ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

LEGISLATURE OF MASSACHUSETTS,

At their Request,

ON THE

HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

BIRTH OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

BY

FRANCIS C. GRAY.

Boston:
DUTTON AND WENTWORTH......PRINTERS TO THE STATE.
1832.
ORATIO

CEREMONIES OF MY SACRAMENTS

SACRAMENTUM HYMIANUM

RECEIPT OF FIRST COMMUNION

FRANCIS D'OLRY
Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

IN SENATE, FEBRUARY 23, 1832.

Ordered, That Messrs. J. T. Austin, and Hastings, with such as the House may join, be a Committee to present the thanks of the Legislature to the Hon. Francis C. Gray, for the instructive and eloquent Oration delivered yesterday by him, at their request, and to ask a copy for the press.

Sent down for concurrence.

CHARLES CALHOUN, Clerk.

IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEB. 23, 1832.

Concurred.—And Messrs. Buckingham, of Boston,
Dewitt, of Oxford—and
Crocker, of Barnstable, are joined.

L. S. CUSHING, Clerk.
No one, whose memory can carry him back to the close of the last century, though it were only the period of his childhood, has forgotten, or ever will forget the effect of the sudden cry, which then rang through the nation, that Washington was dead. It was not merely the shock occasioned by a great and unexpected calamity. It was not merely the excitement arising from universal sympathy in a misfortune common to all. It was not merely the solemn pause produced by the reflection, that a great man had fallen among us. But he had fallen, whom the unanimous opinion of his fellow-citizens regarded as the greatest and the best, whose name, during nearly half a century, had been intimately connected with almost every important event in the most eventful period of our history, who had been summoned in moments of extreme difficulty and imminent danger, both in
peace and in war, by the spontaneous voice of his
countrymen to place himself at their head, and who
with a wisdom, moderation, and energy rarely
united, had led them in war, through unexampled
sufferings and signal victories, to acknowledged
independence; and in peace, through little less than
anarchy, to perfect union under a free and efficient
government; in every vicissitude of fortune always
the same, undaunted in danger, unsubdued by ad-
versity, undazzled by success; on every call of his
country, equal to the occasion, equal to himself.

After having retired from the office of Chief
Magistrate to the domestic quiet, which he had
long wished for, full of years, but undecayed in
body or in mind, distinguished by all the honors,
which his country could bestow on him, and far
more distinguished by the services which he had
rendered to his country, when political hostility had
ceased, and calumny had been shamed into silence;
at the moment when, after a short interval of secu-
ritv, new dangers seemed to be gathering over our
heads, and domestic dissension and foreign war to be
at once impending, and when all his fellow-citizens
had turned, as one man, to him, with entire confi-
dence, a confidence which had been so often reposed
without being once disappointed, that at last it had
become universal and undoubting; while all eyes
were thus fixed on him, full of expectation as well as of gratitude, at that moment, he fell. The calamity came without warning of the danger, and struck the whole people with dismay. Their feelings struggled for utterance. The voice of wailing was everywhere heard. The churches were opened and thronged. The ministers of religion sought to dispense consolation by dwelling on the virtues of him, whom we had lost, the only consolation to which bereavement can listen; and said of him all that man can say of man, without idolatry, holding him up as the special instrument of Divine Providence for working out our political salvation, the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, which led us out of bondage. All the gifted of the land were summoned to speak his praises. Glowing with intense emotion, and assured of the entire sympathy of their hearers, they abandoned themselves to the enthusiasm of the moment, with no other restraint on the full expression of their feelings, than the want of words fervid enough to give them utterance; and imagination was exhausted in seeking language to evince the strength of their devotion to the memory of the man, who was first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow-citizens, the Father and the Saviour of his country. It seemed as if the whole nation were kneeling
round his grave, and pouring forth their grief, admiration, and gratitude, in all the ecstasy of recent bereavement.

How just, how touching this spontaneous and irrepressible tribute of feeling! But the time for eulogy is past. And the life of that great man has now become matter of history. As such we are to consider it. Standing as we do, at the distance of a century from his birth, and at that of a generation from his death, and knowing him only by the record of his actions, we may look on it with as much impartiality, as it can ever be looked on by his countrymen.

From the elevated position we now occupy, let us turn our eyes back then on the history of the past century, to observe the progress of America since the birth of Washington, and the influence of his life and character on the destinies of his country and of mankind. What was his country? Eleven small British colonies, (for Georgia had then no existence, and Delaware no separate name,) were scattered along the shores of the Atlantic, within the present limits of the United States. They extended inland only to a short distance, their remotest outposts hardly reaching the foot of the Alleghany Mountains. Behind them was an unexplored wilderness, from the recesses of which, savage tribes,
trained to war and plunder, were ever ready, at the instigation of an ambitious chief, or the temptation of a favorable opportunity, to spring forth on their inhabitants, without warning and without mercy. On the north and on the south were the Colonies of France and Spain, both ancient rivals of Great Britain, and according to the universal opinion of that age, its natural as well as hereditary enemies; so that every contest between those nations brought war home to the doors of the colonists, who thus suffered from all the intrigues of European policy. These dangerous neighbors, too, by supplying the Indians with arms, and affording them council, and sometimes direct aid, rendered their aggressions more frequent and more formidable.

The Colonies, while surrounded by enemies at home and exposed to attacks from abroad, were subjected, so far as related to their trade, both foreign and domestic, to the power of a remote government, which was not only too ignorant both of their condition and their wants to adapt its laws to the promotion of their welfare, if such had been its purpose; but which professed no such design, avowedly and systematically exercising its power over them to restrain and limit their domestic industry and commercial enterprise, for the sole emolument of the inhabitants of Great Britain. At the
time of which I am speaking, the spirit of monopoly in the mother country had just taken a new alarm in consequence of a report of the lords of trade, setting forth the condition of the Colonies. It is dated exactly one week before the event we commemorate. From this it appears that wool, flax, and hemp were raised in small quantities by the farmers, and wrought into coarse cloth and ropes, in their own dwellings for their own use. Beside these household manufactures, and a number of establishments for refining sugar, for distilling, and for tanning; there were several forges and furnaces for making iron, and in all America, one slitting mill, one nail mill, and one paper mill, the last of which produced paper enough to sell for nearly a thousand dollars a year. The inhabitants of the northern Colonies also had recently begun to make hats, and had even exported some, of which great complaints were made by the hatters of London, as interfering with their business. On the whole, their lordships express the opinion, that undertakings of this nature are detrimental to the trade, navigation, and manufactures of Great Britain, and that some expedient should be found to "divert the thoughts of the Colonists" from such proceedings, and they recommend for this purpose to encourage the production of naval stores.
The Parliament, however, had a different mode of "diverting the thoughts of the colonists" from manufacturing and exporting the produce of their soil; and this was to make it criminal. It was enacted, under severe penalties, that neither hats nor wool, nor any manufactures of wool, produced in America, should be water borne, or laden in any vehicle or on any animal for transportation, even within the Colonies themselves; and that every slitting mill and nail mill should be abated as a common nuisance. Their foreign commerce was subjected to restraints no less odious and oppressive. They were not allowed to trade with the East Indies, or with any part of Europe north of Cape Finisterre, excepting Great Britain itself; and were prevented from opposing or discouraging the importation of slaves into their own territories, lest the market or the profit of the British slave dealer should thus be diminished.

Only two of the Colonies had the right of choosing their own chief magistrates. The others had Governors appointed in England, either by the crown or by the proprietors of the Colony, who possessed also respectively the right to annul, within a limited time, any laws passed by the Colonial Assemblies.
The Colonies were not bound together by any other tie than their common allegiance to the British crown. Indeed, New England was entirely separated from the southern Colonies for some time from their first establishment, by the Dutch and Swedish settlements between them, and long after this obstacle was removed, they had little direct intercourse. The several Colonies of New England had been united in the preceding century for defense against the Indians, but this confederation had long been dissolved, and the disputes between Massachusetts and her neighbors, in relation to their boundaries, had tended to alienate them from each other, and to make them more sensible of their dependence on the British government, to which they had been obliged to appeal for a settlement of these controversies.

Such was America; a number of feeble scattered Colonies surrounded by enemies, disunited, dependent. Possessing, indeed, in its habits of industry and enterprise, in its domestic, civil, literary, and religious institutions, the germs of its subsequent greatness, but faintly developed; crushed beneath the oppressions of the Colonial system, and in this part of the country, still languishing under the influence of that connexion of civil with ecclesiastical power, which is everywhere degrading to re-
ligion, and dangerous to liberty. Such was America. Look on it now. What do you behold? One great, united, powerful, prosperous, free people, without a master, without an enemy, without a rival. The Alleghanies, which were then your utmost limits, are now in the midst of your population; the vast region beyond them, at that time a wilderness, is crowded with villages, and towns, and cities, swarming with inhabitants, burdened with plenty;—the Mississippi whose origin and course were not then known, is now a common highway; and the still more remote territory, then unexplored, may I not say, undiscovered, is now entirely subjected to your laws. Your manufactures, relieved from the monopoly of the Colonial system, have extended with inconceivable rapidity;—your commerce peoples the ocean;—enterprize and industry in every pursuit are all unshackled;—and under the protection of a free government and equal laws, the institutions then so feebly developed, have shot up, and spread abroad, and covered the whole land, and blossomed and brought forth fruit abundantly, the fruit of knowledge and of virtue.

But general expressions can give no idea of our progress. Fancy itself flags, and lingers, and halts behind the truth. Look only at our population. A hundred years ago, it did not exceed seven hun-
dred thousand. At this day, it is more than thirteen millions. Consider, too, the difference between our progress in this respect, during the first half and the last half of the century just ended. The first fifty years added to the existing population two millions, making in all, nearly three millions of inhabitants in 1782. The last fifty years have added to that number more than ten millions. The whole shipping of America a century ago, was not one hundred thousand tons. At present, though the revolutionary war almost swept it from the ocean, and it suffered greatly in the last, it approaches two million tons. In the whale fishery alone, thirteen hundred tons only of shipping were then employed, and it now gives occupation to sixty thousand tons. Our whole exports and imports, which did not exceed one million sterling, have increased twenty fold. There are no sufficient data for estimating our progress in other respects; but who can look round him without perceiving, that in domestic comforts, in internal improvements, in wealth, in knowledge, and in all the arts of life, it has been far more rapid, even than in population or in trade; and that we have advanced with constantly accelerated speed, during the whole period. It began with achieving the work of a century in a generation, and it seems to
end with crowding the work of generations into single years.

But the greatest blessings, for which this century is indebted to the last, those which are in no small measure the origin, and the chief security of all the rest, are our independence of foreign power and our admirable system of government; and no one man had so much influence in establishing and securing these, as George Washington. To his memory this day is consecrated. There is in the mind of every one of you a distinct impression of his life and character. Let us call up the picture and place it before us, not to examine its details, but to contemplate its just proportions, its admirable harmony, its lights and its shadows, its most prominent peculiarities and its general and grand effect. I can point out, indeed, no excellence in his character, no event in his life, which is not already perfectly well known to you. But as the eye recurs again and again to one of the master pieces of genius, and dwells on it longer and longer, not to discover any thing new in it, but to make itself still more intimate with what is already familiar, to imbibe something of the pure taste which it exhibits, and to catch a portion of the inspiration breathed round it; we may for the same purpose, or rather for the higher purpose of exalting our con-
ceptions of moral excellence and of purifying not the taste only, but the heart and the life, devote ourselves to the repeated and assiduous contemplation of that masterpiece of creation, a great, good man.

From a boy, he was distinguished for activity and intelligence; and in the business of surveying land, to which he early applied himself, he executed every commission intrusted to him with the utmost promptness and accuracy. At the age of nineteen, he held the office of an Adjutant General, in Virginia, and he seems early to have felt a strong predilection for a military life, inspired perhaps by the narratives of his elder brother, Lawrence Washington, who had served in the expedition against Carthagena, under Admiral Vernon, and had given the name of that commander to his estate on the banks of the Potomac.

In 1753, a fort was built on the Ohio, by the French, in pursuance of their policy of connecting Canada with Louisiana, by a chain of military posts, and thus preventing the British colonists from forming settlements west of the Alleghanies; on being informed of which fact, the Governor of Virginia commissioned Washington to carry to the French commander a remonstrance against his occupying a station within the chartered limits.
of that State. This was a three months' journey through a wilderness occupied by hostile and suspected tribes; and it is obvious, that the commission did not express the young officer's most important duty, that of making himself acquainted with the face of the country and the condition of the fort.

The report of his proceedings, drawn up by him within twenty-four hours after his return, is a perfectly clear, simple, and unpretending narrative of his journey; but the facts related in it evince great energy, sagacity, and perseverance in accomplishing every thing expected of him, and singular address in his intercourse with the Indians. It added greatly to his reputation, and we find him the next year in the command of the regiment sent from Virginia to dispossess the French of this fort. Encountering on his advance, a large body of the enemy, who had received reinforcements from Canada, he retreated to a stockade, which he had constructed for the security of his baggage, a day or two before, and there defended himself during the whole day against a force four times the number of his own; resolutely refusing to surrender his little stockade in the woods, on any other terms, than that his troops should march out with the honors of war and retire unmolested, retaining all their arms
and all their baggage, to the settled part of Virginia. This defeat was so very like a victory, that the Legislature of Virginia passed a vote, expressing its thanks to him and his officers, and its high sense of their gallant conduct on this occasion.

In the course of the same year, an order having been received from England directing, that when the king's troops and those of the Colonies were in service together, the British officers should take rank of the Americans, without regard to seniority; Colonel Washington considering this order an insult to the Americans, indignantly threw up his commission.

In 1755, he accepted the invitation of General Braddock, to accompany him as a volunteer Aid, in his expedition against the French, on the Ohio, his services being deemed important, both on account of his military reputation, and his acquaintance with that part of the country. On the march, he was seized with a fever, which endangered his life, and compelled him to remain for some days behind the army. But by great exertions, he re-joined it the day before the battle of the Monongahela, and though still in feeble health, immediately resumed his duties. The fate of that battle is well known. The British troops fell into an Indian ambuscade, and fled in terror from their unseen enemies. The
chief of the British staff, present on that day, and escaping alive, in his original account of the battle, after stating in general terms, that "the officers were sacrificed by their unparalleled good behaviour, advancing some times in bodies, and some times singly, to encourage the soldiers, but to no purpose"—selects one name, and one only, for special commendation: "Mr. Washington," he says, "had two horses shot under him, and his clothes shot through in several places, he behaving the whole time with the greatest courage and resolution." Washington was the only officer on horseback who was not killed or wounded, and it is said, that from that time the Indians considered him as bearing a charmed life.* The evening before the battle, a considerable party of friendly Indian warriors had offered their services to the British General, who in opposition to the strenuous advice of Washington, rejected the offer with disdain. Had it been accepted, the fortune of the day must have been different, and the expedition successful; and

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* There is a tradition in the Western country, that when Washington visited it, still a wilderness, in 1774, to examine some lands, which he had purchased there, a party of Indian warriors came to his little encampment, one of whom told him, that he had seen him before at Braddock's field, where he deliberately aimed at him sixteen times, (so runs the tale,) and was sure of having hit him repeatedly; but finding him still unhurt, he told his warriors, that the tall chief could not be wounded, and that to shoot at him was wasting powder.
the inhabitants of Virginia would have been saved from three years of exposure to Indian war.

As this defeat left the whole frontier open to the incursions of the savages, instigated and directed by the French, a regiment was immediately raised for its defence, the command of which was given to Washington, who was at the same time appointed commander-in-chief of all the forces raised or to be raised in Virginia, with the privilege of naming his own officers. In this command, he displayed the utmost skill and vigilance; but it was obviously impossible, with only seven hundred men, to defend an unfortified frontier of three hundred and fifty miles in extent against such an enemy; and his representations of the sufferings of the inhabitants, of the insufficiency of his force, and the impossibility of protecting the settlements completely, without reducing the French fort on the Ohio, are frequent, earnest, and forcible. At last, in the year 1758, this reduction was accomplished by an expedition, in which he joined; and it is stated, that within four years after that time, more than four thousand families returned to their habitations, on the frontiers of the southern States, from which they had been previously driven, by the incursions of the Indians. On his return from this expedition, no further active duty remaining to be
performed, he resigned his commission, and retired
to Mount Vernon, which his brother had bequeath-
ed to him a few years before. The rest of his life
is part of the history of his country.

The expulsion of the French from the northern
Provinces during the war, which ended in the
peace of 1763, is the first great epoch in the Colo-
nial history of the past century. Until that event,
the cloud of Indian hostility was constantly im-
pending over the whole western frontier, black and
threatening; and now and then a flash would burst
from it, to blast some peaceful settlement, leaving
only its reeking and blackened ruins to tell the
story of its fate. The danger to which the colo-
nists were exposed from their civilized enemies,
though less constant, was not less serious. The
expeditions fitted out from Louisburg, to invade
their territories, destroy their fisheries, and inter-
rupt their commerce, called for their utmost exer-
tions to repress them; and, as the only effectual
means of accomplishing this object, they undertook
the reduction of that formidable fortress. The
attempt was successful and most glorious; but it
required efforts and sacrifices, which left those, who
had supported it with most zeal, and especially
Massachusetts, greatly exhausted. Happily, it was
the exhaustion of youthful vigour, which needs but
one night’s sleep to repair it. The very next year saw the mighty armament, which was fitted out by France, to revenge the capture of Louisburg, on New England, sweeping across the Atlantic, and threatening nothing less than utter devastation. Our Fathers looked to Great Britain for aid; but no aid came. The enemy was already on their coast with a force far greater, in proportion to the resources of the country it was destined to attack, than the grand Armada which threatened England in the days of Queen Elizabeth. It spread the same universal alarm, it roused the same dauntless resolution; and it was destroyed by the same power. “He blew with his wind, and they were scattered.” The capture of Fort William Henry, with the massacre that followed it, in 1757, a disaster occasioned by the supineness of the British general, left our whole northern frontier exposed to the incursions of the savages, and spread terror throughout New England. The whole population rushed to arms, and in the succeeding campaign, nearly one third of the inhabitants of Massachusetts, capable of military service, were actually in the field; while the taxes levied on the citizens of Boston amounted to two thirds the whole income of their real estate. The sufferings of the southern Colonies have been already mentioned. It was in this
school of Indian warfare, that Washington was trained to arms. This it was, which inured him to hardship, and accustomed him to the exercise of that caution, foresight, and celerity, of that watchfulness, in discovering every movement of his enemies, and that sagacity in detecting its object, which he afterwards uniformly exhibited. This it was, which by affording opportunity for the display of his military talents, and also of his wisdom and firmness, his scrupulous devotion to duty, and his indefatigable activity, secured the confidence of his fellow-citizens, and pointed him out to them as their leader in the war of the revolution.

Through all these embarrassments, difficulties, sufferings, and dangers, the colonists struggled onward with irresistible spirit and energy; gathering new strength at every step, and constantly increasing in numbers, wealth, and power. Already their population was more than doubled, exceeding a million and a half. In the year 1731, a writer describing their rapid progress, had ventured to foretell, that New England, alone, would be strong enough to give the law to all the Indian nations within a century from that time. This was then thought a bold prophecy; but within a single generation it was accomplished. Deprived of the supplies and aid formerly received from the French in
Canada, the Indians ceased to be formidable, and
the Colonies, no longer surrounded by enemies,
sprang forward with an impulse, which was an
omen of their high destiny. The spirit of British
monopoly, which had been alarmed thirty years be-
fore, might well be startled then, and very naturally
determined, that the Acts of trade, restraining
the commerce of the Americans, should be rigidly
enforced. This excited great discontents in all
our commercial towns, and occasioned frequent
evasions of those laws; but it was only when the
British government attempted to impose direct
taxes on the Colonies, that the authority of Par-
liament over them was denied and resisted. The
controversy, which ensued, led to the assertion by
the Parliament, of its right to bind them in all cases
whatever, and to a denial on their part of its right
to bind them in any case whatever. They main-
tained, that while Great Britain and the Colonies
were parts of one empire, and owed allegiance to
the same King, each possessed its own independent
Legislature, whose authority was strictly confined
to the territory within which it was chosen; and
that the British Parliament had no more right in
any case to bind a Colony, than a Colonial Assem-
bly had to bind Great Britain. The Parliament
finding that the attempt to levy a duty on tea, for
the mere purpose of vindicating its claim, was met by a resistance, which no threats, and no enactments could overcome, determined to subdue that resistance by the sword. The first blow was struck, and the first blood was shed here in Massachusetts, and from that day the independence of the Colonies was inevitable. This was not then apparent, for who could tell beforehand whether the cry for liberty or death rose, as it has so often done, from the excitement of a momentary enthusiasm, or from the stern resolution of the martyr. But we, who look back on the struggle, and judge of the characters of those engaged in it by their deeds, must feel assured, that it never could have ended in the subjection of America, but by the extermination of its inhabitants.

In the controversy preceding the war, Washington, who was a member of the Legislature of Virginia, embraced the cause of his countrymen with characteristic zeal and decision; and was appointed a delegate to the first Congress, which met at Philadelphia, in 1774. He was there constantly employed on committees for the defence of the country, until the breaking out of the civil war rendered it necessary to appoint a military leader, when he was unanimously chosen Commander-in-Chief of all the forces raised or to be raised in
America, "with full power and authority to act as he should think for the good and welfare of the service." On being informed of this appointment, the next day, the very day of the battle of Bunker Hill, by the President of Congress, he rose in his place, and expressing his distrust of his abilities to fulfil the high and responsible duty imposed on him, and his determination to accept no compensation for his services, he submitted to the will of the Congress in accepting the office.

He hastened to Cambridge, and there first assumed the command of the American army, which he found to consist of excellent materials, but with little idea of discipline, with no more powder than was necessary to afford nine cartridges to each man, with few bayonets, without proper clothing, and almost without organization. His own peculiar spirit of discipline and of exact method, and his indefatigable diligence, aided by the zeal of the troops themselves, and the patriotic exertions of all the neighboring towns, soon, in a great measure, supplied these defects. Repeated plans were devised for attacking the British in Boston, but were found to be impracticable, and the town remained in their occupation till the spring of the next year. In the meantime the practice, which had always prevailed in New England, of enlisting troops for a
single campaign, had rendered it necessary to raise
a new army; and it was not till the beginning of
March, that the General felt himself strong enough,
with the aid of 6,000 Massachusetts Militia, called
out by him for the occasion, to seize and fortify the
heights of Dorchester, which commanded the har-
bor; and thus made it necessary for the British to
dislodge him from them, or to evacuate the town;
since by remaining till his fortifications should be
completed, they would lose the power of evacuating
it at their pleasure. It was by a movement pre-
cisely similar to this, that the military genius of
Napoleon first displayed itself at Toulon. After one
attempt to attack the American position, which was
defeated by a storm, the British troops evacuated
the town; and thus ended the war in Massachu-
setts. The blood of her sons was afterwards in-
deed poured forth like water in every conflict, but
it was not again shed on their native soil, within
sight of their own dwellings, under the eyes of their
mothers, their wives, and their children. To lib-
erate this City and this State from the presence of a
hostile army was the first great achievement of our
illustrious leader. Surely then, neither Massachu-
setts nor Boston will ever be the last to do justice
to his fame.
The time would fail me to enumerate his public services, and I can only call your attention to a few of the instances, in which his talents and character were exhibited in the most conspicuous manner, or were most effective in deciding the fortunes of his country. His high military qualities were never more strikingly displayed, than during the struggle between his feeble and fluctuating band of soldiers, suffering under the evils resulting from short enlistments, and from the want of ammunition, clothing, and provisions; and the numerous and well appointed British army, which marched from New York through New Jersey, for the purpose of taking possession of Philadelphia, and of destroying the American force, if it should venture to intercept their march. By a series of the most masterly movements, multiplying his numbers by activity, and keeping his shadow of an army always together in the most imposing form, he avoided an engagement, and yet impeded their progress to such a degree, that they did not reach the Delaware till December; when they found that he had crossed it, securing all the boats and breaking down the bridges, and had so guarded all the fording places, that they could not prudently attempt the passage, and thereupon they went into winter quarters in the towns on the eastern bank of the
river. At the end of the year, the period for which most of the American troops had enlisted, would expire, while the general despondence, occasioned by their retreat, rendered it extremely difficult to obtain recruits, so that the American force seemed about to dissolve of itself, and leave the way open for the enemy to pursue their march unmolested to Philadelphia. Under these circumstances, Washington formed the daring project of crossing the Delaware by night in three divisions, and attacking the British on three separate points, at the same moment. Though two of the divisions were unable to effect the passage of the river, that under his own immediate command was completely successful, gaining the battle of Trenton, a brilliant achievement, which revived the drooping spirits of the people, and induced the Americans to gather round the standard, which no longer seemed to be entirely deserted by victory.

By the influence of this success, combined with that of his personal solicitations, he prevailed on the troops from New England, whose term of service had expired, to remain with the army, and posted himself at Trenton. The enemy determined to regain the ground they had lost, and having received large reinforcements, advanced on him with an overwhelming force. The armies were encamp-
ed in sight of each other, while the Delaware was so obstructed by ice, as to render a retreat across it difficult under any circumstances, and in the presence of such an enemy impossible. The British waited only for the dawn to make their attack, not doubting but that the next day would see him a prisoner in their hands. And where did it see him? He had silently quitted his camp in the night, leaving fires lighted, and guards to go the usual rounds, had made a circuitous march along their left flank, and was attacking their rear, and gaining the battle of Princeton, which drove them for that season from the banks of the Delaware.

Early in the next Spring, he occupied and fortified the heights of Middlebrook, so as to render an attack on him in that position extremely hazardous for his enemies, while it was no less hazardous for them to attempt crossing the Delaware, while he was hanging on the side of the mountains in their rear. In vain did they exhaust their ingenuity and address in endeavoring to draw him from his position, till finally they were obliged to return to New York, from which they had marched out the year before, with a confident and not unreasonable expectation, of destroying the American army, and taking possession of Philadelphia, without having accomplished either of those objects; but having been entirely
foiled by an adversary never for a moment capable of meeting them in the field, yet who, by his activity and perseverance in harrying and impeding their march, by his secrecy and celerity in surprising their posts, by his watchfulness in discovering and promptness in seizing every opportunity for attacking them in detail, by his resolute enterprize and steady courage, in prosecuting every such attack, and finally by his skill in selecting a position where he could neither be assailed nor left in the rear by them without extreme danger, and his prudence in maintaining it, in spite of every artifice and temptation, had supplied all other deficiencies, and obtained a complete victory; winning, I will not say two battles merely, but two campaigns. It was throughout a constant triumph of intellectual over physical superiority, and contributed greatly to the acquisition of that high reputation for military talent among his fellow-citizens, his enemies, and foreign governments, which became, like every thing else he possessed or acquired, an instrument for the service of his country. The manner in which it thus operated, is strikingly exemplified by the effect on the French government of the battle of Germantown, in which he had attacked the British in their own lines, with the most flattering prospect of success, until the want of that exact discipline,
which it was impossible for his new levies to possess, conspired with the unfavorable state of the weather to change the fortune of the day. The news of this action, and that of the surrender of Burgoyne, were received in Paris on the same day, and communicated at once to the French Ministry, who immediately requested the American Commissioners to renew their proposal for a treaty of alliance; and in conversing with them on the subject of their recent triumphs, the Prime Minister, Count Vergennes declared, "that nothing struck him so much as General Washington's attacking and giving battle to General Howe's army; that to bring an army raised within a year to do this, promised every thing."

His firmness, his patience, his activity, his resources in difficulty and in suffering were abundantly evinced, while his army was in winter quarters at Valley Forge. Destitute of the most essential articles of clothing, and even of shoes, so that their march over the ice and snow of winter could be traced by the blood of their feet; obliged to bring their fuel from the forest on their own backs, without blankets to cover them, or even straw to raise them from the damp and frozen ground, and often for days together without food, these defenders of our liberties endured sufferings of which the
most wretched inhabitants of our crowded cities, and even the inmates of our most neglected prisons have no experience and no conception. Want and exposure brought on disease, and the hospitals, though themselves unprovided with common comforts, or even necessaries, were crowded with the sick and the dying. A large portion of the troops were altogether incapable of service, and had the enemy advanced on them in any force, they could have found no safety either in retreat or resistance, but must have dispersed at once, or surrendered at discretion.

The task of finding a remedy for all these evils seemed to devolve on the General alone; for at that time, little aid or support was afforded him by Congress. On the contrary, they had rendered the commissariat entirely inefficient, by making the deputies responsible directly to themselves, and not to the head of the department; and the most earnest expostulations of Washington could not induce them to re-establish it on a proper footing, till the army was at length visited by a committee of that body, who witnessed its sufferings. During this period, it was necessary to support the troops by military requisitions on the inhabitants of the neighboring country; a means of supply, which the General felt to be in its very nature, temporary
and precarious, and to which he resorted with the utmost reluctance, as well from an apprehension of its consequences, and from an unwillingness to strip the inhabitants of the provisions laid in for the use of their families, as from a conviction, that the only effectual mode of obtaining permanent supplies, was by voluntary contract, and that, even when coercion was requisite, it ought to be applied by the civil authority, and not by military force. His representations to this effect, were not listened to, his forbearance was censured, and he was ordered to exercise rigorously his power of seizure, and expected to rely on it for subsistence.

In the midst of these difficulties, a few officers of rank and several members of Congress, some of them of no small influence, were exerting their utmost efforts to prepare the way for depriving him of his command. One motive for this no doubt may have been an honest apprehension, that his personal influence with the army and the people, gave him a power too great to be intrusted to any one man, and which might at some future time be abused for the subversion of liberty, an apprehension, which there was nothing in the character or conduct of Washington to justify, but for which there is unfortunately too much apology in the history of mankind. Some of the participators in the scheme,
however, were too little scrupulous as to the means they adopted, for accomplishing it, to challenge any great respect for their motives. He was neither ignorant of these attacks, nor insensible to them; but according to his usual practice, he took no public notice of them whatever, confiding for his vindication, in the justice of his country; a confidence not disappointed; for when it became necessary, in furtherance of this project, for those engaged in it to sound the feelings of the army and of the public; all their insinuations were met by the most determined incredulity, and the slightest suggestion of their purpose repelled with such astonishment and indignation, that the plan was soon abandoned as utterly hopeless.

Under the pressure of all these accumulated evils, gathering round him at the same moment, as if to overwhelm him, we see him maintaining, in the presence of his little army, a firm and tranquil demeanor; discharging, with his accustomed activity and precision, all the duties of an accomplished general, at once watching every movement of his adversaries, and carefully concealing from them his own designs and his own weakness; preserving order and discipline among his soldiers, amid all their hardships, evincing indefatigable diligence in his efforts to supply their wants, inspiring them
with confidence in him, in their country, and in themselves, by his energy and composure; and increasing their already devoted attachment to his person, by fellowship and sympathy with them in suffering, the strongest bond, which binds man to man.

If we follow him to the solitude of his tent, we there find him constantly engaged in representing to Congress and to the Governors of the States, the melancholy condition of his army, pointing out to them the mode in which they might respectively contribute to its relief, and urging them to zealous and united efforts for this purpose, by every motive of interest, of justice, and of patriotism, and this with an earnestness of importunity, which, however ineffectual for a time, could not ultimately fail of success; and leaving, with more entire self-devotion, than the great Athenian leader, leaving the most wanton and unjust attacks on his character, unanswered and unnoticed, in the zeal of his ex-postulations for his country; all the while fully aware of the dangers and difficulties, in which he was involved, yet nothing daunted, and firmly resolved, however he might be embarrassed or assailed, however the measures which he deemed essential to the public welfare might be neglected, thwarted, or opposed, that no feeling of resentment
for the past, or of despondence for the future, should induce him to utter an intimation, or to enter a thought of abandoning the cause or renouncing the service of the public.

The same firmness of character, which prevented him from despairing of his country in adversity, saved him also in prosperity, alike from supineness and from presumption. More than once, when his countrymen, too confident in his successes, and in the aid of their allies, relaxed their efforts for defence, his voice was heard reminding them of the continuance of danger, and exhorting them to renewed exertions. On the other hand, instances are not wanting, in which they were prevented from engaging in hazardous schemes, only by his strenuous and repeated remonstrances. Of these, the plan formed in 1778, for conquering Canada and the other British Provinces, always a favorite object both with Congress and the people, is one of the most remarkable. It was devised, by a committee of Congress, and approved by that Assembly, and it proposed, that three armies should be stationed on different parts of our northern frontier, who, with the aid of the French, would, as was expected, after two years of exact co-operation and uninterrupted success, complete the conquest. This project thus matured and adopted, and about
to be communicated to the French government, with a request for their co-operation, and an assurance, that America would faithfully fulfil the part assumed by her in its execution, was forwarded to Washington, by Congress, for his observations. He immediately perceived, and strongly represented their utter inability to raise the armies proposed, or to comply in any respect, with the obligations they were about to assume, the consequent danger that any French force, which might be employed in the expedition, would be sacrificed for want of support, and the natural effect of such a breach of faith in America in disgusting her allies, and deterring them from rendering her any further assistance; while, at the same time, the mere attempt on her part to fulfil her engagements, would leave her own territories destitute of protection, and in the undisputed possession of the British army. Congress still for some time insisted on their plan, in the confident expectation, that the British army would evacuate the United States early in the following spring, and it was only after repeated representations of the General, and an interview between him and one of their committees, that the project was at last reluctantly abandoned. Subsequent events proved the fallacy of the expectation, that the country would be so soon evacuated, and
gave Congress and the nation abundant reason for rejoicing, that their own wishes and determinations had, on this occasion, yielded to his wisdom and firmness.

It was by his personal efforts alone, that the French Admiral, the Count de Grasse, was prevailed on to forego the indulgence of his thirst for glory, and to remain stationary in the Chesapeake, during the siege of York, thus preventing the succour or escape of the British army, and securing the opportunity for achieving that complete victory, which at once terminated and crowned the struggle of America, in support of her independence.

The entire devotion of the army to its illustrious leader, if it was not unequalled, has at least never been surpassed. But of the few, who have possessed similar power, who ever used it like him? Who ever refrained from using it like him? Near the close of the war, many of the officers, perceiving, that security was followed by dissension and party strife, disgusted with the proceedings of Congress toward themselves, and convinced, that from the very organization of that body, it was incapable of maintaining justice and preserving union, after that strong bond of union, the common danger, should have ceased to operate; concluded, naturally enough perhaps for military men, that
the only mode of securing a stable and efficient government was to commit to the hands of an individual a large portion of the sovereign power. One of their number, as from himself, but probably not without consultation, communicated this opinion to the General, in a private letter, and intimated, that the army and the nation looked to him. The suggestion was met, not by the coy and reluctant denial of a Cæsar, holding fast the power, while he waived the diadem, but by such a stern and withering rebuke, as stifled it at once, and forever. Such a scheme must, we think, have failed in America, but how often has it been attempted elsewhere, on no stronger temptation, and with no better opportunity, and if without success, yet not without mischief.

His influence over the army was exerted in the most remarkable manner in allaying their discontents at the end of the war. Great arrears of pay were then due, and it seemed as if Congress had neither the ability nor the inclination to discharge them. From a difference of opinion, with regard to the proper mode of providing for these claims, they were not provided for at all; but were left, just, meritorious, sacred as they were, the price of independence, unsatisfied and unsecured. The reiterated petitions of the army had produced no
result. Their patience was already exhausted, when the news of peace came, and it was evident, that they were about to be disbanded; while, at the same time, a communication was received from the committee, whom they had appointed to urge their claim on the Congress, stating, that all their efforts had been unsuccessful. The discontent was natural and universal, and already anonymous addresses were circulated in the camp, calling on the army to assume a sterner attitude and a bolder tone, and on the officers to meet and declare to Congress, that they would not be disbanded, till their rights should have been secured.

Washington, in general orders, severely condemned these proceedings, but appointed a meeting of the officers on a later day, when he addressed them in person, assured them of his own strenuous support of their just claims, and of his entire conviction, that the Congress, though from its organization, slow in its proceedings, would not be finally unjust; and entreated them by every principle of duty, and every sentiment of patriotism, by their regard for him, and for their own glory, to repel every suggestion of supporting their rights by coercion or by menace, and to submit with implicit and unhesitating confidence to the justice of their country. From him, such an
appeal was irresistible, and the measures he recommended were adopted unanimously. We have heard of the triumphs of eloquence, of its peaceful victories, more glorious than those of the field. Some of them we have witnessed. But when did eloquence ever achieve a victory like this? So complete and unaided a victory over wounded feelings, and natural resentment, and personal interest? Never. A greater than eloquence was here. In referring to these signal instances of his influence, it has been my purpose to exemplify, not to enumerate the effects of his individual character on the fortunes of his country. There were several periods in the course of the war, when the army was kept together mainly by its attachment to him, and when recruits could be obtained only through the confidence, with which he had inspired his countrymen. Had the army, from the want of his influence in either of these respects, ceased to exist, the British forces might have ranged over the whole country without any efficient check; and though I will not say, that they could have subdued it, who can doubt, that they would have increased its sufferings, and prolonged the contest. How many more farms would have been ravaged, how many more towns and villages burned, how many more men slain at their own doors.
The shock of hostile armies, prepared for the encounter, surrounded by all the pomp and circumstance of war, and kindling with the rapture of the strife, is far, far different from the incursions of armed men into villages, to compel the submission in detail of a people determined to be free; hunting them out, wherever two or three are met together. From this calamity, he saved us, from war at the threshold, war at the fireside, and all the horrors, which such war brings with it.

We owe it also to the commanding influence of his personal character, that our revolutionary contest was not disgraced by any of those dissensions and struggles for the chief command, by which so many other countries, under like circumstances, have been distracted. He saved us from those military factions, which have more than once survived victory, and stifled freedom; and preserved that unity of effort and of feeling, which increases both the probability and the value of success. He saved us also from a contest between the army and the civil authority of the State; a contest, which, however it should have terminated, must have impaired the dignity and the credit of both, and might have produced irreparable evils. It is only by recurring to the history of other revolutions, and observing how rare is an exemption from
all these evils, that we can learn to estimate justly the moral influence of this wonderful man.

His glorious task was accomplished, and all that now remained for him, was to take leave of his brethren in arms, and to resign his command. The principal officers of the army were assembled to meet him. Illustrious men, the companions of Washington in toil, in danger, and in victory;—Heroes, whose native valor had foiled and defeated the disciplined strength and almost boundless resources of one of the mightiest nations of Europe;—Patriots, who had resigned power, without attempting to enforce your personal rights, hoping all things, believing all things, enduring all things, rather than stain the majesty, or impeach the justice of the country you had saved;—what were your feelings when you gathered round him (in peace and glory indeed, but for the last time,) round whom you had so often gathered in the most severe sufferings, the most imminent perils, and the fiercest conflicts, and who had led you triumphant through them all? They were unuttered, they were unutterable. He was heard in silence. After bestowing on them the rich reward of his unqualified approbation, and expressing to them his affection and his gratitude, he requested them to approach him in turn, and taking leave of each with a
warm embrace, he departed. They followed him in silence to the shore; and as the boat, which bore him, receded from it, exchanged with him another mute signal of farewell, fixing on him a long, lingering, and many of them a last look of devoted affection, which seemed to speak the language of their hearts: Go, our father and our friend. Ripe in virtue, rich in glory, go to fulfil the destiny before you. Go, with our gratitude, with our confidence, with our prayers, with our blessings. And may God guide and guard you on your way.

We next find him at Annapolis, for the purpose of resigning to the Congress, then in session there, the commission which he had received from them eight years before, conferring on him the supreme command of the forces of America, and enjoining him to defend her from all her enemies. Think, what a commission! Think, when it had been accepted;—how it had been executed;—and how it was resigned.

The Fathers of the land are met in Council. But not a word is spoken. The past rushes back upon their memory. They recall the time, when compelled by oppression to resist their acknowledged sovereign, one of the most powerful in Europe, whose armies occupied their cities and military posts, whose ships commanded their har-
bors, and to whom their allegiance was not yet renounced, the American people stood forth, burning with indignation, but without preparation, without military supplies, without alliance, without any resources whatever, but their own strong limbs, and their own brave hearts, like an unarmed giant, single handed and alone, to meet the conflict. They recollect the day, when the blow having been struck, blood already shed, and civil war begun, they themselves the chosen guardians of the public welfare, called on one of their own number to go forth and save his country. They remember his modest, disinterested, devoted obedience. They see him organizing and disciplining his raw, but brave troops, and bringing method out of confusion; maintaining his posts almost without ammunition, speedily compelling the British army to evacuate forever the capital of New England, and by this success, increasing among the people that union of sentiment, and that reliance on themselves, which warranted the early declaration of independence. They observe him in his subsequent career, always evincing such enterprize, vigilance, and wisdom, as to command the confidence of his countrymen, so as to raise army after army and to maintain, under every hardship and every privation, a sufficient force to keep the common enemy constantly in
check; winning the respect of other governments, and thus facilitating the acquisition of foreign alliance, and foreign aid; gathering the full fruits of victory himself, yet perpetually eluding the consequences of defeat; never desponding in difficulty, nor careless in success; full of foresight, and full of resources; by his own personal exertions and influence supplying all defects, preventing dissensions, allaying discontents; respecting and supporting the majesty of the laws, and the supremacy of civil over military power; and finally, executing the high trust committed to him, not only with complete success, but with signal triumph, so as to give glory to his country, as well as to secure her independence. And now they see him come to render up his trust to them, by whom it had been conferred.

They sit in silent expectation, with an awful solemnity, inspired by the sense of his dignity, and that of the occasion, and by the consciousness of their own; all eyes waiting on him. He rises, with the modest self-possession, the unpretending greatness, which always distinguished him; congratulates the Congress on the successful result of their common labors in the termination of the war, expresses his gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance of his countrymen,
requests their patronage for those officers attached to his person, who should continue in their service, commends the interests of his country, and those who superintend them, to the protection of God, and returning to that august assembly the commission, which he had so long before received from them, bids them an affectionate farewell, and takes his leave of all the employments of public life. Behold the simple majesty of virtue. Look through the whole history of mankind for another such scene. You will look for it in vain.

He had surely accomplished enough for his country, enough for the immortality of his fame; and if his career had then terminated, he would have left a name second to none in our annals. Who that should read the history of his life thus far, and contemplate the services he had already rendered to his country, could imagine or believe, that they would ever be surpassed;—that the same man would surpass them;—that great, illustrious, unequalled as they were; greater, yes, greater, were behind? We see clearly, or think we see clearly, judging from the history of other nations, that in any event, and even without his aid, independence must ultimately have been secured, though Heaven only knows with how much more of suffering, with how much less of glory. But who shall assert
from the experience of others, or from our own, that, without him, this nation would have had a government, I mean a government worth having? Hardly had he retired from the public service, when it seemed as if the fortune of his country had departed with him. The common danger of the States had produced a degree of union among them, which the authority of Congress was not sufficient to preserve. That body was little more than an assembly of ambassadors, having no means whatever of compelling obedience to their decrees. During the war, indeed, they had the control of the army, and could raise funds on the credit of the nation, and dispose of them at pleasure. But when peace came, the army was disbanded, and public credit gone. The first object and the first duty of Congress, was to provide funds to discharge the debt they had contracted; but this required the unanimous consent of the States, which could never be obtained; and America was therefore bankrupt, not for want of resources, but for want of government. Private credit too, was almost annihilated, and in many of the States, a paper currency, already depreciated, and constantly depreciating, was made a legal tender, and other similar means adopted for obtaining relief from immediate embarrassments, by that sacrifice of the future to the present,
which springs from the infatuation proverbially known as the precursor of ruin. The competition of the States, with each other for foreign trade, occasioned conflicting regulations, which produced adverse interests, and hostile feelings; and everything seemed to forebode their entire separation; a result, which would have left them, each surrounded by secret rivals, or open enemies, exposed to all the calamities of border wars, inviting foreign interference by their conflicts, and foreign aggression by their weakness, and becoming the victims of internal dissensions, and in spite of their hard won independence, the tools of European intrigue. Already they had a foretaste of these evils. After four years of peace, America was poorer, less united, less powerful, less respectable, and less respected, than at the close of that exhausting struggle, the Revolutionary War.

The friends of their country were filled with anxiety, and no one more so than Washington, who even as early as 1783, had taken occasion, on retiring from the command of the army, to address to the Governors of the several States, a circular letter, which he then deemed his last legacy to his country, most earnestly exhorting them to maintain indissoluble union among the States, and to preserve a sacred regard for justice. But in both
respects, alas, that I must say so, in both respects his exhortations had been greatly disregarded. After one ineffectual attempt to form a national convention, for the purpose of revising the articles of confederation, another, sanctioned by vote of Congress, was made successfully; and delegates from twelve States assembled at Philadelphia. Of this body, Washington was President, and the result of its deliberations was the present Constitution of the United States.

The former Congress derived its authority from the States, as independent, political communities, and exercised it over them only as such. Hence, all its votes and resolutions, however authorized by the articles of confederation, could be enforced in no other way than by war, the only possible means of coercing independent States. Their union was only a confederacy. The new Constitution proposed, that the authority vested in the National Government, should be enforced by legal process, acting directly on individuals, and that thus the confederacy should be exchanged for a government. To accomplish this change, was the great and avowed object of its framers. That such would be its effect, was the recommendation of its friends, the charge of its enemies, the universal understanding of all men.
A great portion of the people, and some of the most ardent and eloquent patriots of the revolution were strenuously opposed to it, because it thus impaired the sovereignty of the States. Nor is it at all surprising, that those who had passed their youth and manhood in struggling against the British Parliament for the absolute independence of the State Legislatures, should feel reluctant to have the authority, which it had been the labor and the glory of their lives to maintain, in any way diminished. This opposition was so strong, so general, and so nearly fatal to the new Constitution, as to leave no doubt, that nothing less than the decided exertion of all Washington's authority and influence in its support, could have secured its adoption. In this, as in other great achievements, he had indeed, illustrious fellow-laborers. Profound statesmen; they exhibited the greatest sagacity, prudence, and genius, in providing a remedy for the defects of their former system, at once so precise, so simple, and so new, and which has since been so completely sanctioned by success: But it was his opinion, which then sanctioned it in the eyes of the people, and induced them to submit it to the test of experience.—Resolute and devoted patriots; they exerted all their influence, and hazarded their whole reputation, in support of this untried experi-
ment, no less frankly and fearlessly than he did: But it is no derogation from them to say, that no one of them had such an influence as his to exert, or such a reputation as his to put at hazard.—Zealous advocates; they maintained and vindicated its merits, with a force of reasoning, a copiousness and variety of illustration, a charm of style, and a vehemence of feeling, which may well perpetuate the fame of their eloquence: But the eloquence that carried it, was the eloquence of his life.

It cannot be inappropriate on this occasion, and especially before this audience, to advert to some of the great principles, which distinguish our political system; since the agency of Washington in establishing and maintaining the National Government, that essential part of the system, which secures all the others from external injury, and from mutual collision, and thus enables them to act freely and efficiently in their several spheres, must be regarded, if gratitude is to be proportioned to the importance of the benefits received, as his highest title to the gratitude of his country. It is only, however, of the general spirit, which characterizes the system, and not of the proportions, relations, or harmony of the several parts, that the time will permit me to speak. I will not detain you for a moment to compare it with these crude democra-
cies, in which the people exercise the ordinary powers of government themselves, instead of committing them to representatives, or agents with definitive authority; a mode of proceeding in numerous bodies, which all experience, both in public and in private affairs, equally condemns. But a Republic may have the legislative power vested in a representative assembly, and yet possess few of the advantages of liberty. Let me present a strong illustration, but one not altogether imaginary.

Let me suppose a Legislature as equally and as freely chosen, as that which I have the honor to address; but exercising unlimited power, Legislative, Executive, and Judicial, either immediately, or through departments, which are the mere organs of its will. After having abolished all our ancient political subdivisions, and having parcelled out the State, by geometrical or geographical lines, into counties, and those counties, in the same manner into towns, and these again into parishes, and school-districts, or other divisions and subdivisions, under whatever names, without the least inquiry into the wishes of the individuals thus grouped together; and having itself appointed all the officers throughout the whole series from highest to lowest, let me suppose it to govern them all, not only by general regulations, but by sending, whenever it
may see fit, a special mandate to any one of them, to direct his conduct in a particular case, which he is bound implicitly to obey.

Is this a complete, free, representative system? Nothing like it. When the supreme authority of the State acts directly, and without check on every separate portion of the community, not according to uniform laws, but according to its mere discretion; controlling every thing, deciding every thing, administering every thing, by its own absolute and unquestioned authority, this is nothing more nor less than a government of arbitrary power. Its head may consist of one or of many, may be elective or hereditary. But its body, and its limbs, and its soul are despotic. It is despotism wearing the mask of liberty. And so much the more to be dreaded, since it takes its victims off their guard. Merely to substitute a popular assembly for an absolute monarch is not abolishing arbitrary power; but only transferring it; and transferring it, so far as private rights are concerned, to worse hands; worse, because they can abuse it with less danger to themselves. Such assemblies have been known to commit every sort of outrage on property, liberty, and life, with a frequency and to an extent, which no single despot could imitate with impunity. Before he should have perpetrated one tenth part of
them, his life would be the prey of any one, who should seek it; not an arm would be raised in his defence, and the dagger of a slave might reach him on his throne. But under the sacred name of liberty, every thing was sacred.

The principle on which representation is founded, is, that all men have a right to manage their own affairs through agents chosen by themselves, and when the government of any nation is vested in representatives freely chosen by the people, that nation, in its political capacity, considered as a nation, is free. But it does not necessarily follow, that the citizens are free in the exercise of their private rights. It is only when the same principle is carried throughout the whole community, when all the divisions and subdivisions of society elect their own officers, and manage all their peculiar and exclusive concerns through agents chosen by themselves, acquainted with their particular interests, sharing their burdens, and sympathising with them in feeling, that a complete representative system is established. And when the rights of individuals also are so secured, that no man’s person or property can be affected in any other mode, than by legal process, applying to it general and uniform laws, then are the people truly free. Then it is, that Liberty not only walks abroad in the high places of the State,
but pervades the whole community, descends to the cottage, and inhabits every dwelling in the land. The maxim, that there should be no empire, within the empire, no authority in the state, but that which is supreme, if it be understood to apply only to the judicial power, which determines the rights of men is true; for the rights of all men are the same, and must, of course, ultimately be determined by the same authority. But the interests of all men are not the same; and therefore, if this maxim be understood to include that discretionary authority, which does not determine rights, but only administers interests, it is the maxim of despotism.

The maxim of truth and of liberty is, that all men and all bodies of men should have as much freedom of action as is compatible with equality of right. It is essential to observe, that these several subdivisions have no more power over the individuals composing them, than is necessary to accomplish the precise purposes of their organization; and that they have no power at all, as distinct political bodies, in administering the affairs of the larger divisions, in which they are included; the power possessed by each portion of the state residing in the individuals and not in the communities contained within it; so that the system presents successive collections of men, and not a series of confederacies.
The authority of these successive bodies of men, of these communities within the community, must indeed be so limited and defined, as to prevent their clashing with each other, or disturbing the public order; but when this has been accomplished, they move on, orb within orb, system within system, without collision, and without departure; each in its own sphere safe and unincumbered, and each influencing each in preserving the grand harmony of the whole.

This principle has been applied in Massachusetts, to the smaller divisions of the political body from the earliest period of our history, and is still carried into operation more extensively in New England, than in most other parts of our country, though even here not without exception.* The powers of all these minor communities in the State are limited and restrained by such equal and general laws, as the Legislature may from time to time enact. But the National and the State Governments are entirely independent of each other, their authority being limited and defined only by those

* The prominent exception is in the administration of the Counties. Since these are too large to admit the simple organization of our towns and parishes, and have comparatively few peculiar concerns, (the conducting of political elections, the support of paupers, and most details of police, being committed to the towns,) those few are intrusted to the management of the Court of Sessions, excepting only the county rates, which are levied by direct authority of the Legislature.
codes of fundamental law, which we call Constitu-
tions, framed by special agents, appointed for this
purpose, and confirmed by the people themselves. The State Governments are not derived from that
of the nation, since many of them existed before
it: neither is that government derived from them.
They were never competent to establish such a
government; their power over their own citizens,
which could only be conferred, according to the
true principles of liberty, by those, over whom it is
exercised, being a special trust to be executed by
themselves, and not their property, to be transfer-
red at will.

It is obviously in vain, that these limitations and
restrictions should be stated, unless they are en-
forced and maintained, by holding every act of
power, which transgresses them, to be void, and ren-
dering it in fact inoperative. This is accomplished
by the Judiciary, the one, uniform, all pervading
power, which keeps every part of the system in its
place, determining the effect of the laws in each
disputed case, and of course their validity, as well
as their construction. It is independent of the
Legislature; since it would be mere mockery to
refer a citizen complaining of the invasion of his
rights, to those of whom he complains, or to their
dependents, for a remedy. Its authority, also, is
coextensive with that of the Legislature; and must be so in every free government; since otherwise some laws will exist, which are either not enforced at all, but obeyed or disobeyed by every man at pleasure; and so far as these extend, this would be anarchy, not government; or else they are enforced by some other than judicial power, by some other power than that, which gives full hearing, and fair trial, and deliberate judgment, according to law; and this would be tyranny, not freedom.

Yet even the judicial power is not arbitrary, and absolute, but is subjected to every restraint and control compatible with its impartial and efficient action. Those who administer it, have no discretion whatever as to its exercise. The power of deciding on the validity of a law is not their prerogative, to be exerted or not, according to their will. It is the right of each individual, who may think himself aggrieved by any law, to call on them to determine its validity, for his protection. In that case, it is their duty to do so, and it is only in that case, that they have the power.

Their decisions, moreover, are not mere orders, directing what shall be done in each particular case, but determinations of right, founded on systematic and declared rules, and of course uniform, so that each case is a precedent for all others like
This principle limits their discretion, compels them to mete out to all men the same measure of justice, and tends to secure deliberation, and to prevent partiality, since they can never know on whom or in what manner the rule established by any decision will ultimately operate most powerfully. That, which affects a stranger today, may affect themselves or their children tomorrow. It has been objected to this principle, that it gives them the power of legislation, and enables them, by the decision of any one case, to make that to be law, which was not law before. But this is not so. For if it were so, then the very case decided must have been determined unjustly, by a law made after it arose. There is an obvious difference between deriving a rule from principle or analogy, to govern cases not previously contemplated and provided for, and altering one already established and acknowledged. Besides, all controversies must be determined, and if the effect of uniformity in deciding them is like that of ordinary legislation, then effect of the want of it would be like that of the worst kind of legislation, or rather of the arbitrary power, which, under the name of legislation, makes a special law for each particular case.

The proceedings of the Judiciary are public, and their ultimate decisions, together with the grounds
of them are made known and transmitted to future times, in order that they may feel that each decision must not only put at stake their reputation for wisdom and integrity among their contemporaries, but must abide the judgment of posterity; and that they may therefore always act under a deep sense of their responsibility to that power, which is the last appeal of right and reason upon earth—Public Opinion—Not the popular opinion of the day; but that public opinion, which speaks the wisdom of ages, and whose throne is from generation to generation.

The liberty of the citizen requires, that this should be the only ultimate coercive power in the state: that he should never be compelled finally to submit even to an act of the Legislature itself, the highest depositary of political power, without an opportunity to be fully heard, both as to its validity and its construction, before a tribunal as independent of every external influence as can be devised, and deciding on his rights under all possible restraints and the most solemn responsibilities.

It is not unnatural, that those, who have been trained up, and have had their characters formed and their feelings fixed in the other high departments of government, should occasionally complain of the judicial authority, which keeps their own
power, or that of the body, to which they belong, within prescribed limits. But an intelligent people, well aware that all restrictions of discretionary power are securities of private right, and more desirous to maintain their own liberties than to extend the prerogatives of their agents, will feel little sympathy with these complaints even from the lips of those popular favorites, whose opinions on all other subjects are listened to with the highest respect.

The only end of these and of all other restrictions and limitations in government is to secure to every man the power of using all his natural faculties, and the common privileges of social life, as freely as is consistent with the exercise of the same power by others. The complete accomplishment of this object would be the consummation of liberty on earth, which has often been dreamed of by the Philosophical Framers of imaginary republics, but never so nearly approached in practice as by this system.

All the parts of this system, indeed, are not peculiar to America, several of the most important being derived from the land of our origin. But that combination of the whole, which produces the results we experience, especially the great result of making private right paramount to legislative power, has no where else been seen in efficient action. Neither did Washington alone establish and carry into opera-
tion that part of the system, which, from its emi-
nent position, attracts the most notice, and appears
to regulate and preserve the whole, the Government
of the Union. But among those, who united to im-
press the first movement on it, there is no one name
so prominent as his.

Men delight to exalt the character of their race.
And, as the glory of an individual makes a far more
lively impression on the imagination and on the feel-
ings, than that of a multitude, we are naturally in-
clined to connect with every great improvement,
though it may have been produced by the combined
labors of many individuals, and the concurrence of
many events, the name of some one man; common-
ly that of him, who was most conspicuous in bring-
ing it to that degree of perfection, which first fully
developed its principles, and eminently exhibited
its utility in practice.

If then our frame of Government is to be regard-
ed as a distinct and independent political system,
resting on peculiar principles, or a peculiar combi-
nation of principles, and capable, by proper modifi-
cations, of extensive and varied application; the
name of no one man is so likely to be permanently
connected with it as his, whose birth we are now
met to commemorate.

Many Americans, opposed to the Constitution,
were more easily reconciled to adopting it by the conviction, that Washington would be the first Chief Magistrate, a conviction, to which he was the last man who yielded. Throughout his whole life, he never sought, nor was suspected of seeking any public office, but he never declined any one properly conferred on him, nor relinquished any until all its duties had been completely performed. Having on this occasion accordingly, yielded to the voice of his country, he selected for the highest offices the most able and eminent citizens; and gathered round him men, whose united services were most important to the nation, especially at that time; but who could never have been brought together under any other auspices than his, nor kept together by any thing but their veneration for his character, and their confidence in his wisdom and impartiality. Indeed, his influence on other minds was always great, and greatest on the strongest. Unbiased by any personal motive of interest or ambition; indulging no pride of opinion, but patiently hearing, and even seeking the opinions of others, and the grounds of them; claiming no authority, and yielding to none but that of reason; deliberate, but never fluctuating; at once unassuming and independent; calm and energetic; pure in motive, sound in judgment, firm of purpose; he commanded the respect and the confi-
dence of all men, even of the few, who were occasion-
ally weary of finding him forever in the right.

The system of administration established by him, and the main principles both of foreign and domestic policy which he laid down, have, for the most part, been adhered to ever since by the American government, and have never been departed from without reason for regret. One of the greatest public services ever rendered by him to his country, and at the same time one of the most striking examples of his wisdom, independence, and decision of character, as well as of his commanding influence, was his maintaining a perfect neutrality in the war between England and France; when the latter, who had assisted us so effectually in our struggle for independence, having herself established a republican government, at least republican in form, called on us from beyond the Atlantic, entreating us in the name of our old friendship, and our common liberty, by every sentiment of gratitude and of sympathy, to aid her in turn in her contest with the tyrants of Eu-

rope. The appeal was received with acclamations; and so strong was the current of opinion in its fa-
vor, that no man but Washington could have check-
ed it. But as his judgment was fixed, his conduct was unwavering, and he threw himself without re-
serve or hesitation into the fiercest conflict of opin-
ion that ever raged in America. In that conflict he was victorious; and saved the people, almost in spite of themselves, from an alliance with that fierce democracy, in which we must have shared the fate of her other humble allies; partaking in her dangers, sufferings and defeats, but gathering none of the fruits of her victories; and even in the height of her fame, witnesses only, and not companions of her triumph. From this sad destiny, which would have kept us for years and perhaps forever entangled in the wars and policy of Europe, from this, by his own energetic character and unexampled influence, he saved America.

The extensive consequences of this great achievement, and the grandeur of the moral power, by which it was accomplished, mighty as they are, should not entirely withdraw our attention from the noble and heroic bearing, which he maintained throughout the contest: congratulating the new republic on her free form of government with a frankness and cordiality, repelling the insults of her agents with a dignity, and defeating their attempts to invade our neutrality with a promptness and vigor, which render the whole scene one of the most interesting in the story of his life. Happy will it be for America, if, always adhering to the principles, and imitating the conduct which he main-
tained on that occasion, she shall be ever ready and even eager to welcome a free people into the community of nations; but ever resolute to form no such connexion with any foreign government, as shall give it a right of interfering in her transactions with others, and to enter into no Holy Alliance whatsoever, either of monarchies or of republics.

His consent to sustain again the office of Chief Magistrate, under circumstances of public doubt and difficulty; his final retirement from it, when he could leave the nation safe and prosperous; his farewell address to his fellow-citizens, familiar to you all; and his acceptance of the command of the army, on the appearance of new dangers, are interesting exhibitions under various circumstances, of the same great qualities, which we have been contemplating. But the time admonishes me to forbear.

History, however, demands the whole truth, and will ask if he had no failings. If he had any, for he was a man, they have left no trace in the annals of his country, and no speck upon his own bright fame. His enemies could never find any; for all the shafts of calumny seemed to be directed against the strongest points in his character, aimed, as it were, at his very shield, and only served to signalize its impenetrable temper. He was called a
weak general, as if to remind men, that the characteristic of his military life was vigor. He was charged with taking money from the Treasury, in anticipation of his salary; and this charge was not only instantly disproved, but it rendered still more familiarly known than they had been before, his scrupulous precision and exactness, his refusal to receive any compensation whatever for his revolutionary services, and the perfect disinterestedness of his whole public life. Forged letters, bearing his name, were published, with a view to excite doubts as to the steadfastness of his adherence to the cause of his country. Surely, they could detect no failings in his character, who shot such shafts as these. His friends could never find any, excepting one. The frailty, which reminded him of his nature, was the possession of such violent passions, as rarely inhabit the human breast. By minute scrutiny, a few instances may be discovered in the course of his active and varied life, in which, when he was surprised by the gross cowardice or misconduct of individuals, on whom he had relied, the storm gathered on his brow, usually so serene, and wrath flashed forth like lightning;—as terrible, as transient;—for in an instant he was himself again. And what does this prove? We are told of Socrates, that he rebuked his disciples for cen-
suring a physiognomist, who had pronounced, that his countenance indicated the possession of the vilest propensities; and acknowledging the assertion to be true, declared, that philosophy had enabled him to subdue them. And if Washington, conspicuous as he was for the habitual equanimity of his demeanor, inherited from nature so vehement a temper, what does this prove, but his uncommon self-command? What is it but evidence, conclusive evidence, like praise from the lips of an enemy, of the strength and greatness of his character? Thus controlled, this impetuosity should not perhaps be regarded as a failing, but rather as a trial, given like other trials, to afford opportunity for triumph, glorious in proportion to the strength of the enemy subdued. Thus controlled, what does the violence of the tempest prove, but the divinity of the virtue, which rides in and rules it?

After a short illness, borne with his usual composure, his last words being, “I am dying, but I am not afraid to die,” he gave his body to the earth again, his blessed part to Heaven, and left to his country the inheritance of his fame. A glorious inheritance, which will grow brighter and more precious through all succeeding ages.

It was the saying of an ancient philosopher, that no man could be pronounced happy, till his death.
But the renown of great men, the degree of distinction, which they hold in history, is not permanently fixed, even by death itself. Generations, as well as individuals, naturally attach most importance to those characters and events, by which their own interests are most affected. Those men, therefore, whose power appears to have terminated in their own age, however great it may then have been; though they may have rolled the tide of war over a whole continent, or established a mighty empire; if the devastation, which followed their steps, was speedily repaired by the exuberance of nature, if that empire soon crumbled into decay, leaving no living influence to act on the destinies of mankind; such men are never more conspicuous than in their own times. Their names, indeed, and their actions, are recorded in history, and their progress is traced on the surface of the globe, like the path of a pestilence, or any other scourge of God; but the interest, with which they are regarded, is diminished rather than increased, by the lapse of ages. On the other hand, the Founders of permanent States, or of grand Systems, which exercise an extensive and durable influence on the fortunes, and especially on the intellectual and moral condition of the human race; with however feeble instruments, or in however narrow a sphere they may originally have
acted, become the objects of more and more familiar contemplation, as the consequences of their actions are more fully developed; especially if those consequences are beneficial to mankind, as by that merciful dispensation of Providence, which renders good more durable than evil, is commonly the case.

Time also, by obscuring ordinary distinctions, tends to bring the fame of those eminent men, who have acted together with nearly equal power and merit, or with only the usual gradations of excellence, into one common mass of glory; in which each individual character appears distinctly defined, then only, when it is made the object of particular examination: and for the same reason, if there be one among them always first and pre-eminent over those around him; it tends to fasten the attention almost exclusively on him, this one grand distinction being rendered more conspicuous and striking, by the obliteration of all others. This is not perhaps strict poetical justice, but it is human nature.

The eye of posterity therefore, in looking back on the pyramid of a nation's glory, less to scrutinize its structure, than to contemplate its lofty grandeur, will always involuntarily rest upon its summit. And if it behold there, not a gigantic phantom, gifted with power and genius indeed, yet
distorted by ambition, or polluted by crimes;—but a majestic form, erect and serene; of exact proportions and severe simplicity; without a fault for censure, an extravagance for ridicule, or a blemish for regret;—on that it will delight to linger, to that it will direct the admiration of mankind.

Rapidly as the prosperity of America has advanced, the name of Washington has risen still faster. Already it overtops every other belonging to the new world, and equals the greatest in the old. The opinions of his countrymen may be partial. But his character is every where venerated. The once great ornament of the English bar,—the champion of the rights of juries, and the master of their hearts, who had no competitor in forensic eloquence, and who has been followed by no equal,—long ago declared, that this one man was the only human being, of whom he ever stood in awe. One of the most gifted of British statesmen,—who entered public life when there were giants in the land, and who fell, himself a giant among those round him, one who was no admirer of American greatness, and who could sneer at our fir frigates and our striped bunting,—felt even his pride and his prejudices bow before the majesty of this illustrious name; and when, after he had asserted and vindicated the determination of his government to ad-
here to the true principles of neutrality in the
contest between France and Spain, he was chal-
lenged on the floor of the House of Commons, the
very theatre of his glory, and in the moment of his
triumph, by his astute and watchful adversaries, to
say what he meant by the principles of neutrality,
—exultingly replied, the principles laid down in the
Presidency of Washington; and by this answer
sealed their lips.

Philosophy, too, whose decisions are more calm,
but quite as durable as those of eloquence, philoso-
phy has rendered her tribute to his fame. The most
distinguished living philosopher in Great Britain, an il-
lustrious father's not less illustrious son, in a recent
work worthy of his genius, while contending against
the asserted inferiority of the moderns to the ancients,
holds up the three chief lights of modern science
as equal to the three greatest of their philosophers;
and at the same time points singly to Washington,
as not inferior in virtue and in patriotism, to the
brightest examples of antiquity. But why cite the
opinions of individuals, however eminent? Where-
ever the name of America is known, wherever
liberty, or the desire of liberty dwells upon the
earth, there his praise is familiar.

Thus much has been already gained. This har-
vest of glory at least is secure, ripe, reaped, gar-
nered, hid in the sacred treasure of the past. O, for a prophet's eye to look into the future. If it be the destiny of America to administer with fidelity, wisdom and success, her free institutions, and especially that union which is the great security of all the rest, and to spread them over the whole continent,—filling it with a numerous, enlightened, industrious, moral, and contented people—one in name, one in government, one in power,—and thus realizing the prophetic vision of Berkeley, to build up here an empire the last and the noblest offspring of Time:—this whole accumulated greatness will constantly tend to exalt higher and higher in the estimation of mankind him, who will forever be deemed the Founder of it all.

If still further, the convulsions,—which are now shaking to their foundations the old institutions of Europe, and leading her statesmen to look with astonishment on the freest government in the world, as the most stable, the most quiet, and the most secure,—should at last bring down those institutions in one common ruin; if the reformers of society, abandoning the wild idea, that liberty consists in transferring arbitrary and absolute power from one to many, shall effectually limit and control all power, and secure the great rights of the
individual citizen against all authority, even that of legislation itself; and thus found the temple of liberty on the everlasting rock of justice; and if, having done so, they shall find it stand there, secure and unshaken, amid the tempests of human passion and human interest, which are always raging round the summits, where the powers of the earth are seated:—then will he be every where regarded as the Lawgiver, who was first in presenting to the imitation of the world the model of a government, at once free, just, and permanent; and will be universally hailed, as the grand Apostle of Liberty.

Above all, if it shall be found, that under the full development of a system, thus equally distributing political power, and perfectly securing private right, so as to leave to every individual the free and unincumbered exercise of the faculties, which God has given him; those faculties—though not stimulated by the national rivalries and civil conflicts of the ancient democracies, nor fostered by modern patronage, yet breathing the pure air of liberty, and growing up and expanding in all their native vigor—will be capable of achieving splendid triumphs; and that the equal protection of the rights of all best tends to bring about that noblest of triumphs, which is alone conducive to the equal happiness
of all, the triumph of intellect over force, and of virtue over intellect:—then, indeed, will those who prize intellect, or delight in virtue, throughout all time, turn to him, whose intellectual and moral greatness first introduced and recommended this system—standing at last, all alone in his pre-eminence, fixed forever in the solitude of his glory, as the Miracle of Men, the great political Benefactor of mankind,—and will exult, that they belong to the same race of beings with Washington.
CELEBRATION
OF THE
CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
BIRTH DAY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON,
BY THE
Legislature of Massachusetts.

FEBRUARY 22, 1832.

ORDER OF SERVICES AT THE OLD SOUTH MEETING HOUSE.

I. — VOLUNTARY ON THE ORGAN.

II. — SELECTIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES, Read by the Rev. Mr. Greenwood, Chaplain of the Senate.

I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old. Thou art the God that doest wonders; thou hast declared thy strength among the people. Ps. lxvii, 5, 11, 14.

We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favor unto them. Ps. xlv.

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us; then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul, the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Ps. cxxiv.

Let us now praise famous men;—the Lord hath wrought great glory by them, through his great power, from the beginning. Such as did bear rule; men renowned for their power, giving counsel by their understanding; leaders of the people by their counsels; wise and eloquent in their instructions—all these were honored in their generations, and were the glory of their times. There be of them that have left a name behind them, that their praises might be reported. Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore. The
people will tell of their wisdom, and the congregation will shew forth their praise. Ecclus. xlv. 1—15.

As for the land of Judea, that was quiet all the days of Simon; for he sought the good of his nation in such wise, as that evermore his authority and honor pleased them well. Then did they till their ground in peace, and the earth gave her increase, and the trees of the field their fruit. The ancient men sat all in the streets, communing together of good things, and the young men put on glorious apparel. He provided victuals for the cities, and set in them all manner of munition, so that his honorable name was renowned unto the end of the world. He made peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy; for every man sat under his vine and his fig tree, and there was none to fray them; neither was there any left in the land to fight against them; yea, the kings themselves were overthrown in those days. Moreover, he strengthened all those of his people that were brought low; the law he searched out; and every contemner of the law and wicked person he took away. 1 Maccab. xiv. 4—14.

Unto whom king Demetrius wrote after this manner—King Demetrius unto Simon, as also unto the elders and nation of the Jews, sendeth greeting;—We are ready to make a steadfast peace with you—and whatsoever covenants we have made with you shall stand; and the strong holds, which ye have builded, shall be your own. As for any oversight or fault committed unto this day, we forgive it, and the crown tax also, which ye owe us; and, if there were any other tribute paid in Jerusalem, it shall no more be paid. Thus the yoke of the heathen was taken away from Israel. 1 Maccab. xiii. 35—41.

The people therefore, seeing the acts of Simon, and unto what glory he thought to bring his nation, made him their governor, because he had done all these things, and for the justice and faith which he kept to his nation, and for that he sought by all means to exalt his people. 1 Maccab. xiv. 35.

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. And of Zion, if shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Ps. lxxxvii. 3, 5, 6. How was he honored in the midst of the people! He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full; as the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High, and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds. Ecclus. 1. 5, 6, 7.

A governor of his brethren, a stay of the people, whose bones were regarded of the Lord. Ecclus. xlix. 15.

Now therefore bless ye the God of all, who only doeth wondrous things everywhere, who exalteth our days from the womb, and dealeth with us according to his mercy. He grant us joyfulness of heart, and that peace may be in our days in Israel forever. Ecclus. 1. 22, 23.

III.—HANDEL'S HALLELUJAH CHORUS.

IV.—PRAYER, By the Rev. Mr. Malcolm, Chaplain of the House.

V—PSALM.

VI.—ADDRESS, By the Hon. Francis C. Gray.
VII.—ORIGINAL HYMN

To thee, beneath whose eye
Each circling century
Obedient rolls,
Our nation, in its prime,
Looked with a faith sublime,
And trusted in "the time
That tried men's souls"—

When, from this gate of heaven,*
People and priest were driven
By fire and sword,
And, where thy saints had prayed,
The harness'd war-horse neighed,
And horsemen's trumpets brayed
In harsh accord.

Nor was our fathers' trust,
Thou Mighty One and Just,
Then put to shame:
"Up to the hills," for light,
Looked they in peril's night,
And, from thou guardian height,†
Deliverance came.

There, like an angel form,
Sent down to still a storm,
Stood WASHINGTON—
Clouds broke and rolled away;
Foes fled in pale dismay;
Wreathed were his brows with bay,
When war was done.

God of our sires and sons,
Let other Washingtons
Our country bless,
And, like the brave and wise
Of by-gone centuries,
Show that true greatness lies
In righteousness.

VIII.—BENEDICTION.

* The Old South Church was taken possession of by the British, while they held Boston, and converted into barracks for the cavalry, the pews being cut up for fuel, or used in constructing stalls for the horses.
† From his position on "Dorchester Heights," that overlook the town, General Washington succeeded in compelling the British forces to evacuate Boston.