing power of the Commons, in popular education. Chatham himself would hardly know his own England if he should return to it. The throne continues, illustrated by the virtues of her who fills it, and the ancient forms still obtain in Parliament. But it could not have occurred to him or to Burke that a century after the ministry of Grenville the embarkation of the Pilgrims would be one of the prominent historical pictures on the panels of the lobby of the House of Lords, or that the name of Oliver Cromwell, and of Bradshaw, president of the high court of

justice, would be cut in the stone in Westminster Abbey, over the places in which they were buried, and whence their decaying bodies were dragged to the ditch and the gibbet. England is now, as has been well said, "an aristocratic Republic, with a permanent executive." Its only perils lie in the fact of that aristocracy, which, however, is flexible enough to endure, of that permanence in the executive which would hardly outlive one vicious prince.

What changes have taken place in France I need not remind you, nor how uncertain is still its future. You know how the swift, untiring wheels of advance or reaction have rolled this way and that in Italy and in Spain; how Germany has had to be reconstructed; how Hungary has had to fight and suffer for that just place in the Austrian councils which only imperial defeat surrendered. You know how precarious the equilibrium now is in many states between popular rights and princely prerogative; what armies are maintained to fortify governments: what fear of sudden and violent change, like an avalanche tumbling at the touch of a foot, perplexes nations. The records of change make the history of Europe. The expectation of change is almost as wide as the continent itself.

Meantime, how permanent has been the Republic, which seemed at the outset to foreign spectators a mere sudden insurrection, a mere organized riot! Its organic law, adopted after exciting debate, but arousing no battle, and enforced by no army, has been interpreted and peacefully administered, with one great exception, from the beginning. It has once been assailed with passion and skill, with splendid daring and unbounded self-sacrifice, by those who sought a sectional advantage through its destruction. No monarchy of the world could have stood that assault. It seemed as if

the last fatal Apocalypse had come, to drench the land with plague and flood, and wrap it in a fiery gloom. The Republic

—“pouring, like the tide into a breach,  
With ample and brim fulness of its force,”

subdued the Rebellion, restored the dominion of the old constitution, amended its provisions in the contrary direction from that which had been so fiercely sought, gave it guarantees of endurance while the continent lasts, and made its ensigns more eminent than ever in the regions from which they had been expelled. The very portions of the people which then sought its overthrow are now again its applauding adherents—the great and constant reconciling force, the tranquillizing irenarch, being the freedom which it leaves in their hands.

It has kept its place, this Republic of ours, in spite of the rapid expansion of the nation over territory so wide that the scanty strip of the original state is only as a fringe on its immense mantle. It has kept its place, while vehement debates, involving the profoundest ethical principles, have stirred to its depths the whole public mind. It has kept its place, while the tribes of mankind have been pouring upon it, seeking the shelter and freedom which it gave. It saw an illustrious President murdered by the bullet of an assassin. It saw his place occupied as quietly by another as if nothing unforeseen or alarming had occurred. It saw prodigious armies assembled for its defence. It saw those armies at the end of the war marching in swift and long procession up the streets of the capital, and then dispersing into their former peaceful citizenship, as if they had had no arms in their hands. The general before whose skill and will those armies had been shot upon the forces which opposed them, and

whose word had been their military law, remained for three years an appointed officer of the government he had saved. Elected then to be the head of that government, and again re-elected by the ballots of his countrymen, in a few months more he will have retired, to be thenceforth a citizen like the rest, eligible to office, and entitled to vote, but with no thought of any prerogative descending to him or to his children from his great service and military fame. The Republic, whose triumphing armies he led, will remember his name and be grateful for his work; but neither to him nor to any one else will it ever give sovereignty over itself.

From the Lakes to the Gulf its will is the law, its dominion complete. Its centripetal and centrifugal forces are balanced, almost as in the astronomy of the heavens. Decentralizing authority, it puts his own part of it into the hand of every citizen. Giving free scope to private enterprise, allowing not only but accepting and encouraging each movement of the public reason which is its only terrestrial rule, there is no threat, in all its sky, of division or downfall. It cannot be successfully assailed from without, with a blow at its life, while other nations continue sane.

It has been sometimes compared to a pyramid, broad-based and secure, not liable to overthrow, as is obelisk or column, by storm or age. The comparison is just, but it is not sufficient. It should rather be compared to one of the permanent features of nature, and not to any artificial construction—to the river, which flows like our own Hudson, along the courses that nature opens, forever in motion, but forever the same; to the lake, which lies on common days level and bright in placid stillness, while it gathers its fulness from many lands, and lifts its waves in stormy strength when winds assail it; to the mountain, which is not artisti-

cally shaped, and which only rarely, in some supreme sunburst, flushes with color, but whose roots the very earthquake cannot shake, and on whose brow the storms fall hurtless, while under its shelter the cottage nestles, and up its sides the gardens climb.

So stands the Republic:

“Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,  
As broad and general as the casing air.”

What has been the fact? Lay out of sight that late evil war which could not be averted when once it had been threatened, except by the sacrifice of the government itself and a wholly unparalleled public suicide, and how much of war with foreign powers has the century seen? There has been a frequent crackle of musketry along the frontiers, as Indian tribes which refused to be civilized have slowly and fiercely retreated toward the West. There was one war declared against Tripoli, in 1801, when the Republic took by the throat the African pirates to whom Europe paid tribute, and when the gallantry of Preble and Decatur gave early distinction to our Navy. There was a war declared against England, in 1812, when our seamen had been taken from under our flag, from the decks, indeed, of our national ships, and our commerce had been practically swept from the seas. There was a war affirmed already to exist in Mexico in 1846, entered into by surprise, never formally declared, against which the moral sentiment of the nation rose widely in revolt, but which in its result added largely to our territory, opened to us Californian treasures, and wrote the names of Buena Vista and Monterey on our short annals.

That has been our military history: and if a people, as powerful and as proud, has anywhere been more peaceable also in the last 100 years, the strictest research fails to find it.

Smarting with the injury done us by England during the crisis of our national peril, in spite of the remonstrances presented through that distinguished citizen who should have been your orator to-day; while hostile taunts had incensed our people; while burning ships had exasperated commerce, and while what looked like artful evasions had made statesmen indignant — with a half million men who hardly yet laid down their arms, with a navy never before so vast or so fitted for service — when a war with England would have had the force of passion behind it, and would, at any rate, have shown to the world that the nation respects its starry flag and means to have it secure on the seas — we referred all differences to arbitration, appointed commissioners, tried the cause at Geneva with advocates, not with armies, and got a prompt and ample verdict. If Canada now lay next to Yorkville, it would not be safer from armed incursion than it is when divided by only a custom house from all the strength of this Republic.

The fact is apparent, and the reason not less so. A monarchy, just as it is despotic, finds incitement to war — for preoccupation of the popular mind; to gratify nobles, officers, the army; for historic renown. An intelligent republic hates war, and shuns it. It counts standing armies a curse only second to an annual pestilence. It wants no glory, but from growth. It delights itself in arts of peace, seeks social enjoyment and increase of possessions, and feels instinctively that, like Israel of old, “its strength is to sit still.” It cannot bear to miss the husbandman from the fields, the citizen from the town, the house-father from the home, the worshipper from the church. To change or shape other people’s institutions is no part of its business. To force them to accept its forms of government would simply contradict and

nullify its charter. Except, then, when it is startled into passion, by the cry of a suffering under oppression which stirs its pulses into tumult, or when it is assailed in its own rights, citizens, property, it will not go to war, nor even then if diplomacy can find a remedy for the wrong. "Millions for defence," said Cotesworth Pinckney to the French directory, when Talleyrand in their name had threatened him with war, "but not a cent for tribute." He might have added, "and not a dollar for aggressive strife."

It will never be safe to insult such a nation, or to oppress its citizens, for the reddest blood is in its veins, and some Captain Ingraham may always appear to lay his little sloop-of-war alongside the offending frigate, with shotted guns and a peremptory summons. There is a way to make powder inexplusive; but, treat it chemically how you will, the dynamite will not stand many blows of the hammer. The detonating tendency is too permanent in it. But if left to itself, such a people will be peaceful, as ours has been. It will foster peace among the nations. It will tend to dissolve great permanent armaments, as the light conquers ice, and Summer sunshine breaks the glacier which a hundred trip-hammers could only scar. The longer it continues the more widely and effectively its influence spreads, the more will its benign example hasten the day, so long foretold, so surely coming, when

"The war-drum throbs no longer, and the battle-flags are furled  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world."

It will not be forgotten, in the land or in the earth, until the stars have fallen from their poise, or until our vivid morning star of republican liberty, not losing its lustre, has seen its special brightness fade in the ampler effulgence of a freedom universal!

But while we rejoice in that which is past, and gladly recognize the vast organic mystery of life which was in the Declaration, the plans of Providence which slowly and silently, but with ceaseless progression, had led the way to it, the immense and enduring results of good which from it have flown, let us not forget the duty which always equals privilege, and that of peoples, as well as of persons, to whomsoever much is given shall only therefore the more be required. Let us consecrate ourselves, each one of us, here, to the further duties which wait to be fulfilled, to the work which shall consummate the great work of the fathers!

Mr. President, fellow citizens, to an extent too great for your patience, but with a rapid incompleteness that is only too evident as we match it with the theme, I have outlined before you a few of the reasons why we have the right to commemorate the day whose hundredth anniversary has brought us together, and why the paper then adopted has interest and importance not only for us, but for all the advancing sons of men. Thank God that he who framed the Declaration, and he who was its foremost champion, both lived to see the nation they had shaped growing to greatness, and to die together, in that marvellous coincidence, on its semi-centennial! The fifty years which have passed since then have only still further honored their work. Mr. Adams was mistaken in the day which he named as the one to be most fondly remembered. It was not that on which independence of the Empire of Great Britain was formally resolved. It was that on which the reasons were given which justified the act, and the principles were announced which made it of general significance to mankind. But he would have been absolutely right in saying of the fourth day what he did say of the second: it "will be the most remarkable epoch in the

history of America: to be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival, commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to Almighty God, from one end of the continent to the other."

From barren soils come richest grapes, and on severe and rocky slopes the trees are often of toughest fibre. The wines of Rudesheim and Johannisberg cannot be grown in the fatness of the gardens, and the cedars of Lebanon disdain the levels of marsh and meadow. So a heroism is sometimes native to penury which luxury enervates, and the great resolution which sprang up in the blast and blossomed under inclement skies, may lose its shapely and steadfast strength when the air is all of summer softness. In exuberant resources is to be the coming American peril — in a swiftly-increasing luxury of life. The old humility, hardihood, patience, are too likely to be lost when material success again opens, as it will, all avenues to wealth, and when its brilliant prizes solicit, as again they will, the national spirit.

Be it ours to endeavor that that temper of the fathers which was nobler than their work shall live in the children, and exalt to its tone their coming career; that political intelligence, patriotic devotion, a reverent spirit toward him who is above, an exulting expectation of the future of the world, and a sense of our relation to it, shall be as of old, essential forces in our public life, that education and religion shall keep step all the time with the nation's advance, and be forever instantly at home wherever its flag shakes out its folds.

In a spirit worthy of the memories of the past let us set ourselves to accomplish the tasks which in the sphere of national politics still await completion. We burn the sunshine of other years when we ignite the wood or coal upon

our hearths. We enter a privilege which ages have secured in our daily enjoyment of political freedom. While the kindling glow irradiates our homes, let it shed its lustre on our spirit and quicken it for its further work. Let us fight against the tendency of educated men to reserve themselves from politics, remembering that no other form of activity is so grand or effective as that which affects, first the character, and then the revelation of character in the government, of a great and free people. Let us make religious dissensions here, as a force in politics, as absurd as witchcraft. Let party names be nothing to us, in comparison with that costly and proud inheritance of liberty and of law which parties exist to conserve and enlarge, which any party will have here to maintain if it would not be buried at the next cross-roads, with a stake through its breast. Let us seek the unity of all sections of the Republic through the prevalence in all of mutual respect, through the assurance in all of local freedom, through the mastery in all of that supreme spirit which flashed from the lips of Patrick Henry when he said, in the first Continental Congress, "I am not a Virginian, but an American." Let us take care that labor maintains its ancient place of privilege and honor, and that industry has no fetters imposed of legal restraint or of social discredit to hinder its work or to lessen its wage. Let us turn and overturn in public discussion, in political change, till we secure a civil service, honorable, intelligent, and worthy of the land, in which capable integrity, not partisan zeal, shall be the condition of each public trust; and let us resolve that it shall come to pass that wherever American labor toils, wherever American enterprise plans, wherever American commerce reaches, thither again shall go as of old the country's coin—the American eagle, with the encircling stars and golden plumes!