

Responsibilities of the Founders of Republics :

AN

A D D R E S S

ON THE

PENINSULA OF SABINO,

On the Two-Hundred and Fifty-eighth Anniversary

OF THE

PLANTING OF THE POPHAM COLONY,

AUG. 29, 1865.

BY HON. JAMES W. PATTERSON.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE "BOSTON POST" of August 31, 1865, contained the following:—

FORT POPHAM, MAINE.

The 253th Anniversary of the Landing of George Popham.

THE ANNIVERSARY EXERCISES.

The celebration was quite largely attended, the numbers probably reaching about four thousand. Conveyances by steamers and barges carried the multitude to and from the Fort, both from Portland and Bath. Fort Popham was reached about eleven o'clock; and, at twelve, the assemblage gathered in front of the "Ocean House," where the exercises of the day were to take place. Hon. B. C. Bailey, of Bath, called the meeting to order, and nominated, as President of the day, Hon. Charles J. Gilman, of Brunswick. The President took his place upon the platform, accompanied, among others, by Hon. E. E. Bourne, President of the Maine Historical Society; John A. Poor, Esq.; Rev. Leonard Woods, D.D., President of Bowdoin College; and Hon. Mr. Patterson, of New Hampshire, Orator of the day.

Rev. A. D. Wheeler, D.D., of Topsham, then offered prayer.

After the prayer, Hon. Charles J. Gilman, the President of the day, addressed the meeting as follows.

SPEECH OF CHARLES J. GILMAN.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—It will be remembered by many present to-day, that we were assembled here three years ago for the first time; and it was a curious question then to many, and it

is a question now, as to the real import of this celebration. The salient point of American Colonization before this, was Plymouth. All our hopes seemed to be set there ; all our aspirations seemed to take origin in that spot. Now, it will be understood on this occasion, and on all similar occasions in future, that it is not the design of the Popham celebration to transport Plymouth Rock to this spot ; neither to underrate the efforts of the early settlers of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, or of those of Lord Baltimore, at Baltimore, or of the settlements of Jamestown in Virginia. Nor is this the arena to prove that Puritanism is better than Episcopalianism, or that Episcopalianism is better than Puritanism. We do not propose that this is to be the sign of a conflict between Episcopacy and Puritanism ; but we do say, that there is an historical record, and that record is founded on truth, and with truth we propose to deal.

After the discovery of América by Columbus, various enterprises were set on foot for the occupation of the Atlantic shores of this continent. A long interval, however, elapsed before any purposes were accomplished, having reference to the settlement of the region now known as New England. Petitions had been made to the Crown of England as early as 1574, for measures to be allowed tending to secure the possession of the northern parts of North America. In 1578, Elizabeth granted a charter to Sir Humphrey Gilbert, embracing a large territory, the central portion of which appears to have been Nova Scotia. The loss of the charter by lapse to the Crown followed the cessation of occupancy ; and, in consequence of the loss of the patentee (Gilbert) by shipwreck, the Crown was left at liberty to make a new grant. Several expeditions followed, under Gosnold, 1602 ; Pryng, 1603 ; and George Weymouth, in 1605 ; in all of which, the evidence shows that the mind, means, and energy of Sir Ferdinando Gorges were specially concerned.

The French government was at the same time eager to secure a title to the lands in the New World ; and, in 1603, gave a patent to the De Monts, covering the region from the 40° of latitude to New Brunswick ; and, in 1604, the De Monts made a voyage for exploration and occupancy. But the great event which determined the title to our land, and gave permanent direction to its colonization by the Anglo-Norman race with English laws and institutions,

was the charter of James I., in 1606, which granted to seven persons, and among them the "worthy" George Popham, the territory in North America between the degrees of 34 and 45 north latitude, extending one hundred miles inland. In this royal charter we find the foundation of the title of the English of that day, and their descendants since, to the New World. The first colonizing act under this charter was the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia, May 13, 1607. The second colony followed in the same year, and took possession Aug. 19 (O.S.), 1607, corresponding to Aug. 29 (N.S.). The leaders were George Popham and Raleigh Gilbert, men of long experience, and "as noble and gallant commanders as ever walked a quarter-deck, and worthy the command of an expedition of so grand an import." The enterprise was watched with deep and untiring interest by its patrons at home. The principles apparent in the charter and in the laws for the guidance of the colony were such as warranted the expectations of a new world, where civilization and Christianity should, in coming ages, have their permanent home; and though the shores of the American side of the Atlantic were rock-bound, and their interior forests undisturbed except by the Indian hunter, yet the eye of hope saw them peopled with a prosperous population, and a new government arising under which the soil should produce abundant wealth. The French nation never had any possessions west of the Kennebec; and the fact of English occupancy seems to have been one of the causes, if not the only cause, why the French government did not assert the authority in this part of the country, as was claimed in the charter to De Mont. But they did claim the Eastern region, and wars followed; and Pemaquid, occupied and fortified by the English, became a subject of dispute between the nations. Hostilities continued, with intervals of peace, till the capture of Quebec in 1759, and the treaty of Paris in 1763. Thus the charter of James, issued April 10, 1606, was the foundation of North-American greatness. It was grounded on the right of occupation and exploration previous to the charter under Gilbert, Gosnold, and Weymouth. It was confirmed by the occupation of this spot by Popham, and of Argall at Mount Desert, Francis Popham at Pemaquid, Richard Vines at Saco, and others at Monhegan, as well as at Plymouth. It was for ever confirmed by successful war and the treaty of Paris in 1763. A strong proof of the early

occupation of Pemaquid by the English, for purposes of commercial pursuits and profits, is found in the "Jesuite Relations," where it is shown that the English were in the habit of coming every year to Pemaquid to provide themselves with fish for winter use. They heard, in 1613, of the establishment of the French on Mount Desert; and their commander, Samuel Argall, changed his course thither for the purpose of claiming the territory under the charter of James I., issued six years before. From this we learn, that, in 1613, the English claimed a right at Pemaquid, and they used it for shelter and commerce; and their habit of coming there every year will carry the occupancy back as far as the five years since the Popham colony ceased. The Popham colony may have failed as a commercial enterprise; but, in its historical influence, it was one of the steps in the grand onward march of civilization.

The discovery by Cabot, in 1497, gave a knowledge of our shores; De Mont, in 1605, was upon our shores; Champlain was here in 1604, and has, in his writings, given us a thorough survey of the discoveries here made.

In 1607, here was a representative form of organized government; here was punishment of crime; and here were the germinating principles of that system of government now overshadowing the continent under which we now live and thrive. Popham planted and colonized here; and it is owing to this fact that we have the Anglo-Norman rather than the French elements of civilization on these Eastern shores.

Mr. Gilman concluded by introducing the Orator of the day.

A D D R E S S.

THIS is hallowed ground. The lines of an eventful history, stretching through more than two centuries and a half, converge to this beautiful promontory of Sabino. Here, by "the most excellent and beneficyall river of Sagadahoc," sleep the ashes of George Popham, the companion of Raleigh, and the venerable leader of the first colony of New England, whose charter was maintained amid the many grants and revocations of that mutable age of adventure, and which England pleaded, as the legal evidence of a priority of right, against the counter-claims of France and Spain. In the quaint but touching language of Gorges, "he was well stricken in years, and had long been an infirm man. Howsoever, heartened by hope, willing he was to die in acting something that might be serviceable to God, and honorable to his country." This massive and splendid structure, that frowns upon the sea, reared by the genius and skill of military science, at once a mausoleum and a fortress, shall preserve alike the memories of the dead and the liberties of the living.*

It is meet that you, the children of this noble and

* Fort Popham.

magnificent State, should gather year by year, from your prolific fields and opulent marts, at this spot, to pay a tardy but fitting tribute to the adventurous and enterprising men who disembarked from the fragile "Gift of God" and the "Mary and John," two hundred and fifty-eight years ago, and, kneeling beneath the shadows of Seguin, dedicated this broad inheritance of their offspring to a free commerce, a free church, and a free state.

Though a spirit of adventure and a lust for gold entered largely into most of the voyages for discovery or colonization during the seventeenth century, unquestionably the settlement at Sagadahoc in 1607, which Gorges says was subsequently broken up, had its origin in commercial enterprise, fostered and directed by the lucrative fisheries upon our coast. The impelling motive was an honorable desire to increase the wealth and enlarge the dominion of the English people.

The colonists of 1620 encountered the hazards of a stormy sea, and the greater dangers of the wilderness, from the exalted desire to found an asylum in which they and their faith should be free from the restraints and persecutions of the father-land. The stern and indomitable will imparted by religious enthusiasm maintained an unbroken continuity of the Plymouth settlement with the subsequent history of the country.

The rival claims of these respective colonies I leave to be settled by the research of the masters of history.

If my purpose were not to-day to treat of the responsibilities rather of the living than the dead actors of history, I would not presume to strike the balance of evidence in the friendly controversy in respect to priority of birth which a natural pride has raised between "the beautiful mother and her more beautiful daughter." But permit me to remark in passing, that, in all such discussions, we do well to bear in mind that the connections of history, though sometimes material, are largely invisible and moral, and lie within the region of thought, memory, and emotion. Failure is often the necessary antecedent to success, and defeat begets the spirit which ensures victory. The want of success in the expeditions sent to Port Royal and Roanoke did not discourage and frustrate colonization; but rather, by obstructing, increased the head and force of public opinion to such an extent as to overcome all obstacles, and to secure the permanent settlement and final possession of the continent. The fearful disasters of our late conflict were, through their influence in uniting public sentiment and arousing the popular heart, the necessary antecedents to our magnificent victories and glorious triumphs. The gratitude and the honors of the nation are due to those who struggled against defeat at Bull Run, as well as to those who upheld the victorious banners of the Republic on the bloody field of Gettysburg.

The developments of history are as natural and as necessary as those of nature. Each plant and tree,

each insect and animal, "after its kind," unfolds, in endless variety of beauty and strength, to the devout student, the fixed thought and creative activity of God in nature. An invariable sequence of cause and effect makes a science of nature possible, and enhances our power over its results with the extension of our knowledge of its laws. So too, in the progress of society, the connection of antecedent and result is equally uniform and certain, and, when we have discovered the line of its march amid the wide range of its complicated facts, we are able to trace the sublime and irresistible movements of Him "who works within us to will and to do of his own good pleasure," and will work till the golden promise of the ages is realized.

This invariable connection between moral forces and social results makes the successive stages of civilization a development from the past, and connects the generations of men in indissoluble bonds of gratitude and responsibility. In it prophecy becomes possible, and is, to the eye of faith, but history unfulfilled. If civilization, as some have affirmed, was the accidental resultant of uncontrolled facts and forces, it would be difficult to comprehend how, in the long run, there could be any progress of society such as history establishes. Human destiny, in time at least, would be a mystery more insoluble than the Sphinx's riddle, and the lofty incentives to noble effort and heroic action would be lost in the uncertainty and aimlessness of the organic life of communities. The

march of ideas, the enlargement of the domain of knowledge, the improvement in the civil institutions and social condition of man, witnessed in every age, are not the fortunate outgrowth of accidents. The operations of chance are without method or uniformity.

Neither is this unbroken advance of the human mind from the rude civilization of the infant world, through the æsthetic but sensuous culture of the old Greek, to our higher intellectual and spiritual condition, the development of a blind fatalism. It is the majestic evolution of an intelligent forethought which sees the end from the beginning, and works out its purposes without limiting human activity or invading the domain of its responsibility.

The causes which operate to produce the progress of society are not absolute and efficient, but motive causes existing in the condition of society itself; and hence the responsibility of each generation to those who come after them. But the great body of motive power, which we sometimes denominate the spirit of the age, and which determines the mental activity and achievements of a people, is not the same in the nineteenth as in the fifth century, — is not the same in New England as in China; and neither the volition nor the activity of man can make them the same, any more than they can turn back the Gulf Stream to its source, or change its drops of water to a tide of glittering pearls. The planets are impelled in their orbits by the power of a mutual attraction which they

cannot resist ; so man is borne forward by the current of civilization which his own free activity has created, but cannot arrest or divert. Blind conservatism and arbitrary power, though baffled at every stage, have wrangled against the progress of man, and stained his path with blood in every epoch ; and still he advances.

It is this inseverable connection of the present with the future, and the certainty that the vindication of truth and the establishment of justice will lift man to a more exalted condition of civil and moral life, which justify the unmixed horrors of war, and make labor and sacrifice the highest duty and loftiest service of a Christian patriot.

He who governs in nature by a system of laws has not sundered the connection between cause and effect in the higher sphere of intelligent moral action, where the finite approaches, and seems to blend with the infinite ; has not left man, wayward in his affections, and hence misguided by his will, to an aimless existence, the mere sport of accident ; but moves through the ages, shaping their events for the consummation of designs supremely wise and beneficent. That development is absolute progress ; and its law, as applied to governments, is the profoundest political philosophy.

To deduce from the infinite chaos of misrule and right government, of malignant war and benignant peace, of misfortune and prosperity, of misery and happiness, with which society has heaved and swayed

through the lapse of centuries, the principles which have determined the conditions and characteristics of different nationalities; to clearly set forth a theory of government founded upon the absolute rights of man, and under which he will attain to the highest social and moral development, — is the work of a sound political philosophy.

Profound study and meditation, in this most difficult of all sciences, give to the statesman the wisdom and marvellous forecast of a Richelieu or of a Burke. A sciolist, familiar with the shibboleths of party, may navigate the quiet currents of politics; but the work of laying governmental foundations and of organic legislation demands comprehensive knowledge, and something of the prophetic genius displayed by Madison and Hamilton in our own Convention of 1787. The great crises in human affairs which come naturally, though by the ordination of Providence, will be directed at last by the men, however belittled at the time, whom the future will discover to have been specially fitted to be leaders and lawgivers in the exodus from a cramped and partial system of institutions to one full of the promise and wealth of a higher development.

The teachings of inspiration confirm the revelations of national experience. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” This finds illustration in every phase of the organic life of a people. It is the most terse and comprehensive generalization of the great law of human progress to be found in language,

and rests upon the authority of Him who spoke central truths in the philosophy of life, which transcend the loftiest utterances of Plato.

The seed which one generation scatters must bear its legitimate harvest in the institutions, the fortunes, the social conditions, and moral life of another. Men cannot, if they would, shuffle off their responsibilities to the future. They are as inevitable as their shadows. Pre-eminently is this true of the founders of nations. I use the word nation rather than government, because it comprehends not only the constitution and laws which are the framework of civil power, but the sentiments, the spirit, the education, the religion, — all those peculiarities in the character and condition of a people which give them a distinct nationality. Government, it is readily admitted, is the chief element in the more comprehensive idea of a nation, for all history teaches, that civil institutions though unable to meet the profounder wants of man, determine largely his intellectual growth, his social condition, and spiritual development.

The strength and reach of the influence of principles, when embodied in national laws and institutions, may be gathered from any epoch of history. Art and life, — indeed, what are they but the ideas of men crystallized into things and deeds? The improvements, the culture, the learning, the civilization of an age, are but the accumulated resultant of the thought of the present and past generations, corrected and systematized by experience. The spirit of a

people, too, though exerting a reciprocal influence upon their institutions, is itself the outgrowth of those institutions. The ordinances of Lycurgus, by which Spartan youth were educated at the expense and under the direction of the government, — by which all the interests, the person, and the life itself of the citizen were made subordinate to the welfare of the State, — entirely transformed the spirit and social organization of the people, and created a military power, which, sweeping the Peloponnesus, humbled the pride of Athens at the very gates of that proud home of eloquence and philosophy, and, shaping the course of Greek history, permanently affected the political condition of the world. The dogma of the Koran, that the Mohammedan faith must be propagated by the sword, and the promise of a Paradise of sensuous pleasures to the followers of Allah who might fall in the cause of the Prophet, covered the half of two continents with the desolations of war, and caused the fair fields of Spain to smoke with the blood of Christian and Moor for eight centuries.

If we reflect for a little upon the state of European society as it existed at a later day, and measurably even in our own time, we discover that the want, the intellectual and moral degradation, and nameless miseries of the masses; the laggard march of popular industry and trade; the slow increase of capital and the tardy development of ideas; the perpetual unrest and upheavals of society, — were the legitimate fruits of false and vicious systems of government, which

made the welfare of the people subordinate to the interests of the State.

“The State! I am myself the State,” said Louis Fourteenth; and he but expressed, with honest brevity, the essential idea of absolute monarchy, which rests its claim to power upon the *gratia Dei*, and repudiates all responsibility to the nation.

The principle of fear shapes the polity of absolutism, and is the paramount motive to obedience with the subject. The unavoidable result is an arbitrary and oppressive administration of power, which engenders national ignorance, stolidity, cowardice, and selfishness. The pleasures of vice supplant the noble enjoyments of the mind, and the spirit of society becomes slavish and morally depraved. Enterprise and thrift perish for want of motive; and the springing aspirations of youth, like the heart of Prometheus, are consumed by the vultures of despair. The currents of progress fall into eddies, advancing only by spasmodic and convulsive movements. At length, the yearning instincts of men force them into rebellion against the unendurable oppression, and the red-handed genius of revolution stalks like a scourge of God through the kingdom, piling its battle-fields with mangled victims whose blood cries to God for vengeance. The people, freed from their tyrant, but too ignorant for self-government, irresolute and helpless, fall back to play the bloody carnival of a reign of terror, till some demon of the storm lures the exhausted nation, by the pomp and glitter of military

glory, back into the "Serbonian bog" of despotism, from which they must again emerge through the smoke of battle. Is not this a truthful picture of the experience of France and Italy, nay, of continental Europe, drawn from the records of history?

The free constitution and liberties of England, too, have been wrested from power, unlimited by law and absolute in practice, by a series of stern struggles in Parliament and Court, by arms and press, stretching from the gift of the great charter at Runnymede to the last national approbation of a liberal policy, sealed by the vote of the people whose pæans of victory may even now be heard ringing along our shores. Nor have the rights of the governed been wrested from the grasp of tyrants once only, but time and again have they been rescued, when royal arts and arbitrary power would override and trample them down, by a people constant to resist unto death the invasion of their privileges.

What have not the liberties of England cost? and yet her lowest operatives might covet to-day the freedom and condition of the sleek, well-fed studs of blooded steeds in the stables of her nobility.

Such is the unbroken record of irresponsible sovereignty. "A system so bad," says Lord Brougham, "that the best disposition on the part of those who administer it could not make its burden tolerable to the community; but calculated at the same time to eradicate all good intentions in the rulers and privileged orders, and foster the prejudices and propensi-

ties most hurtful to their own character, and most unhappy for their fellow-citizens." It learns nothing by experience, and yields to nothing but necessity. The demands for salutary reformatations which might perpetuate the government by transforming it into a solid and useful system of civil polity, it scorns to heed, and, with blind defiance, invites the terrific sweep of popular revolutions.

An autocracy is an organism of selfishness, which, from its nature, must become more exclusive and arbitrary with age. But, if it never changed, man's growth in ideas and capacity, and consequent wants, would render it a cruel and unyielding frame, within which his spirit would chafe, and his misery become complete. This iron harness of oppression must be broken and cast off, or all progress ceases, and the nation becomes enslaved. I would not charge home upon the founders of an autocracy all the evils which spring from its existence, for, in the rude beginnings of a people, monarchy may be necessary as a matrix within which the culture and discipline necessary to organize and sustain a plan of self-government may be produced. But he who would not labor wisely to remove it as soon as man is prepared for something better ; he who would engraft any slip of the accursed tree upon the institutions of a people who may safely enjoy the franchises of liberty, — deserves the glory and the reward of him who would —

“ Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.”

Government is an experimental science, and its fundamental principles are reached through manifold errors and failures. The world is the grand laboratory within which men have been testing, during all time, by an *experimentum crucis*, without a figure of speech, the successive theories of statesmen and philosophers.

Political equality, and the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the conditions of happiness, the first truths in any system of national self-government, though sometimes foreshadowed in the utterances of men of such mould as the poet-statesman of the Puritan era of English history, come slowly to the apprehension of the unlettered masses of the mother continent.

When the great Cromwell fell, mark with what pliant submission the lion-hearted and iron-handed men who had conquered at Marston Moor and Naseby suffered absolutism to resume its lost dominion in the person of the weak and licentious Charles, and, overriding constitution and laws, to flaunt its usurped prerogatives in their faces with a superlative audacity and corruption of regal power that must have tempted the great protector to repass the portals of the tomb, and drive the lascivious hirelings from the temple of English liberties. That people knew not what they lost.

To-day the birth-rights of men are ignored on more than half the globe. Children suck slavery and misery with their mother's milk, and wear them in their hearts to the grave.

It not unfrequently happens, in the grand march of events, that the Providence of history overrules the wrath of oppression to the furtherance of the interests of freedom. The restrictions and monopolies which crippled home industry and trade, and the arbitrary encroachments upon civil and religious liberty which at last drove the Roundheads into rebellion, and reared the commonwealth upon the ruins of the monarchy, pushed out, during the first half of the seventeenth century, those numerous expeditions which resulted in planting along our seaboard a chosen people, whom the loftiest virtues, the profoundest experience, and the most heroic spirit, fitted to lay, in pain and toil and sacrifices and the agonies which come to the manliest and noblest souls, the foundations upon which their children after them, in many generations, should rear the superstructure of a mighty republic.

They were prescient of the future, and suffered and died in the triumphs of a faith which was the "evidence of things not seen," and yet they did not fully comprehend the nature and responsibilities of the great work in which they were engaged. They claimed the right of personal liberty, and were ready to die for it, but they did not clearly understand that it could be permanently secured only by independent self-government.

The Plymouth emigrants, warned by a factious spirit manifested by some rude adventurers who had crept in among them, realized the dream of philosophers by entering into an original social compact

before disembarking; and yet they did not realize fully that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that the people may alter, abolish, and establish new governments to secure their rights. One of the magistrates of the colony declared, when the freemen demanded that assistants should be “chosen anew every year,” that “the bigotry” of Laud and “the tyranny” of a Stuart were preferable to a popular government.* “Democracy I do not conceive that ever God did ordain,” wrote John Cotton, “as a fit government or commonwealth. As for monarchy and aristocracy, they are both of them clearly approved and directed in the Scriptures.” †

These men had not been long enough in the school of Providence to unlearn the lessons of a lifetime. They had surrendered affluence and ease at home, — had turned from friends and father-land with many tears to a voluntary exile of toil and suffering, to establish the freedom of their faith, to secure wealth, liberty, and a home to their children after them, and to give an empire to the crown of England; but they did not apprehend that they were the elect of many generations, produced in the fulness of time, and prepared by the discipline of sorrow, to lay the foundations of an independent republic on a continent reserved and revealed for this very purpose.

* Oliver's Puritan Commonwealth.

† Letter to Lord Say and Seal in Hutchinson.

It was on the threshing-floor of the wilderness, and in the wintry winds of six generations, that the un-mixed seed of liberty, in Church and State, was to be separated from the chaff of European governmental philosophy. If they were tenacious of social and civil prerogatives, if they were stern and exclusive in church discipline, it resulted from the narrowness of the times, and was rather their misfortune than their fault. If bitter persecution had given to their faith a shade of gloomy intolerance, what a grand and solemn massiveness and solidity of character it imparted! how it prepared them "to hope all things and endure all things" in the far-reaching enterprise upon which they had entered! how it centralized and intensified the forces of their being, and organized and elevated every thing that it touched!

The freemen of the colonies, who had sprung from the unprivileged classes of Europe, untainted by prejudice, never faltered, never tripped in the path of empire which they trod with an unwavering faith and an undaunted courage. They were of the order of God's nobility, and the men who fought and fell at Yorktown and at Gettysburg had their blood in their veins.

That God whose offspring men are, and who "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation," knowing that human instrumentalities were impotent against the arts and power of the moss-grown despotisms of the old world, and that the principles and polity essential to the successful

establishment, vigorous administration, and enduring strength of an extended representative government, could never be learned in the school of absolutism, preserved here, for the reception of a chosen seed, a continent of unparalleled resources and unexhausted wealth. Here, sequestered from arbitrary force and the influence of false theories, they passed a century and a half of necessary and profitable pupilage. The savage at first supplied their wants, when famine would have swept off the infant colony, and then, by incessant war, taught them a vigilance and self-reliance which baffled the disciplined forces that would have wrested from them the inherited rights of British subjects. The want and hardship of the wilderness gave them force and resource of character. The unjust exactions and insidious invasions of prescriptive rights by Parliament, the neglect and insolence of the officers of the king, weaned their affections and loosened their loyalty to the home government. The organization and discipline of their church, their colonial legislation, and the administration of municipal and provincial affairs, discovered to them the nature and value of liberty. And so, in the sixth generation, the founders of the colonies, in the persons of Sherman, Adams, Morris, Jefferson, Madison, Washington, and their great compeers, came to the Declaration, the war, and the organization of independence. The men of that day need no eulogy from their children; their record is in the memory of mankind; the story of their lives is too familiar to be rehearsed.

The declaration of independence; the formal confederation of States, already leagued; and in their unity exercising the functions of national sovereignty wrested from England by a revolutionary power; the seven years of disaster and defeat, eventuating in victory and freedom; the utter failure of the confederation, and consequent ruin to the industry and credit of the country; the reconstruction of the constitution by the convention of 1787, and its subsequent adoption by the people of the States,—these and other momentous issues, which moulded the institutions and determined the destiny of a great people,—which exerted a large and permanent influence upon the political history and civilization of the future of the world,—crowded into the brief period of a little more than a decade. But the influence of those infant years of the republic who can tell? Who can measure the responsibilities of the patriot founders of our government to the millions of their posterity here, and to that wider posterity who shall enter into their labors in other lands? No conclave or council mentioned in civil history has been perplexed with more original, difficult, and weighty problems than the convention of 1787. None ever better comprehended its responsibilities, or met them with a broader reach of understanding, a more religious fidelity.

The natural rights of man, abstractly considered, were clearly defined in the writings of such men as Locke, Sydney, and Montesquieu; but there were no existing constitutions of government from which they

could learn how properly to distribute and vest the original sovereignty of the people, and yet upon this rested the success and permanence of their work. All the teachings of a hundred and fifty years of colonial life, and all the sacrifices and sufferings of the war, would be lost if their wisdom and sagacity should fail in the reconstruction of the government. The English constitution, though far from being a model, was frequently referred to for parallels or contrasts in their great work. But this embraced three estates, — the Sovereign, the Lords, and the Commons; and the rights and privileges which it secured to the people, though large, were such only as they had been able to extort from the Crown in the bitter struggles of more than a thousand years, and any amendment of the fundamental law by which their liberties might be enlarged must be made by further violent encroachments upon the royal prerogatives.

There is yet a fourth estate, — the large producing substratum of the population, — whom the constitution of Great Britain cruelly excludes from all participation in the government, and who, though theoretically entitled to the protection of laws which they are allowed no voice in enacting, are practically deprived of this advantage by an enforced poverty. And, to obviate the wreck and destruction which might naturally be anticipated from this great magazine of explosive human forces criminally placed beneath the superstructure of society, when the train may be fired by

unavoidable want and misery, it is guarded by an expensive and arrogant drove of military drones.

The suicidal policy is perpetuated, too, by keeping this excluded caste in a state of precautionary ignorance, and by stealing the sweat of their brows to feed their watchdogs.

But the convention of the new-born republic received, as a first truth, the principle which had been settled by the Revolution, that all political rights and power reside originally in the people, and must be distributed, so far as given up, between the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government, exclusively for the popular good.

Starting from that point, they vested the supreme authority, executive and legislative, in the people, to be exercised only by representatives chosen by and responsible to themselves. They excluded the establishment of governmental and class monopolies, and provided for the freedom of industry in all its branches. They for ever barred the possibility of privileged orders, and all laws of entail and primogeniture. They guarded against the abuse of official power by requiring its frequent and stated return to its source. They consulted the interests of liberty and humanity by connecting the sympathies of the highest tribunal of justice with popular rights. They gave to the people an assurance, in the guarantee of a republican form of State governments, that no independent power should arise in the future to interfere or tamper with laws made for the protection of their persons and

property. They anticipated internal dissensions and revolutions by providing for amendments to the organic law to meet the growth of public intelligence and the changed conditions of society. All this, and more, they added to the great inheritance of English liberties and common law.

The tests of ninety years have proved their work well and faithfully done. They have been gathered to the fathers, but their monument is washed by lake and gulf, by sea and sea, and rises through the generations of their children, —

“ And so sepulchred, in such pomp do lie,
That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.”

It may be a sad but profitable reflection, that the one great marplot in our national history; the fiend of mischief and discord that for eighty years put a break upon the industrial prosperity and growth of power in the republic; which threw apples of discord into deliberative assemblies and religious conventions, and, at last, slew, as of old, even the first-born, until “there was not a house where there was not one dead,” — sprung from the sufferance of a political wrong which the fathers believed to be a demand of prudence and patriotism. The principles underlying the Revolution and the Confederation demanded that the constitutional convention should abolish slavery; but an anxious desire to unite all the States which had stood together through the war, in the adoption of the new constitution, beguiled them into the belief

that a wise statesmanship demanded the surrender of justice for the attainment of a present good. Could their eyes have been opened to look down the vista of a hundred years, and see this dark genius of barbarism, now "fiercer by despair," sweeping away the accumulated wealth of generations, and, in a war of unparalleled violence and destructiveness, slaying half a million of men, the most intelligent who have ever fallen in battle, they would have discovered that the teachings of political justice are a safer guide than the dictates of expediency. For them to have left South Carolina and Georgia out of the Union, nay, to have sunk them in the depths of the sea, would have been far better for the nation than to have done that great wrong.

But the end is not yet. We, too, have work to do; for the foundations of the republic are not yet completed. We cannot escape the responsibility of those who build for posterity. The great architects of our system reared the framework, and other generations have labored faithfully and successfully upon it. The star-lit flag which symbolizes its existence, more beautiful than the pearly gates of morning closed with bars of crimson, has been unfurled over fleet and camp and court, but the broad substructure of this great nation cannot be settled firmly and compactly in its bed in a hundred years.

"I am a long time painting," says an old Greek artist; "for I paint for a long time." This is the laconic language of a universal truth. Whatever is

destined long to survive comes slowly to maturity. The primeval forests of cedar and oak, whose giant strength has resisted the forces of decay through half the lifetime of man, slowly lifted their gnarled and massive forms through centuries of growth. The earth's deep plating was laid, stratum above stratum, through the lapse of the silent, unchronicled ages; for it was to be the theatre of man's historic career. While the old cathedrals of Europe have risen slowly to their grand and solemn beauty, kings, their founders, have mouldered back to dust within their vaults, and the names of their architects have perished from memory. Succeeding generations have added a tower, a stained window, or a jewelled altar, and lain down to rest beneath their shadow, and the work still lingers; but there they stand, firm as the hills, perpetuating in histories of stone the moral life and intellectual growth of the world through many of its most eventful centuries. These are but types of national life.

From the foundations of Rome, eight centuries, crowded with the reverses and triumphs of a heroic people, had passed into history, ere she became the mistress of the world.

The republic of Venice, too, which at first fled from Rome's insatiable lust of power, and hid herself in the islands of the sea, dropping her bridal ring into the Adriatic, while the white-haired Doge pronounced the "*Desponsamus te, mare, in signum veri perpetuique dominii*," wedded the waves to her sweep

of power through thirteen hundred years of freedom: —

“The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
And, annual marriage now no more renewed,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood.”

The records of France, of Spain, and of other of the existing transatlantic States, may be traced upward for thousands of years to the dim beginnings of European civilization.

In history, where results are to be reached through the slow-moving but irresistible tides of public opinion, time must be reckoned, not by years, but by ages. Centuries are required for maturing the fruits of national life, that they may be used as the seeds of a more advanced civilization.

We cannot reasonably expect our government to be an exception in this divine economy of nations. If we are soon to perish, why were we given a hundred and fifty years of pupilage? Why led through a seven years' war into governmental independence? Why were the wisest of statesmen brought together to organize civil institutions based upon the liberty and political equality of men, and inspired to plant free schools and free churches, if we as a people are to be cut off in our childhood? Why this palpable interposition of the divine hand in every period of peace and war? Have the principles of civil liberty answered their design, and lost their vitality? Have the American people reached the limit of their capacity, and exhausted their energy and enterprise? Let

the farmer, who floods the markets of the world with the products of his toil; let the cunning artificer, the noise of whose industry never dies in our land; let the merchant, whose white-winged messengers of trade are on every sea; let the sailor, whose fleets have battered down the strong defences of cities, and penetrated to the inland fastnesses of treason; let the soldier, who has saved liberty and civilization on fields more bloody and glorious than Cressy or Waterloo, whose heroic valor and Christian fortitude have perpetuated to after-ages the inheritance of the fathers, as he now stands modestly in his robes of peace at his daily toil, with his virtues and his sensibilities all untouched,—answer these interrogatories.

Already have the American people proved, contrary to the predictions of speculative statesmen, that a purely republican form of self-government can be founded and maintained in a country of vast extent, and peopled by millions of inhabitants. It remains to us to develop this plan in the spirit of its founders; to build up and perpetuate here a system of institutions and society upon the postulates laid down in our declarations of right and independence.

“In the great frame of kingdoms and commonwealths, it is in the power of princes or estates,” says Lord Bacon, “to add amplitude and greatness to their kingdoms. For, by introducing such ordinances, constitutions, and customs as are wise, they may sow greatness to their posterity and successors.” In that

hope we labor. If to-morrow we die, we may eat, drink, and be merry, — giving ourselves no concern about the character of society or the issue of great public events ; but, if the nation is to live in our posterity, we must remember “the evil that men do lives after them,” and strive to purge our institutions from every admixture of arbitrary power or injustice, that they may be transmitted pure and simple in their massive beauty, so that not only our children may be glad as they enter into our labors, but that the down-trodden and despairing of other lands and other times may see that liberty is possible, and worth dying for.

As the seed comes to the golden sheaves of harvest by the constant care and toil of the husbandman ; so the rich fruitage of life is secured by forethought, attention, and assiduous labor. The adoption of a free constitution and the enactment of equitable laws will not build up an enduring fabric of government, or make a virtuous community : the people must give themselves to study, to self-restraint, and the practice of righteousness between man and man ; must search for that wisdom which comes from the experience of the past, and yield a supreme love and obedience to justice and truth. There is no safety to a nation in the path of wrong-doing. Our fathers proclaimed, in justification of their declaration of independence, that all men are entitled to freedom ; but they practically proclaimed it a cheat and a lie by continuing the bondage of an enslaved people. God held the nation to its declaration, and to the vindication of its constitu-

tion. We have poured out the gathered treasures of three generations like water, and have sacrificed three hundred thousand of our bravest and best to pay the penalty of that primal infidelity to principle. We assumed also that there was but one estate, and that "*all men are created equal*" before the law. It remains to be seen whether this generation will be true to that first truth of its organic law or not. If we depart from fundamental principles of the constitution from a motive of mistaken prudence and patriotism, we may throw upon our children the price of our exemption from a fancied ill. God grant that they may not be called upon to pay in blood the penalty of our unmanly surrender of a great opportunity! We are now perplexed and puzzled because the application of the principle seems to require of us what public safety denies. If our injustice first made him ignorant and debased whom God has now made free, shall we attempt to remedy the evil by limiting God's justice or by correcting our own wrong? Which does the wisdom of experience pronounce to be the part of prudence,—to give to the ignorant freedmen the incentives to knowledge and good citizenship, or to make them a class by themselves, without the privileges or responsibilities of citizens, whose wrongs will aggravate the very danger we so much dread?

We cannot justify a system of class restriction, on the plea that females and minors are deprived of the right of suffrage; for the sex and condition of woman makes hers a different case, while the right is only

delayed to the minor, and made sure on the sole condition of his majority.

I do not here propound or discuss the method by which the condition of the freedmen is to be disposed of: I only contend that the policy of the Government in this matter shall be uniform and homogeneous, and in accordance with the principles which underlie our whole system, and which must be appealed to in revolutionary times. We may sacrifice, as in the past, if we will, justice, to appease sectional prejudice, and to ease off a present danger; but, if we do, we shall only help to verify the fearful prediction of Macaulay, that, at some distant day, hungry millions of the abject and the depraved will rise, and sack our fair and rich inheritance with more than fiendish hate and Vandal fury. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

We stand to-day on the spot where the footsteps of Popham and his loyal "landmen" first pressed the continent two hundred and fifty years ago. The painful but glorious record of those troubled centuries out-rolls to our vision, through the soft and sombre light of the past, revealing a few feeble settlers slowly lifting themselves from the humility of colonial subordination to the proud pre-eminence of self-government. From out the fruitless and pathless wilderness rises the republic, full of the wealth, the arts, and the institutions of an industrious Christian population. Its shores are lined with the opulent marts and burdened fleets of commerce, and its fruitful fields dotted

with the palaces of its untitled rulers. The beauty and virtue of its daughters are equalled only by the intelligence and enterprise of its sons. Twice, in glorious and just war, it has hurled back its hereditary foe discomfited and defeated. Since first you met to commemorate, by annual services and grateful remembrances, the settlement of 1607 upon these sandy inlets and rocky headlands, it has crushed the organized treason of millions of the slave-corrupted sons of noble sires in a colossal war, and to-day its industries, its charities, its liberties, and its intelligent population, are the grand memorials of its heroic dead.

How feeble is the loftiest conception of the genius of art, compared with this picture drawn by the hand of Providence on the canvass of history ! There upon the shore stand the first settlers, homeless, houseless, heart-sick, and weary, in a world alone. Thence commences the long march of centuries, through cold and hunger, toil and sickness, war and despair. The way opens before them into fruitful fields, where peace and prosperity wait upon toil and enterprise as they move. Onward still press the gathering throng, and, as they come, we catch the songs of liberty and the shouts of victory ; nor, widening as they move, rest they day or night, till here they stand in this broadest, freest, richest, goodliest inheritance of men, and this is all our own. Those untitled exiles upon the shore were our ancestors ; and, thank God, we are their children. So may we improve these liberties, this civilization, this faith, that our children may turn back to bless us when we sleep with our fathers !

A P P E N D I X.

AT the conclusion of the Address, a vote of thanks to Professor Patterson was proposed by Rev. Dr. Ballard, seconded by Oliver Moses, Esq., of Bath, and unanimously adopted; and a copy of his oration requested for publication by the committee.

A resolution was adopted, that the committee of last year be re-appointed, with authority to fill vacancies and add to their number.

From the various interesting letters received by the committee, in reply to invitations to take part in this year's celebration, the following is thought worthy of preservation:—

Boston, Aug. 27, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your invitation to be present at the Popham Celebration is at hand. The short notice will prevent me from being present to take part in the interesting ceremonies. Without assenting to all the claims made in your “Popham Memorial” volume, allow me to say, that I think those who have spoken or written on that subject have overlooked one of the most important results of that enterprise. In this practical age, we must look to what was really effected by the earliest colonists on these shores. Let us briefly try that at Sagadahoc by this test; for, in my opinion, their works were far more important than the formal acts recorded. They certainly erected houses, a church, a fort; and, lastly, a vessel, the dimensions of which are unknown, but fit to cross the ocean. Now we know, that, in a forest, it is not a diffi-

cult thing to build log-houses, or a church and a fort in the same way ; but to construct a sea-going vessel is quite a different affair. This requires artisans who are used to such work ; and there can be no doubt, that, among the colonists, there were found a master-builder,* with the necessary journeymen and sawyers (for there were no mills), a smith, and also several laborers ; for the building of a vessel in a remote wilderness would then require three times the amount of manual labor that would now effect the same result, — in these days when materials are so easily prepared, transported, and fitted, by the aid of machinery.

Looking, then, at what was certainly done by the Popham colony, we must allow, that, during the short period they occupied the rugged peninsula of Sabino, and making due allowance for a hard winter, the destruction of their store-house, and the sickness that followed, they deserve credit for enterprise and industry in constructing a vessel fit to encounter the storms of the Atlantic, and make a safe voyage to England. There she must have attracted much attention, being the pioneer ship built in North America. When, therefore, we consider the value of Popham's enterprise, the building and voyage of the "Virginia of Sagadahoc" is one of its most important results. It was not equalled by the Plymouth colony in the first ten years of its existence ; and it was not till the third year of the existence of its powerful neighbor of "Massachusetts Bay," that a ship, fit to cross the ocean, was constructed.†

Wishing you a pleasant day and a numerous company, I am,

Yours truly,

FREDERIC KIDDER.

To Rev. EDWARD BALLARD, *Secretary, &c.*

* Strachey says, "the chief shipwright was one Digby, of London." He also speaks of "the carpenters." — Ch. x.

† According to "Holmes's Annals," a ship of sixty tons was built at Medford in 1633. "*The Blessing of the Bay*" was built in 1631 ; but she was a mere shallop, without a deck, and fit only to keep along the shore.