The Daily Crescent.

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Independence Day in Washington.

EXTENSION OF THE CAPITOL.

MR. WEBSTER'S ORATION.

The Fourth of July was celebrated in Washington by the entire population and a large concourse of visitors. The various divisions of the procession were so full that the American Telegraph remarks of its harmonious and imposing ranks: "The programme of the day's proceedings, like the orders of Gen. Scott on the eve of his battles, might be written down as history after the event."

The President, Cabinet, Army and Navy Officers made a splendid turn out. The President, in the morning, delivered a speech at the Washington Monument, on the reception of a stone from the Pennsylvania Temperance Society.

The multitude assembled on the Capitol Grounds numbered not less than ten thousand persons. The Telegraph says:

"The ceremony of laying the corner-stone (of the Capitol Extension) could, of course, be witnessed by but few of the multitude. The ancient rites of the Masonic fraternity were duly observed in the ceremony. The address of B. B. French, M. W. G. M. of the District of Columbia, was brief, occupying not more than twenty minutes; but it was well expressed and to the purpose, associating the great idea of Union with the important event of the day."

The oration of Mr. Webster occupied nearly two hours in the delivery. The earlier portion of it is a learned and beautiful commentary on Liberty, and especially the great fabric of American Liberty. The oration is reported in full in the NewYork Herald of the 5th. We publish that larger portion of it which relates to the particular occasion of the Extension of the Capitol.

Fellow citizens: By the act of Congress of 20th September, 1850, provision was made for the extension of the Capitol, according to such plan as might be approved by the President of the United States, and the necessary sums to be expended under his direction, by such architect as he might appoint. This measure was imperatively demanded for the use of the Legislature and judiciary departments, public libraries, and the occasional accommodation of the Chief Executive Magistrate, and other objects. No act of Congress, incurring a large expenditure, has received more general approbation from the people. The President has proceeded to execute this law. He has approved a plan—he has appointed an architect, and all things are now ready for the commencement of the work. The anniversary of national independence appeared to afford an auspicious occasion for laying the foundation stone of the additional building. That ceremony has now been performed by the President himself, in the presence and view of this multitude. He has thought that the duty and the occasion made a united and imperative call for some short address to the people here assembled; and it is at his request that I have appeared before you to perform that part of the duty which was deemed incumbent on us. Beneath the stone is deposited, among other things, a list of which will be published, the following brief account of the proceedings of the day, in my hand writing:

"On the morning of the first day of the seventy-sixth year of the Independence of the United States of America, in the city of Washington, being the 4th day of July, 1851, this stone, designed as the corner stone of the Extension of the Capitol, according to a plan approved by the President," in pursuance of an act of Congress, was laid by Millard Fillmore, President of the United States, assisted by the Grand Master of the Masonic Lodges, in the presence of many members of Congress; of officers of the executive and judiciary departments, national, state and district; of officers of the army and navy; the corporate authorities of this and neighboring cities; many associations, civil and military, and Masons; officers of the Smithsonian Institution and National Institute; professors of colleges and teachers of schools of the District, with students and pupils; a vast concourse of people from all parts of the country; and among others, the following gentlemen, who witnessed the laying of the corner stone of the Capitol by President Washington, on the 18th day of September, 1793, seventy-seven hundred and ninety-three. If, therefore, it shall be hereafter the will of God that this structure shall fall from its base, that its foundations be upturned, and that deposit beneath this stone brought to the eye of men, be it then known to this generation, that the Union of the United States of America stands firm—that their constitution still exists unimpaired, and with all its original usefulness and glory, growing every day more and stronger in the affections of the great body of the American people, and attracting more and more the admiration of the world. And all those who have contributed to place this Union on such a basis, with hearts devoutly thankful to Almighty God for the preservation of the liberty and happiness of the country, unite in the sincere and fervent prayer that this edifice, and the walls and arches, the domes and towers, the columns and entablatures, now to be erected over it, may endure for ever. God save the United States of America.

DANIEL WEBSTER, Secretary of State."

Fellow citizens: Fifty-eight years ago, Washington stood on this spot to execute a similar duty to that which has now been performed. He then laid the corner stone of the original Capitol. He was at the head of the Government, at that time weak in resources, burdened with debt, just struggling into political existence, and agitated by the leaving waves which were overturning European thrones. But even then, in many important respects, the Government was strong. It was strong in Washington's own great character; it was strong in the wisdom and patriotism of other eminent public men, his political associates and fellow laborers; it was strong in the affections of the people. Since that time, astonishing changes have been wrought in the conditon and prospects of the American nation, and a degree of progress witnessed to which the world can furnish no parallel. As we review the course of that progress, wonder and amazement arrest our attention at every step. The present occasion, allowing us to lengthen our remarks, may yet, perhaps, admit of a short comparative statement between important subjects of national interest, as they existed at that day, and as they now exist. I have adopted for this purpose the tabular form of statement, as being the most brief and the most accurate.

COMPARATIVE TABLE.	1792.	1851.
Number of States.....	15	31
Representatives and Senators in Congress.....	135	295
Population of the U. States, 18 0	3,929 326	23,267 488
Do. Boston, do.	18 038	136,881
Do. Baltimore, do.	13,503	169 054
Do. Philadelphia, do.	42,520	409 045
Do. New York (city) do.	33,131	515 547
Do. Washington, do.	—	40,075
Amount of receipts into the Treasury, do.	$5,720,604	$43,774,848
Amount of expenditures of the United States, do.	7,529,375	39,355,998
Amount of imports, do.	178,138 18	31,000,000
Do. Exports, do.	20,109,000	151,898,720
Do. Tonnage, do.	529,764	3,535,454
Area of the United States, do.	865,481	2,314,265
Rank and file of the Army....	5,120	10,000
Militia, (enrolled).....	—	2,000,456
Navy of the U. States (vessels)	None.	76
Cost of Armament, (estimate)	—	2,614
Number of treaties and conventions with foreign powers....	9	90
Number of light-houses and light-boats.....	7	372
Expenditures for do.....	$12,001	529,265
Area of the first capitol building (in square feet).....	—	14,441
Do present capitol (including wings).....	—	4½ acres
Lines of railroads, in miles.....	—	8,500
Do. telegraphs.....	—	15,000
Number of post-offices.....	59	21,5 1
Number of miles of post route.	5,642	178,671
Amount of revenue from post-offices.....	$104,747	$5,552,971
Amount of expenditures in the Post-office Department.....	72,040	5,232,953
Number of miles (mail transportation).....	—	46,541 423
Miles of railroad.....	—	8,500
Public libraries.....	35	104
Number of volumes in do.....	75,000	2,201,653
School libraries.....	—	10,000
Number of volumes in do.....	—	2,000,000

A short note is here added respecting the growth of Western trade and commerce, extracted from an address before the Historical Society of Ohio, by William D. Gallagher, Esq., 1850. "A few facts will exhibit, as well as a volume, the wonderful growth of Western trade and commerce. Previous to the year 1800, some eight or ten keelboats, of twenty and twenty-five tons each, performed all the carrying trade between Cincinnati and Pittsburgh. In 1802, the first Government vessel appeared on Lake Erie. In 1811, the first steamboat (the Orleans) was launched at Pittsburgh. In 1826, the waters of Michigan were first ploughed by the keel of a steamboat, a pleasure trip to Green Bay being planned and executed in the summer of this year. In 1832, a steamboat first appeared at Chicago. At the present time, the entire number of steamboats running on the Mississippi and Ohio, and their tributaries, is more probably over than under six hundred, the aggregate tonnage of which is not short of one hundred and forty thousand—a larger number of steamboats than England can claim, and a greater steam commercial marine than that employed by Great Britain and her dependencies." In the department of invention there have been wonderful applications of science to the arts, within the last sixty years. The spacious hall of the Patent-office is at once the repository and the prop of American inventive art and genius. Their results are seen in the numerous improvements by which human labor is abridged. Without going into details, it may be sufficient to say, that many of the applications of steam to locomotion and manufactures, of electricity and magnetism, to the production of mechanical motion, to the electrical telegraph, to the registration of astronomical phenomena, to the art of multiplying engravings, the introduction and improvements among us of all the important inventions of the old world, are strikingly indicative of the advance of this country in the useful arts. The network of railroads and telegraph lines by which this vast country is reticulated, have not only developed its resources, but united, emphatically, in metallic bonds, all parts of the Union. The hydraulic works of NewYork, Philadelphia, and Boston, surpass, in extent and importance, those of ancient Rome.

But we have not confined our attention to the immediate application of science to the useful arts; we have entered the field of original research, and have enlarged the bounds of scientific knowledge. Sixty years ago, besides the brilliant discoveries of Franklin in electricity, scarcely any thing has been done among us in the way of original inventions. Our men of science were content with repeating the experiments, and diffusing a knowledge of the discoveries of the *savans* of the old world, without attempting to add a single new fact or principle to the existing stock. With the last twenty-five or thirty years, a remarkable improvement has taken place in this respect. Our natural history has been explored in all its branches; our geology has been investigated with results of the highest interest to practical and theoretical science. Discoveries have been made in pure chemistry and electricity, which have received the approbation of the world. The advance which has been made in meteorology in this country within the last twenty years, is equal to that made during the same period in all the world besides. In 1793, there was not in the United States an instrument with which a good observation of the heavenly bodies could be made. There are now instruments at Washington, Cambridge, and Cincinnati, equal to those at the best European observatories, and the original discoveries in astronomy, within the last five years in this country, are among the most brilliant of the age. Our knowledge of the geography and topography of the American continent, has been rapidly extended by the labor and science of the officers of the United States army, and discoveries of much interest, in distant seas, have resulted from the enterprise of our navy. In 1807 a survey of the coast of the United States was commenced, which at that time, it was supposed no American was competent to direct. The work has, however, grown within the last few years, under a native superintendent, in importance and extent, beyond any enterprise of the kind ever before attempted. These facts conclusively prove that a great advance has been made among us, not only in the application of science to the wants of ordinary life, but to science itself, in its application to satisfy the cravings of the immortal mind. In respect to literature with the exception of one or two spelling books, and other school books of an inferior character, and some theological treatises, of which none but those of Jonathan Edwards have any permanent value, and some works on local history and politics, like "Hutchinson's Massachusettes," "Jefferson's notes on Virginia," the "Federalist," "Belknap's New Hampshire," and "Morse's Geography," and a few others, America had not produced a single work of any repute in science or literature. We were almost wholly dependent on imported books. Even our Bibles and Testaments were for the most part printed abroad. The book trade is now one of the greatest branches of business, and works of standard value, and of high reputation in Europe as well as at home, have been produced by American authors, in every department of science and literature. While the nation has been expanding in dimensions, in numbers, and in wealth, the government has applied a wise forecast in the adoption of necessary measures, when the world shall no longer be at peace, to maintain the national honor, whether by appropriate displays of vigor abroad, or by well adapted means of defence at home. A navy which has so often illustrated our history by heroic achievements, though restrained in peaceful times, possesses in its admirable elements the means of great and sudden expansion, and is justly looked upon by the nation as the right arm of its power. An army still smaller, but not less perfect in its details, which has, on more than a few occasions, exhibited the military aptitudes and prowess of the race, and demonstrated the wisdom which has presided over its organization and government.

While the gradual and slow enlargement of these military arms has been regulated by jealous watchfulness over the public treasure, there has, nevertheless, been freely given, all that was needed to perfect their quality; and each affords the nucleus of any enlargement that the public exigence may demand from the millions of brave hearts and strong arms upon the land and water. The navy is the active and aggressive element of national defence; and, let loose from our own sea coast, must display its power in the seas and channels of the enemy. To do this it need not be larger, and it can never be large enough to defend, by its presence at home, all our ports and harbors. But, in the absence of the navy, what can the brave hearts and strong arms of the army and militia do against the enemies' line of battle ships and steamers falling without notice upon our coast! What will guard our cities from tribute, our merchant vessels and our navy yards from conflagration? Here, again, we see a wise forecast in the system of defensive measures which, especially since the close of the war with Great Britain, has been steadily followed by our government. While the perils from which our great establishments had just escaped, were yet fresh in recollection, a system of fortifications was begun, which now, though not quite complete, fences in our important points with impassable strength. More than four thousand cannon may, at any moment, within strong and permanent works, arranged with all the advantages and appliances that the art affords, be turned to the protection of the sea coast, and be served by the men whose hearths they shelter. Happy for us that it is so, since these are means of security that time alone can supply; and since the improvements of maritime warfare, by making distant expeditions easy and speedy, have made them more probable, and at the same time more difficult to anticipate and provide against. The cost of fortifying all the important points on our whole Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico frontier will not exceed the amount expended on the fortifications of Paris. In this connection one most important facility in the defence of the country is not to be overlooked. It is the almost instantaneous rapidity with which the soldiers of the army and navy and any number of the militia corps may now be brought to any point where a hostile attack may be made or threatened. All this extension of territory embraced within the United States, increase of its population, commerce and manufactures, development of its resources by canals and railroads, and rapidity of intercommunication by innumerable steamboats and telegraphs, has been accomplished without overthrow of, or danger to the public liberties, by any assumption of military power; and, indeed, without any permanent increase of the army, except for the purpose of frontier defence, and affording a slight guard to the public property; or of the navy, any farther than to secure the navigation that, in whatever sea he shall rail his ship, he is protected by the stars and stripes of his country. All this without the shedding of a drop of blood for treason or rebellion—all this while systems of popular representation have regularly been supported in the State governments and in the general government—all this, while laws national and State, of such a character have been passed, and have been so wisely administered that I may stand up here today and declare, as I now do, in the face of all the intelligent of the age, that from the period which has elapsed from the day that Washington laid the foundation of this capitol to the present time, there has been no country upon earth in which life, liberty and property have been more amply and steadily secured, or more freely enjoyed than in these United States of America.

Who is there that will deny this? Who is there prepared with a greater or a better example? Who is there that can stand upon the foundation of facts, acknowledged or proved, and assert that these, our republican institutions, have not answered the true ends of government, beyond all precedent in human history? There is yet another view. There are still higher considerations. Man is an intellectual being, destined to immortality. There is a spirit in him, and the breath of the Almighty hath given him understanding. Then only, is he tending towards his own destiny, while he seeks for knowledge or virtue, for the will of his Maker, and for just conceptions of his own duty. Of all important questions, therefore, let this, the most important of all, be first asked and first answered, in what country on the habitable globe, of great extent and large population, are the means of knowledge the most generally diffused and enjoyed among the people? This question admits of one and only one answer. It is here—it is here, in these United States—it is among the descendants of those who settled at Yorktown—of those who were pilgrims on the shore of Plymouth; and of those other races of men, who, in subsequent times, have become joined in this great American family. Let one fact, incapable of doubt or dispute, satisfy every mind on this point. The population of the United States is 23,000,000. Now take the map of the continent of Europe and spread it out before you. Take your scale and your dividers and lay off in one area, in any shape you please, a triangle, square, circle, parallelogram, or trapezoid, and of an area that shall contain 150,000,000 of people, and there will be found within the United States more persons who do habitually read and write, than can be embraced within the lines of your demarcation. But there is some thing even more than this. Man is not only an intellectual, but he is also a religious being; and his religious feelings and habits require cultivation. Let the religious element in man's nature be neglected, let him be influenced by no higher motives than low self-interest, and subjected to no stronger restraint than the limits of civil authority, and he becomes the creature of selfish passions or blind fanaticism. The spectacle of a nation, powerful and enlightened, but without Christian faith, has been presented, almost within our own day, as a warning beacon for the nations. On the other hand, the cultivation of the religious sentiment represses licentiousness, incites to general benevolence, and the practical acknowledgement of the brotherhood of man, inspires respect for law and order, and gives strength to the whole social fabric; at the same time it conducts the human soul upward to the author of its being. As one of its necessary consequences, it may, I think, be stated with truth, that in no country, in proportion to its population, are there so many benevolent establishments, Bible, missionary and tract societies, supported by public and private contributions, as in our own. There are also institutions for the education of the blind, the deaf and dumb, of idiots, for the reception of orphan and destitute children, for moral reform, designed for children and females respectively; institutions for the reformation of criminals, not to speak of those numerous establishments in almost every county and town in the United States, for the reception of the aged, infirm and destitute poor, many of whom have fled to our shores to escape the poverty and wretchedness of their condition at home. In the United States there is no church and no government or ecclesiastical authority founded by government. Public worship is maintained, either by voluntary contributions, or by trusts and donations of a charitable origin. Now, I think it safe to say that a greater portion of the people of the United States attend public worship, decently clad, well behaved, and well seated, than of any other country of the civilized world. Edifices of religion are seen every where. Their aggregate cost would amount to an immense sum of money. They are, in the general, kept in good repair, and consecrated to the purposes of public worship. In these edifices the people regularly assemble on the Sabbath day, which is sacredly set apart for rest, by all classes, from secular employment and for religious meditation and worship, to listen to the reading of the holy scriptures and discourses from pious ministers of the several denominations. This attention to the wants of the intellect and of the soul, as manifested by the voluntary support of schools and colleges, of churches and benevolent institutions, is one of the most remarkable characteristics of the American people, not less strikingly exhibited in the new than in the older settlements of the country. On the spot where the first trees of the forest were felled, near the log cabins of the pioneers, are to be seen rising together the church and the school-house. So has it been from the beginning, and God grant that thus it may continue.

"On other shores above their mouldering towers,
In solemn gloom the tall cathedral frowns;
Simple and frail our lowly temples throw
Their slender shadows on the paths below;
Scarce seen by man, and that unseen by him
The lark's carolume from the sentier's rim,
Rise like a vision of the morning air,
Hymns from a steeple mark the hour of prayer.
Yet faith's pure hymn, beneath its shelter rude,
Breathes out as sweetly to the lonely wood,
As where the rays through lucent windows pour,
On marble shaft and tessellated floor."

Who does not admit that this unparalleled growth of prosperity and renown are the results, under Providence, of the union of those States under a general constitution which guaranties to each State a republican form of government, and to every man the enjoyment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, free from civil tyranny or ecclesiastical domination. To bring home this idea to the present occasion, who does not feel that when President Washington laid his hand on the foundation of the first capitol building, he performed a great work of perpetuation of the Union and the Constitution! Who does not feel that this seat of the general government, healthful in its situation, central in its position, near to the mountains from whence gush springs of wonderful power, teeming with mines, richest products, and yet not far from the bays and the great estuaries of the sea, easily accessible and generally agreeable in climate and association, does not give strength to the union of these States; that this city, bearing an immortal name, with its broad streets and avenues, its public squares and magnificent edifices of the general government, erected for the purpose of carrying on within them the important business of the several departments for the reception of wonderful and curious inventions, the preservation of the records of American learning and genius, of extensive collections of the products of nature and art, brought hither for study and comparison from all parts of the world; adorned with numerous churches, and sprinkled over, I am happy to say, with many public schools, where all the children of the city, without distinction, are provided with the means of obtaining a good education—where there are academies and colleges, professional schools and public libraries—should continue to receive, as it has heretofore, the fostering care of the nation, and should be regarded as the permanent seat of the national government. Here too, a citizen of the great republic of letters—a republic which knows not the metes and bounds of political geography—has indicated, I trust, prophetically to this nation, a wide and powerful influence in the intellectual world, and to this city a commanding position in the field of science and literature, by endowing here, and placing under the guardianship of the government, an institution "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." With each succeeding year new interest is added to the spot. It becomes connected with all the historical associations of our country, with her statesmen and orators; and alas! its cemetery is annually enriched with the ashes of her chosen sons. Before us is the broad and beautiful river, separating two of the original thirteen States, and which a late President, a man of determined purpose and inflexible will but patriotic heart, desired to span with arches of ever enduring granite, symbolical of the firmly cemented union of the North and the South. On its banks he has repose his ashes of the Father of his Country, and on our side, by a singular felicity of position, overlooking the city which he designed and which bears his name, rises to his memory the marble column sublime in its simple garndeur, and fitly intended to reach a loftier height than any similar structure on the surface of the whole earth. Let the votive offering of his grateful countrymen be freely contributed to carry higher and still higher this monument. May I say as on another occasion, "Let it rise! let it rise! till it shall meet the sun in his coming—let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit."

Fellow citizens—What contemplations are awakened in our minds as we assemble here to represent in some like that performed by Washington! Methinks I see his venerable form now before me, as presented in the glorious statue by Houdon, now in the Capitol of Virginia. He is dignified and grave, but concern and anxiety seem to soften the lineaments of his countenance. The government over which he presides is yet in the crisis of experiment. Not free from troubles at home, he sees the world in commotion and arms all around him. He sees that imposing foreign powers are half disposed to try the strength of the recently established American government. We perceive that mighty thoughts mingled with tears as well as with hopes are struggling within him. He looks down the procession over those then naked fields; he crosses yonder stream on a fallen tree; he ascends to the top of this eminence, whose original oaks of the forests stand as thick around him as if the spot had been devoted to Druidical worship, and here he performs the appointed duty of the day.

And now, fellow citizens, if this vision were a reality—if Washington were now actually among us—and if he could draw around him the shades of the great public men of his own days—patriots and warriors, orators and statesmen—and were to address us in their presence, would he not say to us—"Ye men of this generation, I rejoice and thank God for being able to see that our labors and toils, and sacrifices, were not in vain. You are prosperous—you are happy—you are grateful. The fire of liberty burns brightly and steadily in your hearts, while duty and the law restrain it from bursting forth in wild and destructive conflagration. Cherish liberty as you love it—cherish its securities as you wish to preserve it. Maintain the constitution which we labored so painfully to establish, and which has been to you such a source of inestimable blessings. Preserve the union of the States, cemented as it was by our prayers, our tears and our blood. Be true to God, your country and your duty. So shall the whole Eastern world follow the morning sun to contemplate you as a nation; so shall all succeeding generations honor you as they honor us; and so shall that Almighty Power which so graciously protected us, and which now protects you, shower its everlasting blessings upon you and your posterity."

President Fillmore! It is your singularly good fortune to perform an act such as that which the earliest of your predecessors performed fifty-eight years ago. You stand where he stood. You lay your hand on the corner stone of a building designed greatly to extend that whose corner stone he laid. Changed, changed is every thing around. The same sun, indeed, shone upon his head which now shines upon yours. The same broad river rolled at his feet and bathed his last resting place, that now rolls at yours. But the site of this city was then mainly an open field. Streets and avenues have since been laid out and completed—squares and public grounds enclosed and ornamented, until the city which bears his name, although comparatively inconsiderable in numbers and wealth, has become quite fit to be the seat of the government of a great and united people. Sir, may the consequences of the duty which you perform so auspiciously to-day, equal those which flowed from his act. Nor this only. May the principles of your administration and the wisdom of your political conduct, be such as that the world of the present day, and all history hereafter, may be at no loss to perceive what example you have made your study.

Fellow-citizens—I now bring this address to a close, by expressing to you, in the words of the great Roman orator, the deepest wishes of my heart, and which I know deeply penetrates the hearts of all who hear me: "*Duo modo hoc opto; unum, ut moriens populum Romanum liberum relinquam; hoc mihi a ejus a dis immortalibus dari nihil potest: alterum, ut ita cuique eveniat, ut de republica quisque mereatur.*"

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