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A CENTURY.

In the Footsteps of Washington.

MEMORIAL SERVICES.

At the Scene of the First Inauguration.

A CHRISTIAN PEOPLE'S HOMAGE.

In St. Paul's Chapel—Bishop Potter's Address—Whittier's Poem—Depew's Oration—The Magnificent Parade.

NEW YORK, April 30.—The day broke bright and beautiful. More perfect weather for the celebration could not have been wished for. The air was a little sharp but exhilirating, and just right for those who were preparing to take part in the procession. The earliest streaks of dawn found many people in the streets, and as the day wore on the number increased till the lower half of Manhattan Island was filled with a greater throng than was ever before there at one time.

A brisk breeze set a myriad of flags flapping in jubilation on the memorable anniversary, and rustled among the vast quantities of decoration which blazed in great profusion from every housefront, making a bewildering kaleidoscope of the national colors. Martial strains were borne upon the breezes from the Battery and elsewhere. Horsemen

IN BRILLIANT UNIFORMS

dashed here and there; troops and other bodies moved to their appointed positions to take part in the parade. Then the chimes of Old Trinity church rang out the solemn strains of the "Old Hundred," followed by "Hail Columbia," "Yankee Doodle," "Centennial March," "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," "America," "The Starry Flag," "Our Flag is there," "Auld Lang Syne," "My Country's Flag of Stars." Then the sound of the bells calling the people to thanksgiving services in the various churches awakened the people anew to the true solemnity of the occasion. Services were held in all the churches of the city of every denomination, votive masses being offered up in the Catholic churches, at which special prapers were held.

As a matter of course the principal services were at St. Paul's church on Broadway where Washington attended on the morning of his inauguration.

At 8:30 a. m. the President arrived at the Vesey street gate. As the President stepped from his carriage, followed by the Vice-President and Mr. Hamilton, a committee of the Trinity vestry stepped from the gateway and escorted the party to the west entrance, where the rector of Trinity, the Rev. Dr. Dix, was waiting to escort the President to

THE OLD WASHINGTON PEW.

In the next carriage were Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Morton and Clarence Bowen. A few minutes later the carriage containing Governor Hill, Mayor Grant and General Schofield drew up. Postmaster-General Wanamaker hurried through the crowd on foot. At 9:12 an open carriage, containing ex-President Cleveland, ex-President Hayes, Lieutenant-Governor Jones and Senator William Evarts, drew up. Mr. Cleveland, the first to alight, missed his footing and almost fell. During the service the new British minister occupied a seat in the pew allotted to the diplomatic corps. The Spanish minister sat near him. The Vice-President occupied a large pew midway up the aisle, under the south gallery. The exercises were conducted by the Rt. Rev. Henry C. Potter, DD. LLD., bishop of New York, as the services on the day of Washington's inauguration were conducted by the bishop of New York, the Rt. Rev. Samuel Provost.

Bishop Potter's address was an eloquent one. After dwelling on the exalted character of Washington, especially on the deep religious feeling which governed him, as shown on the day of his inauguration, when he came to worship in this very church, the speaker touched upon the constitution of the United States, and the vast work which had brought the members into one body. The bishop then said, in part: "But it is a somewhat significant fact that it is not along lines such as these that the enthusiasm which has flamed out during these recent days and weeks, as this anniversary approached, seemed to move.

"One thing that has, I imagine, amazed a good many cynical and pessimistic people among us is the way in which the ardor of a great people's love and homage and gratitude have kindled, not before an image of mechanism, but of man, that it celebrates the beginning of an administration which, by its lofty and stainless integrity, by its absolute superiority to selfish or secondary motives, by the rectitude of its daily conduct in the face of whatsoever threats, blandishments or combinations, rather than by the ostentatious phariseeism of its professions, had

TAUGHT THIS NATION

and the world forever what the Christian ruler of a Christian people ought to be, and not the conception of a national government as a huge machine existing mainly for the purpose of rewarding partisan service.

"This was a conception so alien to the character and conduct of Washington and his associates, that it seems grotesque even to speak of it. It would be interesting to imagine the first President of the United States confronted with some one who had ventured to approach him upon the basis of what are now commonly known as 'practical politics,' but the conception is impossible."

The bishop quoted from a letter of Washington to a friend who sought a pledge of office during the campaign, refusing any such pledge, and declaring that neither the ties of blood nor of friendship when in office should sway his judgment.

The speaker then proceeded to contrast such political methods with those of to-day in scathing language. He declared: "We have exchanged Washingtonian dignity for Jeffersonian simplicity, which was in truth only another name for Jacksonian vulgarity."

The speaker closed with a prayer that the nation might be led to follow Washington's noble Christian example.

The following is the order of exercises at St. Paul's:

1—Processional hymn.
2—"Our Father," etc.
3—Psalm LXXXV.
4—First lesson, Ecclesiastics XLIV.
5—Te Deum.
6—Second lesson, St. John VIII.
7—Benedicte.
8—The creed and prayers.
9—Address by Bishop Potter.
10—Processional hymn.

AFTER THE CEREMONIES

in the church were concluded, the Presidential party, escorted by the committee, was driven to the sub-treasury building, where the literary exercises of the day began.

The crowd at the sub-treasury defied computation and the cheers which greeted the President upon his appearance on the platform under the heroic statue of Washington, fairly shook the foundations of the building. The moment the exercises at the sub-treasury began, the military parade started up Broadway from Pine street, with General Schofield commanding. The parade was in three divisions, the first consisting of the regular troops, the cadets and the naval corps. The West Pointers, 400 strong, led the column.

The second division consisted of the militia marching in the order in which their respective states were admitted to the union, with the governors of each state at the head of its troops. Places were also given in this division for governors without troops, including Governor Cooper, of Colorado, and Governor Pennoyer, of Oregon.

The third division consisted of the Grand Army of the Republic and the Loyal Legion.

The sub-treasury steps were the Mecca of thousands from an early hour. At 9 o'clock it was almost impossible to pass through the streets for a quarter of a mile around, while in the immediate neighborhood of the sub-treasury the sight-seers were packed like sheep. As soon as the Presidential party reached the platform a storm of applause rose from the assembled crowd.

Hamilton Fish, Sr., opened the exercises by introducing Elbridge T. Gerry, as chairman. Gerry, with a few appropriate remarks, called upon the Rev. Richard S. Storrs, who delivered an eloquent invocation, closing with the Lord's Prayer.

Clarence W. Bowen, secretary of the centennial committee, was next introduced. He read J. G. Whittier's poem composed for the occasion.

THE VOW OF WASHINGTON.

BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

The sword was sheathed! In April's sun
Lay green the fields by Freedom won;
And severed sections, weary of debates,
Joined hands at last and were United States.

O City sitting by the Sea!
How proud the day that dawned on thee,
When the new era, long desired, began,
And, in its need, the hour had found the man!

One thought the cannon salvos spoke;
The resonant bell-tower's vibrant stroke;
The voiceful streets, the plaudit-echoing halls,
And prayer and hymn borne Seaward from St. Paul's!

How felt the land in every part
The strong throb of a nation's heart,
As its great leader gave, with reverent awe,
His pledge to Union, Liberty and Law!

That pledge the heavens above him heard,
Past row the sleep of centuries stirred!
In earth-wide wonder listening peoples bent
Their gaze on Freedom's great experiment.

Could it succeed? Of honor sold
And hopes deceived all history told.
Above the wrecks that strewed the mournful past
Was the long dream of ages true at last?

Thank God! the people's choice was just.
The one man equal to his trust,
Wise beyond law, and without weakness good.
Calm in the strength of clareless rectitude!

His rule of justice, order, peace,
Made possible the world's release;
Taught princes and serf that power is but a trust,
And rule, alone, which serves the ruled, is just.

That Freedom generous is, but strong
In hate of fraud and selfish wrong;
Pretense that turns her lady traits to lies,
And lawless license masking in her guise.

Land of his love! with one glad voice
Let thy great sisterhood rejoice!
A century's suns o'er thee have risen and set.
And God be praised, we are one nation yet.

And still, we trust, the years to be
Shall prove his hope was destiny,
Leaving our flag with all its added stars
Unrent by faction and unstained by wars!

Lo! where with patient toil he nursed
And trained the new-set plant at first,
The widening branches of a stately tree
Stretch from the sunrise to the sunset sea.

And in its broad and sheltering shade,
Sitting with none to make afraid,
Were we now silent, through each mighty limb,
The winds of heaven would sing the praises of him.

Our first and best!—his ashes lie
Beneath his own Virginian sky.
Forgive, forget, O true and just and brave,
The storm that swept above thy sacred grave!

For, even in the awful strife
And dark hours of the nation's life,
Through the fierce tumult pierced his warning word,
Their framer's voice his erring children heard!

The change for which he prayed and sought
In that sharp agony was wrought;
No partial interest draws its alien line
Twixt North and South, the cypress and the pine!

One people now, all doubt beyond,
His name shall be our Union bond;
We lift our hands to Heaven, and here and now,
Take on our lips the old Centennial vow.

For rule and trust must needs be ours;
Chosen and chosen both are powers
Equal in service as in rights; the claim
Of Duty rests on each and all the same.

Then let the sovereign millions, where
Our banner floats in sun and air,
From the warm palm-lands to Alaska's cold,
Repeat with us the pledge a century old!

OAK HILL, DANVERS, MASS.

At the conclusion of the reading the assembly gave Whittier three cheers and a tiger. The Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, the orator of the day, was next introduced, and received a hearty greeting. He spoke as follows:

"We celebrate to-day the centenary of our nationality. One hundred years ago the United States began their existence. The powers of government were assumed by the people of the republic, and they became the sole source of authority. The solemn ceremonial of the first inauguration, the reverent oath of Washington, the acclaim of the multitude greeting their President, marked the most unique event of modern times in the development of free institutions. The occasion was not an accident, but a result. It was the culmination of the working out by mighty forces through many centuries of the problem of self-government. It was not the triumph of a system, the application of a theory, or the reduction to practice of the abstractions of philosophy. The time, the country, the heredity and environment of the people, the folly of its enemies, and the noble courage of its friends, gave to liberty after ages of defeat, of trial, of experiment, of partial success and substantial gains, this immortal victory. Henceforth it had a refuge and recruiting station. The oppressed found free homes in this favored land, and invisible armies marched from it by mail and telegraph, by speech and song, by precept and example, to regenerate the world.

"Puritans in New England, Dutchmen in New York, Catholics in Maryland, Huguenots in South Carolina had felt the fires of persecution and were wedded to religious liberty. They had been purified in the furnace, and in high debate and on bloody battle-fields had learned to sacrifice all material interests and to peril their lives for human rights. The principles of constitutional government had been impressed upon them by hundreds of years of struggle, and for each principle they could point to the grave of an ancestor whose death attested the ferocity of the fight and the value of the concession wrung from arbitrary power. They knew the limitations of authority, they could pledge their lives and fortunes to resist encroachments upon their rights, but it required the lesson of Indian massacres, the invasion of the armies of France from Canada, the tyranny of the British crown, the seven years' war of the revolution, and the five years of chaos of the Confederation to evolve the idea, upon which rest the power and permanency of the republic, that liberty and union are one and inseparable.

"The traditions and experience of the colonists had made them alert to discover and quick to resist any peril to their liberties. Above all things, they feared and distrusted power. The town meeting and the colonial legislature gave them confidence in themselves, and courage to check the royal governors. Their interests, hopes and affections were in their several commonwealths, and each blow by the British ministry at their freedom, each attack upon their rights as Englishmen, weakened their love for the mother land and intensified their hostility to the crown. But the same cause which broke down their allegiance to the central government increased their confidence in their respective colonies, and their faith in liberty was largely dependent upon the maintenance of the sovereignty of their several states. The farmers' shot at Lexington echoed round the world, the spirit which it awakened from its slumbers could do and dare and die, but it had not yet discovered the secret of the permanence and progress of free institutions. Patrick Henry thundered in the Virginia convention, James Otis spoke with trumpet tongue and fervid eloquence for united action in Massachusetts, Hamilton, Jay and Clinton pledged New York to respond with men and money for the common cause, but their vision only saw a league of independent colonies. The veil was not yet drawn from before the vista, of population and power, of empire and liberty, which would open with national union.

"The Continental Congress partially grasped, but completely expressed, the central idea of the American republic. More fully than any other body which ever assembled did it represent the victories won from arbitrary power for human rights. In the New World it was the conservator of liberties secured through centuries of struggle in the Old. Among the delegates were the descendants of the men who had stood in that brilliant array upon the field of Runnymede, which wrested from King John, Magna Charta, that great charter of liberty, to which Hallam in the nineteenth century bears witness 'that all which had been since obtained is little more than as confirmatio n or commentary.' There were the grandchildren of the statesmen who had summoned Charles before parliament and compelled his assent to the Petition of Rights, which transferred power from the crown to the commons, and gave representative government to the English-speaking race. And there were those who had sprung from the iron soldiers who had fought and charged with Cromwell at Naseby and Dunbar and Marston Moor. Among its members were Huguenots, whose fathers had followed the white plume of Henry of Navarre, and in an age of bigotry, intolerance and the deification of absolutism, had secured the great edict of religious liberty from French despotism; and who had become a people without a country, rather than surrender their convictions and forswear their consciences. In this Congress were those whose ancestors were the countrymen of William of Orange, the Beggars of the Sea, who had survived the cruelties of Alva, and broken the yoke of proud Philip of Spain, and who had two centuries before made a declaration of independence and formed a federal union which are models of freedom and strength.

"These men were not revolutionists, they were the heirs and the guardians of the priceless treasures of mankind. The British king and his ministers were the revolutionists. They were reactionaries, seeking arbitrarily to turn back the hands upon the dial of time. A year of doubt and debate, the baptism of blood upon battle-fields, where soldiers from every colony fought under a common standard, and consolidated the continental army, gradually lifted the soul and understanding of this immortal Congress to the sublime declaration: 'We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, *free* and *independent states*.'

"To this declaration John Hancock, proscribed and threatened with death, affixed a signature which has stood for a century like the pointers to the north star in the firmament of freedom, and Charles Carroll, taunted that among many Carrolls, he, the richest man in America, might escape, added description and identification with 'of Carrollton.' Benjamin Harrison, a delegate from Virginia, the ancestor of the distinguished statesman and soldier who to-day so worthily fills the chair of Washington, voiced the unalterable determination and defiance of the Congress. He seized John Hancock, upon whose head a price was set, in his arms, and placing him in the Presidential chair, said: 'We will show Mother Britain how little we care for her by making our President a Massachussets man, whom she has excluded from pardon by public proclamation!' and when they were signing the Declaration, and the slender Elbridge Gerry uttered the grim pleasantry, 'We must hang together or su we will hang separately,' the portly Harrison responded with the most daring humor, 'It will be all over with me in a moment, but you will be kicking in the air half an hour after I am gone.' Thus flashed athwart the great charter, which was to be for its signers a death warrant or a diploma of immortality, as with firm hand, high purpose and undaunted resolution, they subscribed their names, this mockery of fear and the penalties of treason.

"The grand central idea of the Declaration of Independence was the sovereignty of the people. It relied for original power, not upon states, or colonies, or their citizens as such, but recognized as the authority for nationality the revolutionary rights of the people of the United States. It stated with marvelous clearness the encroachments upon liberties which threatened their suppression and justified revolt, but it was inspired by the very genius of freedom, and the prophetic possibilities of united commonwealths covering the continent in one harmonious republic, when it made the people of the thirteen colonies all Americans, and devolved upon them to administer by themselves, and for themselves, the prerogatives and powers wrested from crown and parliament. It condensed Magna Charter, the Petition of Rights, the great body of English liberties embodied in the common law and accumulated in the decisions of the courts, the statutes of the realm, and an undisputed though unwritten constitution; but this original principle and dynamic force of the people's power sprang from these old seeds planted in the virgin soil of the New World.

"More clearly than any statesman of the period, did Thomas Jefferson grasp and divine the possibilities of popular government. He caught and crystallized the spirit of free institutions. His philosophical mind was singularly free from the power of precedents or the chains of prejudice. He had an unquestioning and abiding faith in the people, which was accepted by but few of his compatriots. Upon his famous axiom, of the equality of all men before the law, he constructed his system. It was the trip-hammer essential for the emergency to break the links binding the colonies to imperial authority, and to pulverize the privileges of caste. It inspired him to write the Declaration of Independence, and persuaded him to doubt the wisdom of the powers concentrated in the constitution. In his passionate love of liberty he became intensely jealous of authority. He destroyed the substance of royal prerogative, but never emerged from its shadow. He would have the states as the guardians of popular rights, and the barriers against centralization, and he saw in the growing power of the nation ever increasing encroachments upon the rights of the people. For the success of the pure democracy which must precede Presidents and cabinets and Congresses, it was perhaps providential that its apostle never believed a great people could grant and still retain, could give and at will reclaim, could delegate and yet firmly hold the authority which ultimately created the power of their republic and enlarged the scope of their own liberty.

"Where this master-mind halted, all stood still. The necessity for a permanent union was apparent, but each state must have hold upon the bowstring which encircled its throat. It was admitted that union gave the machinery required to successfully fight the common enemy, but yet there was fear that it might become a Frankenstein and destroy its creators. Thus patriotism and fear, difficulties of communication between distant communities, and the intense growth of provincial pride and interests, led this Congress to frame the Articles of Confederation, happily termed the league of friendship. The result was not a government, but a ghost. By this scheme the American people were ignored and the Declaration of Independence reversed. The states, by their legislatures, elected delegates to Congress, and the delegate represented the sovereignty of his commonwealth. All the states had an equal voice without regard to their size or population. It required the vote of nine states to pass any bill, and five could block the wheels of the government. Congress had none of the powers essential to sovereignty. It could neither levy taxes nor impose duties nor collect excise. For the support of the army and navy, for the purposes of war, for the preservation of its own functions, it could only call upon the states, but it possessed no power to enforce its demands. It had no President or executive authority, no supreme court with general jurisdiction, and no national power. Each of the thirteen states had seaports and levied discriminating duties against the others, and could also tax and thus prohibit inter-state commerce across its territory. Had the confederation been a union instead of a league, it could have raised and equipped three times the number of men contributed by reluctant states, and conquered independence without foreign assistance. This paralyzed government, without strength, because it could not enforce its decrees; without credit, because it could pledge nothing for the payment of its debts; without respect, because without inherent authority; would, by its feeble life and early death, have added another to the historic tragedies which have in many lands marked the suppression of freedom, had it not been saved by the intelligent, inherited and invincible understanding of liberty by the people, and the genius and patriotism of their leaders.

"But, while the perils of war had given temporary strength to the confederation, peace developed its fatal weakness. It derived no authority from the people, and could not appeal to them. Anarchy threatened its existence at home, and contempt met its representatives abroad. 'Can you fulfill or enforce the obligations of the treaty on your part if we sign one with you?' was the sneer of the courts of the Old World to our ambassadors. Some states gave a half-hearted support to its demands; others defied them. The loss of public credit was speedily followed by universal bankruptcy. The wildest phantasies assumed the force of serious measures for the relief of the general distress. States passed exclusive and hostile laws against each other, and riot and disorder threatened the disintegration of society. 'Our stock is stolen, our houses are plundered, our farms are raided,' cried a delegate in the Massachusetts convention; 'despotism is better than anarchy!' To raise $1,000,000 a year was beyond the resources of the government, and $300,000 was the limit of the loan it could secure from the money-lenders of Europe. Even Washington exclaimed in despair: 'I see one head gradually changing into thirteen; I see one army gradually branching into thirteen; which, instead of looking up to Congress as the supreme controlling power, are considering themselves as depending on their respective states.' And later, when independence had been won, the impotency of the government wrung from him the exclamation: 'After gloriously and successfully contending against the usurpation of Great Britain, we may fall a prey to our own folly and disputes.

"But even through this Cimmerian darkness shot a flame which illumined the coming century, and kept bright the beacon fires of liberty. The architects of constitutional freedom formed their institutions with wisdom which forecasted the future. They may not have understood at first the whole truth, but, for that which they knew, they had the martyrs' spirit and the crusaders' enthusiasm. Though the confederation was a government of checks without balances, and of purpose without power, the statesmen who guided it demonstrated often the resistless force of great souls animated by the purest patriotism, and united in judgment and effort to promote the common good, by lofty appeals and high reasoning, to elevate the masses above local greed and apparent self-interest to their own broad plane.

"The most significant triumph of these moral and intellectual forces was that which secured the assent of the states to the limitation of their boundaries, to the grant of the wilderness beyond them to the general government, and to the insertion in the ordinance erecting the northwest territories of the immortal proviso prohibiting 'slavery or involuntary servitude' within all of that broad domain. The states carved out of this splendid concession were not sovereignties which had successfully rebelled, but they were the children of the union, born of the covenant and thrilliest with its life and liberty. They became the bulwarks of nationality and the buttresses of freedom. Their preponderating strength first checked and then broke the slave power, their fervid loyalty halted and held at bay the spirit of state rights and secession for generations; and when the crisis came, it was with their overwhelming assistance that the nation killed and buried its enemy. The cornerstone of the edifice whose centenary we are celebrating was the ordinance of 1787. It was constructed by the feeblest of Congresses, but few enactments of ancient or modern times have had more far-reaching and beneficient influence. It is one of the sublimest paradoxes of history, that this weak Confederation of states should have welded the chain against which, after seventy-four years of fretful efforts for release, its own spirit frantically dashed and died.

"The government of the republic by a Congress of states, a diplomatic congestion of the ambassadors of petty commonwealths, after seven years' trial, was falling asunder. Threatened with civil war among its members, insurrection and lawlessness rife within the states, foreign commerce ruined and internal trade paralyzed, its currency worthless, its merchants bankrupt, its farms mortgaged, its markets closed, its labor unemployed, it was like a helpless wreck upon the ocean, tossed about by the tides and ready to be engulfed in the storm. Washington gave the warning and called for action. It was a voice accustomed to command, but now entreating. The veterans of the war and the statesmen of the revolution stepped to the front. The patriotism which had been misled, but had never faltered, rose above the interests of states and the jealousies of jarring confederates to find the basis for union. 'It is clear to me as A, B, C,' said Washington, 'that an extension of federal powers would make us one of the most happy, wealthy, respectable and powerful nations that ever inhabited the terrestrial globe. Without them we shall soon be everything which is the direct reverse. I predict the worst consequences from a half-starved, limping government, always moving upon crutches, and tottering at every step.' The response of the country was the convention of 1787, at Philadelphia. The Declaration of Independence was but the vestibule of the temple which this illustrious assembly erected. With no successful precedents to guide, it auspiciously worked out the problem of constitutional government, and of imperial power and home rule, supplementing each other in promoting the grandeur of the nation, and preserving the liberty of the individual.

"The deliberations of great councils have vitally affected, at different periods, the history of the world and the fate of empires; but this Congress builded, upon popular sovereignty, institutions broad enough to embrace the continent, and elastic enough to fit all conditions of race and traditions. The experience of a hundred years has demonstrated for us the perfection of the work, for defense against foreign foes, and for self-preservation against domestic insurrection, for limitless expansion in population and material development, and for steady growth in intellectual freedom and force. Its continuing influence upon the welfare and destiny of the human race can only be measured by the capacity of man to cultivate and enjoy the boundless opportunities of liberty and law. The eloquent characterization of Mr. Gladstone condenses its merits: 'The American constitution is the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man.'

"The statemen who composed this great senate were equal to their trust. Their conclusions were the results of calm debate and wise concession. Their character and abilities were so pure and great as to command the confidence of the country for the reversal of the policy of the independence of the state of the power of the general government, which had hitherto been the invariable practice and almost universal opinion, and for the adoption of the idea of the nation and its supremacy.

"Towering in majesty and influence above them all stood Washington, their President. Beside him was the venerable Franklin, who though eighty-one years of age, brought to the deliberations of the convention the unimpaired vigor and resources of the wisest brain, the most hopeful philosophy, and the largest experience of the times. Oliver Ellsworth, afterwards chief justice of the United States, and the profoundest jurist in the country; Robert Morris, the wonderful financier of the revolution, and Gouverneur Morris, the most versatile genius of his period; Roger Sherman, one of the most eminent of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and John Rutledge, Rufus King, Elbridge Gerry, Edmund Randolph and the Pinckneys, were leaders of unequalled patriotism, courage, ability and learning; while Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, as original thinkers and constructive statesmen, rank among the immortal few whose opinions have for ages guided ministers of state and determined the destinies of nations.

"This great convention keenly felt, and with devout and serene intelligence met, its tremendous responsibilities. It had the moral support of the few whose aspirations for liberty had been inspired or renewed by the triumph of the American revolution and the actives hostility of every government in the world.

"There were no examples to follow, and the experience of its members led part of them to lean toward absolute centralization as the only refuge from the anarchy of the Confederation, while the rest clung to the sovereignty of the states, for fear that the concentration of power would end in the absorption of liberty. The large states did not want to surrender the advantage of their position, and the smaller states saw the danger to their existence. The leagues of the Greek cities had ended in loss of freedom, tyranny, conquest and destruction. Roman conquest and assimilation had strewn the shores of time with the wrecks of empires, and planted civilization into the perils and horrors of the dark ages. The government of Cromwell was the isolated power of the mightiest man of his age, without popular authority to fill his place or the hereditary principle to protect his successor. The past furnished no light for our state builders, the present was full of doubt and despair. The future, the experiment of self-government, the perpetuity and development of freedom, almost the destiny of mankind, was in their hands.

"At this crisis the courage and confidence needed to originate a system weakened. The temporizing spirit of compromise seized the convention with the alluring proposition of not proceeding faster than the people could be educated to follow. The cry: 'Let us not waste our labor upon conclusions which will not be adopted, but amend and adjourn,' was assuming startling unanimity. But the supreme force and majestic sense of Washington brought the assemblage to the lofty plane of its duty and opportunity. He said: 'It is too probable that no plan we propose will be adopted. Perhaps another dreadful conflict is to be sustained. If to please the people we offer what we ourselves disapprove, how can we afterwards defend our work? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair; the event is in the hands of God.' 'I am the state,' said Louis the Fourteenth, but his line ended in the grave of absolutism. 'Forty centuries look down upon you,' was Napoleon's address to his army, in the shadow of the pyramids, but his soldiers saw only the dream of eastern empire vanish in blood. Statesmen and parliamentary leaders have sunk into oblivion or led their party to defeat, by surrendering their convictions to the passing passions of the hour, but Washington in this immortal speech struck the keynote of representative obligation, and propounded the fundamental principle of the purity and perpetuity of constitutional government.

"Freed from the limitations of its environment, and the question of the adoption of its work, the convention erected its government upon the eternal foundations of the power of the people. It dismissed the delusive theory of a compact between independent states, and derived national power from the people of the United States. It broke up the machinery of the confederation and put in practical operation the glittering generalities of the Declaration of Independence. From chaos came order, from insecurity came safety, from disintegration and civil war came law and liberty, with the principle proclaimed in the preamble of the great charter, 'We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, to ordain and establish this constitution for the United States.' With a wisdom inspired of God, to work out upon this continent the liberty of man, they solved the problem of the ages by blending and yet preserving local self-government with national authority, and the rights of the states, with the majesty and power of the republic. The government of the states, under the articles of confederation, became bankrupt because it could not raise $1,000,000; the government of the union, under the Constitution of the United States, raised $6,000,000,000, its credit growing firmer as its power and resources were demonstrated. The congress of the confederation fled from a regiment, which it could not pay; the Congress of the union reviewed the comrades of a million of its victorious soldiers, saluting as they marched the flag of the nation, whose supremacy they had sustained. The promises of the confederacy were the scoff of its states; the pledge of the republic was the honor of its people.

"The constitution, which was to be strengthened by the strain of a century, to be a mighty conqueror without a subject province, to triumphantly survive the greatest of civil wars without the confiscation of an estate or the execution of a political offender, to create and grant home rule and state sovereignty to twenty-nine additional commonwealths, and yet enlarge its scope and broaden its power, and to make the name of an American citizen a title of honor throughout the world, came complete from this great convention to the people for adoption. As Hancock rose from his seat in the old Congress, eleven years before, to sign the Declaration of Independence, Franklin saw emblazoned on the back of the President's chair the sun partly above the horizon, but it seemed setting in a blood-red sky. During the seven years of the confederation he had gathered no hope from the glittering emblem, but now as with clear vision he beheld fixed upon eternal foundations the enduring structure of constitutional liberty, pointing to the sign, he forgot his eighty-two years, and with the enthusiasm of youth electrified the convention with the declaration: 'Now I know that it is the rising sun.'

"The pride of the states and the ambition of their leaders, sectional jealousies and the overwhelming distrust of centralized power, were all arrayed against the adoption of the constitution. North Carolina and Rhode Island refused to join the union until long after Washington's inauguration. For months New York was debatable ground. Her territory extending from the sea to the lakes made her the keystone of the arch. Had Arnold's treason in the revolution not been foiled by the capture of Andre, England would have held New York and subjugated the Colonies, and in this crisis, unless New York assented, a hostile and powerful commonwealth dividing the states, made the union impossible.

"Success was due to confidence in Washington and the genius of Alexander Hamilton. Jefferson was the inspiration of independence, but Hamilton was the incarnation of the constitution. In no age nor country has there appeared a more precocious or amazing intelligence than Hamilton. At seventeen he annihilated the president of his college, upon the question of the rights of the colonies, in a series of anonymous articles which were credited to the ablest men in the country; at forty-seven, when he died, his briefs had become the law of the land, and his fiscal system was, and after a hundred years remains, the rule and policy of our government. He gave life to the corpse of national credit, and the strength for self-preservation and aggressive power to the federal union. Both as an expounder of the principles and an administrator of the affairs of government, he stands supreme and unrivalled in American history. His eloquence was so magnetic, his language so clear, and his reasoning so irresistible that he swayed with equal ease popular assemblies, grave senates, and learned judges. He captured the people of the whole country for the constitution by his papers in the *Federalist*, and conquered the hostile majority in the New York convention by the splendor of his oratory.

"But the multitudes whom no argument could convince, who saw in the executive power and centralized force of the Constitution, under another name, the dreaded usurpation of king and ministry, were satisfied only with the assurance, 'Washington will be President.' 'Good,' cried John Lamb, the able leader of the Sons of Liberty, as he dropped his opposition; 'for to no other mortal man would I trust authority so enormous.' 'Washington will be President,' was the battle-cry of the Constitution. It quieted alarm and gave confidence to the timid and courage to the weak. The country responded with enthusiastic unanimity, but the chief with the greatest reluctance. In the supreme moment of victory, when the world expected him to follow the precedents of the past, and perpetuate the power a grateful country would willingly have left in his hands, he had resigned and retired to Mount Vernon to enjoy in private station his well-earned rest. The convention created by his exertions to prevent, as he said, 'the decline of our federal dignity into insignificant and wretched fragments of empire,' had called him to preside over its deliberations. Its work made possible the realization of his hope that, 'we might survive as an independent republic,' and again he sought the seclusion of his home. But, after the triumph of the war, and the formation of the Constitution, came the third and final crisis, the initial movements of government which were to teach the infant state the steadier steps of empire.

"He alone could stay assault and inspire confidence, while the great and complicated machinery of organized government was put in order and set in motion. Doubt existed nowhere except in his modest and unambitious heart. 'My movements to the chair of government,' he said, 'will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of his execution. So unwilling am I, in the evening of life, nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties, without that competency of political skill, abilities and inclination, which are necessary to manage the helm.' His whole life had been spent in repeated sacrifices for his country's welfare, and he did not hesitate now, though there was an undertone of inexpressible sadness in this entry in his diary on the night of his departure: 'About 10 o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity, and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations.'

"No conqueror was ever accorded such a triumph, no ruler ever received such a welcome. In this memorable march of six days to the capitol, it was the pride of the states to accompany him with the masses of their people to their borders, that the citizens of the next commonwealth might escort him through its territory. It was the glory of cities to receive him with every civic honor at their gates, and entertain him as the savior of their liberties. He rode under triumphal arches from which children lowered laurel wreaths upon his brow. The roadways were strewn with flowers, and as they were crushed beneath his horse's hoofs, their sweet incense wafted to Heaven the ever-ascending prayers of his loving countrymen for his life and safety. The swelling anthem of gratitude and reverence greeted and followed him along the country side and through the crowded streets: 'Long live George Washington! Long live the father of his people!'

"His entry into New York was worthy the city and state. He was met by the chief officers of the retiring government of the country, by the governor of the commonwealth, and the whole population. This superb harbor was alive with fleets and flags, and the ships of other nations with salutes from their guns, and the cheers of their crews added to the joyous acclaim. But as the captains who had asked the privilege, bending proudly to their oars, rowed the President's barge swiftly through these inspiring scenes, Washington's mind and heart was full of reminiscence and foreboding.

"He had visited New York thirty-three years before, also in the month of April, in the full perfection of his early manhood, fresh from Braddock's bloody field, and wearing the only laurels of the battle, bearing the prophetic blessing of the venerable President Davies, of Princeton college, as, 'That heroic youth Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a manner for some important service to the country.' It was a fair daughter of our state whose smiles allured him here, and whose coy confession that her heart was another's recorded his only failure, and saddened his departure. Twenty years passed, and he stood before the New York Congress, on this very spot, the unanimously chosen commander-in-chief of the continental army, urging the people to more vigorous measures, and made painfully aware of the increased desperation of the struggle from the aid to be given to the enemy by domestic sympathizers, when he knew that the same local military company which escorted him was to perform the like service for the British Governor Tyron on his landing on the morrow. Returning for the defense of the city the next summer, he executed the retreat from Long Island, which secured from Frederick the Great the opinion that a great commander had appeared, and at Harlem Heights he won the first American victory of the revolution, which gave that confidence to our raw recruits against the famous veterans of Europe which carried our army triumphantly through the war. Six years more of untold sufferings, of freezing and starving camps, of marches over the snow by bare-footed soldiers to heroic attack and splendid victory, of despair with an unpaid army, and of hope from the generous assistance of France, and peace had come and independence triumphed. As the last soldier of the invading enemy embarks, Washington at the head of the patriot host enters the city, receives the welcome and gratitude of its people, and in the tavern which faces us across the way, in silence more eloquent than speech, and with tears which choke the words, he bids farewell forever to his companions in arms. Such were the crowding memories of the past suggested to Washington in 1789 by his approach to New York. But the future had none of the splendor of precedent and brilliance of promise which have since attended the inauguration of our Presidents. An untried scheme, adopted mainly because its administration was to be confided to him, was to be put in practice. He knew that he was to be met at every step of constitutional progress by factions temporarily hushed into unanimity by the terrific force of the tidal wave which was bearing him to the President's seat, but fiercely hostile upon questions affecting every power of nationality and the existence of the federal government.

"Washington was never dramatic, but on great occasions he not only rose to the full ideal of the event, he became himself the event. One hundred years ago to-day, the procession of foreign ambassadors, of statesmen and generals, of civic societies and military companies which escorted him, marched from Franklin square to Pearl street, through Pearl to Broad, and up Broad to this spot, but the people saw only Washington. As he stood upon the steps of the old government building here, the thought must have occurred to him that it was a cradle of liberty, and as such giving a bright omen of the future. In these halls in 1735, in the trial of John Zenger, had been established for the first time in its history the liberty of the press. Here the New York assembly, in 1764, made the protest against the stamp act, and proposed the general conference, which was the beginning of united colonial action. In this old state house in 1765 the first Congress, the first and the father of American Congresses, assembled and presented to the English government that vigorous protest which caused the repeal of the act, and checked the first step towards the usurpation which lost the American colonies to the British empire. Within these walls the Congress of the Confederation had commissioned its ambassadors abroad, and in ineffectual efforts at government had created the necessity for the concentration of federal authority, now to be consummated.

"The first Congress of the United States gathered in this ancient temple of liberty, greeted Washington and accompanied him to the balcony. The famous men visible about him were Chancellor Livingston, Vice-President John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, Governor Clinton, Roger Sherman, Richard Henry Lee, General Knox and Baron Steuben. But we believe that among the invisible host above him, at this supreme moment of the culmination in permanent triumph of the thousands of years of struggle for self government, were the spirits of the soldiers of the revolution who had died that their countrymen might enjoy this blessed day, and with them were the Barons of Runnymede and William the Silent, and Sydney and Russell, and Cromwell and Hampden, and the heroes and martyrs of liberty of every race and age.

"As he came forward, the multitude in the streets, in the windows, and on the roofs sent up such a rapturous shout that Washington sat down overcome with emotion. As he slowly rose and his tall and majestic form again appeared, the people, deeply affected, in awed silence viewed the scene. The chancellor solemnly read to him the oath of office, and Washington, repeating, said: 'I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the constitution of the United States.' Then he reverently bent low and kissed the Bible, uttering with profound emotion, 'So help me God.' The chancellor waived his robes and shouted, 'It is done; long live George Washington, President of the United States!' 'Long live George Washington, our first President!' was the answering cheer of the people, and from the belfries rang the bells, and from forts and ships thund