

all the lawful passions, all the legal tendencies, all the just aspirations will not be able to satisfy their legitimate desires for growth; these repressed lawful passions will be converted into concentrated hatreds; these concentrated hatreds are going to charge the political atmosphere with electricity; this electricity is going to accumulate in the atmosphere and is going to form a sullen tempest whose mutterings will arouse the rancor of our enemies; and for our friends it will make them pass a life filled with fear and tribulation, and then by the most unforeseen of happenings this invisible tempest, on a day least looked for, will fall upon our heads in the shape of a bloody revolution.

Whatever the consideration in which you hold the prophet, forget not the prophecy!

[Specially translated by Sylvester Baxter.]

GEORGE S. BOUTWELL



GEORGE SEWALL BOUTWELL, American Senator and ex-Secretary of the Treasury, was born at Brookline, Mass., Jan. 28, 1818. His education was obtained at private schools and by prolonged private study. Entering law at Groton, in his native State, he was in 1836 admitted to the Bar, but did not begin practice till some years later. In 1840, he entered politics as a supporter of Van Buren, and served seven terms as a Democratic member of the State legislature of Massachusetts between the years 1842 and 1851. He was repeatedly defeated as a Congressional candidate, but in 1851 was elected Governor of Massachusetts by a coalition of the Democrats and Free-Soilers, after several previous defeats. On the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, in 1854, he took part in organizing the Republican party, and in 1860 was a member of the national convention that nominated Lincoln for the Presidency. By the latter he was appointed first commissioner, in 1862, of the department of internal revenue which he organized. From 1863 to 1869 he was a member from his State in Congress, and Secretary of the Treasury during President Grant's first administration, 1869-73, resigning in March of the latter year to fill the seat in the Senate vacated by Senator Henry Wilson, who had become Vice-president. After leaving the Senate, in 1877, he was appointed to codify and edit the Statutes at Large, and he subsequently practiced law in Washington for some years. His interest in politics has continued unabated since his retirement. He has published "Thoughts on Educational Topics" (1860); "A Manual of the Direct and Excise System of the United States" (1863); "The Taxpayer's Manual" (1865); "Speeches and Papers Relating to the Rebellion" (1876); "Why I am a Republican: a History of the Republican Party" (1884); "The Lawyer, the Statesman, the Soldier" (1887); "The Constitution of the United States at the End of the First Century" (1895). For many years he was a member, and at one time secretary, of the Massachusetts Board of Education.

ON THE PROGRESS OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE

ADDRESS BEFORE N. Y. HISTORICAL SOCIETY, APRIL 2, 1889

AT the close of the French war England entered systematically upon a policy whose object was the establishment of the supremacy of Parliament over the colonies of North America. For one hundred and thirty years this supremacy had been denied whenever the claim was presented. In that time manufactures and commerce,

although borne down by the weight of legislative restrictions, had so increased as to arrest the attention of the ministry and the board of trade, and excite the prejudices of the laborers upon the Thames and in the manufactories. The population of the thirteen colonies, then estimated at 2,500,000, had doubled by natural increase every twenty-five years, and it was then certain that it would be largely augmented by immigration from Europe.

This population was better fed and better clothed than the corresponding classes in England. The inhabitants of the colonies had acquired great experience in the Indian wars, the siege of Louisbourg, and the invasion of Canada. Their bravery was unquestioned. The future greatness of America had been predicted, its natural resources had in a degree been unfolded.

England was burdened with debt and she thought that America might be compelled to contribute to its payment. The first question was this: Has Parliament a right to legislate for America? An affirmative answer suggested a second; what shall be the character of the legislation? In regard to the first question it ought not to have been expected that "ex parte" opinions, whether accompanied by a show of power or not, would lead to an amicable adjustment of the controversy.

The only ground of hope was in negotiation and this appears not to have been thought of. England proceeded to legislate, and upon the question of policy she made a most fatal mistake. With sole reference to her own interests she would have exercised the power that she assumed in the least offensive way. She would have so legislated that in equity no issue could have been made with her acts. But on the contrary, guided apparently by an insensate lust of

power she passed laws which would have kindled rebellion if the right of Parliament had been undisputed. For the purpose of aiding the officers in the collection of the revenue an old and obsolete law was revived under which writs, called writs of assistance, were granted.

By these writs the agents of the government were empowered to search ships, shops, houses, and stores. They were in fact general search warrants. The first application was from the collector of the port of Salem, Massachusetts. The court hesitated. The merchants employed Thatcher and James Otis to resist the application. The writ was granted, but the speech of Otis so excited the people that John Adams fifty years afterward declared that "American independence was then and there born."

In the series of offensive laws first came the Stamp Act, then a declaration that Parliament had a right to legislate for the colonies in all cases whatsoever, then the acts for shutting up the port of Boston, then the act for altering the charter and government of Massachusetts Bay, an act for the better administration of justice, an act to establish the Roman Catholic religion in the Province of Quebec, an act for quartering the army upon the people and various acts for raising a revenue.

The Stamp Act was met by marked opposition in all the colonies, and in some of them the people adopted measures of injustice and violence.

It was determined on all hands that the stamps should not be landed and that no one should hold the office of agent. Those who accepted were compelled to resign. It was in vain that these officials claimed exemption from all responsibility for the existence of the statute, or that they set forth as an excuse that if they did not perform the service

other persons less acceptable would be appointed in their places. The people's ears were closed, there was no alternative but resignation.

In New York a gallows was erected in the park of the present City Hall and on it Governor Colden was hung in effigy; handbills were circulated warning those who sold or used stamped paper that their persons, houses, and effects were in peril, and the house of Major James, the commander of the king's artillery, was sacked by the mob and the colors of his regiment were carried away by the excited crowd.

Finally the stamp agent resigned and the stamps were delivered to the mayor and corporation of the city of New York, with the advice of his majesty's council unanimously given and the concurrence of the commander-in-chief of the king's forces.

In Boston the supporters of the ministry and of the Stamp Act were hung in effigy on a tree afterwards known as "Liberty tree," which stood at the corner of Essex and Washington streets. Oliver, the secretary of the Province and stamp distributor, was frightened into resignation. Jonathan Mayhew, the minister of the West Church, preached a violent sermon against the Stamp Act and its supporters, and the next day the house of the governor was broken into and its contents were destroyed.

Apparently the public sentiment condemned these violations of law and order, but the rioters though known were suffered to go unpunished.

The nature of the opposition to the Stamp Act is illustrated by the proceedings in Connecticut. Jared Ingersoll was appointed stamp master, and immediately he was required to resign. A friend, when endeavoring to conciliate the people

said, "Had you not rather that these duties would be collected by your brethren than by foreigners?"

"No, vile miscreant, indeed we had not," said one, "if your father must die is there no defect in filial duty in becoming his executioner, that the hangman's part of the estate may remain in the family?" "If the ruin of your country is decreed are you free from blame in taking part in the plunder?"

"The act is so contrived," said Ingersoll, "as to make it your interest to buy the stamps. When I undertook the office I intended a service to you."

"Stop advertising your wares until they come safe at market," he was answered. "The two first letters of his name," said one, "are those of the traitor of old. It was decreed our Saviour should suffer; but was it better for Judas Iscariot to betray him, so that the price of his blood might be saved by his friends?"

After much equivocation and with the fear of death upon him Ingersoll shouted "Liberty and property," three times and then resigned his office. The mob spirit evoked by the Stamp Act soon subsided and a calm determined purpose of resistance took its place. Surrounded by these violent and exciting scenes the dejected ones said, "North American liberty is dead." "She is dead," said those of more faith, "but happily she has left one son, the child of her bosom prophetically named Independence, now the hope of all when he shall come of age."

"I am clear on this point," said Mayhew, "that no people are under a religious obligation to be slaves, if they are able to set themselves at liberty."

This was in 1765, and from that time forth the spirit and purpose of independence animated and controlled the repre-

sentative men and the organs of public sentiment in every part of the country. It was during the existence of the Stamp Act and pending the measures of oppression which followed its repeal, that declarations were made and measures adopted of the greatest importance to the cause of American independence.

It was then that Patrick Henry, speaking for the Assembly of Virginia, declared "that every attempt to vest the power of taxation in any person or persons whatsoever, other than the said assembly, has a manifest tendency to destroy British as well as American freedom; that he proposed by resolution that the Colony of Virginia be immediately put into a state of defence, and that a committee should be appointed to prepare a plan for embodying, arming, and disciplining such a number of men as may be sufficient for that purpose;" that in the memorable debate on the resolution, in the language if not with the spirit of prophecy, he declared it vain to indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation, that an appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts was all that was left; that John Morin Scott of New York said if the mother country deny to the colonies the right of making their own laws and disposing of their own property by representatives of their own choosing then the connection between them ought to cease and sooner or later it must inevitably cease; that the Sons of Liberty of the city of New York as early as the 7th day of January, 1766, forecast the American union in the declaration that "there was safety for the colonies only in the firm union of the whole;" that the assembly of New York declared that that "colony lawfully and constitutionally has and enjoys an internal legislature of its own, in which the crown and the people of this colony are constitutionally represented, and the power and authority

of the said legislature cannot lawfully or constitutionally be suspended, abridged, abrogated, or annulled by any power, authority, or prerogative whatsoever;" that the Committee of One Hundred of the city of New York, upon the receipt of the news of the massacre on Lexington Green, resolves that all the horrors of civil war would never compel America to submit to taxation by authority of Parliament; that the assembly demanded "exemption from the burdens of ungranted, involuntary taxes as the grand principle of every free State," and as "without such a right vested in the people themselves there can be no liberty, no happiness, no security;" that Mr. Jefferson said, "We want neither inducement nor power to declare and assert a separation; we are reduced to the tyranny of irritable masters or resistance by force;" that the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to the county "of Hanover, Virginia, instructed its delegates to assent to such measures as would produce the hearty union of all their countrymen and sister colonies;" that William Hooper, of North Carolina, early in 1774, declared that "the colonies are striding fast to independency and will ere long build an empire on the ruins of Britain, will adopt its constitution purged of its impurities and, from an experience of its defects, will guard against those evils which have wasted its vigor and brought it to an untimely end;" that the same State, the 12th day of April, 1776, empowered its delegates to "declare independency;" that Joseph Hawley of Massachusetts asserted that "independence was the only way to union and harmony;" that General Greene in 1775 recommended a Declaration of Independence; that Samuel Adams said, "I am perfectly satisfied of the necessity of a public and explicit Declaration of Independence;" that the press of Philadelphia declared that "none in this day of liberty will

say that duty binds us to yield obedience to any man or body of men, forming part of the British constitution when they exceed the limits prescribed by that constitution; that the Stamp Act is unconstitutional and no more obligatory than a decree of the Divan of Turkey;" that the town of Boston said,—and may their words be remembered,—“We are not afraid of poverty, but we disdain slavery;" that the county of Suffolk in 1774 resolved, “that no obedience is due from this province to either or any part of the obnoxious acts;" that Middlesex, speaking for the men of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill, said, “We are sensible that he can never die too soon who lays down his life in support of the laws and liberties of his country;" that the Continental Congress of 1774 sent forth its immortal remonstrances, memorials, manifestoes, and addresses to the king, to Parliament, to the people of England, to the people of Ireland, to their brethren of Canada, and to the colonies of America; that ancient hostilities were forgotten, that local barriers were broken down, the spirit of union fostered and the colonies made one in purpose and in destiny; and finally, that the formal and authoritative Declaration of Independence introduced an era of freedom, not for this country and people only, but ultimately, for all who shall speak the English language.

Thus does it appear from this array of facts, gathered from an era of a century and a half, that the independence of the American colonies had a slow growth, but its progress was perceptible, and from the year 1764 there could have been no ground for doubt as to the ultimate result. When the Declaration came the country was prepared to give it a substantial if not a united support.

The controversy and the contest were carried on by young men and by men in the meridian period of life. Jefferson

was in his thirty-fourth year. Washington was his senior by only eleven years, and it is said of the signers of the Declaration that their average age was less than forty years.

It is a remarkable but a well-authenticated phenomenon in human history that when the minds of many men are directed to one subject they often arrive at similar results and find similar modes of expression. This peculiarity has been observed in purely scientific researches, and it is more probable that it should have existed in the controversy preceding the independence of these colonies. It is not a marvel then, nor in disparagement of Mr. Jefferson or of the Congress of 1776, that the historian is compelled to admit that the Declaration of Independence is but the last and best expression of the sentiment and purposes of colonial America.

The rights and grievances of the colonies had been set forth by the Congress of 1774; the doctrine of the equality of all men, not as a theory merely, but in the substance of their natural, political rights, had been enunciated by Otis; and the citizens of Mecklenburg, North Carolina, had anticipated the Declaration of Jefferson and in some respects its exact language, and yet there is no reason to believe that the substance of the document was known to any member of Congress, and there is much evidence that neither Mr. Jefferson nor any one of his colleagues of the committee was aware of its existence.

The great merit of the Declaration of Independence is in this: That it asserted with unrivalled precision and power what the country had resolved and what it was prepared to maintain. It proclaimed the natural rights of men; it embodied the history of colonial America and it set forth the nature of the oppressions that the colonists had endured, the sacrifices they had made, the loyalty they had exhibited,

their poverty and forbearance all crowned by a statement of their purposes in the future. The colonies were represented by Mr. Jefferson, of Virginia; Mr. Robert R. Livingston, of New York; John Adams, of Massachusetts; Dr. Franklin, of Pennsylvania, and Roger Sherman, of Connecticut.

The draft as prepared by Mr. Jefferson was as remarkable for what was omitted finally, upon the suggestion of Georgia and South Carolina, as for what was preserved. As prepared by Mr. Jefferson and agreed to by the committee the king of Great Britain was denounced for the crime of perpetuating the traffic in African slaves.

In the year 1774 North Carolina resolved not to import nor purchase slaves; the county of Hanover, Virginia, had pronounced the African trade in slaves "most dangerous to the virtue and welfare of the country;" the Congress of 1774 had discountenanced the trade in slaves, and James Otis with nervous eloquence had denounced the whole system of human bondage.

As we turn from the consideration of the main theme of the occasion a restatement of the leading thoughts may not be inappropriate:

When the colonists laid the foundations of their respective governments they asserted those doctrines of political and personal freedom which constituted finally the legal and moral basis of the Revolution; and although in their weakness they submitted to acts which in their view were oppressive they never recognized the authority of the British Parliament, but upon their records and during a period of nearly a century and a half they asserted and as far as practicable they maintained their independence as political organizations.

The laws which they annulled or evaded were enacted by an assembly whose authority they never acknowledged and in which they were not represented.

Our fathers were careful to maintain their loyalty to the king as the sovereign of the British Empire and to perform all their duties as members of that empire, that the injustice of others might not have root in their own errors and wrongs.

The American Union did not originate in the present constitution, nor even in the articles of confederation; but it is elementary in the history of the country, and as far as we can judge it is essential to our form of liberty.

From 1643, when the union was formed between Massachusetts, New Plymouth, Connecticut and New Haven for "their own mutual safety and welfare," with the name "The United Colonies of New England," there seems never to have been a moment when the idea of union did not exist in the public mind. Union was the necessity of their weakness, as it now is the emblem of our origin and the source of our strength.

I turn now from this array of ancient facts; in conclusion I may direct your thoughts to some of the possibilities of the future. We are now passing from the first to the second century of our national existence. In 1790 the United States had less than 4,000,000 inhabitants, and in 1890 our population will be largely in excess of 60,000,000. We rank as the third nation on the globe if we consider only the number of persons dwelling upon contiguous territory, and in less than half a century we shall stand in the second place.

Our population is at least fifteen times as great as it was a hundred years ago, but we must not assume upon the same ratio of increase for the next century. Relatively there will be a decrease in the number of immigrants, and it is quite

probable that the spirit of enterprise or the love of adventure will carry away the successors of our frontier population to Africa and South America, the continents of the future. At the present rate of increase our population in the year 2000 would exceed 800,000,000, and if the ratio of increase should fall to fifteen per cent in each decennial period the course for the year 2000 will show an aggregate of about 280,000,000.

Whether so vast a population can be sustained within our present limits is a problem of the future, but for one I entertain no doubt that the sustaining force of the United States is adequate to the support of 400,000,000 inhabitants without any impairment of the enjoyments and comforts of social and domestic life. If we assume the habitable area of the United States to be 2,500,000 square miles, an average population of 300 to the square mile, the present average of the State of Massachusetts, would give an aggregate of 750,000,000 souls. And our capacity may be further measured by considering the fact that if the present inhabitants of the United States could be transferred to the State of Texas the average would not exceed 300 persons to the square mile.

And these statements even do not measure and limit the possibilities of comfortable existence on this continent. The diversification of human pursuits, due to science, art, and a wise public policy, is making constant and appreciable additions to the capacity of this globe to sustain human life. The 60,000,000 within our limits are better fed, better clothed, better housed than were the 2,500,000 who inaugurated the Revolutionary War.

Popular education enlarges the views and elevates the aspirations of the masses of men and women, and it also in-

creases their opportunities for advancement and comfort in life.

We may also rely with much confidence upon the simplicity of our system of land titles and the facility with which the soil may be conveyed from one party to another. With the increase of population and of wealth there will be an increasing tendency to make investments in land, and consequently there will be an ever-increasing peril from agrarian controversies. These may be controlled in some degree if not averted altogether by taking security against the existence of land monopolies, and by limiting the possessions of business corporations, of educational, charitable and eleemosynary institutions, and of churches to such areas as may be necessary to the performance of the duties imposed upon them. In all countries the landless classes are the dangerous classes, and it is therefore a wise public policy to encourage the possession of land even though the holdings should be small and in value relatively insignificant. Every title deed is security for the public peace. By the fable of Antæus we are taught that whoever touches the earth becomes strong, and by experience we are taught that whoever owns the earth becomes quiet minded and patriotic.

Henceforth the attention of this country will be withdrawn from Europe by degrees and it will be directed to Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, and the continent of Asia. In the arts and in manufactures Europe is our competitor, but in these departments we are without a rival upon this continent. Our future greatness as a manufacturing and trading nation must rest chiefly upon the kindly dispositions of the Asiatic peoples, upon the development of this continent and the constant friendship of the States and communities between the two great oceans.

I am confident that we have as a nation passed the period when the maxim "in peace prepare for war" was a necessary condition of our public life. First of all we should never indulge the thought of acquiring territory by aggressive means. Not that an honorable extension of the territory of the Union would be unwise under all circumstances, but a war for the enlargement of our dominion would be an unjust war in the very nature of the case.

Our position and influence in the affairs of the world for all purposes consistent with the rights of other nations depend no longer upon the exhibition of military force either upon the sea or upon the land.

We are separated by vast oceans from the great powers of the world; our trade is so valuable that neither England, France, nor Germany can forego its advantages for a single month; and our resources in men and in money are so ample that we may rely confidently upon the forbearance of those rulers from whom we may not be able even to command respect.

In this aspect of the future of the republic I do not accept the opinion that a wise public policy requires us to enter upon the construction of a seagoing navy in competition with the great nations of Europe that exist only under the constant menace of war. Better will it be for us to employ our resources in the construction of small, fast-sailing steamships to be employed in the transportation of the mails to and from all the principal ports of Central and South America and the eastern parts of Asia, thus opening new avenues through which the enterprise and business of the country may have free course.

The time has passed when the fate or the fortunes of nations were dependent upon naval battles lost or won. For

the future a war on the ocean is a war on commerce, and for such a war the heavily armored vessels of great navies are worthless utterly. Let science and skill furnish such protection to our sea coast cities as science and skill can command, but let us abandon the thought of constructing great navies at a cost of tens of millions on tens of millions for anticipated war on the open sea or as aids to the conquest of foreign lands. Let republican America, warned and instructed by the lesson which downtrodden Europe teaches, enter upon its second century with the purpose of demonstrating the truth that a government in which the people rule may be at once peaceful, powerful, and just.