

The Nation in a Nutshell

George Makepeace Towle

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THE NATION IN A NUTSHELL

A _RAPID OUTLINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY._

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GEORGE MAKEPEACE TOWLE

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1886

THE NATION IN A NUTSHELL

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THE NATION IN A NUTSHELL

AN OUTLINE OF

AMERICAN HISTORY.

I.

AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES.

[Sidenote: Geology and Archaeology.]

The sciences of geology and archaeology, working side by side, have made a wonderful progress in the past half a century. The one, seeking for the history and transformations of the physical earth, and the other, aiming to discover the antiquity, differences of race, and social and ethnical development of man, have obtained results which we cannot regard without amazement and more or less incredulity. The two sciences

have been faithful handmaidens the one to the other; but geology has always led the way, and archaeology has been compelled to follow in its path.

[Sidenote: Four Eras of Civilization.]

Though we may doubt as to the exactness of the detailed data established by the archaeologists, there are certain broad facts which we must accept from them as established beyond doubt. These facts are of the highest value and interest. The antiquary has been able, from discovered remains of extinct civilizations, to reconstruct societies and peoples, and to trace the occupancy of countries to periods far anterior to that of which history takes cognizance. The general fact seems to be settled that, in prehistoric times, Europe passed through four distinct eras. These were the Rude Stone Age, when man was the contemporary in Europe of the extinct hairy elephant and the cave bear; the Polished Stone Age; the Bronze Age, when bronze was used for arms and utensils; and the Iron Age, in which iron superseded bronze in the making of useful articles.

[Sidenote: Ancient America.]

In the same way it has been established that, on our own continent, the oldest discoverable civilization was one in which rude stone implements were used, and man lived contemporaneously with the megatherium and the mastodon. Then polished and worked stone implements came into use; and after the lapse of ages, copper. The researches of our antiquaries have rendered it probable that America is as ancient, as an inhabited continent, as Europe. Evidences have been brought to light, leading to the conclusion that many thousands of years before the Christian era, America was the seat of a civilization far from rude or savage. Groping into the remains of the far past, we find skeletons, skulls, implements of war, and even basket-work, buried in geological strata, which have been overlaid by repeated convulsions and changes of the physical earth. But so few are the relics of this dim, primeval period, that we can only conclude its antiquity, and we can infer little or nothing of its characteristics.

[Sidenote: Primeval Races.]

Advancing, however, another stage in research and discovery, we come upon clear and overwhelming proofs of the existence on this continent of a great, enterprising, skilful, and even artistic people, spread over an immense area, and leaving behind them the most positive testimony, not only of their existence, but of their manners and customs, their arts, their trade, their methods of warfare, and their religion and worship. Compared with this people, the Red Indians found here by the Pilgrims and the Cavaliers were modern intruders upon the land. These ancient Americans, indeed, were far superior in all respects to the Red Indian of our historic acquaintance. When the Red Indians replaced them, the civilization of the continent fell from a high to a much lower plane.

[Sidenote: The Mound-Builders.]

The great race of which I speak is known as "the Mound-Builders." Like the "Wall-Builders" of Greece and Italy, they stand out, in the light of their remains, as distinctly as if we had historical records of them. The Mound-Builders occupied, often in thickly settled communities, the region about our great Northern Lakes, the valleys of the Mississippi, the Ohio, the Missouri, and the regions watered by the affluents of

these rivers, and a wide and irregular belt along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. There is little or no evidence that the same race inhabited any part of the country now occupied by the Eastern and Middle States; but some few traces of them are found in North and South Carolina.

[Sidenote: Ancient Mounds.]

The chief relics left by this comparatively polished race are the very numerous mounds, or artificial hills, found scattered over the country. These are sometimes ten, and sometimes forty and fifty, feet in height, with widely varying bases. They present many forms; they are circular and pyramidal, square and polygonal, and in some places are manifestly imitations of the shapes of beasts, birds, and human beings. There are districts where hundreds of these mounds appear within a limited area. Sometimes--as at Aztalan, in Wisconsin, and at Newark, in the Licking Valley--a vast series of earthwork enclosures is discovered, sometimes with embankments twelve feet high and fifty broad, within which are variously shaped mounds, definitely formed avenues, and passages and ponds. These enclosures amply prove, aside from the geological evidences of their antiquity, the existence of a race very different from the Red Indians. They were clearly a people not nomadic, but with fixed settlements, cultivators of the soil, and skilful in the art of military defence.

[Sidenote: Altars and Temples.]

The excavations of the wonderful mounds have brought to light many things more curious than the mounds themselves. It seems to be established that the mounds were used for four distinct purposes. They were altars for sacrifice, and, like the Persians, whose sacrificial ceremonies strikingly resembled those of the Mound-Builders, they were sun-worshippers. They offered up the most costly gifts, and even human victims. The pyramidal mounds, with avenues leading to the summits, were the sites of the stately sun and moon temples. Here, undoubtedly, imposing ceremonies were often performed. The lower or "knoll" mounds were used as the sepulchres of the dead. They yield up to the modern antiquary numberless skulls, of a type distinctly different from those of the Red Indians. The Mound-Builders buried their dead, most often, in a sitting posture, adorned with shell beads and ivory ornaments. Sometimes the dead were burned. Finally, the mounds were employed as points of observation.

[Sidenote: Relics of the Mounds.]

[Sidenote: Early Arts.]

That the Mound-Builders were a far more civilized race than the Indians is clearly revealed by the relics found in and about the mounds. They have left behind them thousands of flint arrow-heads, many of beautiful workmanship. They used spades, rimmers, borers, celts, axes, fleshers, scrapers, pestles, and other implements whose use cannot now be determined, made of various stones, such as porphyry, greenstone, and feldspar. They knew well the use of tobacco, for among their most artistic and elaborately carved remains are pipes, some of them representing animals and human heads. It seems to be certain that they had even attained the art of weaving cloth fabrics; for pieces of cloth, of a material akin to hemp, have been found in the mounds, with uniform and regularly spun threads, and every evidence that they were woven by some deft invention or mechanical device. It is certain that the Red

Indian was ignorant of this valuable art.

[Sidenote: Primeval Mining.]

Among the highly wrought remains of the mounds are fanciful water-jugs, well carved and symmetrical in shape, some of which were evidently made to keep water cool. The human heads represented on these bear no resemblance to the Indian types. Drinking cups with carved rims and handles, sepulchral urns with curious ornaments, kettles and other pieces of skilful pottery, copper chisels, axes, knives, awls, spear and arrow heads, and even bracelets, come to light, here and there. There is no doubt that the Mound-Builders were miners. For, on the southern shores of Lake Superior, great excavations indicate an extensive and skilful mining of copper at a very remote period. It is singular, on the other hand, that no iron implement has ever been discovered in the mounds. The builders used iron-ore as a stone, but never learned the art of moulding it into weapons or utensils.

Thus the fact that vast areas of what are now the United States were once occupied by an active, skilful, imaginative, and progressive race, seems fully established. Not less certain is it that in their physical type, in their government, in their arts, habits, and daily pursuits, they were separated by a wide gap from the Red Indians whom our ancestors found in possession of the continent. The Indian was roving, and hunted for subsistence. The Mound-Builders were sedentary, and undoubtedly cultivated maize as their chief article of food.

[Sidenote: Origin of the Mound-Builders.]

But how remote the Mound-Builders were from the era of European settlement, whence they came; how, whither, and when they vanished,—these are questions before which science stands harassed, impotent to answer positively. There are those who, marking certain apparent resemblances between the implements, religious rites and customs, and cranial formations, of the Mound-Builders, and those of the Asiatic Mongols, conclude that the former were originally Asiatic hordes, who, crossing Behring Straits, when, perhaps, the two continents were united at that point, formed a new home and established a new empire here. Others, with more proof, connect them with that great Toltec race which occupied Central America and Mexico, before they were driven out by the ruder and more warlike Aztecs.

[Sidenote: The Aztecs.]

The Toltecs have left ample records of their existence and gorgeous civilization, in noble monuments and very numerous though till recently undecipherable inscriptions; and many similarities lend weight to the theory that the empire of the Mound-Builders, in the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri valleys, was the result of a great Toltec migration from Central America, which they left to Aztec dominion. Thus while we call our continent the "New World," it is not improbable that we may be living in a country which was alive with art, splendor, invention, and power, when Europe was a dreary waste, over which the now extinct monsters roamed unmolested by man.

THE ERA OF DISCOVERY.

[Sidenote: Historic Myths.]

We live in times when the researches of scholars are minute, pitiless, and exhaustive, and when no hitherto received historical fact is permitted to escape the ordeal of the most critical scrutiny. Many are the cherished historical beliefs which have latterly been assailed with every resource of logical argument and formidably arrayed proofs, unearthed by tireless diligence and pursuit. Thus we are told that the story of William Tell is a romantic myth; that Lucretia Borgia, far from being a poisoner and murderess, was really a very estimable person; and that the siege of Troy was a very insignificant struggle, between armies counted, not by thousands, but by hundreds.

In the same way the old familiar question, "Who discovered America?" which every school-boy was formerly as prompt to answer as to his age and name, has in recent years become a perplexing problem of historical disputation; and at least can no longer be accurately answered by the name of the gallant and courageous Genoese who set forth across the Atlantic in 1492.

[Sidenote: Icelandic Discoverers.]

Bancroft, on the first page of his history, pronounces the story of the discovery of our country by the Icelandic Northmen, a narrative "mythological in form and obscure in meaning"; and adds that "no clear historical evidence establishes the natural probability that they accomplished the passage." But the first volume of Bancroft was published in 1852. Since then, the proofs of the discovery of the continent by the Icelanders, very nearly five hundred years before Columbus was thrilled with the delight of beholding the Bahamas, have multiplied and grown to positive demonstration. They no longer rest upon vague traditions; they have assumed the authority of explicit and well attested records.

[Sidenote: Discoverers of America.]

The discovery of the New England coast by the Icelanders is the earliest which, down to the present, can be positively asserted. But it has been recently urged that there are some evidences of American discovery by Europeans or Asiatics long prior to Leif Erikson. There are certain indications that the Pacific coast was reached by Chinese adventurers in the remote past; and it is stated that proofs exist in Brazil tending to show that South America was discovered by Phoenicians five hundred years before Christ. The story is said to be recorded on some brass tablets found in northern Brazil, which give the number of the vessels and crews, state Sidon as the port to which the voyagers belonged, and even describe their route around the Cape of Good Hope and along the west coast of Africa, whence the trade-winds drifted them across the Atlantic.

[Sidenote: Icelandic Voyagers.]

Confining ourselves to credible history, it appears that in the year 986 (eighty years before the conquest of England by William of Normandy), an Icelandic mariner named Bjarne Herrjulson, making for Greenland in his rude bark, was swept across the Atlantic, and finally found himself

cast upon dry land. He made haste to set sail on his return voyage, and succeeded in getting safely back to Iceland. He told his story of the strange land beyond the seas; and so pleased had he been with its pleasant and fruitful aspect that he named it "Vineland."

[Sidenote: Leif Erikson.]

The story of Bjarne impressed itself upon an intelligent and adventurous man, Leif Erikson; who, having purchased Bjarne's ship, set sail for Vineland in the year 1000, with a crew of thirty-five men. He reached what is now Cape Cod, and passed the winter of 1000-1 on its shores. Returning to Iceland, his example was followed, two years later, by another Erikson, who established a colony on the shores of Narragansett Bay, not far from Fall River, where the founder died and was buried.

[Sidenote: Columbus in Iceland.]

It is well nigh certain that Christopher Columbus, in the year 1477, visited Iceland, and even sailed one hundred leagues beyond it, discovering there an unfrozen sea. The idea of western discovery was already in his mind, and he had received hints of a western continent, from certain carved objects picked up in the Atlantic by other navigators. It is altogether probable that the conjectures of Columbus were confirmed into conviction by the Icelandic traditions of Leif's discovery, during his sojourn at Reikjavik. From this time Columbus was more than ever intent upon the enterprise which, fifteen years after, conferred upon him imperishable glory.

[Sidenote: Voyage of Columbus.]

The story of Columbus is, or should be, familiar to every American who can read. How he sailed forth from the roads of Saltez on the 3d of August, 1492, with three vessels and a crew of one hundred and twenty men; how the voyage was stormy and full of doubts and discouragements; how, finally, early on the morning of October 12, Rodrigo Triana, a seaman of the Pinta, first descried the land which Columbus christened San Salvador; how they pushed on and found Cuba and Hayti; how, after returning to Spain, Columbus made two more voyages westward,--one in 1493, when he discovered Jamaica, Hispaniola, and Porto Rico: and another in 1498 when the Orinoco and the coast of Para rewarded his researches; and his subsequent unhappy fate--all these events have been related by many writers, and most vividly of all by the graphic pen of Washington Irving.

[Sidenote: Menendez.]

The era of American discovery may be said to have continued till the memorable fourth day of September, 1565, when the Spaniard Menendez founded the first town on this continent, on the Florida coast, which he called St. Augustine. In one sense, indeed, the era of discovery did not cease down to within the memory of men still living; for the discovery of a path across the Rocky Mountains might well be regarded as included in it. But during the period which intervened between the return of Columbus from his first voyage and the building of St. Augustine, the extent and character of the eastern portion of our continent was revealed to Europe by many and successful navigators.

[Sidenote: The Cabots.]

The story of Columbus inspired the cupidity and territorial ambition of England, France, Spain, and Italy; and in the year 1497 John Cabot, a Venetian by birth, but long a resident of Bristol, England, set out thence across the Atlantic. He was accompanied by his son Sebastian. On the 24th of June he came in sight of Newfoundland, and then of Nova Scotia; then he sailed southward and reached Florida. As this was a year before the third voyage of Columbus, in which he saw the coast of the mainland, to John Cabot belongs the honor of having landed upon the American continent before Columbus.

[Sidenote: Amerigo Vespucci.]

Voyages to the new land now followed each other in quick succession for many years. It was in 1499 that the accomplished but unscrupulous Amerigo Vespucci made his first voyage to Hispaniola, following it up by voyages along the coast of South America. He returned thence to claim, after the death of Columbus, the honors due to the great Genoese.

[Sidenote: Verrazzani.]

Portugal and France, jealous of the success of the Spanish and English expeditions, lost no time in entering into this perilous and brilliant competition for maritime honor and western possession. Portugal sent out Cortereal, and France Verrazzani. The former skirted the coast for six hundred miles, kidnapping Indians, and spending some time at Labrador, where he came to his death. Verrazzani, in 1524, sailed for the Western Continent in the _Dolphin_, ranged along the coast of North Carolina, and so northward until he espied the beautiful harbor of New York, and anchored for a brief rest in that of Newport. Verrazzani returned to France with glowing accounts of the beauty, fertility, and noble harbors of the country.

[Sidenote: Jacques Cartier.]

Within ten years France sent forth another expedition, under the command of the famous Jacques Cartier, which was destined to acquire for that nation its claim to the possession of Canada. Cartier sailed from St. Malo to Newfoundland in twenty days. He went up the St. Lawrence, and returned home to tell the thrilling tale of his adventures. The next year he came back to discover the sites of Montreal and Quebec; and he made two more voyages, in 1540 and 1542.

[Sidenote: Ponce de Leon.]

Meanwhile, Spain was resolved to sustain the great prestige she had gained by the expeditions of Columbus, and to yield to no rival her claims to dominion on the new continent. In 1512, Don Juan Ponce de Leon, a brave soldier and adventurous man, who had accompanied Columbus on his second voyage, landed on the peninsula of Florida, and established the right of Spain to its possession. Five years after, Fernandez landed on the coast of Yucatan; and ere long Garay explored the coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

[Sidenote: De Soto.]

It is not possible, in this survey, to follow, or even to name, the Spanish expeditions of discovery and conquest between 1512 and 1550. Suffice it to say that during this period subjects of the Spanish king landed on the coast of South Carolina, entered the harbors of New York

and New England, crossed Louisiana and northern Mexico to the Pacific, explored Mexico and Peru, marched across Georgia under the lead of the renowned Ferdinand de Soto, penetrated to the interior, and, after many romantic adventures and desperate hardships, discovered the magnificent river which we call the Mississippi; made perilous excursions into the wild depths of Arkansas and Missouri, and even to the remote banks of the Red River.

[Sidenote: Character of the Discoverers.]

The enterprises of Spaniards, English, Portuguese, and French were alike prompted by the greed of gain. All sought the fabled El Dorado; all craved the power of colonial dominion. None the less were the navigators and soldiers, whom the nations sent forth to reveal a new world to civilization, men of courage and fortitude, able in achieving the momentous tasks assigned to them. Columbus and Cabot, at least, thought less of riches and fleeting honors than of the proper and noble glories of discovery; it was left to their Spanish successors to kidnap the Indians, to rob their settlements and murder their women, and to invade the peaceful wilds of America, with fire and the sword.

III.

THE ERA OF COLONIZATION.

[Sidenote: Voyages of Colonization.]

To acquire a title to the fertile and fruitful lands and fabled riches of the newly discovered continent, became the aspiration of the great maritime states of Europe, which had shared between them the honors of its discovery. From the middle of the sixteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth century, the voyages of adventure and projected colonization were almost continuous. Spaniards, Frenchmen, and Englishmen fitted out vessels and crossed the ocean, to make more extended researches, and to found, if possible, permanent settlements. Although failure generally attended these attempts at colonization, they gradually led the way to the final occupation of the continent.

[Sidenote: The Huguenots in America.]

Of these abortive efforts, that of Admiral Coligny to found a settlement of the Huguenots, who were persecuted in France, on the new shores, was the earliest and one of the most romantic. As long ago as 1562, America became a refuge of the oppressed for conscience's sake. The Huguenot colony, taking up their residence on the River May, gave the name of "Carolina" (from King Charles IX.) to their new domain. After many and terrible hardships, they returned again to France, to be soon succeeded by another colony of Huguenots, also sent out by brave old Coligny, which settled on the same soil of Carolina.

[Sidenote: Menendez in Florida]

This aroused the jealousy and cupidity of Spain. The "most Catholic" king was not only enraged to find the soil which he claimed as his own by right of discovery, taken possession of by the subjects of his French

rival, but was scandalized that the new colonists should be Calvinistic heretics. It was the very height of the gloomiest period of religious fanaticism and persecution in Europe. Menendez was accordingly sent out to Florida by King Philip, and assumed its governorship; and on September 8, 1565, Saint Augustine, the oldest town in the United States, was founded, and Philip of Spain was solemnly proclaimed sovereign of all North America. Menendez lost no time in attacking the Huguenot colonists of Carolina. They were speedily defeated, and most of them were ruthlessly massacred; and our almost virgin soil was thus early the scene of another St. Bartholomew.

Meanwhile, England was not idle in contesting with France and Spain the supremacy of the western land. Very early in the sixteenth century projects of colonizing America were formed in England.

[Sidenote: English Colonization.]

Numerous voyages hither were undertaken during the reign of Henry VIII.; but the accounts which remain of them are rare and meagre. Some of them resulted in terrible disasters of shipwreck and death. Late in the century a courageous and determined navigator, Martin Frobisher, made three voyages to America, but without establishing a colony, or finding the treasures of gold and gems which he sought. Later, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the half-brother of Raleigh, and Barlow, made attempts to found colonies, but in vain.

[Sidenote: Raleigh's Expedition.]

It was in the spring of 1585 that Sir Walter Raleigh fitted out his famous expedition of seven ships, and one hundred and eight emigrants, and sent it forth, bound for the shores of Carolina. At first it seemed as if our English colony were really about to prosper in the new land. They established themselves at Roanoke, and explored the country. Hariot, one of the shrewdest of them, discovered the seductive properties of tobacco, the succulence of Indian corn, and the nutritive quality of potatoes.

[Sidenote: Sir Francis Drake.]

The hostility of the natives, however, soon became so bitter, and their attacks so frequent, that the colony was glad to return to England in the visiting ships of Sir Francis Drake. Two years later Raleigh, undismayed by the failure of his first colony, sent out another, under John White, which settled on the Isle of Roanoke, and founded the "city of Raleigh." It was here that, on the 18th of August, 1587, the first child of English parents was born on American soil. Her name was Virginia Dare, and she was the granddaughter of Governor White. The Governor returned to England, leaving the emigrants behind; and on his going back to Roanoke, three years afterwards, no vestige of the colony could be discovered. It is supposed that they were all massacred by the Indians during White's absence. The first permanent settlement in America, was made by the French, at Port Royal, in 1605.

[Sidenote: Port Royal.]

[Sidenote: Colonies in Virginia.]

English enterprise was now at last ready to found and perpetuate states on the new continent. In little more than a year after the French

occupation of Port Royal, a patent was granted by King James the First to a party of colonists, under Newport and Smith, authorizing them to form a government in Virginia, subject to the English crown. Imagine, then, three small ships setting forth, on the bleak 19th of December, 1606, and directing their way to Virginia, with one hundred and five men on board, and freighted with a goodly store of arms and provisions. Most of the party were gallant and courtly cavaliers: there were but twelve laborers and four carpenters in all the company. After a stormy voyage they passed up the James River, and landing, on its shores, they founded Jamestown.

[Sidenote: Heinrich Hudson.]

The news of the colonization of Virginia, the success of the adventurous emigrants in maintaining their settlement, and the fertility, beauty, and salubriousness of the continent, soon inspired other enterprises of a similar kind. The Dutch have always been famous navigators; and it was in 1609 that gallant Heinrich Hudson, after two previous futile attempts to find a western passage to India, reached these shores, and sailed up the noble river which now bears his name. Five years after, a Dutch colony was formed on Manhattan Island, whereon the city of New York now stands, to which was first given the name of "New Amsterdam." The colony prospered, and in 1624 the island was purchased of the Indians for twenty four pounds English money.

[Sidenote: The Pilgrims and Puritans.]

We now reach the fourth permanent colony on American soil; that which was more powerful in shaping our destinies and determining our national traits than any other. The story of the Pilgrims and Puritans is almost too familiar to be rehearsed. Every schoolboy knows of their adventures and trials, their hardships and their dauntless energy, their piety and rigidity of rule, the great qualities by the exercise of which it may be justly claimed that they made themselves the true founders of the American Republic. Driven by persecution from their native England, they took refuge in Holland; and from thence they sailed in two small vessels, the Speedwell and the Mayflower on a July day in 1620, for the new world. One hundred Puritans thus crossed the ocean.

[Sidenote: Settlement at Plymouth.]

After a tempestuous voyage of sixty-three days, the Mayflower coasted along Cape Cod, and landed, on the twenty-first day of December, at Plymouth. The Speedwell had been forced to put back in a disabled condition. Before landing, the Puritans made a solemn compact of government, purely republican in form, and to this they afterwards religiously adhered. In 1629 another English Puritan colony, called the "Massachusetts Bay Colony," settled at Salem; and in the following year came Governor John Winthrop, with eight hundred emigrants. The Massachusetts Bay Colony, thus re-enforced, and now numbering not far from one thousand souls, settled Boston and its neighborhood.

[Sidenote: New England Colonized.]

New Hampshire began to be settled three years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth. Maine was colonized not much later. Vermont, having been explored by Champlain in 1609, was settled some years after. The Rhode Island colony was founded by Roger Williams and five companions, driven from the Boston and Plymouth colonies in succession,

in 1636; and Connecticut first became the seat of a settlement in 1635, the colonial constitution being adopted in 1630. Next in point of time, Delaware was settled by parties of Swedes and Finlanders in 1638, and was called "New Sweden." The province passed into the hands of the Dutch of New Amsterdam, however, in 1655.

[Sidenote: European possessions in America.]

Thus, in a period of a little less than half a century, the whole of the American coast had been acquired by, and was to a large degree under the dominion of, five European nations. In 1655 the Spaniards held the peninsula of Florida; the French were in possession of, or at least claimed the right to, what are now the two Carolinas; the Dutch held Manhattan Island, New Jersey, a narrow strip running along the west bank of the Hudson, and a portion of Long Island; the Swedes were established (soon to be deprived of it) in what is now Delaware, and a part of what is now Pennsylvania, along the Delaware River; while the English possessions far exceeded those of all the others put together, including as they did nearly the whole of Virginia, a large share of Maryland, all of New England, and the greater part of Long Island.

[Sidenote: William Penn.]

In the year 1681 all the Dutch possessions had been added to the dominion of the English in America; and it was in this year that William Penn, having received a grant of a large tract of land in what is now Pennsylvania, sent out a colony, which settled on his grant. The next year he came in person, assumed the governorship of the colony, founded Philadelphia, and made his famous treaties with the Indians. At the close of the seventeenth century the English dominion comprised the whole coast, from Canada to the Carolinas; and it may be fairly said that when the eighteenth century opened, the era of colonization had reached its culmination, English civilization was indelibly stamped on, and firmly planted in, the new continent. The crystallizing process of a new and mighty nation had begun and was in rapid progress.

IV.

THE COLONIAL ERA.

[Sidenote: England's Acquirements.]

The Colonial Era, intervening between the permanent colonization of the Atlantic coast and the momentous time when the colonies united to assert their independence, may be said to have been comprised within a period of a little more than a century. In 1664 England had acquired possession of the whole colonized territory from the Kennebec to the southern boundary of South Carolina. Georgia was still unsettled, and remained to be colonized some sixty years after by that good and gallant General Oglethorpe, who forbade slavery to be introduced into the province, and prohibited the sale of rum within its limits. Florida was still held by the Spanish, the only continental power which then had a foothold on the Atlantic border of what is now the United States.

[Sidenote: Colonial Progress.]

The century of settlement and growth which we call the Colonial Era was full of hardship, romance, brave struggling with great difficulties, fortitude, and alternate misfortune and success. As we look back upon it from this distance, however, we do not fail to be struck with the steady and certain progress made towards a compact and enduring nationality. Even then the same variety of race and habits and characteristics which the United States reveal to-day were to be observed in the population which was scattered over the narrow strip of territory extending a thousand miles along the seaboard. There were English everywhere--predominant then, as English traits still possess, in a yet more marked degree, the prevailing influence. There were, however, Dutch in New York and Pennsylvania, some Swedes still in Delaware, Danes in New Jersey, French Huguenots in the Carolinas, Austrian Moravians, not long after, in Georgia, and Spaniards in Florida.

[Sidenote: The New England Colonies.]

Amid such a diversity of races, of course the habits, the laws, and the religious opinions of the colonies widely differed. But these differences were not confined to those arising from variety of origin. The English in New England presented a very marked contrast to the English in New York and in Virginia. The settlements of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay comprised communities of zealous Calvinists, rigid in their religious belief and ceremonies, codifying their religious principles into political law, and adhering resolutely, through thick and thin, to the idea expressed, by one of the early Puritans, that "our New England was originally a plantation of religion, and not a plantation of trade."

[Sidenote: Roger Williams.]

Roger Williams founded Rhode Island on the principle of religious toleration; but he carried thither the sobriety and diligence and courage of his former Puritan associations. He provided, as he himself said, "a shelter for persons distressed for conscience." Connecticut was also essentially a "religious plantation," which for many years accepted the Bible as containing the only laws necessary to the colony, and confined the right of suffrage to members of the church; and Connecticut, as well as Massachusetts, vigorously punished offenders by the rough, old-fashioned methods of the pillory, the stocks, and the whipping-post.

[Sidenote: Colonial New York and Virginia.]

No contrast could be more striking than that between colonial New England and colonial New York and Virginia. The Puritans gathered together in towns and villages; they lived in log or earth cottages, one story high, with no pretensions to ornament, and but little to comfort. The wealthier New Englanders, after a time, built two-story brick houses; but these were still plain and substantial, and not imposing.

[Sidenote: Puritan Costumes]

The men wore short cloaks and jerkins, short, loose breeches, wide collars with tassels, and high, narrow-crowned hats with wide brims. The women dressed in plain-colored homespun, but bloomed forth on Sundays with silk hoods and daintily worked caps. The proximity of Indians required that every New England village should be a fortress, and every citizen a soldier. Two hundred years ago, muster-days and town-meetings,

means of defence from attack and of self-government within, were as prominent features of New England life as they are to-day.

[Sidenote: New England Industries.]

The New Englanders were mainly farmers, hunters, and fishermen. Commerce was slow to grow up among them. Trade was the means towards supporting a religious state; not a method for the acquirement of wealth. By and by, however, manufactures of cotton and woollen fabrics grew up, lumber was floated down to the coast, gunpowder and glass were made, and fish were cured for winter use and to be sent abroad. They ate corn-meal and milk, and pork and beans were a favorite New England dish from the first; and they drank cider and home-brewed beer. The first coins appeared in 1652; and the oldest college on American soil, Harvard, was founded at Cambridge in 1636.

[Sidenote: Dutch and Cavaliers.]

The Dutch, in New York, and the Cavaliers, in Virginia, set out upon their colonial careers in a very different way. The Dutch came to America as traders; the Cavaliers came to be landed proprietors and to seek rapid fortunes. Instead, therefore, of clustering close in towns and villages, both the Dutch and the Cavaliers spread out through the country and established large and isolated estates. Wealthy Dutchmen came hither with patents from the East India Company, took possession of tracts sixteen miles long, settled colonies upon them, and lived in great state on their "manors," ruling the colonies, working their lands with slaves, and assuming the aristocratic title of "Patroon." Thus a sort of feudal system grew up, in which the "Patroons" exercised an authority well nigh as absolute as that of the mediaeval barons on the Rhine; and this system long flourished side by side with the democratic simplicity of the Puritan commonwealths.

[Sidenote: Captain John Smith.]

In the same way the Virginians scattered themselves in the fruitful and sunny valleys between the sea and the Alleghanies, and in time created lordly domains and plantations, over which the possessors exercised feudal sway. But this colony, composed originally in the main of gentlemen unused to manual labor, and indisposed to bear patiently the hardships of early settlement, did not become established without many and serious difficulties. The colonists at first hung tents to the trees to shelter them from the sun; and the best of their houses "could neither well defend wind nor rain." Captain John Smith wrote to England, begging his friends there to "rather send thirty carpenters, husbandmen, gardeners, fishermen, blacksmiths, and diggers-up of the roots, well provided, than a thousand of such as we have."

[Sidenote: Tobacco in Virginia.]

The Virginians cultivated tobacco; and in the same year that the Puritans landed on Plymouth Rock, the first cargo of African slaves was carried up the James River in a Dutch trading ship. It is an interesting fact that so extensive and profitable was the early cultivation of tobacco in Virginia that it became the general medium of exchange. Debts were paid with it; fines of so much tobacco, instead of so much money, were imposed; a wife cost a Virginian five hundred pounds of the narcotic weed; and even the government accepted it in discharge of taxes.

[Sidenote: Virginian Customs.]

Virginia early became divided into classes; the landlords being a virtual nobility, the poorer colonists a middle class, and the slaves comprising the lower social stratum. The Church of England was the prevailing sect, and English habits of hospitality and ease of manner replaced the Puritan austerity of the North. Yet Virginia had a severe code of punishments; and at one time, if a man stayed away from church three times without good reason, he was liable to the penalty of death. The Virginians were tolerant of all faiths excepting those of the Quakers and the Roman Catholics. Persons professing these creeds were sternly excluded from the colony.

[Sidenote: The Indians.]

Just one hundred years before the outbreak of the Revolution, the white population of New England had reached fifty-five thousand: while the Indians, retreating at the approach of the European, had become reduced to two-thirds of that number. The presence of the aborigines on the borders of the whole line of the colonies seemed at first, destined to become fatal to the settlement of the continent. But had it not been for Indian hostility, the colonies might never have grown together and merged, first into a close defensive alliance, and then into a great and united state. It was mainly the sentiment of the common preservation that brought about the intimate relations which gradually grew up between Puritan, Dutchman, and Cavalier.

[Sidenote: Indian Wars.]

The Puritans treated the Indians with strict justice: Penn made friends of the powerful tribes along the Delaware; and Roger Williams succeeded in conciliating the Narragansetts. But a time came when the Indians saw clearly that they were being pushed further and further back, away from their ancient homes. Then followed the terrible wars which so long threatened the existence of the struggling colonies, and which the dauntless courage and hardihood of the settlers alone rendered vain. King Philip arose, and struggled fiercely for more than a year to exterminate the New England intruders. The Canadian French, jealous of English supremacy on the continent, joined hands with the Indians, and incited them constantly to fresh assaults. These French had explored the Lakes, and the Mississippi as far as what is now New Orleans; and they feared lest the English should deprive them of these western domains.

Wars succeeded each other with alarming rapidity. After King Philip's War came King William's War in 1689, Queen Anne's War in 1702, King George's War in 1744, the Canadian War (which lasted from 1755 to 1763, and in which Quebec was taken by Wolfe, and Canada was conquered by the English), and finally, Pontiac's bold but futile rebellion, aided by the French, in 1763. It was these wars, and the growing need of combined resistance to the tyrannical assumptions of the British government, which together drew close the bonds of friendship and mutual support between the colonies, and made them capable of striking a successful blow for independence.

V.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

[Sidenote: The Revolution.]

[Sidenote: American Loyalty.]

The Revolution was long in brewing. The discontent of the colonies at their treatment by the mother country was gradual in its growth. At first it seemed rather to inspire fitful protests and expostulations, than a desire to foster a deliberate quarrel. Even New England, settled by Pilgrims who had no strong reason for evincing loyalty and affection for the land whence they had been driven for opinion's sake, seemed to have become more or less reconciled to the dominion of British governors. There can be no doubt that the colonists, even down to within a brief period of the Declaration of Independence, hoped to retain their connection with Great Britain. Congress declared, even after armies had been raised to resist the red-coats, that this was not with the design of separation or independence. Even the mobs cried "God save the king!" Washington said that until the moment of collision he had abhorred the idea of separation: and Jefferson declared that, up to the 19th of April, 1775 (the date of the battle of Lexington), "he had never heard a whisper of a disposition to separate from Great Britain."

[Sidenote: Effect of the Stamp Act.]

The Stamp Act, and the similar acts which followed it, united the colonies in a spirit of resistance. They inspired Patrick Henry's eloquence in Virginia; they gave rise to the "tea-party" in Boston; they produced the Boston massacre; they led to the burning of the Gaspee in Narragansett Bay; they finally developed, no longer rioting, but open and flagrant rebellion at Concord, Lexington, and Bunker Hill. The colonies did not refuse to be taxed. They recognized the right of Great Britain to tax them. But they claimed that this right had its condition--that the taxed people should be represented in the body which held the taxing power. Had the colonies been permitted to send members to the British Parliament, and to have a voice in the deliberations of the government, the Revolution might never have taken place. But King George and his Tory ministers were obstinate to folly. They met protest with repression; in order to subjugate the colonies, they added tyranny to tyranny. The warnings of Townshend and Chatham were lost upon them, and at last the colonies, utterly despairing of a settlement with a power so deaf and so inconsiderate, launched into the storm of revolution.

[Sidenote: Independence Hall.]

[Sidenote: Trumbull's Picture.]

Every American who pays a visit to Philadelphia should visit the plain, old-fashioned, sombre room known as "Independence Hall." Its dinginess is venerable; its relics are illustrious. In this hall have resounded the voices of Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, Hancock, Randolph,--the whole circle of Revolutionary statesmen. On that table, which is pointed out to you, the famous Declaration was signed. From the walls historic faces gaze down upon you. Every relic has its record and its hint. In the square below, you see the place where the Philadelphians of 1776

listened to the reading of the Declaration from the Court House steps. No one can visit this hall without conjuring up in his fancy the memorable scene of the first of our "Fourth of July"; and, happily, a great painter, who knew many of the actors in it, has preserved its features on canvas. It is not difficult, standing in Independence Hall, and retaining Trumbull's picture in memory, to imagine very nearly the scene it presented.

[Sidenote: Signers of the Declaration.]

There were the long rows of plain uncushioned benches, extending up and down the sides, filled with men of all ages, some with wigs, some with powdered hair, some with unpowdered hair, all dressed in small-clothes, breeches, knee-buckles, long stockings, and buckled shoes; coats of blue, gray, and snuff color; venerable men like Franklin and Stephen Hopkins, men in the full vigor of middle life, like Samuel Adams and Roger Sherman, young men in the ardor and flush of lusty patriotism, like Thomas Jefferson, and Francis Hopkinson, and Robert Livingston, and John Hancock--the younger evidently predominating, alike in numbers and activity. The faces were solemn and grave, no doubt, though Dr. Franklin would have his genial joke about the necessity of their all hanging together, lest they should all hang, separately; deep silence prevailed, followed now and then by an excited stir among the benches.

[Sidenote: President Hancock.]

[Sidenote: The Continental Army.]

Then there was the President's table, a little aside from one end of the hall, with papers strewed over it, and by its side President Hancock, attired with dainty and aristocratic precision, his sword by his side, his wig perfectly dressed, his face earnest yet serene and bright. We can fancy, too, the commotion which arose, the leaning forward, the holding of the breath, then the dead silence, when the committee appointed to draw the Declaration advanced to the President's table. It was the moment of crossing the Rubicon. It was the burning of the ships behind them. From this moment there was to be no possibility of retreating. Independence declared, it still remained to conquer it. British troops burdened the soil; shiploads of them were at that moment crossing the Atlantic. The Continental army was but an armed rabble, with patriotism for their strongest weapon. And would the colonies, one and all, adhere, and "hang together"; or would the Declaration strike terror to timid hearts, and destroy its purpose by its very audacity?

[Sidenote: Thomas Jefferson.]

[Sidenote: Franklin.]

All this must have passed through the mind of each deputy as the illustrious committee of five stood before Hancock, at the President's desk. Foremost among them was Thomas Jefferson, the tallest, youngest, and ablest of the five; their chairman, and the author of the great document which he held in his hand. In his thirty-fourth year, Jefferson was then a fine specimen of the Virginian gentry, his tall form clad loosely in the small-clothes of the period, his bright red hair, unpowdered, gathered carelessly behind with a ribbon, his light blue eyes clear and calm, and his lips parted in a placid and confident smile. Next to him, side by side, stood Franklin and John Adams, sons of Massachusetts--the one risen from the printer's case, the other a

prosperous country lawyer, descended from the good Puritan stock of John Alden. Franklin was already beyond three score and ten; his gray hair hung in long locks to his shoulders; his snuff-colored coat reached to his knees; his large, pleasant face must have encouraged the others on that fateful day, so did it shine with trust in the cause and confidence in its success.

[Sidenote: Roger Sherman.]

Pugnacity and determination were revealed in the short thick-set figure of John Adams; the round bald head, the firm mouth, the set eyes of the Braintree patriot, gave the idea that he was grimly and terribly in earnest. Square-headed old Roger Sherman was another figure well worth studying; a man, like the others, with the air of being rather resolved on, than resigned to, the step which was being made, and seriously prepared to take all consequences. And, to complete the group, there was the polished and scholarly Livingston of New York, almost a fop in dress and toilet, a model of elegance and fine courtesy, who, though serving as one of the committee, was absent when the Declaration was signed. The signing did not take place for several weeks after its adoption.

[Sidenote: The Declaration proclaimed.]

[Sidenote: British exasperation.]

Jefferson read the Declaration to the Congress, and it was accepted, with a few alterations, by the votes of the deputies of twelve of the colonies. New York alone abstained from voting. The bell of the State House rang out the tidings; the Declaration was read to a surging, excited crowd in the square; it was sent off in all directions by fleet messengers, and read at the head of each brigade of the Continental army; and the colonies now knew that the fight was to go on to the bitter end. Thenceforth there was no thought of patching a compromise with the mother country, or of returning to the old allegiance to the British crown. On the side of England, national pride and royal obstinacy urged forward every preparation to continue the struggle; and the voices of Chatham, Burke, and Fox were drowned amid the storm of exasperation which the Declaration had caused. A price was set upon the heads of Hancock and Samuel Adams, and Hessians were purchased to fill the insufficient corps of the red-coats.

[Sidenote: Consequences of the Declaration.]

Now the colonies were the United States, with a flag common to all, the symbol of a united nationality. Seldom has a written paper so moved the world. In our own history, the only document that can compare with it, in its momentous results, was the emancipation charter of Abraham Lincoln. Both required a courage that was nothing less than heroic: but the proclaimers of the Declaration of Independence risked life, family, property; engaged in an irreconcilable conflict against enormous odds; defied the greatest naval power in the world, and the richest nation, in pursuit, not of the material gain to be derived from the abrogation of a tax, but of national liberties which they were determined to secure at every hazard. The Declaration, indeed, was needed to combine the action of the patriots, and to give them a definite and certain purpose. It was the bond that pledged them to harmony, and which confined them to the alternative of "liberty or death."

VI.

SOCIETY IN 1776.

[Sidenote: American Society.]

Despite the numerous biographies, histories, narratives, diaries, and volumes of correspondence concerning the revolutionary epoch, which fill many shelves of our larger libraries, it is not easy to reproduce in imagination the state of American society as it was a hundred years ago. In order to do so we must exclude from the mind many objects and ideas which have been familiar to us all our lives. We must subtract all of material improvements, of changes in the method of doing things, of new directions and wide divergencies in the current of thought and knowledge that have come about in the interval. We must strip the modern home, for instance, of appliances without which it is difficult to conjure up a picture of comfort, much less of luxury. We must forget railways, and the telegraph, and every other use of that still mysterious agent, electricity. We must put out of our minds all notion of great cities, of long lines of elegant shops, blocks of noble residences, spacious parks adorned by every refinement of the gardening art, public buildings capped with stately dome and graceful turret and sculptured front; all notion of the later growth of recreation, the theatre and the concert hall, the lecture platform, the brilliant holiday festival, the sea excursion, the gay and attractive summer resort with its big hotels and its countless luxuries. We must return in imagination, in short, to a social condition but few remnants of which are still to be found in remote corners of the country; the relics of which still visible to the eye are rare and precious, and dwindling away day by day; and the life and spirit of which have ceased with the broadened, gift-laden civilization which has replaced the old primitive simplicity, and made a powerful, teeming, and restless nation out of scattered villages and colonies struggling to exist.

[Sidenote: Old-time Mansions.]

Still, there was a very distinct advance in culture, elegance, comfort, and luxury, beyond the condition of the colonies in the previous century. Those who remember the stately Hancock House, on the top of Beacon Hill in Boston, and compare its exterior and interior with still extant edifices which were residences of the wealthier colonists of two hundred years ago, may gather some idea of the far more lavish adornment and elegance of the period in which Hancock lived. We may well believe that when Washington drove through the streets of Philadelphia in a state coach, "of which the body was in the shape of a hemisphere, cream-colored, bordered with flowers round the panels, and ornamented with figures representing cupids, and supporting festoons," he presented a very different appearance from that of the early Puritan governors and Virginian squires; and could we have peeped into the square, solid drawing-room in which, as President, he held his receptions, aided by the matronly grace and dignity of Mrs. Washington, the scene would be far gayer and more imposing than William Penn's house would have displayed, or the company of the richest Dutch "patroon" of New York could have presented in the seventeenth century.

[Sidenote: Old Furniture.]

Yet, had we gone over the mansion, in how many things would we, used to the minute refinements of this later age, have judged it wanting! Instead of gas, there would be candles, and not of the best quality, everywhere. Instead of stoves and furnaces with coal, we should have been fain to comfort ourselves with the cheerful blaze and genial glow, but scant and capricious warmth, of the wood logs, burning in the big open fireplaces. Lace curtains and moquette carpets would be nowhere apparent. The furniture, though here and there richly carved and bountifully upholstered, would be wanting in variety and the luxurious ease of that which we now enjoy.

[Sidenote: The Tables of 1776.]

At table we should have missed the thousand refinements and inventions of French and native cooking which now lend variety to our sustenance. The food would have been substantial and heavy and little various; the English simplicity, probably, of barons of beef and shoulders of mutton, and cold bread, and big plum puddings, with a relish of fruits. Were we in fancy to journey from New York to Philadelphia or Boston, we should be forced to rumble slowly over bad roads, through interminable forests and by desert sea-coasts, in heavy and rudely jolting vehicles, and be several days upon the trip.

[Sidenote: Travelling in the Olden Time.]

[Sidenote: The Wealthier Classes.]

It is a striking fact that people in the days of Washington travelled not a whit more rapidly than people in the days of Moses or of Homer. The chariot-rider of the Olympic games attained a speed which was, perhaps, never equalled in Europe or America until the first railway-train sped between Liverpool and Manchester, in 1830. In 1776, the Americans were still mainly confined to the original occupations of the early colonists, farming, trade, hunting, and fishing. Manufactories there were not as yet; Lawrence and Lowell. Pittsburg, and the great industrial New York towns, were still in the womb of the future. In almost every household throughout the land the old-fashioned spinning-wheel was humming under the pressure of matronly and maidenly feet, by which the homespun garments of the time were made. While the less well-to-do and laboring classes were content with clothing spun and knitted at their own firesides, the wealthier people arrayed themselves with far more ostentation than they do at this day. Silks and satins came hither by ship-loads from France to supply the luxury of costume which was then in vogue. The difference between the costumes of that day and of this was especially marked in the attire of gentlemen. Now there is much greater plainness and uniformity. When Washington held his levees, he was generally dressed "in black velvet, with white or pearl-colored waistcoat, yellow gloves, and silver knee and shoe-buckles." "His hair was powdered and gathered in a silk bag behind. He carried a cocked hat in his hand, and wore a long sword with a scabbard of polished white leather." The display of dress was not less marked in other officials, and in men of high social rank. The judges of the Supreme Court wore scarlet robes faced with velvet. "If a gentleman went abroad, he appeared in his wig, white stock, white satin embroidered vest, black satin small-clothes, with white silk stockings, and a fine broadcloth or velvet coat; if at home, a velvet cap, sometimes with a fine linen one under it, took the place of the wig; while a gown, frequently of colored damask lined with silk, was substituted for the coat, and the feet were

covered with leather slippers of some fancy color." All men shaved their beards clean; a man who appeared in the streets wearing hair on any part of his face was stared at, and very likely laughed at.

[Sidenote: Old-time Attire.]

[Sidenote: Wigs and Queues.]

All the great gentlemen wore wigs; most of the country farmers contented themselves with tying their hair in a queue behind, sprinkling it with powder when they went to church on a Sunday. As for the ladies, those in the best society were even more elaborate in their toilets than those of to-day. On the dressing of the hair, especially, much time and money were spent. It was raised high upon the head and powdered thick; "the hair dressers," says Higginson, "were kept so busy on the day of any fashionable entertainment, that ladies sometimes had to employ their services at four or five in the morning, and had to sit upright all the rest of the day, in order to avoid disturbing the head-dress."

[Sidenote: Amusements.]

Although our ancestors did not possess the variety of amusements which now exists, their life was far from a humdrum one. Theatres were tabooed, but were beginning to hold their ground here and there, though not, we may be sure, in New England. There were, however, private theatricals and charades, which became at one period very much in vogue in the aristocratic houses of New York and Philadelphia. Concerts were often held, and in the country many old-time English festivals, such as May Day, were kept up. The most frequent and fashionable amusements of that time were balls and parties. We hear of the gentlemen and dames going to "routs" in their sedan chairs, much as they did in the old country: arriving at eight--they kept better hours than our modern fashionable people--they would dance the staid and stately minuet and the gayer contra-dance, to the music mainly of fiddles, till midnight, and then separate, horrified at the lateness of the hour.

[Sidenote: Imitations of the English.]

Indeed, we are able to see in the habits of the American upper classes a distinct imitation of London fashions, despite the quarrel with the British. The whole etiquette of patrician society was based upon that of the English court, just as the law administered in the courts was borrowed from that dispensed at Westminster. It is interesting to note that "gentlemen took snuff in those days almost universally: and a great deal of expense and variety were often lavished upon a snuff-box. To take snuff with one another was as much a matter of courtesy as the lifting of the hat."

[Sidenote: Wine and Profanity.]

The days of prevalent cigar-smoking and tobacco-chewing had not come. The use of wine and ardent spirits was regarded with less reprobation in the old society than in the new; profanity, too, was indulged in much more freely by men of standing and moral profession than now. Thus we can recognize, in these and in many other things, a progress in morals, and in greater refinement both of thought, manners, and language, as well as in the material enginery of civilization.

VII.

THE REVOLUTION.

[Sidenote: Washington as Commander-in-chief.]

George Washington had been assigned to the command-in-chief of the colonial troops, just before the Battle of Bunker Hill. Thus, at the very start, wisdom ruled the counsels and Providence guided the action of our forefathers. The military abilities and lofty patriotism of Washington could scarcely have been foreseen at the first in all their breadth and scope; yet he was already known as a soldier of tried courage and of prudent conduct, and as a Virginia gentleman of conspicuous social and private virtues.

[Sidenote: Continental Generals.]

Washington assumed the chief direction of the Continental forces, under the famous old elm which still stands, but a few steps from Harvard College, in Old Cambridge, on the third day of July, 1775. At the same time of his appointment, four major-generals--Artemus Ward, Israel Putnam, Philip Schuyler, and Charles Lee--were designated. The principal troops of the colonies were at this time gathered in an irregular cordon around Boston. Their position was almost unchanged from that which they had occupied before the Battle of Bunker Hill; for the British were unable to follow up the success which they had achieved on that occasion.

[Sidenote: The Continental Forces.]

The general-in-chief, on inspecting his forces, saw how ill disciplined and ill supplied they were. They had but little clothing, a scant supply of arms, and still less ammunition. Washington's first task was by no means the least difficult of those which lay before him. It was to create an army out of a brave but heterogeneous multitude of patriots. It was to collect arms and supplies; to keep vigilant watch on the British in Boston; to fortify and defend the surrounding circle; and prepare to meet and drive out the pent-up foe.

At last, after preparations extending through nearly eight months, Boston was attacked by batteries from Dorchester Heights, and on the 17th of March, 1776, Howe evacuated the town, and the first decisive struggle of the seven years' contest had been decided in favor of the Americans.

[Sidenote: First Campaign.]

The scene is now transferred further south. Charleston had, it is true, already been attacked, but without favorable results to the English; on the other hand, Arnold and Montgomery had vainly essayed to assail British power in the Canadas. New York was the objective point of those who had now come to be regarded as the invaders of our soil. Its splendid harbor and its central position afforded a good standpoint. The concentration of the troops of Howe, which had evacuated Boston, the war ships commanded by his brother, Lord Howe, and the forces under Clinton, which had been occupied in futile operations in the South, enabled the British to force Washington out of New York, and to occupy it

themselves.

[Sidenote: Numerical Force of the Contestants.]

The whole British force engaged in this enterprise was scarcely less than twenty-five thousand men; the American force did not exceed twelve thousand; and the contrast in discipline and equipment still further increased this inequality of strength. Then came the retreat across New Jersey, succeeded by one of the most brilliant strokes of the war. This was the midnight and midwinter crossing of the Delaware by the American general and his troops, the forced march upon Trenton through the snow and cold, and the surprise and utter defeat of the Hessians at that place on Christmas morning.

[Sidenote: Valley Forge.]

But the colonists, though waxing in strength, were not yet able to cope in a prolonged and active campaign with the royal army. Philadelphia, like New York, had to be given up. The terrible winter months spent at Valley Forge formed one of the saddest and most heroic romances of the Revolution. The army lived in huts, which, as Lafayette exclaimed, "were no gayer than dungeons." Bread and clothing were sadly wanting. The cold was intense, and almost unrelenting. The Pilgrims during their first winter at Plymouth were scarcely more comfortless.

[Sidenote: Bennington.]

It was early in the following year (1777) that General Burgoyne made an offensive movement southward from Canada, by way of Lake Champlain and Fort Ticonderoga. A portion of his troops were sent to Bennington to capture some stores collected there by the Vermont patriots. A vigorous defence of these stores by the intrepid Stark resulted in the repulse, first of the British, then of the Hessian troops. The next scene in the drama was what may be called the second decisive action of the war. Burgoyne, with his whole force of five thousand men, encamped at Saratoga. There he was confronted by General Horatio Gates, who engaged him in two battles, which, however uncertain their immediate issue, were followed by a retreat on Burgoyne's part. The Americans succeeded in turning his flank, and hemming him in; and then came the surrender of Burgoyne and his entire force.

[Sidenote: Surrender of Burgoyne.]

The consequences of this event were of far greater moment than the elimination from the contest of an able British general and five thousand well drilled British and mercenary soldiers. It silenced the complaints which were growing loud against the inactivity of Washington. It once more harmonized the colonial counsels, which were becoming seriously discordant. It inspired new effort throughout the colonies. And it decided France to make open cause with the struggling patriots. To the masterly diplomacy of Franklin we owe it that the great European rival of England threw the weight of her sympathy and material assistance on our side.

[Sidenote: Charleston Taken.]

[Sidenote: Capture of Stony Point.]

From the moment of Burgoyne's surrender, the tide of the war was

fitful, but on the whole, towards American success. There were still vicissitudes, now and then an apparent back-sliding; Charleston was taken by Clinton; massacres by Indians took place in Pennsylvania; the progress of the cause at times seemed grievously slow. On the other hand, "mad" Anthony Wayne assaulted and took Stony Point, on the Hudson; Paul Jones made vigorous havoc with the British war-ships, conquering the Serapis and carried terror to the English by approaching close to their coast with his doughty Bonhomme Richard; Marion and Sumter kept up constant hostilities with the British in South Carolina; and the vexatious character of the war was evidently wearying the patience, and wearing upon the determination, of the royal government.

[Sidenote: Surrender of Cornwallis.]

The final scene of the war, at least that which most obtrusively stands forth in its panorama, was the siege and capture of Yorktown, in Virginia, and the surrender of General Lord Cornwallis with seven thousand troops. On this occasion the Americans had the aid of a corps of French troops under Count Rochambeau, while the French Admiral de Grasse guarded York River. The siege was so vigorous that in ten days Lord Cornwallis found himself unable to hold the town. But for a propitious rain-storm, he might yet have saved his army, and thus protracted the war. His attempt to leave Yorktown under cover of night was, however, frustrated by the outburst of a tempest; and he was forced to send word to Washington that he would surrender.

[Sidenote: Peace.]

This he did, with all the customary formalities of war, on the 19th of October, 1781. By this act seven thousand British troops, the largest force left on American soil, were withdrawn from the conflict. It was the death-blow to British hopes. The war dragged on, however, for two years more. The royalist troops held New York, Charleston, and Savannah, but did not venture upon aggressive projects. At last, a treaty was made at Paris, on the 3d of September, 1783, by the conditions of which Great Britain grudgingly acknowledged the independence of the United States of America.

[Sidenote: The Revolutionary Heroes.]

There would be no justice in presenting even an outline of the American Revolution, without referring to its triumphs of statesmanship and diplomacy, as well as its triumphs of military achievement. Washington, Greene, Stark, Putnam, Wayne, Lafayette, De Kalb, Steuben, Schuyler, and their fellow-soldiers, performed a great part, and that which was the most brilliant and conspicuous, in accomplishing our liberties. But in the Congress were patriots quite as devoted, and not less efficient; while Franklin, during his sojourn abroad, exercised with great skill the delicate and subtle generalship of diplomacy. It would have been easy for the statesmen of the Revolution to render all of Washington's efforts vain and futile. The triumph of unworthy ambitions in the colonial counsels might well have brought wreck and ruin upon the cause.

[Sidenote: Revolutionary Statesmanship.]

Had the revolutionary statesmen lacked capacity or courage, they would have loaded the army with a burden which it probably could not have supported. The marvel of the period was the almost undisturbed unity, readiness, and practical energy of every branch of the public service;

the devotion of each one in his own sphere to the common end; the general co-operation in the means by which that end was to be reached; the remarkable rarity of treason, even of self-seeking; the steadfast exercise, amid the comfortlessness of camps and the temptations of the council-hall of the highest and worthiest public virtues.

VIII.

THE CONFEDERATION AND CONSTITUTION.

[Sidenote: The Confederation.]

[Sidenote: Bond of the States.]

The Confederation was designed as a temporary civil machine, with which to conduct a war common to the colonies. The Constitution was the later and permanent bond, combining the States under a single government. Without the confederation, there would have been chaos in the revolution; without the constitution, there would have remained the weakness arising from the division and rivalry of States. It is most interesting to observe the gradual manner in which our civil government crystallized out of the original elements offered by the colonies; and it is wonderful to see with what wise deliberation and patriotic earnestness States differing so widely in manners, in religion, in colonial system, and even in blood and race, were brought together in harmonious coalition, bound with a bond which the greatest civil war of modern times failed to sever, and which it seems only to have confirmed and strengthened.

[Sidenote: Early Confederations.]

There were, indeed, local confederations before those which, in 1774, enabled a congress to meet at Philadelphia, and which, in 1777, established articles for a more regular, though still a temporary, civil enginery with which to bring the war to a successful conclusion. More than a century before the first meeting of the Continental Congress, the idea of a confederation had been agitated among the New England colonies. In 1643 a confederation of those colonies was agreed upon at Boston, with twelve organic articles, for the common protection and defence. Here was the very beginning of American unions; and in its features may be discovered traces of the democratic principles of the Pilgrims.

[Sidenote: Declaration of Rights.]

A general congress of all the colonies met at New York in 1690, for purposes of conference, when the Stamp Act was promulgated. Massachusetts invited the colonies to meet in a general congress, which assembled at New York in 1765, adopted a declaration of rights, asserted the sole right of taxation to rest in the colonies, and passed other important resolutions. Eleven years before this, commissioners from nearly all of the colonies had met at Albany, and before this body Benjamin Franklin submitted his famous "project of union." Other conferences and congresses were held between 1765 and 1774; but it was early in September of the latter year that the first formal Continental Congress met, at Philadelphia, mainly to concert measures for resisting

the arbitrary acts of the mother country. The rules which guided its deliberations were few and simple; but even so early we find Patrick Henry arguing upon the great question of the rights of the States, which has been a bone of contention in this country from that time to this.

[Sidenote: Articles of Confederation Adopted.]

The first formal articles of confederation, after several ineffectual attempts, were adopted on the 15th of November, 1777, when the States were in the midst of the war of independence; but they were not formally ratified by all of the colonies until 1781, when Maryland at last agreed to them. These articles contained the germs of nationality, the crude material out of which the much broader and wiser constitution was afterwards framed. The second article provided for the complete "sovereignty, independence, and freedom," of the several States, in all powers not expressly delegated to Congress.

[Sidenote: Restrictions on the States.]

It was declared that the confederation was a mutual league for protection and defence; that each State should deliver fugitives from justice to the others, and accord full faith to the judicial records of the others; that each State should have the right to recall its delegates, and that no State should be represented in Congress by less than two nor more than seven delegates; that no State should send embassies to foreign powers, confer titles of nobility, lay imports inconsistent with treaties of the United States, keep vessels of war or military forces in time of peace without the consent of Congress, a certain quota of militia excepted, or engage in war except in certain specified exigencies.

These, with many minor regulations, were the organic rules under which our civil government was carried on from 1777 to 1788, when the constitution came into force. The confederation was supplied with an executive chosen by Congress, comprising secretaries of foreign affairs, war, and finance. It was evident, however, that this league, while it had well served a temporary purpose, was quite inadequate to the purpose of a permanent bond of union. "We are one nation to-day," said Washington, "and thirteen to-morrow; who will treat with us on these terms?"

[Sidenote: Steps towards a Constitution.]

The first formal step towards establishing a constitution was the meeting, in the autumn of 1786, of commissioners from Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey, at Annapolis. They conferred together, and reported to Congress a recommendation that a body, comprising delegates from all the States, and empowered to frame an organic instrument, should be convened early in the following year. Congress adopted the scheme, and the constituent convention was called.

[Sidenote: The Constituent Convention.]

This famous assembly met at Philadelphia in May, 1787, and its deliberations continued until the middle of September. Among its members were many of the most eminent statesmen and soldiers of the Revolutionary period.

[Sidenote: Members of the Convention.]

George Washington, pre-eminent in war, and to be still pre-eminent in times of peace, presided over the convention, and was one of the guiding spirits of its labors. Of the thirty-eight delegates who signed the constitution, six--Roger Sherman, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Morris, James Wilson, and George Clymer--had previously signed the Declaration of Independence. It was in the constitutional convention that Alexander Hamilton's genius for statesmanship became conspicuous to the whole nation; while Madison, the future President, achieved therein a large reputation.

[Sidenote: The Non-signers.]

Among others, the two Pinckneys from South Carolina, John Dickinson, Jonathan Dayton, Rufus King, Gouverneur Morris, Jared Ingersoll, and John Rutledge, were eminent in various spheres of public life. Some of the members of the convention refused to, or for some reason did not, sign the constitution after it was completed and drafted. These were Elbridge Gerry and Caleb Strong of Massachusetts, Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut, John Lansing and Robert Yates of New York, William C. Houston of New Jersey, Luther Martin and John Francis Mercer of Maryland, George Mason, James McClung, Edmund Randolph, and George Wythe of Virginia, William R. Davis of North Carolina, William Houston and William Pierce of Georgia.

[Sidenote: Issues in the Convention.]

The discussions on the proposed constitution were long, earnest, sometimes heated, and revealed the presence of widely divergent opinions. Four plans, or projects, were submitted severally by Edmund Randolph, William Paterson, Charles Pinckney, and Alexander Hamilton, differing widely in the political systems recommended. Throughout, the struggle was between those who desired to preserve a large degree of independence to the States, and those who wished to make a strong national government; and the crisis of the struggle came upon the question whether the States should have equal votes in the Senate, or should be represented in that body, as in the House of Representatives, according to population.

This was warmly debated for several days, the venerable Roger Sherman and Hamilton sustaining the principle of State equality, and Madison and Rufus King as vigorously opposing it. At last the former party prevailed, after a report in favor of State equality in the Senate said to have been moved in committee by Dr. Franklin. Other phases of the same contention occurred in the discussion of the article specially defining the powers of Congress. It was the object of the "States' rights" party to limit these as much as possible, and of the nationalist party to give them a broad range.

[Sidenote: The Constitution a Compromise.]

[Sidenote: Powers of Congress.]

Thus, after labors extending through nearly four months, the constitution issued from the hands of its framers with the marks of compromise and concession on almost every section. On the one hand, the States were to vote as equals in the second and upper branch of Congress, and reserved to themselves local self-government and all powers not expressly set forth in the instrument. On the other, Congress

was clothed with authority to lay uniform taxes and imposts, to provide for the common defence, to borrow money on the credit of the nation, to regulate foreign commerce, to make naturalization and bankruptcy laws, to coin money, to establish post-offices and roads, to declare war and raise armies and a navy, to constitute courts, to organize and call out the militia, and to "execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrection, and repel invasions."

Animated, too, by the true republican spirit, the framers of the constitution inserted in it that no bill of attainder or _ex-post-facto_ law should be passed; that the writ of _habeas corpus_ should only be suspended in cases of extreme necessity; and that no title of nobility should either be granted by the government or accepted by a citizen of the United States.

[Sidenote: Ratification of the Constitution.]

As soon as the constitution was promulgated, a warm contest arose in all the States over its ratification. The instrument, upon being ratified by nine States, was to become the organic law of the land. Although it was strenuously opposed by many eminent men, among them Patrick Henry, a sufficient number of States assented in time to bring the constitution into operation the year after its submission to the people.

[Sidenote: "The Federalist."]

Although neither Hamilton nor Madison was entirely satisfied with the work of the convention, both sank their scruples in a loftier spirit of patriotism; and their defence of the constitution, in conjunction with John Jay in the _Federalist_, is likely to be read as long as the constitution lasts. How wisely the framers labored, and the great fruits of their labor, are far more clearly to be seen now that the great instrument has been so long and so severely tried, than was possible in their own generation. The constitution has stood well the strain of a progress far more rapid, and needs far more vast and pressing, than they could have foreseen. It protects the liberties of a nation many fold more extended and numerous than they could have anticipated would exist within the brief space of a century; nor does the promise of its endurance yet grow feeble.

IX.

WASHINGTON'S PRESIDENCY.

"To have framed a constitution was showing only, without realizing, the general happiness. This great work remained to be done; and America, steadfast in her preference, with one will summoned her beloved Washington, unpractised as he was in the duties of civil administration, to execute this last act in the completion of the national felicity." Thus spoke Gen. Henry Lee, the funeral orator of Washington, and the father of a later and more famous Lee, who fought to destroy the national felicity of which his father spoke.

[Sidenote: Test of the Constitution.]

The test of the constitution had come; and it was indeed an experiment well calculated to arouse the liveliest anxieties of the infant nation. The passions of party ran yet more high in those days than in our own. Views the most antagonistic existed already, regarding the interrelation, as well as the probable success, of the organic instrument. But upon one point: all factions, however opposed, were agreed. The only possible first President of the United States was George Washington.

[Sidenote: Election of Washington as President.]

The new nation proceeded, in the autumn of 1788, to the choice of an executive. There being no contest as to the chief office, the struggle turned on the Vice-Presidency; but even in this case one candidate was conspicuous far above the others. If Virginia had the President it was right that Massachusetts should have the Vice-President; and as Washington was the pre-eminent Virginian, so John Adams was, beyond all dispute, the foremost New Englander. Ten States voted in the election, casting sixty-nine electoral ballots. Washington received the whole sixty-nine; and our government began with the happy augury of an unanimous choice for its head. For Vice-President, John Adams received thirty-four votes; John Jay nine; R.H. Harrison six; John Rutledge six; John Hancock four; and George Clinton three.

[Sidenote: Washington takes the Oath of Office.]

It was on the last day of April, 1789, that President Washington took the oath of office at New York, and in person delivered his inaugural address in the presence of the two branches of Congress. This masterly paper expressed the reluctance with which Washington had abandoned a retreat which he had chosen "as the asylum of my declining years"; his willingness to yield the prospect of repose to the call of country and duty; his faith in the constitution and in the future of the nation; and his devout reliance, in the burden he was taking upon himself, on "the benign Parent of the human race."

[Sidenote: The First Cabinet.]

A very able cabinet surrounded and strengthened the hands of our first President. Thomas Jefferson, who had written the Declaration of Independence, had been Governor of Virginia, and was the successor of Franklin at the Court of France, was made Secretary of State. At the head of the Treasury--then, as now, the most important branch of the executive--was placed the still young but conspicuously able Alexander Hamilton; the most forcible of revolutionary pamphleteers, the most efficient of staff-officers, and already an authority on finance. Major-General Henry Knox, the chief of the continental artillery service, who had presided over the war department during the confederation, became Secretary of War. Samuel Osgood of Massachusetts, experienced in civil affairs and a judicious counsellor, was assigned to the General Post-Office; and Edmund Randolph, who had recanted his hostility to the constitution, and was now a close ally of Jefferson, was appointed the first Attorney-General of the United States.

[Sidenote: Washington's Difficulties.]

[Sidenote: Antagonism of Parties.]

Many difficulties surrounded the first President and his advisers at the

outset. The nation was deeply in debt, and its currency was a paper one. The people, oppressed for so many years by the burdens of an unequal war, were irritated by the necessarily heavy taxes. The Indians on the borders of the settled States were troublesome. And, to add to the embarrassments of our statesmen, the relations of the United States with the European powers were strained, and at times alarming. The two parties which had struggled to fashion the constitution continued to agitate the country in a more bitter rivalry than has been seen since, with the exception of the party excitement of the period just before the Rebellion. Their antagonism became more pronounced during Washington's presidency, by reason of the great European war then going on, which divided the sympathies of our people and politicians between France and England.

[Sidenote: The Republicans.]

On the one hand, the party which called itself "Republican," and at the head of which were Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Adams, James Madison, Edmund Randolph, and Patrick Henry, were zealous friends of the French Revolution. They regarded that great convulsion as a desperate attempt on the part of our recent allies to found a republic like that of the United States; and they were in favor of extending the French our aid and sympathy, while the more eager went so far as to advocate our active participation in the war on behalf of France. On the other hand, the "Federalists," chief among whom were Washington, John Adams, Hamilton, and Jay, deplored the excesses of the French Revolutionists; thought their example rather to be avoided than emulated; and, with a still lingering affection for England despite her tyrannies, leaned to her side in the conflict which was so fiercely raging.

[Sidenote: State Rights and a Central Government.]

The cabinet itself was divided between these two parties. Jefferson, the "Republican" leader, was Secretary of State; Hamilton, the "Federalist" leader, was at the head of the Treasury. On other than foreign subjects the antagonism of the two parties was distinctly defined. The Republicans were the stout defenders of what they called the rights of the States. The Federalists wished to make the central government as strong as possible. The Republicans favored strict economy, a democratic simplicity of manners and costumes, and opposed official ceremony and formality. The Federalists were the aristocratic party, elegant and patrician in their tastes, sticklers for etiquette and state. Hamilton and Washington were freely charged by the Republicans with being monarchists at heart.

[Sidenote: Washington's State.]

Political capital was made of the President's ostentatious style of living, of his cream-colored coach and six, and liveried lackeys, his velvet and gold apparel, his almost royal levees, and his well known desire that the title of "High Mightiness" should be conferred upon him. He was accused of imitating the state of the monarchs of the old world, and of wishing to gather a brilliant, ceremonious, and exclusive court about him. Thus before he had completed his two terms of office, Washington found himself confronted and opposed by a powerful democratic party. John Adams, his successor in policy as well as in office, was chosen President by only one majority in the electoral college; and when his term expired, the Republicans succeeded in placing Jefferson in the executive chair, and in holding power for a quarter of a century.

[Sidenote: Washington's Policy.]

Washington's administration, however, proved his capacity for statesmanship as well as for war, his wisdom and force of character, and his pure and lofty devotion to the interests of the whole country. His policy was at once vigorous and moderate. At first he preserved an almost impartial bearing towards the two parties, as indicated by his selection of their several chiefs for the highest seats in his cabinet. Towards the close of his term, however, the government became more distinctly Federalist. Hamilton's influence became paramount; and Jefferson retired from office to put himself at the head of a very earnest and aggressive opposition.

[Sidenote: Relations with Foreign Powers.]

The results of Washington's policy may be recognized, at this distance of time, as having been in the highest degree beneficial to the welfare of the young nation. He placed its finances on a sound basis. He maintained order, and put a term to the aggressions of the Indians. He compelled Algiers to prevent her pirates from preying upon our commerce. He made friendly treaties with England and Spain. With the French question he dealt in a manner most creditable to his wisdom, and in the only manner by which the United States could escape being involved once more in war. He issued a proclamation of absolute neutrality; and he saw that it was adhered to in the spirit and in the letter. Towards the close of his presidency, the arbitrary conduct of France towards this country was such that a conflict became imminent. Even an invasion by the French was threatened. This danger continued into the period of John Adams' term; but the firm and vigorous policy of Washington and his successor averted it, while the European wars in which Napoleon soon became involved diverted the attention of France elsewhere.

[Sidenote: States Added to the Union.]

[Sidenote: General Results of Washington's Administration.]

Three States were added to the Union of thirteen during Washington's tenure of office. Vermont came within the circle in 1791; Kentucky followed in the next year; and her neighbor, Tennessee, became a state in 1796. What a contrast in national expenditure there was between Washington's administration and those of modern times may be judged when it is stated that the average annual expense of the government in Washington's time was something less than two millions of dollars. The population, according to the first census taken in 1790 was a little less than four millions. Now we number more than fifty millions. It may be said, generally, of Washington's presidency, that it gave the new government a good start on its career of growth, order, and prosperity. By his statesmanship, which was pure, solid, and vigorous, rather than brilliant, peace was preserved at home and abroad; and the result was that that general happiness which Henry Lee spoke of as promised only by the constitution had already at least begun to be realized.

THE WAR OF 1812.

[Sidenote: The Period of Political Settlement.]

The period between the inauguration of Washington and the declaration of war against Great Britain in 1812 may be regarded as the era of formation and political settlement in the history of the republic.

It must not be forgotten that, at first, many of the wisest American statesmen looked upon Republicanism as an experiment, and did not place implicit faith in its success. The accession of Jefferson to the presidency, however, and the events of his administration, gave the Republican idea full scope and trial. The most philosophical and studious of the statesmen of that day, Jefferson had the courage to test the theories for which he had contended against the Federalism of Washington, Adams, and Hamilton, by a vigorous practical policy.

[Sidenote: Jefferson's Ideas.]

Jefferson was heartily supported in this by the great mass of the nation; and it was he who, thus sustained, established those general principles of policy and government which became final, and have prevailed ever since. That suffrage is a right and not a privilege, that we should make large annexations of territory, and become the controlling power of the continent; and that a rigid economy should be practised, leaving the States the largest scope of local self-government: these were cardinal articles in the Jeffersonian creed. For twenty-four years Jefferson himself, and Madison and Monroe, his fellow-Virginians and his earnest political disciples, presided without interruption over the destinies of the country.

[Sidenote: Condition of the Union in 1812.]

The condition of the United States in the year 1812 presented a striking and most favorable contrast to that which they had exhibited at Washington's accession. The population had increased from four to about seven and a half millions. The sixteen States over which Washington presided had swelled to eighteen. Ohio and Louisiana had been admitted to the circle. But this was by no means the limit to territorial acquisition. It was President Jefferson who added to the domain of the Union that vast and fertile tract which is even now in rapid process of settlement, and which was known as the Louisiana purchase. This tract reached from the banks of the Mississippi to the base of the Rocky Mountains. It embraced nearly a million square miles, or more than the whole of the area of the Union as it then was; and fifteen millions of dollars were paid to France in exchange for it. A great invention had been put into practical operation during Jefferson's term. This was the steamboat. Robert Fulton put the _Clermont_ upon the Hudson in 1807; and thenceforth navigation by steam was to play a great part in the commerce and economical progress of the land.

[Sidenote: Inventions.]

[Sidenote: Causes of the War.]

President Madison, who assumed the executive chair in 1809, inherited a quarrel with Great Britain from his predecessor, which soon ripened into war. The great contest which raged between France and Great Britain early in the century could not but affect the rest of the civilized world. American commerce had already grown into importance, and was now

seriously crippled by the arbitrary course respecting trade adopted by both of the belligerents. Each power forbade neutral nations to trade with its foe. But while Napoleon followed the example of Pitt in making a decree to this effect, the bearing of Great Britain towards this country, in respect to the prohibition of trade, was far more arrogant and vexatious than that of France. American ships were captured on the high seas by British men-of-war, carried into port, adjudged, and confiscated.

[Sidenote: The Right of Search.]

A still more serious assault upon our national honor was made by the British government. It claimed the right to search American vessels for British seamen, and proceeded to execute it. Thus sailors were taken from our ships by the hundred; and, on one occasion, an American ship, the Chesapeake, was fired upon and forcibly boarded by a British man-of-war, within sight of the Virginia coast. For a while retaliation was attempted in the shape of an embargo upon American vessels; but this was soon found to tend to the utter extinction of our commerce, and the embargo was abandoned. Remonstrance with Great Britain proved to be of no avail. The English ministry at that time was a strict Tory one, and far from friendly in disposition toward the United States. Despite the protests of our envoy, the practice of search was vigorously pursued.

[Sidenote: War Declared.]

This was the state of affairs when James Madison became President. The party represented by him was now clamorous for war, while the old Federalists, especially those of New England, as earnestly deprecated it. At last it became apparent that war was the only remedy for the outrages committed almost without cessation on our commerce. The President sent a message to Congress expressing this opinion; and on the 18th of June, 1812, war was formally declared against Great Britain. This was evidently in accordance with the will of the nation: but we did not enter upon the conflict without the bitter opposition of the Federalists. A convention of the leading members of that party met at Hartford, held secret sessions, and issued an energetic protest against the war. This aroused a deep sense of hostility in the breasts of the war party; and, ever since, the Hartford Convention has been regarded as at least an injudicious demonstration at a period when war already existed, and when the government needed the support of every patriot to bring it to a successful end.

[Sidenote: Beginning of Hostilities.]

[Sidenote: Naval Victories.]

The Americans began hostilities by making an ineffectual attempt to conquer Canada. Meanwhile the English promptly took up the challenge, sent ships of war loaded with excellent soldiers, many of them veterans of the Napoleonic wars, across the Atlantic, and engaged Tecumseh, and other Indian chiefs inimical to the intruders upon their former hunting-grounds, to aid them in the contest. While Tecumseh, however, was defeated and killed, the successes of the American army were few compared with the brilliant exploits of our naval forces. The War of 1812 proved that the Americans had studied well the British example and system in naval warfare. It was emphatically a naval war, simply because Great Britain could only approach us from the sea. The victories of Hull and Perry showed the greatest maritime power on earth that, though our

navy might be inferior to hers in distant waters, it was more than a match for hers on the Lakes and the American coast. If the _Shannon_ captured the _Chesapeake_, and if gallant David Porter had at last to desert the burning _Essex_, on the other hand the capture of the _Guerriere_ and the surrender of the British squadron on Lake Erie to Perry, more than compensated for our disasters.

[Sidenote: The British take Washington.]

It was the the last year of the war, which continued nearly three years, that the British landed on our southern coast, and, making havoc of villages and plantations as they went, took Washington, and burned the Capitol and the President's house, from which Mr. Madison and his family had happily escaped into Virginia. But the enemy found it impossible to pursue their temporary success to a decisive issue. Both countries were weary of the war, and overtures of peace having been made, four American commissioners--John Quincy Adams, James A. Bayard, Henry Clay, and Jonathan Russell--were sent to Ghent, in Belgium, to meet British commissioners and conclude a treaty. The treaty of Ghent was signed on the 24th of December, 1814; and, singularly enough, while such subjects as the boundary line and the fisheries were discussed, that treaty contained no stipulation in regard to the British claim to the right of search.

[Sidenote: Battle of New Orleans.]

In those days, when there were neither railways, steamships, nor telegraphs, news was long in travelling from one continent to the other. The tidings of the treaty did not reach New Orleans in time to prevent General Andrew Jackson from winning glory by defending that city from behind his cotton-bales. This was one of the most brilliant land-battles of the war, and was fought on the 8th of January, just a fortnight after peace had been formally concluded at Ghent.

[Sidenote: Results of the War.]

The War of 1812, while it left many questions unsettled between the mother and the daughter country, practically put an end to the vexatious disturbance of our commerce by Great Britain. It also tended to give a longer lease of political power to what was then called the Republican party, and prepared the way for the "era of good feeling," over which the amiable though not conspicuously able President Monroe presided. The war also brought certain men prominently before the public eye. Hull, Bainbridge, Porter, Decatur, Rodgers, and Perry, were enshrined among the country's naval heroes. General Harrison, the hero of Tippecanoe, and General Jackson, the hero of New Orleans, later reaped the reward of the Presidency, the indirect result of their military exploits. The gallant Richard M. Johnson afterwards became Vice-President; and it was in the War of 1812 that General Winfield Scott won his first laurels, and that General Zachary Taylor, long afterwards President, gave promise of the military genius which later so much aided in bringing the Mexican War to a speedy and victorious end.

[Sidenote: Growth of the Union.]

The period of the war and of the years immediately succeeding witnessed a very rapid growth of population, and a notable swelling of the tide of emigration westward. In 1816 Indiana came within the circle of States; followed alternately by slave and free states--Mississippi, 1817;

Illinois, 1818; Alabama, 1819; Maine, 1820. and Missouri, 1821. The great highway built between Cumberland and Wheeling was all alive in those days with the wagons and groups of new settlers. A long era of peace was to follow, and to give the country opportunity to increase, to develop its resources, and to make rapid progress in its prosperity and the development of its institutions.

XI.

THE MEXICAN WAR.

[Sidenote: An Era of Peace.]

[Sidenote: Andrew Jackson.]

An interval of over thirty years elapsed between our second war with Great Britain and the war with Mexico. Although this period was one of external, and, excepting the troubles which now and then arose with the Indians, of internal peace, its social and political aspects are very full of interest. Within its limits the first railway and the first telegraph-lines were laid in the United States, and the great Erie Canal was built. After three tranquil presidential terms, presided over by the sensible though not brilliant Monroe, and by the shrewd, scholarly, and positive younger Adams, a man succeeded to the Executive Chair whose course was destined to revolutionize parties, to carry party bitterness to a height of great violence, and to divert the political destinies of the country into new channels. Andrew Jackson was well fitted by his strong will and stubborn courage to do the dangerous work of his time.

[Sidenote: Nullification.]

Various considerations induced the State of South Carolina to defy the Union. The alleged ground of her quarrel was the high rates of the tariff imposed by Congress upon imports. This tariff she resolved to resist; hence a resolution was passed by a convention in South Carolina that after a certain date the tariff should be null and void within her limits. It was further resolved that if the United States attempted to enforce it, South Carolina should secede, and form an independent government. John C. Calhoun was, or was charged with being, the instigator of this movement. It was at once quelled, however, by the prompt action of President Jackson. He sent troops and war-ships to Charleston, under the command of General Scott; and "nullification" was overawed and defeated.

President Jackson also had the nerve to veto the bill creating a national bank; and when, after two terms of service, he retired, he gave up to the rule of his designated successor a nation of fifteen millions of people, solvent, prosperous, and apparently destined to a long career of peace and power. The four years of President Van Buren's term were not notable for great events, and are chiefly interesting as exhibiting the re-formation of parties, in which the lines between the Whigs and the Democrats became more defined and distinct. Van Buren was the leader of the Democrats, but was soon to lose that leadership by reason of his connection with the fast-growing anti-slavery cause. Henry Clay was the Whig chief; and continued to be so, despite the rivalry of Webster, down

to the time of his death. [Sidenote: Causes of the Mexican War.]

[Sidenote: Texas.]

It was during the term of President John Tyler, who succeeded to the chief magistracy after poor worn-out old General Harrison had exercised its functions for one brief month, that the events took their rise which ripened into the War with Mexico. The large territory of Texas, lying upon our extreme southwestern border, between Louisiana and Mexico, had revolted from the latter nation and set up an independent republic of its own. Texas had been largely colonized from the slave States, and General Sam Houston, formerly of Tennessee, was its President.

[Sidenote: Election of Polk.]

The republic sought admission to our Union in 1837, but the application was then refused. Seven years later, Mr. Tyler gave it a more hospitable reception. A treaty was framed, and at first rejected by the United States Senate. At last, in March, 1845, just as Mr. Tyler was retiring from office, a resolution was adopted by both houses of Congress annexing Texas, and this resolution was approved by the outgoing President. The presidential campaign in the autumn of 1844, between Henry Clay as the Whig and James K. Polk as the Democratic candidate, was fought mainly upon the issue of this annexation, and the election of Mr. Polk was looked upon as a confirmation of it by the people.

[Sidenote: Boundary Dispute.]

No sooner had the new President been inaugurated than what the Whig leaders had earnestly predicted came to pass. A dispute arose with Mexico as to the boundary between that country and Texas. Mexico claimed that this boundary was the river Nueces; Texas asserted it to be the Rio Grande. The matter was one of some importance, as the Nueces is a hundred miles northeastward from the Rio Grande, and that much of territory was therefore in dispute. The brief negotiations which ensued with a view to the settlement of this question, proved abortive. President Polk accordingly ordered General Zachary Taylor to occupy the disputed territory with a small body of troops. Taylor concentrated his men at Corpus Christi, near the frontier.

[Sidenote: First Battles.]

The Mexicans were equally prompt, and the first collisions occurred at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, near the Rio Grande. General Taylor repulsed the enemy with little difficulty and but small loss, and, crossing the Rio Grande, advanced upon and captured Matamoras. Thus far the hostilities had proceeded when a formal declaration of war was made against Mexico by the United States. Clay and the Whigs strenuously opposed this action; but the administration party bore down all opposition. Volunteers now flocked, especially from the Southern States, to Taylor's standard; and in a few weeks he found himself at the head of a resolute though not very well disciplined force of nearly eight thousand men. Monterey, a fortified town of considerable importance, was held by about nine thousand Mexican troops. General Taylor's objective point was the City of Mexico.

[Sidenote: Taylor's Campaign.]

After an attack of three days, Monterey fell into his hands. Victory

followed his army everywhere. Santa Anna, a crafty and able man, who had sat in the presidential chair of Mexico, was now in command of the Mexican army, and confronted Taylor at Huena Vista. His gallant attempt to stay the advance of the triumphant Americans, however, failed, for Taylor defeated him in what was perhaps the most brilliantly and hotly contested action of the war. Taylor's force at Buena Vista numbered about six thousand men, the larger part of them being but rudely disciplined soldiers. Santa Anna's command comprised at least twenty thousand Mexicans. It was at Buena Vista that the Lancers, the best body of troops in the Mexican army, were routed by the dashing onset of the American volunteers.

[Sidenote: Victory at Vera Cruz.]

[Sidenote: Scott Enters Mexico.]

General Scott now appeared upon the scene to reap fresh victories, and to lend powerful aid, by his scientific skill and ripe military judgment, in bringing the war to a decisive issue. He was despatched with an army to attack Vera Cruz, the most important port and fort on the Mexican coast. His force numbered between eleven and twelve thousand men, and he was supported by Commodore Matthew Perry, who operated with a fleet in the Gulf. Vera Cruz fell after a vigorous bombardment and a brave defence. The Mexicans could no longer hold the fortress of San Juan D'Ulloa, which was speedily occupied by General Scott. The two victories of Buena Vista and Vera Cruz rendered the cause of the Mexicans hopeless. The fall of the capital was only a question of more or less delay. The resistance of the Mexicans was still obstinate, though always ineffectual. The troops of the United States won in succession the battles of Cerro Gordo, Cherubusco, El Molino del Rey and Chapultepec. Finally, on the 14th of September, 1847, the American army of six thousand, under Winfield Scott, entered the City of Mexico. This was one year and four months after war had been declared by Congress.

Besides these main operations, there were various collateral movements designed to cripple the power and diminish the territory of Mexico. General Kearney, with an independent force of volunteers, had marched into and taken possession of the province of New Mexico; Colonel Doliphan had in like manner occupied Chihuahua; while Colonel Fremont, placing himself at the head of a band of American settlers recruited in the valley of the Sacramento, and supported by Commodore Stockton, had availed himself of the opportunity to hold Upper California for the United States.

[Sidenote: The Treaty of Peace.]

Thus Mexico was subdued and compelled to come to terms, her enemy dictating these from her own capital. Commissioners met at the city of Guadalupe Hidalgo to conclude a treaty of peace. By this instrument Mexico agreed to accept the Rio Grande as the boundary between herself and Texas, adding thereby to the territory of the United States an area of not less than five hundred thousand square miles; to make over New Mexico and Upper California to the United States in consideration of the sum of fifteen millions of dollars; and to guarantee the debts due from Mexico to American citizens. This treaty was duly ratified and exchanged in the spring of 1848--about two years after the beginning of hostilities.

[Sidenote: Political Effect of the War.]

[Sidenote: California.]

The political effect of the Mexican War was to add a large territory and a fast-increasing population to the tier of slave-holding States, and thus to aggrandize the slave-holding oligarchy, as opposed to the party in favor of free soil. On the other hand, the military glory won by General Taylor, and his adoption in the year after the war as the Whig candidate for the Presidency, singularly enough brought into power the party which had persistently opposed both the annexation of Texas, and the war which had been undertaken to complete it. The Mexican War provided the parties with four presidential candidates, Generals Taylor, Scott, Pierce, and Fremont, two of whom succeeded in reaching the summit of executive authority. When Colonel Fremont raised the American standard in California, it was little imagined that he was acquiring a province for the country the value of which was destined to be incalculably greater than the Texan republic. Within a year, however, the gold mines had been discovered, and that wonderful civilization of the Pacific Coast which we now witness had begun to grow up in the far western wilderness.

XII.

THE SLAVERY AGITATION.

[Sidenote: Slavery Inherited.]

The United States inherited, and had to accept, from the colonial system, a great moral and social wrong. Slavery, planted on our soil soon after its first settlement, had spread not only through the South, but had existed for a time even in the Puritan colonies of New England. An active slave-trade had grown up, and was still flourishing at the time that the constitution was framed. There is every reason to believe that the most eminent and enlightened even of Southern statesmen, in the very infancy of the Republic, regarded African bondage as not only a moral, but, in many regards, a material evil. Washington and Jefferson especially uttered, in no doubtful accents, their dislike of the system; while such northern statesmen as Franklin, Adams, and Roger Sherman protested in yet sterner tones against its continuance.

[Sidenote: Strength of the Slave Power.]

[Sidenote: The Missouri Compromise.]

But slavery, like many traditional abuses of nations, was so securely lodged, so difficult to uproot, that wise men at once deplored its presence and despaired of its abolition. While, therefore, the framers of the constitution refused to insert a direct recognition of slavery in that instrument, choosing to regard it as temporary, and likely in time to become extinct, other subjects, crowding upon the attention of statesmen at the period of political formation, pushed this of slavery for a while into the background. The first definite collision between the upholders and the opponents of slavery occurred when, as a consequence of the rapid growth of the country, the territories began one after another to knock for admission into the household of States.

The dispute came to an issue in the year 1820. Missouri sought admission into the Union, and it was attempted to admit her as a slave state. Then the Northern statesmen declared that some limit or restriction should be placed upon future admissions of States, in regard to slavery.

[Sidenote: The "Slavery Agitation."]

The debates in Congress were long and warm. Every argument which has since become so familiar on the subject was advanced on one side and on the other. The moral evil of slavery, its demoralizing influence upon freeman and bondman, its cruelties in practice, were dilated upon by some; others pictured "the peculiar institution" in its more patriarchal and pleasant aspects. Finally, the northern members agreed to admit Missouri as a slave State, on condition that thenceforth all new states north of the line of 36 deg.30'north latitude-- known as "Mason and Dixon's line"--should be free; while all new states south of that line should decide for themselves whether they should be free or slave. It was the vain hope of the statesmen of Monroe's time that this settlement, known in history as the "Missouri Compromise," would be accepted as final, and that the mutual ill-feeling which had already become bitter between the sections would be finally allayed by it.

They flattered themselves that they had put a period to the agitation, and that the irritating question was now cast outside the domain of American politics. Perhaps they did not sufficiently reflect that the same power which had established the boundaries of slavery might, when the opportunity was ripe, erase them. The slavery agitation was, however, only in its infancy. It had within it a vital and irrepressible element of growth. With the advance of civil liberty, the growth of education, it, too, must necessarily make progress. As yet it was in the hands of so-called "fanatics." Respectable statesmanship, having made the Missouri Compromise, would have no more of it.

[Sidenote: The "Liberty Party."]

[Sidenote: Garrison.]

It was early in General Jackson's presidency that the small but determined "Liberty party" of the North began to attract attention by what was considered the extravagance of its utterances, and the absurdity of its proposals. The Quaker Lundy published his "Genius of Universal Emancipation"; Garrison put forth the "Liberator" at Boston; and soon, in various parts of the Union, abolition tracts and fanatical orators brought down upon them not only the execration of the South, but the assaults of northern mobs. An insurrection, under the lead of a negro named Turner, broke out in Virginia, and massacres and burnings followed. The Georgia Legislature put a price upon Garrison's head; and that devoted advocate of human freedom responded by founding the New England Anti-Slavery Society--an example soon followed in various places through the North.

[Sidenote: Sympathy for the Slaves.]

[Sidenote: Lovejoy Killed.]

The cause was right, and grew despite every obstacle of mob violence, persecution, contempt, and, not the least, the indignant hostility of respectable statesmanship. Yet evidences began to appear, here and there, that the sympathy even of official responsibility was gradually

leaning to the principle of liberty. The Massachusetts Supreme Court declared the child Med, whose master had brought her to Boston, to have become by that act free. There was still, however, much suffering in store for the anti-slavery advocates. Garrison, in attempting to speak before the Female Anti-Slavery Society in Boston, was dragged through the streets by an enraged mob, and was only saved from death by being hurried to the jail as a refuge. A hall in Philadelphia which had been desecrated by an abolition conference, was burned. Elijah Lovejoy, an Illinois abolition editor, was killed by a mob. These are a few among many examples of the violence with which the abolitionists were treated.

The old "Liberty party," however, grew gradually into the larger and more powerful "Free Soil" party, of which the venerable John Quincy Adams became the champion in the House of Representatives, and Martin Van Buren the presidential candidate in 1848. It was still, of course, a small minority, but its influence was now distinctly felt in the legislative councils and in the politics of the country. The petitions in favor of abolition which invaded Congress created alarm in the South, and at last the southern members found it necessary to pass a rule excluding these "incendiary documents" altogether.

[Sidenote: The Compromise of 1850.]

If the Free Soilers were becoming formidable, the South was also resolved to assume the offensive. Its triumph in securing the annexation of Texas as another slave State was followed, a few years after, by the celebrated "Compromise" of 1850; by which, while California was admitted as a free State, and the slave trade was abolished in the District of Columbia, the Fugitive Slave Law was also conceded. This aroused the indignation of very large numbers in the North, and the treatment of fugitives under it, notably that of Jerry in New York State, and of Anthony Burns in Boston, did much to develop and strengthen the anti-slavery feeling. The outrageous character of the law was too palpable to be unperceived and unresented.

[Sidenote: The Free Sellers.]

[Sidenote: Border Ruffianism.]

The next effort of the slave power provoked the formation of a great national anti-slavery party, out of the old Free Soil elements. This effort, which, by the aid of the Pierce administration and some Northern statesmen, was successful, was to destroy the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and thus open the way to the creation of slave States north, as well as south, of Mason and Dixon's line. The immediate object of this policy was to make slave States of Kansas and Nebraska, two great territories which were ready for admission into the fatuity of the Union. No sooner had the Nebraska Bill passed, in May, 1854, than the terrible scenes of "border ruffianism" began. As the new law required that the inhabitants of the territories should themselves decide whether slavery should exist or not, the attempt was made to convert Kansas into a slave State by invasions of "border ruffians" from Missouri. After a long and bloody struggle, the cause of freedom triumphed in the two disputed territories.

[Sidenote: The "Irrepressible Conflict."]

The events in that part of the Union served to win many converts to the

anti-slavery cause in the North. The Republican party was organized on the eve of the Presidential election of 1856. Its chief doctrine was that no more slave States whatever should be admitted to the Union. It put a ticket into the field with Colonel John Charles Fremont as the candidate for President, and William L. Dayton of New Jersey for Vice-President. It could not be expected that so young a party would triumph at its first essay; but when Fremont received 113 electoral votes, while Buchanan had only 177, it was appreciated everywhere that the "irrepressible conflict" between slavery and liberty was fast approaching its crisis.

[Sidenote: John Brown's Raid.]

The self-sacrificing heroism of a fanatic, the most salient incident of the slavery agitation during the Presidency of Buchanan, had a marked influence in hastening the final issue. This was John Brown's raid upon Harper's Ferry, for the purpose of setting free the slaves. The old man's courage, his utter self-devotion to his cause, his noble death, his simple and sincere character, appealed most strongly to the sympathy of the opponents of slavery, and even compelled words of strong praise from the lips of Henry A. Wise, the Virginia Governor, who signed his death-warrant.

[Sidenote: The South Prepares to Secede.]

The cause of free soil at last attained its triumph in the election of 1860. All things foreshadowed the success of Abraham Lincoln. The northern people were ripe for decisive action against the extension, at least, of human bondage. The Democratic party divided into two factions at Charleston, and the factions put each a candidate into the field, mutually to destroy each other. The South so far gave up the contest as to make preparations, while the presidential battle was yet raging, to withdraw from the Union. Then, as the grand, bitter, but necessary result of the long-continued slavery agitation, the war came, and wiped out slavery with the blood of patriots.

XIII.

THE CIVIL WAR.

[Sidenote: The Civil War.]

The great American Rebellion of 1861-65 is still, perhaps, too near to be judged with the calm and judicial spirit which gives its chief value to history. Thousands of those who took part in it on either side are yet living; millions who witnessed its progress, and watched its course with varying emotions of grief and joy, who mourned its dead, exulted in its victories, and hailed its termination, yet hold it in vivid memory. Moreover, all that could be said of it, from bald narrative to infinite discussion of this and that general, this and that campaign or stratagem, of causes and effects, has already been repeated till the tale has been, not twice, but many times told.

The results of that awful yet necessary conflict are still being felt, in one way or another, by all of us. Many a household still mourns the

loss of those who died on southern battle-fields. We feel the war in our business, in our pockets. We feel it in the financial enigmas which even yet await solution. And although we have come to a period of reconciliation, when we can with free hearts garland with roses the graves alike of the blue and the gray, we feel still the indirect influences of the war in our political contests.

[Sidenote: Origin of the War.]

[Sidenote: Secession.]

The war may be said to have had its origin in two not necessarily connected circumstances. It was the fruit, on the one hand, of a certain political doctrine; on the other, of a threatened and to-be-defended social condition. The political doctrine was that called "State's rights," from which two corollaries were deduced by Calhoun and his disciples: "nullification," or the right of a State to disobey a United States law; and "secession," or the right of a State to withdraw from the Union at will. The social condition was that of slavery, threatened, as the South thought, by the election of Abraham Lincoln, and to be defended under cover of the political doctrine which Calhoun had taught the South to credit and to cherish. Thus, while the cause of the rebellion was slavery, its justification was an asserted constitutional right. The North did not believe in slavery, or at least in the extension of slavery. But what the North at first undertook to subdue was not slavery in the States, but the altogether destructive doctrine of secession.

[Sidenote: South Carolina's "Ordinance."]

[Sidenote: Fort Sumter Taken.]

The threat loudly uttered during the election of 1860, that the South would secede if Lincoln were chosen, was duly followed up by action in a few weeks after that event. Before Christmas South Carolina had passed her famous "ordinance," and by early February, 1861, Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Texas had followed in her footsteps. The senators and representatives of these States in Congress retired from their halls, breathing defiance as they went. South Carolina took the lead in military, as she had done in political action. Claiming the national property within her limits, she attached and took Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor. The way had been prepared for this by Secretaries Floyd and Toucey of the Buchanan Cabinet, who had sent South materials of war, and so disposed the navy as to render it for the time powerless for aid in the Union cause.

[Sidenote: Call for Troops.]

Lincoln was now President. The guns fired at Sumter roused the North, and gave the signal of war, proving that a conflict could no longer be avoided. Meanwhile, North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, and Arkansas were hurried out of the Union by the political leaders. On the day following the fall of Sumter, the President issued his call for seventy-five thousand volunteers, and the governors were urged to send such forces as they could at once to Washington, which was threatened with an attack. Then came the assault upon the gallant Sixth Massachusetts in the streets of Baltimore, the isolation of Washington, and its relief. A blockade of the southern ports was proclaimed.

[Sidenote: Bull Run.]

After a few minor engagements, such as those in Western Virginia, in which McClellan was successful, and at Big Bethel, the first great battle was fought on July 21, 1861, at Bull Run. This was in consequence of an attempt by General Scott to advance upon Richmond. The result was the total defeat of the Union army, which recoiled in confusion upon Washington. Later in the first year of the war, General Lyon gained some advantages over the rebels in Missouri, and naval expeditions were sent to Hatteras and Port Royal; General Scott yielded the command-in-chief to General McClellan, and rebel privateers appeared upon the ocean, and began their destructive depredations upon our commerce. Great Britain had too hastily recognized the belligerent rights of the rebels, and in November the capture of Mason and Slidell was followed by their delivery again to the protection of the British flag.

[Sidenote: Second Year of the War.]

The second year of the war found no less than half a million of soldiers enlisted in the army of the Union. It seemed as if we were now ready to cope with rebellion in all its extent and strength. The hope of an approaching and decisive triumph animated the hearts of the loyal. McClellan now led the Army of the Potomac against Richmond, approaching it from the east. Then followed the battle of Fair Oaks, and the Seven Days' battles, of which that at Malvern Hill was the most hotly contested. The Confederates were beaten, with terrible loss on both sides. Cedar Mountain and the second Bull Run followed, the latter proving a disaster as serious as the former struggle on the same field had been.

[Sidenote: Antietam.]

Then came Lee's advance into Maryland, his capture of Frederick City, and that great battle, Antietam, in which Lee was repulsed and retreated into Virginia. But McClellan, having failed to follow up his advantage, was relieved of the command-in-chief, which was conferred on Burnside. Burnside's repulse at Fredericksburg was followed by a discouraging retreat. But though the attempt to capture Richmond was foiled, in other parts of the country many advantages were obtained by the Union forces in the year 1862.

[Sidenote: Union Victories.]

Prominent among these were the victory of the Monitor over the Merrimac, in Hampton Roads; the capture of Roanoke Island and Fort Pulaski; Grant's gallant victories at Forts Henry and Donelson, at Island No. 10, and, later, at Pittsburg Landing; and the heroic taking of New Orleans by Farragut and Butler.

[Sidenote: Chancellorsville.]

At the very threshold of the third year of the war, President Lincoln issued the "Proclamation of Emancipation." Thus not only was the crime of slavery wiped away, but a new source of strength to our forces was provided by the emancipated negroes, who were enlisted to aid in the confirmation of their freedom by final victory. The first half of the year 1863 witnessed what was perhaps the gloomiest and most disheartening period of the war. Hooker succeeded Burnside, only to meet at Chancellorsville the same disastrous fate which had overtaken his

predecessor at Fredericksburg. General Lee was encouraged to assume the offensive, and to invade Pennsylvania. The North was discouraged; the expense of the war began to be grievously felt; the draft was becoming very obnoxious; the desertions from the army were alarming in number.

[Sidenote: Gettysburg.]

Lee advanced by the Shenandoah Valley into the Northern States. But at Gettysburg he met the reorganized Union army, under Meade. The collision of one hundred and sixty thousand men, lasting for three days, resulted in that hard-won Union victory which proved the turning-point of the war. On the day of Lee's retreat from Gettysburg, the Fourth of July, Vicksburg was surrendered to Grant. Soon after, Port Hudson fell, and the Mississippi was opened to the passage of troops. Then the Battle of Chattanooga was fought and won, and Tennessee was rid of Confederate occupation. Meanwhile, the siege of Charleston was proceeding on the coast, and before the end of the year Fort Wagner was taken.

[Sidenote: Grant Commander-in-chief.]

[Sidenote: Sherman's March to the Sea.]

We have now reached the fourth year of the war, 1864. It was now clear that the result was only a question of time. The first events of the year were not brilliant. Kilpatrick made his famous but futile raid near Richmond; Hanks met with disaster at Red River; Forrest captured Fort Pillow and killed three hundred negro troops. The last act of the momentous drama began by the elevation of General Ulysses S. Grant to the command-in-chief in March. The two great movements which were together to seal the fate of the Confederacy were at once prepared. Grant, assuming command of the Army of the Potomac, made Richmond his objective point. He advanced deliberately towards the southern capital, and fought the terrific battles of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, and Cold Harbor. He laid siege to Petersburg, but without immediate result. Meanwhile the gallant Sherman began his marvellous march to the sea, took Atlanta, and at last entered Savannah in triumph. Sheridan, making his famous ride, defeated Early at Cedar Creek. The Alabama was sunk by the Kearsarge off the French coast. Mobile was captured by Farragut. The Albermarle was destroyed.

[Sidenote: Surrender of Lee.]

The Confederates were now penned in, and it only remained to make a last strenuous effort to end the war. While Sherman advanced northward, taking Charleston by the way, and Terry captured Fort Fisher, the siege of Richmond became closer and more vigorous. Then Sheridan conquered at Five Forks, turning the flank of the hunted and hounded Lee. Finally, on the 3d of April, 1865, the Union troops occupied Richmond and Petersburg; Lee surrendered on the 9th, at Appomattox; Johnston followed by yielding to Sherman; and the Southern Confederacy was no more.

XIV.

THE PRESIDENTS.

[Sidenote: Number of Presidents.]

Between 1789, when the government organized by the constitution began its functions, and 1886, the people of the United States have twenty-five times chosen a President; and of the Presidents, seven have been chosen for a second term. Four of them, having died in office, were succeeded by Vice Presidents. While the number of terms, therefore, has been twenty-five, the executive chair has been filled by twenty-two individuals. In referring to the line of Presidents, and scanning the names of those who have exercised powers more extensive than those of English royalty, we are struck by the fact that very few of our Presidents have ranked first, in point of intellect, in their own generation. It may be said, indeed, that Jefferson alone of them all was without dispute the foremost statesman of his day.

[Sidenote: Presidential Ability.]

Comparing our elected chief magistrates with the various lines of hereditary sovereigns of Europe, we find that pre-eminent ability is scarcely more frequent among them than is presented by the houses of Romanoff, Hohenzollern, and Hapsburg. When, however, we consider their moral qualities as rulers--their patriotism and purity, their freedom from a too grasping ambition, the fidelity and zeal with which they have served the country as best they knew how--we are perhaps not unreasonable in judging them superior, as a line of rulers, to any royal house of which history affords record. Very rarely has it been that a President has been even suspected of craving increased power for himself, or of using his office for unworthy personal ends. Some have been weak, some perverse and obstinate; but as the clouds of party passion, which have sometimes obscured the motives and the acts of our chief magistrates, pass away, we may recognize in their action honest though now and then ill directed efforts to use their high office for the general weal.

[Sidenote: The Ablest Men not Presidents.]

Our intellectually ablest men have not, with the exception of Jefferson, attained the Presidency, though many of them have aspired to it. No one can doubt that Hamilton was a greater political genius than the first two Presidents. It can scarcely be questioned that Webster, Calhoun, and Clay were greater in this respect than the three Presidents who succeeded Jefferson. Madison was a man of culture, clear vision, and political learning, but he was the disciple of Jefferson, and did not reveal qualities of originality and constructiveness in statesmanship. Monroe was a man of yet more limited capacity, unless Polk be excepted, Monroe was the least able of all our Presidents. But he had a large experience in public affairs, he was judicious and cool-tempered, and thoroughly honest and simple-minded. He was personally liked, and after Washington was the only President who was the unanimous choice of the country.[1]

[Sidenote: Monroe.]

[Sidenote: John Quincy Adams.]

John Quincy Adams, a trained statesman, who had been an ambassador, a Senator, and a Secretary of State, was still inferior in point of political intellect to Clay, his own Secretary of State, and to Calhoun, the Vice-President; and there were several others at that time who might

justly be competed with him. So, although Andrew Jackson was perhaps the greatest of our Presidents in executive vigor and stern force of will, as a political figure his most devoted admirers would scarcely rank him with Clay or Webster. Van Buren was rather a shrewd politician than an eminent statesman; but he was a politician in a higher sense, and no stain of dishonor attaches to his career, while his presidential term was an honest and able one.

[Sidenote: Later Presidents.]

Many public men might be named who, living at the time of Harrison's elevation, were very much his political superiors; in his very cabinet were at least three, Webster, Crittenden, and Ewing; and John Tyler was very far from being in the front rank of American statesmen, though his political capacity has sometimes been underrated.

[Footnote 1: Monroe was chosen for his second term by every vote but one in the Electoral College. That vote was given by Mr. Hummer of New Hampshire, on the ground that it was a dangerous precedent to elect a President unanimously.]

Polk was the weakest of all our later Presidents, and he too presided over at least three secretaries who were intellectually larger men, in Marcy, Robert J. Walker, and Buchanan. The same may be said in comparing General Taylor with his advisers, and Fillmore, Pierce, and Lincoln with theirs; for while no one can fail to revere the grand moral and practical qualities which make Lincoln illustrious, in purely intellectual eminence he was excelled by Seward, Chase, and perhaps Stanton.

[Sidenote: A Conservative Republic.]

[Sidenote: Origin of the Presidents.]

Ours has always been a conservative Republic. The French Republicans of '93 and '48, the Communards of '71, did not derive their wild and visionary fanaticism from our example, although there can be no doubt that our Revolution had not a little influence in hastening that of France. When the people have been called upon to choose a chief magistrate, therefore, they have not sought men of extreme views, nor have humble birth and limited education often been recommendations of candidates. It is notable that the first six Presidents were selected from the class which in England is called the "gentry." Washington, indeed, belonged to the high rural aristocracy of Virginia; Mount Vernon was as much a patrician manor-house as are the "halls," "pories," and "manors" of rural England; and he lived there in the style of a country magnate, John Adams belonged to the sturdy New England yeomanry sprung from the Pilgrims, and, as the descendant of John Alden, had some reason to pride himself upon good blood. The three succeeding Virginia Presidents were sons of gentlemen-farmers, and belonged to the cultivated gentry of the Old Dominion. Jackson was the first of the plebeian Presidents, and then came Van Buren, of the gentry by birth; Harrison, the son of a signer of the Declaration, and thus well born, and Tyler, another Virginia gentleman, the lord of Sherwood Forest. Polk belonged to the same rural condition. Fillmore was the next President of humble beginnings, and Lincoln the third; while Andrew Johnson, who learned to read after he was married, and began life as a country tailor, was the most lowly born of all our chief magistrates.

[Sidenote: Military Presidents.]

Those young men who, having a taste for and ambition in politics, adopt the law as a stepping-stone to political honor, may derive some encouragement from the classification of the Presidents by their professions; for out of the twenty-two Presidents, no less than eighteen were at some period of their lives practising at the bar. The four who were not lawyers were the four military Presidents, Washington, Harrison, Taylor, and Grant. Three other Presidents, however, derived something of their fame from military careers--Monroe, Jackson, and Pierce. Monroe was a revolutionary colonel, Jackson the hero of New Orleans, and Pierce a brigadier in the Mexican War. But Monroe owed his political eminence to diplomatic successes and the friendship of Jefferson and Madison: while Pierce certainly did not win the presidency by his Mexican exploits.

[Sidenote: Presidential Succession.]

No man has ever yet passed directly from the United States Senate to the White House. Of the Presidents, Monroe, J.Q. Adams, Jackson, Van Buren, Harrison, Tyler, Pierce, Buchanan, and Johnson had been senators; while John Adams, Jefferson and Van Buren held the Vice-Presidency just before their elevation by election to the higher office. The custom of succession from the one office to the other, which prevailed in the earlier years of the Republic, was broken when Madison was preferred to George Clinton in 1808; and was revived only in the single instance of Van Buren, whom the irresistible will of Jackson imposed upon the Democrats as his successor. Washington, before becoming President, had held the office of President of the Constitutional Convention. Polk had only served in the lower House of Congress, over which he had presided as speaker. Neither Taylor nor Grant ever held a state or national office before being raised to the Executive Chair. Lincoln had served a few years, with but little distinction, in the national House of Representatives. The same may be said of Hayes, and of Fillmore before he was chosen Vice-President.

[Sidenote: Presidents Contributed by the Various States.]

Virginia has had five Presidents, four of them having served in the first quarter of a century of the national existence. Tennessee has had three; Ohio, three; Massachusetts, two; New York, four; Illinois, two; and New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Louisiana, each one. But Harrison, though elected from Ohio, and Taylor, elected from Louisiana, were both born in Virginia; and Lincoln, elected from Illinois, was born in Kentucky. Therefore Virginia gave birth to seven of the Presidents. In point of years, the ages of the Presidents have ranged from sixty-eight, which was Harrison's age on his accession, to forty-six, which was Grant's age when he became President; the average age being about fifty-seven.

XV.

MATERIAL PROGRESS.

[Sidenote: A Twofold Progress.]

It is manifestly impossible to give, within the brief scope of this volume, more than a hint of the elements which have entered into and stimulated the material progress of the United States during the past century. That progress may be said to have been twofold; the progress which we have shared in common with the civilized world, and the progress which has been peculiar to ourselves. The agency which invention and discovery have had in our advancement scarcely needs to be pointed out. We have only to look around us, and remember the origin of many of the comforts, conveniences, luxuries, nay even what we now regard as necessities, that surround us and minister to our existence, in order to comprehend how very vast, how much beyond easy calculation, the material progress of the century has been.

[Sidenote: Modern Comforts.]

Every hour of the day, should you stop to reflect, you would find yourself doing something, or aided by something, unknown to or unused by the generation of 1776. Sitting in your parlor or library, your feet rest upon carpets, which were introduced into American households in 1792; the book you are reading--which has far better paper, print, binding and illustration than the old copy of "Pilgrim's Progress" which your great-grandfather used to read--is lighted by gas, which did not come into use till this century was well on its way; and that gas you have lit by a friction match, an affair of marvellous simplicity, which was unknown till after 1830.

[Sidenote: Improvement in Dress.]

You are writing, perhaps, with a steel pen; the Declaration of Independence was signed with quills. It is, possibly, a rainy day. You put on rubbers, and you carry an umbrella. The men of '76 had to do as best they could without either. You burn coal in a furnace or stove; they must fain have warmed themselves with more cheery but less warming wood, in an open fireplace. Every article of your dress is an improvement in convenience and comfort on those worn by Washington in all his Presidential glory.

[Sidenote: Rapidity of Transit.]

Your walls are hung with photographs; your wife or daughter has a sewing-machine. In the kitchen are endless contrivances which our great-grandmothers would have greeted with speechless astonishment. You can order a case of goods from Hong Kong on Monday, and be told that they are ready for shipping on Thursday. You can go to San Francisco in almost the same time that it took, only fifty years ago, to reach Washington from New York. When General Jackson went to the capital to be President, he could travel no faster than did the Jews, after the captivity, from Babylon to Jerusalem.

[Sidenote: Material Growth.]

[Sidenote: Population.]

Taking a broader view--for we might go on with the material details of progress all about us _ad infinitum_, did patience and strength hold out--we look abroad over the land, and note the great elements of a progress peculiarly American, in the growth and distribution of population, in manufactures, agriculture, and commerce. Each and all

have been incalculably aided by perpetual invention. A few leading facts must suffice to show that our orators, in their most daring flights, can scarcely exaggerate the marvels of our material advance. The population of this country in 1776, including slaves, was about two and three quarters millions. In 1886, it is without doubt more than fifty millions. In 1790, when the first census was taken, the figure was a little less than four millions. A notable circumstance in reference to the movement of our population has been the increase of the proportion of dwellers in our cities to those in the rural districts. In 1790, only one-thirtieth of our population inhabited the cities. In 1886, probably nearly one-fourth are included in the cities.

In 1790 there were but six cities with a population of more than eight thousand each. These were: Philadelphia, with about 42,500; New York, with about 33,000; Boston, with about 18,000; Charleston, with about 16,300; Baltimore, with about 13,500; and Salem, with a little over 8000. The total was about 131,500. Now the aggregate of our urban population is, probably, at least 12,000,000. It may be added that the centre of our population has shifted from a few miles east of Baltimore, where it was in 1790, to about eight miles west by south from Cincinnati, where it is now supposed to be.

[Sidenote: Agriculture.]

The earliest avocation of our colonies was that of agriculture; and before 1776 our agricultural industries, owing to the discoveries which had gradually been made as to the capabilities of the then settled districts, had grown to important proportions. It needs but a glance at the map to observe over what a vast area agricultural enterprise has spread since 1790. We may fairly say that invention and improvement, in the application of chemistry and mechanical discovery to the cultivation of land, have kept pace with the territorial advance of agricultural science. There can scarcely be named a farming operation which is not performed by instruments far more perfect, and with a rapidity far greater, than was possible with our ancestors.

[Sidenote: Cheaper Tools.]

Human labor has been greatly lessened in proportion to the results obtained. Tools are cheaper; and whereas they were formerly made, to a large extent, on the farms themselves, they are now perfected in factories supplied with the most efficient machinery. There were in 1880 two thousand establishments for the manufacture of agricultural implements, with an annual production valued at over \$68,000,000. It would take up too much space to give even a list of these implements; suffice it to say that it is calculated that the value of those now in use on American farms is at least \$500,000,000. A hundred years ago a man could only manage six bushels of grain a day--cutting, binding and stocking, threshing and cleaning it. Now, with the aid of mechanical appliances, a single man's labor can achieve almost eight times as much.

[Sidenote: Advance of Agricultural Arts]

To machinery must be added the advance in the arts of manuring, draining, irrigation, and of grafting and obtaining greater varieties of fruits and vegetables. The improvement in breeding and raising live-stock must not be omitted. In this product the wealth of the country was at least \$2,000,000.000 in 1880.

[Sidenote: First Mills.]

Great as has been our progress in agriculture, it is scarcely so remarkable as that in manufactures. In 1776 we were mostly a farming community. Now, in New England at least, to a large extent in the Middle States, and to some degree in the West and South, manufactures have outstripped the farming industry. Manufacturing necessarily began, indeed, very early in the settlement of the country; for ships had to be built, and were built, soon after the colonization of Plymouth and Boston. The first saw-mill was erected at Salmon Falls as early as 1635. A printing-press was set up at Cambridge in 1638, and a book-bindery in 1663. The first fulling-mill for making cloth was started at Rowley in 1643. Iron manufacture was regularly established at Lynn in 1645. The first successful cotton-mill in the United States was started by Samuel Slater at Providence in 1793.

[Sidenote: The Cotton Industry.]

[Sidenote: Manufactures.]

The growth of the cotton industry may be appreciated when we state that its extent in 1831 comprised 795 factories and 1,246,500 spindles; while in 1880 there were over ten million spindles, and the value of the products reached nearly two hundred million dollars annually. The progress in woollen manufacture has been equally rapid. Since 1850 the number of factories in this industry has more than doubled, while the value of the products has increased over fourfold. Looking over the whole field of manufacturing industries, it is stated that the estimated capital employed throughout the country in 1880, namely \$2,790,000,000, does not really approximate to the total amount. According to the census of that year, moreover, over two and a half millions of persons were engaged in manufacturing; while about seven and a half millions were employed in agriculture, and nearly two millions in trade and transportation. Only a hint can thus be attempted of our progress in manufactures.

[Sidenote: Commercial Relations.]

It need scarcely be said that commerce, as the great medium of barter and exchange between States and with foreign nations, has necessarily kept pace with the development of the industries which we have briefly glanced at. The increase of our mercantile marine, up to the unhappy period of the war, when it was almost swept from the ocean, kept pace with the ever-increasing needs of the business of the country. Now it is again slowly reviving from the disasters of the civil conflict. During the past century, our commercial relations have extended to the remotest corners of the earth, whither we send the commodities we have to spare, and whence we derive those which we need for comfort, convenience, luxury, and wealth. The extent to which steam applied to water navigation, and telegraphy laid not only over the continents but under the oceans, have stimulated our commerce in common with that of the world, is more easy to be observed in general than calculated in detail. With many nations we have treaties of commerce, and the time may not be long in coming when such pacts will be reciprocated between all the trading nations of the world.

XVI.

PROGRESS IN LITERATURE.

[Sidenote: English Literature.]

[Sidenote: Majority of Authors from New England.]

With English laws, customs, Protestantism, habits of thought, and methods of culture, we also inherited the English literature. So rich was already this inheritance when our colonies were settled, that there was little need or incentive for the early Americans to strike out into new literary paths, and create an original literature. Our ancestors read Milton, Bunyan, Doddridge, Butler, Dryden, Pope, and Shakespeare. It is a noteworthy fact that American literature not only took its start from, but, up to within recent times, was mainly produced by the New England and the Middle States. Even now, the noted writers in any branch of letters born south of Virginia may almost be counted upon the fingers. It is equally true that west of Ohio authors who have won a general and permanent reputation are few. If we survey American literature from the time of Cotton Mather (who may perhaps be called the first author of the country whose works are still remembered and read) to the present, we find that a majority of the best authors, both in prose and verse, have been New Englanders.

[Sidenote: Ante-Revolutionary Writers.]

The rise of our literature having taken place in the colonies of Puritan stock, and those most fully imbued with Puritan sobriety and seriousness, it was natural that our earliest literary products should be religious and philosophical. Cotton Mather, with his extravagant "Magnolia"; Jonathan Edwards, with his stern treatise on the Will; Franklin, with his shrewd maxims, and clear, strong, unadorned essays, were about the only ante-revolutionary writers who are not by this time forgotten. It was not surprising that the period of the Revolution should develop a literature peculiarly political. There were, no doubt, already poetasters, novelists, and essayists; but even their names are strange to us of this age. Where are they and their works? What faint traces are still left of them show us that they were mostly mere imitators, and not brilliant ones, of the English authors of their day.

[Sidenote: Political Literature.]

But our political literature became, with the Revolution and its sequel, most vigorous, philosophical, eloquent, and profound. The Declaration itself was a masterpiece of political style, as well as of substance; and Jefferson, its author, continuing for years after to discuss political questions with a lucidity and vigor which were unrivalled in America, took his place in literary history as perhaps our greatest political writer. Close behind him came writers like Hamilton, Jay, Madison, Ames, Freneau, and Tom Paine, all of them holding high rank in this department of letters.

[Sidenote: Post-Revolutionary Writers.]

When we became an independent nation, literature naturally felt the impulse and inspiration of the new national life. Poets and novelists came up of a higher type than their ante-revolutionary predecessors;

writers like Dwight, Hopkinson, Trumbull, Barlow, Brockden Brown, and Paine. But no one of these attained the rank of genius, nor did any of them establish a great reputation; and if they are remembered at all, it is rather by happy isolated pieces than by the general excellence of their works. The American novels of the last century, unlike the English novels of Swift, Fielding, and Goldsmith, have one and all passed into oblivion.

[Sidenote: William Cullen Bryant.]

The position of American literature in 1886 may, especially in the departments of history and poetry, fairly bear comparison with that of England. Yet the first really great American authors, if we except the theological and political writers of whom mention has been made, published their first works at a period quite within the memory of men still living. Our first great poet was William Cullen Bryant, who survived to old age to observe to what vast proportions our literary productions, both in quality and quantity, had grown. Our first great biographer and essayist, Washington Irving, may be remembered as living by the man of thirty-five. Our first eminent novelist, James Fenimore Cooper, would only be ninety-seven if he were still among us. And our first great historian, Prescott, died but twenty-seven years ago.

[Sidenote: Rise of American Poetry.]

The new career of American letters, indeed, may be said to have been begun when William Cullen Bryant published "Thanatopsis," in the year 1816. Our writers then began to feel the influence of the vigorous schools of English poetry of which Byron, Wordsworth, and Coleridge were the shining lights. Like these, our own writers shook off the poetic dominion of Pope, and declared form to be subordinate to the thought and the feeling. Bryant, the enthusiastic disciple of Wordsworth, set the bold example, and from that moment American literature received an element of vitality which was given it its noble and rapid growth. It is almost always the case that, in young nations, poetry is the first branch of letters to be developed. The earliest masterpieces of Greek and English literature are the "Iliad," the "Canterbury Tales," and the "Faerie Queene." Perhaps the best German literature before Lessing, worth remembering, was the songs of the Minnesinger.

[Sidenote: Earlier Poets.]

[Sidenote: Later Posts.]

In the United States, Bryant was soon followed by a succession of poets whose productions clearly revealed the magnetism of the English revival, and gave promise of the rise of that poetic art which we have seen reach its culmination in our own day. Richard H. Dana wrote the "Buccaneer"; Fitz-Greene Halleck, "Marco Bozarris"; Edgar A. Poe "The Raven"; the painter Allston turned easily from brush to pen, and added more than one fine poem to our literature; Emerson rose to found a school of transcendental poetry as well as philosophy; N.P. Willis became the lyrical likeness of Moore on this side of the Atlantic; Percival reached a brief popularity, and wrote some things well worthy of remembrance; and the banker-poet Sprague filled a worthy place in our group of bards. In the next generation came the poets of the highest culture and most widely extended popularity: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, John Greenleaf Whittier, James Russell Lowell, and Oliver Wendell Holmes.

[Sidenote: Historians.]

The United States have produced a race of historians whose works and names may not unfairly be ranked with those of Hume, Macaulay, Hallam, and Froude. Prescott and Irving have been followed by Bancroft, Motley, Parkman, Adams, Kirk, Goodwin, Young, and Ticknor. Sydney Smith, were he now living, would find his question, "Who reads an American book?" speedily answered; for in English drawing-rooms and on English book-stalls "Evangeline" and "The Wayside Inn" are to be found quite as often as "In Memoriam" and "Idyls of the King"; and "Ferdinand and Isabella" and the "Rise of the Dutch Republic," as often as the histories of Macaulay and Froude.

[Sidenote: Theological Literature.]

Our theologians have kept pace, in the amount and intellectual force of their writings, with those of the older continent. It is not astonishing that, in a nation established by a sect for the purpose of doing God honor, a race of great theological authors should arise. The names of Hopkins and Emmons, of Dwight, Channing, Norton, Theodore Parker, Wayland, Bacon, Park, Bushnell, and many others, will recur, to remind us how active religious philosophy and speculation have been from the time of Jonathan Edwards to the present.

[Sidenote: Political and Legal Writers.]

In other departments of letters our progress during the century, though less marked, has been very distinct. Webster, Everett, Sumner, Winthrop, and, it may well be added, Lincoln, have made a literary art, as well as a practical career, of politics. American legal writers, like Greenleaf, Kent, Story, and Parsons, are quoted in the English as in the American courts, as authorities worthy of respect and trust. In the domain of searching literary criticism, England has perhaps produced no author since the days of Gifford and Jeffrey superior in learning, acuteness, and grace to Edwin P. Whipple.

[Sidenote: Humorists.]

[Sidenote: Writers of Fiction.]

Humorists have been many; in this field we count not only Lowell, Neal, and Holmes, but the younger band, which includes Artemas Ward, Mark Twain, Nasby, Bret Harte, Warner, and Leland. In the department of essays and miscellaneous belles-lettres, the names of George William Curtis, Thoreau, Tuckerman, Higginson, Marsh, and many more, crowd upon the mind. Foremost among writers of fiction may be classed Cooper and Nathaniel Hawthorne; and though in this field America can scarcely contest the palm with the mother country, and the great purely national novel has not yet appeared, the fertility of our novelists affords promise that in time great and national romances will come. Meanwhile, Mrs. Stowe, Donald G. Mitchell, T.B. Aldrich, William D. Howells (poet as well as novelist), Henry James, Julian Hawthorne, Stockton, Miss Phelps, E.E. Hale, and others, have delighted thousands by their imaginative works.

[Sidenote: American Dictionaries.]

To present even a list, indeed, of American writers who may be called noted, would much more than occupy the limits assigned to this chapter.

The multitude that crowds upon the memory, even in a cursory glance over our history, is so large that even in mentioning any names at all one runs the risk of some unjust omission. Suffice it to say that no field of letters has remained wholly uncultivated in this country, and that literary invention in the United States, though sometimes at a pause, on the whole advances with their population and civilization. We have philosophers, men of science, poets, critics, essayists, art writers, theologians, fully able to cope with their literary brethren in the old world. Let it be added that America has produced the two dictionaries which are to-day paramount authority in every English school, college, and university; and that in the science of language George P. Marsh and William D. Whitney have carried their studies to depths as profound, and have given the world results as valuable, as have any old-world philologists.

XVII.

PROGRESS IN THE ARTS.

[Sidenote: Old-time Simplicity.]

American art, like American letters, was of slow and difficult growth. The early colonists, even those who, like the Virginia cavaliers and the settlers in Maryland, possessed somewhat of the old-world culture and taste, had little time for the ornamental. To worry a decent living out of an inhospitable and reluctant soil, and to serve God after their strict and severe fashion, were abundant occupation to the Puritans. Therefore, could we carry ourselves back through the generations and find ourselves in the streets and abodes of colonial New England, we should observe but very few and slight attempts at decoration.

Pictures, unless it were now and then a scriptural or historical print, there would be none on the plain walls with their heavy beams; varnishing and frescoing would be but rare vanities, if indeed such could be anywhere discovered at all; as for rare vases, or bronzes, or marbles, such things were assuredly unknown. The austere simplicity of the place, the people, and the age, forbade not only a footing to the arts, but refused all nurture to imaginative growths. The Puritans especially had the lofty scorn of art which resented the idea of a picture or a statue in a church with as much indignation as they would have shown to the Pope had he invited them to return to the fold of Rome.

[Sidenote: John Singleton Copley.]

As there was very little literature for America to be proud of before the Declaration of Independence, so, in casting our eyes backward over the annals of art, we can discover but one notable native artist in the period between the early settlements and the Revolution. This was John Singleton Copley. He was born in Boston in 1738, and became the pupil of Smybert, an English artist of some talent, who had accompanied Bishop Berkeley across the Atlantic and had settled in Boston. The pupil soon eclipsed the master, and for years Copley stood alone as a popular portrait-painter in New England.

[Sidenote: Historical Pictures.]

But even the monopoly of his profession did not suffice to give him adequate support, or gratify Copley's ambition; and he was forced to seek in a more art-loving land the full recognition and reward of his genius. He left behind him many portraits which still exist as precious heirlooms in New England families, and just as the storm of the Revolution was gathering, he set sail for the mother country, which he never afterward left. Before he went, however, a son had been born to him in Boston, who was destined long after to reach the highest summit of English legal dignity and rank--Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst. Copley was especially great as a portrait-painter, but he also sometimes adopted historical subjects. Of these the best known is his "Death of Lord Chatham," which now hangs in the South Kensington Museum, in London.

[Sidenote: Benjamin West.]

Copley was soon succeeded by an American artist whose triumphs in England afterward far outshone his own. Benjamin West was born in Pennsylvania in 1738, and was the youngest of nine children, of Quaker parents. His genius for art was discovered in an amusing way. When he was seven years old he was put to the task of fanning the flies away from the sleeping baby of one of his sisters. Instead of doing so, he sketched her face with black and red ink. His mother snatched the paper from him, looked at it with amazement, and exclaimed: "I declare, he has made a likeness of little Sally." From the Indians he got some of the pigments with which they smeared their faces, and his mother's indigo bag supplied him with blue; while from the house cat's tail he took the hair for his brushes. West was well known as a portrait-painter at fifteen. His Quaker friends at first demurred at the vanity of his calling; but in a solemn meeting the spirit happily moved them to bless him and consecrate him to art. He found rich patrons, who sent him to Italy, where he studied the great masters with zeal and enthusiasm.

[Sidenote: Royal Academy Founded.]

This sojourn in the favored land of art, and the chance which procured him an introduction to King George III. as he was passing through England on his way home, deprived his native country of this famous artist. Received and petted at the English court, he took up his permanent residence in London. There, with Sir Joshua Reynolds, and encouraged by the king, he founded the Royal Academy, of which he became president; and as long as King George retained his mind, West was constantly in the sunshine of royal favor. He was appointed "Painter to His Majesty," and a splendid income rewarded his labors. He was neglected by the Prince of Wales, but was recompensed for the loss of his court associations by the patronage of the nobles and people. Copley and West were the forerunners of a succession of American portrait-painters not inferior in their art to their European contemporaries. Both Copley and West aspired to something higher and more creative than copying the lineaments of human faces, but it may be said of them that in historical and imaginative painting they fell short of the highest standard.

[Sidenote: Peale, Stuart, and Trumbull.]

Following Copley and West came, close together, three painters whose works were of a high order, some of them being familiar to every one in

engraved copies. These were Charles Wilson Peale, Gilbert Stuart, and John Trumbull. Peale was a saddler's apprentice, Stuart the son of a snuffmaker; Trumbull, on the other hand, was the son of one of the foremost statesmen of the Revolution. To all three we owe portraits of Washington from life. Peale painted him in his prime, just after the battle of Monmouth; Trumbull painted him as he was a few years later, at the surrender of Cornwallis; and Stuart painted him when the added dignity of age had crept upon him, and he was President at Philadelphia. Both Peale and Trumbull fought in the Revolution. Trumbull is now best known as the painter of the historical pictures of the war for independence which hang in the Capitol at Washington; of which the most familiar is the "Battle of Bunker's Hill."

[Sidenote: Washington Allston.]

It could no longer be said, after these great painters had lived and left enduring results of their labors, that America was devoid of a genius for, or an appreciation of, art. The appearance of Washington Allston, who as a colorist won the name of the "American Titian," and whose noble conceptions of Biblical subjects, executed with wonderful power, have given him permanent rank among the best artists of his time; and of Henry Inman, whose versatile genius readily took up portrait, historical, or landscape painting at will, served to carry American art yet another grade higher. Rembrandt Peale sustained the tradition of his father's ability by his own works; Sully came from England to win fame here as a portrait-painter; Vanderlyn and many others rapidly rose to establish art as a profession and adornment in this country. It is worthy of note that two of the greatest of American inventors, Robert Fulton and S.F.B. Morse, began life as artists; but found it more profitable, in fame and fortune, to run steamboats and establish telegraphs.

[Sidenote: Artists as Inventors.]

[Sidenote: Sculptors.]

The sister arts have nourished in this country in a degree scarcely less marked than painting. In sculpture, a later but prolific growth with us, the names of Hiram Powers, Horatio Greenough, Crawford, Ball, Story, Ward, Rogers, Hart, and Harriet Hosmer, sufficiently attest the progress made and the reputation established in this respect. In drawing, caricature, water-colors, and other minor branches of art, our progress has been scarcely less notable; we may fairly claim to have our Gillrays and Cruikshanks as well as our English cousins.

[Sidenote: Art a Modern Necessity.]

Art, from having been a very rare luxury among our forefathers even as lately as the beginning of this century, has become an adjunct, it may even be said a necessity, of our civilization. Drawing is being taught in our schools, and is regarded as one of the polite accomplishments of educated young ladies. Art galleries have sprung up everywhere, and art stores are popular resorts in our larger cities. Art societies thrive and flourish in many States, and art teachers are in demand in most of our towns. Colonies of artists swarm in stately buildings in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. The time has come when no artist of merit need starve for want of patronage.

Thousands of Americans, travelling abroad every year, spend the larger

portion of their time in Europe in visiting those splendid art galleries which the munificence and taste of kings and nobles have established, and which are free to all the world. The taste for art has become universal, and has penetrated all classes; few are the American houses, in these days, wherein the evidences of this taste are not apparent.

[Sidenote: Music.]

Music has progressed with the other arts in popularity and culture; though America, like England, has as yet produced no really great composer. Every branch of music, however, is cultivated with us; and music as a profession is even more certainly lucrative than painting. America welcomes the most renowned singers and musicians in the world, and the highest efforts of musical composition are performed here to audiences sufficiently cultivated fully to enjoy and appreciate them. We cannot doubt that the future will still further develop the American love of all the arts; or that, in time, this continent will rival that of Europe in great artistic productions.

XVIII.

PROGRESS IN SCIENCE AND INVENTION.

[Sidenote: The Patent Office.]

The progress in practical science and invention, in this country and the civilized world, has been so amazingly rapid during the present century, that the merest hint of a few of the most important elements of that progress can alone be given. The fertility of the human intellect, in devising quicker and more exact methods of doing those things which contribute to the wealth and the pleasure of man, has accomplished results so vast and so varied since the Declaration of Independence, that the mind cannot survey the smallest portion of this field without bewilderment and wonder. If we should visit the Patent Office at Washington, and give ourselves up to a scrutiny of its records, its tabulated results, and its long rows of cases of models, we should in time gain some idea of the extent to which American minds have carried the effort of invention.

[Sidenote: Discoveries in the Exact Sciences.]

Yet the Patent Office, while it exhibits the results of American invention, fails to show anything like the total amount of useful discovery which has been achieved on this continent since the foundation of the government. There are those who discover and invent, and who do not patent. There are discoveries which cannot be circumscribed by the filling-out of blank forms, and an official restriction on their use. This is emphatically the case with discoveries in the exact sciences, which, while they have added immeasurably to the knowledge of mankind, have also attained results the most useful and practical.

[Sidenote: Meteorological Laws.]

Illustrations of this truth may be found in the progress made by such sciences as astronomy and meteorology. No one can doubt the value of the

result which accrues to human lore from a more accurate knowledge of astronomy, of the mutual influences of the solar system, and the physical character of its members. Nor can we deny that the rapid strides which have been made within thirty years in the science of meteorology are of the most immediate benefit to the material interests of men. The simple statement that the predictions of "Old Probabilities" as to the weather prove, in a large majority of instances, to be justified by the event,--founded as they are, not upon mere guesswork, but upon ascertained meteorological laws and a proved uniformity in the direction of storms,--is enough to show the importance of the recent discoveries in this field. One has only to reflect upon the changes in the course of little and of great events wrought by the weather, to be convinced of their large and permanent value.

[Sidenote: Improvements in Machines and Methods.]

We can look in no direction, however, without at once in some degree appreciating, and being astonished at, the metamorphosis which has been effected by the activity of scientific invention and discovery of the most palpably practical kind. No practical profession, trade, or industry can be named in which the improvements in machinery and methods have not been such, within the century, as to alter most of its conditions, and very greatly to multiply its efficiency and productiveness. These improvements have descended, too, from general systems to the minutest details. Cloth fabrics are not only manufactured on a very different scale and extent, but every little appliance of the machinery has been made better, and does its appointed work faster and with greater precision.

[Sidenote: Steam and Electricity.]

[Sidenote: Conveyances.]

If one were asked what two inventions made within the century have wrought the greatest changes, the reply would be prompt that they are locomotion by steam and communication by electricity. The steam-engine and the steamship have made it possible to travel around the world, if not in the eighty days required of Jules Verne's hero, at least in a hundred; while the telegraph enables us to talk with our friends at the antipodes--if such we have--within a week. What share America has had in achieving these mighty agencies is signified by the names of Fulton and Morse. Nor have other means of locomotion and communication been neglected. The horse-car has to a large extent taken the place of the omnibus and of the lumbering stage-coach; while vertical travelling, by means of the elevator, has become easy and luxurious in our day. In the making of carriages of every kind, the progress becomes very apparent when we compare the light and elegant vehicles which fill our fashionable avenues on a pleasant day, with the coaches in which Washington and Lafayette deigned to ride on state occasions.

[Sidenote: Iron Manufactures.]

In the great industries, invention has supplied the means of changing the rude ore or the raw material into every manifold form of use and ornament, in an increased production which would have filled the men of '76 with amazement. Machinery has come to do a vast amount of work which manual labor used to do; yet, by a happy compensation in the economic condition of things, human labor, far from being left in the lurch by mechanical introduction and ever increasing efficiency, is in greater

demand than before. In the melting and puddling of iron, in its casting, forging, and rolling, and especially in its turning and planing, the inventions have been, perhaps, more striking than in any other operations upon metals; and the importance of the improvements thus effected in the manufacture of iron may be appreciated when we consider to how many more precious uses iron is put than any other metal. The advances made in the working of wood, and in that noble engineering science which employs itself in the construction of canals, dikes, and bridges, are not less notable.

[Sidenote: Machines and Weapons.]

To even mention the devices by which the manufacture of cotton and woollen fabrics, of shoes, of silks, and very many other articles, has been brought from rude processes to the rapid production seen to-day at our great industrial centres, would require a volume. To America is due the sewing-machine, which in the factory and in the household has given a manifold value to labor, has cheapened time, and is assuredly one of the chief triumphs of human ingenuity. We have done our part, too, in devising deadly weapons for contending armies. The revolver, invented by Samuel Colt, made a man armed with it six times as formidable as he was before; and the breech-loader, first attempted by John Hall of Yarmouth, Massachusetts, more than seventy years ago, was generally adopted in Europe. It is said that the greater number of the military arms made in the United States for Europe are on the breech-loading system. The invention of what is called the principle of "assembling," which consists in making the various parts of a machine "in distinct pieces of fixed shape and dimensions, so that the corresponding parts are interchangeable," has brought about a revolution in the manufacture of other articles besides fire-arms. It is applied also to watches, sewing-machines, knitting-machines, and even to agricultural implements and the building of locomotive engines.

[Sidenote: Labor Saving Appliances.]

The kitchen, the farm, and the sitting-room have been invaded by labor-saving appliances so numerous and so deft as to make each of these domestic departments a sort of factory in itself. The spinning-wheel has been abandoned for the sewing and the knitting machine, and the hand-plough for the steam-plough, and the scythe for the mowing-machine, and the rude kitchen knife and spoon for an endless variety of contrivances, from the apple-parer, the egg-beater, and the bean-shelters, to the lemon-squeezers, knife-sharpeners, and coffee-mills.

[Sidenote: Various Inventions.]

It is equally vain to attempt the enumeration of the improvements in the security of movable property, the rapidly changing devices for more effective fire-alarms, the revolution in the system of fire prevention with its steam-engine and its fire-alarm telegraph, the growing efficiency of the science of aerostation, the invention of scales for weighing heavy bodies, the processes for refining the precious metals, the achieved idea of making ice by machinery, the great advance effected in the making of glass, and the vast changes which have been wrought in many respects by the perfection of india-rubber as an article of common use.

[Sidenote: Surgical Progress.]

[Sidenote: Printing and Engraving.]

Nor must we forget to hint at the discoveries which have given new effect to surgical skill--the discovery of anaesthetics, the perfection of artificial limbs, the repair of the body, and the valuable method of lithotrity; while even the match need not be disdained as one of the chief inventions of the century. Paper, too, and engraving, and printing (with all its complications of stereotyping, electrotyping, and heliotyping), photography (with its constant improvements), can only be mentioned to open the mind to a wide vista of marvellous triumphs. We have but to glance along the stalls of a modern book-store, to appreciate that the arts of printing and engraving have made a more rapid progress during the past hundred years than during all the previous centuries since the invention of type; while it may fairly be said that the United States can at last boast that not only is her literature worthy to be compared with that of England, but that it is as well printed, illustrated, and bound, and is presented on home-made paper as elegant and as durable, as are the choicest publications of London and Paris.

XIX.

POLITICAL CHANGES.

[Sidenote: Sources of Government.]

President Woolsey has forcibly remarked that states and forms of government have had mainly two sources of origin. They have either "slowly built themselves up for ages, finding support in historical causes, and in past political habits"; or, they have been "the artificial results of political theory." England presents the most conspicuous modern example of the former class; while France, since the Revolution, may be regarded as the chief modern example of the latter. And as it was with England, our mother-country, so it has been, and is, with us. It is true that the organism of the United States was the immediate result of revolution, and is founded upon a constitution that is written and fixed, or only with great pains and difficulty modified. Yet, if we search further and deeper for the materials of which our national fabric has been constructed, we shall easily recognize that our freedom, like that of England, has really "broadened slowly down from precedent to precedent."

[Sidenote: Gradual Growth of the American System.]

The growth towards American independence did not begin, the seeds of it were not sown, either at Bunker's Hill or at Philadelphia. Indeed the growth had then reached the period of fruitfulness. The progression towards an independent nation, and a free nation, began at Plymouth and at Jamestown. The Constitution only made articulate the spirit which had been growing for more than a century, and it still left an unwritten law set up by custom, habit, and characteristics most aptly nourished to the ends reached in 1776, 1787, and 1789. While our written constitution was made, we still retained the common law of England as the basis of our own, and, like England, proceeded gradually to build upon this broad

foundation the superstructure of statute.

[Sidenote: Origin of the Government.]

If, therefore, the origin of our government was in one respect revolutionary, it was not revolutionary as being sudden, accidental, and without preparation. The revolution was, in fact, almost formal in a political sense. The same people, the same traditions remained, and the same growth went on. There was a new bond, binding the colonies together, and holding them the more sturdily to purposes already formed and undertaken. Yet it was certain that a new government, starting forth, as ours did, at a period when political theories of diverse and contradictory import were engaged in a very active struggle in Europe, would meet with unusual difficulties, and be beset with grave dangers from the outset.

[Sidenote: The Contest of Diverse Political Ideas.]

We note, therefore, in the very body which framed the constitution, the rise of the contest out of which have come the most momentous changes which our polity has since undergone. Happily for us, we have had to witness no sudden and startling alterations in the form or spirit of our institutions. What changes have occurred--and some have occurred of very high and grave importance--have come gradually, have been foreseen. The victories of parties in this country have never been by *_coups d'etat_*. They have been won by light of day, with banners flying and trumpets sounding. We have not been subject to that dread of sudden calamity, of a bean-stalk growth of anarchy in a night, which haunts the French to this day, and which makes both kings and peoples in continental Europe sensitive to every untoward rumor.

[Sidenote: Political Changes.]

Of all the political changes which the United States have undergone during the ninety-nine years of our national career, the most conspicuous, perhaps, is that which has tended to increase the powers of the central government, and diminish those of the several States. The contest between those who believed in a strong central power and those who jealously defended the largest share of independence for the several States compatible with the bond of federation, began in the Constitutional Convention; and the instrument which was there framed, after long discussion and many perils, was really a compromise between these two principles. On the one hand, the equality and dignity of the States were conceded in the structure of the Senate, in the division of the electoral votes by States, and in the "reserved rights" of the States, which have been so often and so strenuously insisted upon since.

[Sidenote: Early Political Parties.]

On the other, the words of the Constitution throughout imply that the United States constitute more than a league--a nation; and the money power was lodged in the lower house of Congress, elected by the people of the nation, according to their population. The opposing ideas regarding the powers of the States and of the government, respectively, gave rise to the two first political parties, the Federalist and the Republican; and these have had as successors parties which have fought the same battle over and over again. The later Whigs and Republicans, on the one hand, and the Democrats, on the other, have usually been the champions, respectively, of a strong central government, and of State

rights. The older Democrats insisted on a strict construction of the Constitution, and opposed the undertaking of internal improvements and the maintenance of a national bank by the general government; and for the first sixty years of this century the State rights principle prevailed in national policy with little interruption.

[Sidenote: Rights of the States.]

[Sidenote: Tendency towards Centralization.]

It happened that the social institution and evil of slavery, which had become confined to the Southern States, needed the defence of the doctrine of State rights for its continuance. Nullification, in 1833, and secession, in 1861, were the ultimate conclusions of that doctrine, practically applied for the purpose of sustaining the system of human bondage. A State had a right, it was said, to break her "compact" with the Union; and the Southern States, following in the line of this doctrine, did attempt to secede in order to maintain slavery. The war which followed was the rock upon which the doctrine of State rights split. The tide at once turned towards a strong central government. Extraordinary powers, civil, military, and financial, were exercised to put down the rebellion; and some of these powers, once assumed by the general government, have been continued to this day. They have been greatly strengthened by the enormous patronage which has accumulated in the hands of the Executive; by the army of office-holders which, scattered through the land, is subject to the influence of the central power.

[Sidenote: Results of Emancipation.]

[Sidenote: The Fifteenth Amendment.]

Connected with this change are some other changes, scarcely less important. One of these is the establishment, throughout the Union, of universal male suffrage. The emancipation of the slaves wrought a social and economic change the final results of which are still problematical. It also introduced a new political element, by endowing millions of ignorant men with electoral rights for their own protection. Gradually yet steadily through our political history, restrictions upon the suffrage have been swept away. At first, not only was there a property qualification in many of the States, but foreigners and negroes were in some of them altogether excluded from the polls. The fifteenth amendment to the Constitution crowned the edifice of universal suffrage in the United States; and the floodgates, once open, can never be shut again. A set of men once armed with the vote cannot be deprived of it: and all the efforts of Know-nothing movements will probably be vain, whether directed against the freedman, the Chinaman, or the European emigrant. The only way to meet the evils which accompany universal suffrage is by paths of education, and the creation of a pure and sincere public spirit.

[Sidenote: The Political Changes Gradual.]

[Sidenote: Changes Effected by the Civil War.]

It may be said, then, of the few great political changes which have come over the spirit of our body politic, that they have been, like the English revolutions, gradual, and, if on one occasion violent, at least long contemplated and foreshadowed. On questions of commercial finance,

we are still where we were half a century ago. The antagonistic principles of a protective tariff and of free trade are still struggling for the mastery. The greatest changes--that produced on the government in aggrandizing it at the expense of the States, and that produced on the South by freeing and enfranchising the blacks--were brought about by the civil war. The evil results which have flowed from them, mingled with great good, are evident in many ways. Is it too much to hope that, a generation hence, those of us who survive will look back gratefully upon a survival of the good only wrought by these changes; and upon a completed reform of the civil service, a purified government and Congress, a people no longer eager to grow suddenly rich by wild speculation, but content with the moderate prosperity attained by steady enterprise and wholesome trade; and a South educated and reconciled, with its civil and political freedom assured by its own enforcement of equal law?

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