

ADDRESS

ON THE

Anniversary of American Independence,

Celebrated July 5, 1852, at Jamaica, N. Y.,

BY THE

CATHOLIC TEMPERANCE SOCIETIES

OF LONG ISLAND.

BY JOHN C. DEVEREUX, Esq.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

NEW YORK:

E. DUNIGAN & BROTHER, 151 FULTON STREET.

M.DCCC.LII.

From the Jamaica Democrat, of July 6, 1852.

“THE CATHOLIC TEMPERANCE CELEBRATION yesterday, was the grand feature of the day. Perhaps nearly a thousand members of both sexes were gathered into Jamaica from the south and east end of the Island, and made an imposing procession through our streets.

“The immense assembly repaired to the Exhibition room of the Academy, which was completely filled. A large number of ladies and gentlemen not connected with the society were present.

“The Declaration of Independence was read in a very forcible and correct style by JOHN J. ARMSTRONG, Esq. After which JOHN C. DEVEREUX, Esq., pronounced a beautiful and highly classical oration, which was repeatedly cheered and interrupted by the audience. A copy of the address for publication was called for by the unanimous voice of the audience, we therefore forbear making any remarks upon it; lest we might do it injustice.

“After the orator of the day had taken his seat, the Hon. JOHN A. KING, at the earnest request of all present, made a brief and animated address, which was rapturously received.

“The audience were then dismissed. A hospitable repast was provided for the strangers, at his residence, by the Rev. Mr. MCGINNSIS, whose faithful efforts in the temperance cause have been crowned with triumphant success, throughout the Island. Long may he live and prosper in his labor of philanthropy!”

ADDRESS.

“To see a whole nation hastening to the defence of its liberties, and shutting its gates against invasion, is truly a magnificent spectacle.”—Such an event, fellow-citizens, in all its beauty and grandeur, we this day commemorate. On the Fourth of July, seventy-six years ago to-day, a handful of venerable men, without show or state, retinue or official pomp, assembled together in a room of the State House at Philadelphia, put their hands to the document which has just been read to you. That body was the Continental Congress, and although the attending circumstances of the occasion were of a character little calculated to attract admiration or applause, its authors were men of no common order, but each one of them a patriot, for wisdom, counsel, and energy even worthy the leadership of the great cause, to the support of which they then so solemnly pledged “their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.” The occasion was no *coup d’etat*, no sudden outbreak of suffering bondsmen, no chance effort of outraged feeling and opinion, but the fulfilment of a united purpose, well pondered and matured in the stern energy of a strong will, and of determined hearts.

The Declaration then planted has stood and will stand forever, a beacon light in history,—towards which the silent reverence of each heart that scorns to be a slave shall ever turn with gratitude and hopeful resolution. Proud Caesar, the world’s great victor,

“—— ‘midst triumphal cars,
The spoils of nations and the pomp of wars,”

entering imperial Rome, does not dilate the soul with half that kindling majesty, as the scene it is our privilege this day once more to behold, when amid the crowd of patriots, the conscript-fathers of our Revolution gave to mankind the Declaration of American Independence.

We are assembled, my friends, to celebrate that great event; to recount its story in the past, the present, and the future of this country.

Pride of descent is common to all. The prince exults over an honored ancestry, the humblest peasant in the honest stock from which he sprang. So with nations: they penetrate even the twilight of history in search of materials, by which to swell the volume of a common renown. In this respect our country is no loser by comparison with any people, ancient or modern. No portion of her story is obscure or in dispute, but all of it, each great event and trivial fact, its origin, influences and motives, open to view in broad and glowing colors on the page of exact and recent history. And where, let me ask, is there a national retrospect more glorious in all that confers substantial honor? From the period of a few struggling settlements on the Atlantic coast to this day, when her "far-west" is bounded by the Pacific, our country has steadily progressed to its present proud place among the nations.

The kingdoms of the Old World count their ages by centuries. Not so with us. Each generation of our history, since the *Mayflower* ploughed her untracked way to the rock-bound coast of Plymouth, is pregnant in event, rich in unexampled progress. Look around you over the land, and dwell for a moment on the view which commands attention. How has so much been so soon accomplished? What philosopher's secret has thus transmuted into golden success every effort, almost each national anticipation? What potent talisman renders every hour so productive of peace, plenty, and happiness? Is it an energy that never tires—a dauntless will, unceasing industry, aided by and acting upon great natural resources? No; none of them. Nations have had them at command, and yet lingered for ages unhonored and unprospered. What, then, is the great secret—this talisman of national success? The answer is upon every tongue before me. What but the possession of liberty, civil and religious, in its truest and broadest sense, has made this nation what she now is? That alone can give true direction to national energy, unfetter the mind, and compel man to his most perfect development.

Without it, prosperity is unsound, but a name, a deception not to be trusted. Self-government can alone develop true prosperity. To be permanent, it should grow by copious draughts of that freedom, which, like the sun, rain, and dews of Heaven, strengthen, invigorate, and refresh.

The scattered elements of North American colonization, the *disjecta membra* of this Republic, and the sources of her ample liberty, deserve our attention on this day. That colonization commenced in 1620; in that year Puritan feet first took hold upon the soil of New-England. The Puritans furnished fit *material* for pioneers of an unexplored wilderness. They were men of iron frame, of stern energy of heart and purpose; with capacity and acquirement, of unbending principle in practice and theory; drilled indeed to endure, yet not to forbear. They fled from persecution at home, to find in exile toleration for conscience; unlike others, however, by whom America was peopled, it was liberty for the Puritan conscience alone they sought. But they possessed the theory of a commonwealth, founded upon suffrage, which was at once realized in their new home; in a form crude indeed, and yet advanced for the standard of that day. The governments instituted by them were a species of Theocracy, in which the Church of their peculiar profession was curiously blended in the groundwork of State, to the exclusion of other persuasions. By them indeed it was held that a "coercive power in the magistrate was absolutely necessary to preserve the order of the Gospel." I wish not to speak of the Pilgrim Fathers in the invidious spirit of faint praise, but with candor and justice; giving credit for their many noble traits of character—in short, for all those admirable qualities, which speedily made the forest fall, and all nature smile before them.

Maryland, by example, if not numbers, has proved herself a strong pillar of the Republic. Baltimore, the friend and favorite of a monarch, did not abuse as a courtier his well-earned influence, but, on the contrary, turned it to noble account. A man of ability and action, of high character and connections, hearty and earnest in his religious convictions, although himself secure by the favor of his prince, he yet mourned in heart over the suf-

ferings of his brethren in faith, then exposed to a most sanguinary execution of penal law. The wildness of popular fanaticism in England, deaf alike to the voice of reason and conscience, peopled America. How truly it is said of us that we are the "offspring of tyranny." Disgusted with all he witnessed at home, Lord Baltimore formed the design of a colony on the American shores, founded in freedom, an asylum to the oppressed of every clime, of every shade of conscience. How fully was his design achieved!

He solicited and at length obtained, in great part by royal aid, as the well-merited recompense of faithful service to the state, a grant of Maryland, now a flourishing member of this great confederacy. He was deeply imbued with the principle of religious toleration in its broadest sense, seeking it for others as for those of his own creed; and so faithful did he continue to this, the guiding star of his undertaking, that through every vicissitude and change, and until the reins fell from him to less worthy hands, he carried out heartily in practice, this, the spirit of his charter. Maryland thus became the home of all claiming for welcome the merit of persecution for conscience's sake, and her founder the pioneer of freedom to a continent.

Happily, he was not destined to remain alone in his great example. Another, equally worthy, shared its influence in shaping the then future of our country. But William Penn, the founder of that colony which has resulted in the great "Key-Stone State," was no copyist. His design was novel as it was grand. Thrown into life at the restoration of monarchy, upon the death of Cromwell, Penn was qualified for an important part in public affairs. Anarchy then prevailed in Church and State. Every shade of political opinion, from the strictest school of "divine right" to the wildest republicanism, had its votaries. Religious opinion was equally divided into numberless sects, warring upon each other with an animosity till then unknown.

Recent circumstances have brought into more full relief, before the public mind, the career of the founder of Pennsylvania. Of the many distinguished men who left their impress in the early settlement of this country, his true character was least under-

stood, till the injustice of one who, in an unfortunate hour for his own reputation, abandoned the pen of the essayist for that of the historian, called forth a cloud of witnesses, a storm of indignant denial and vindication.

Penn's great qualities as a man, a statesman, and a patriot, at length stand revealed. Of practical and cultivated mind, he fully proved himself a statesman of enlarged and liberal views. A zealot in religious profession, he yet never for a moment swerved from the principle of religious toleration; but was consistently at all times, and under every changing circumstance, the fast friend and advocate equally of the persecuted Quaker, Dissenter, and Catholic. His well known influence with Charles and the second James, was ever exerted in their behalf.

Penn was likewise an author of eminence. In a *brochure* from his pen, as early as 1686, we find his definition of the true "idea of liberty in matters of religion."

"By conscience," he says, "I mean the apprehension and persuasion a man has of his duty to God."

"By liberty of conscience—a free and open profession and exercise of that duty; especially in worship."

"But," he continues, "I always premise this conscience to keep within the bounds of morality, and that it be neither fanatic nor mischievous, but a good subject; a good child, a good servant in all the affairs of life; as exact to render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, as jealous of withholding from God the things that are God's."

Such was the definition left us by William Penn. I ask, can our present experience supply anything more perfect, definite, or comprehensive?

He was equally the consistent friend of civil liberty. Failing in the struggle for freedom at home, he yet did not despair of freedom. Experience had convinced him, that in America alone was there room enough for that great trial of free Democracy, he had so much at heart. That in an open field, the experiment of a Commonwealth, in which the whole power lay with the people, would succeed and flourish, he had no doubt. To its realization in the new world he nobly surrendered his future and fortune.

In payment of large arrears due by government to Admiral Penn, the huge wilderness, now a great State, was conferred by charter upon the son. William Penn carved from thence a free colony for all mankind. His experiment proved that there is in human nature virtue sufficient for self-government. In his new State he established equal laws, entire sovereignty in the people, election by suffrage to public trust, universal freedom of the conscience, a perfect equality of political and civil rights, without difference of rank or privileged order. Such was the colony of William Penn. Nothing more perfect in the foundation of government has been since discovered.

Other colonies were founded. That of the Carolinas prospered when it had discarded a constitution, in which civil and religious freedom were named to be disavowed. The cavaliers of the "Old Dominion" at length realized, that notions of royal prerogative and church exclusiveness, are incompatible with the liberty of thought and action.

From the goodly materials which I have thus, fellow-citizens, grouped before you, was formed this great Republic. We can recognize in its structure the fusion of many elements, each conferring some quality of strength, beauty, or endurance. But in every attractive and solid feature of its greatness, we see conspicuous the handiwork of the founders, Baltimore and Penn:—

" Water'd by heavenly dew,
The germ of Empire grew,
Freedom its root."

I will not dwell upon the present of our country. It is before you on every side. You feel it in the very air you breathe. It is borne to us this day in sounds of thanksgiving and jubilee, on every breeze. What national progress unexampled, and all within the short space of three quarters of a century, have we not to be thankful for to the Providence which gave us national name and existence! At the outset we were three millions, hemmed within the bounds of the old thirteen colonies. The nation has grown beyond such inadequate proportions. Now the vast region, embracing every clime and people of almost every hue, ly-

ing between the great oceans, having on the North the "Great Lakes," on the South extending to the great river, seems already not space enough for our growth and future development.

What is history but a record of the dealings of Providence with man, who by his corresponding faithfulness alone merits and receives a continuance of its favors? And how visibly the finger, eye, the right arm, of that Providence directs and sustains this country, doubtless for some high destiny and great mission not yet fully developed! But within a few years that directing power comes, as it were, visibly to our aid. New agencies, before unknown, almost unheard of, are the slaves of our bidding; the very elements become tributary to us.

COLUMBUS, in pursuit of an eastern passage to the El Dorado of a former age, stumbled upon this continent, but lived not to attain the wished-for result of his labors. The vision of the great navigator has since come true, and the passage he sought—simple, short and quick beyond his dream, and to wealth exceeding that of

" ——— Ormus, or of Ind' —

is found, and daily traversed.

Hitherto, the path of man has been from East to West. From the cradle of our race in distant Asia came forth countless millions—those human swarms which, covering Europe, at length overflowed, as it were, upon these shores. And still the ceaseless tide of empire is Westward. But behold a phenomenon in man's history! A new movement, but not a counter current, meets that human tide; this time, however, from west to east. The Asiatic millions, still countless, have turned upon their steps, and seek us with the hope which has peopled our continent—that of less crowded homes in peace and plenty. There is a manifest destiny in this new and vast meeting of races upon our soil, not to be thwarted by any efforts of that policy which, in a nation indebted beyond all others to sources of population and opulence not originally her own, would make a difference, where there is no distinction, between the native and adopted citizen.

At the present rate of development and progress, what a majestic future opens upon this country; that is, if she continues

true to herself. We see and feel the source of her great fortunes, yet at the same time have become aware, from an experience full of warning as of hope, that the strength of our liberty is in Union ; that by Union alone we can control the tide of prosperity pressing us from every side. This country has just passed a time of peril and anxious fear, but in safety and triumph, proving the inherent strength of free institutions, cemented as ours have been ; and also the wisdom, sagacity and discretion of her people. Would she profit by a great future, let her sons continue practically faithful to the sentiment, " Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

During the year this people have greeted a new mission—not deriving its force from official recognition or approval. Without discussing the value of facts tending, perhaps, to detract from the respect in which that mission should be held, it has yet answered more than one valuable purpose. It has forced us to know ourselves, and at the same time appreciate the wants and feelings of nations less happy. It has induced a re-discussion, most fully, by all classes—by the statesman, the soldier, and the private citizen—of the foreign policy of Washington. A discussion that has resulted as it should result, in retaining that policy where first placed by the " Father of his Country." The stirring appeal of Europe, however, to free America, has not been in vain. It has turned attention to hidden faults of the past—the causes of recent defeat—the true elements of her future success.

America can never stand indifferent in the struggles of Freedom. At the same time a faithful love, the result of association with her, and happy experience of the blessings she confers, cannot fail to discriminate between Liberty and her counterfeit.

Near the outset of the decade just passed, a smiling change gradually but perceptibly brightened the face of Europe. Her people, recovered from the shock of wars, reaping in quiet the rich fruits of a long peace, in the spirit of emulation prosperity was calculated to produce, cast around for new sources of comfort and progress. The public attention, sharpened by sad, rendered hopeful by more recent, experience, soon recognized the

institutions which alone might realize national longings and aspirations. The earnest discussion of law and government, their forms and comparative influences, naturally ensuing, gradually prepared and instructed the general mind to its true interests. Kings even, felt the movement, the necessity of timely concession ; thrones, the insecurity of power without popular sympathy and support.

With this happy approach of a new era, the horizon of Europe suddenly brightened also under the mild radiance of a brilliant star, full of sacred hope and promise. I allude to the accession of the good Pontiff, who, from his advent, was hailed, by the voice of nations, as chosen to lead the cause of social amelioration and well tempered freedom.

The cross itself is the true emblem of Liberty ! The mission of the universal Christian Church over the face of the earth has ever been to elevate Man in all that is just, noble and good ; to sustain the oppressed and humanize the oppressor. Such, when left to herself untrammelled, is the result of her patient and peaceful ministrings. Her history, thus far, is that of accessions to popular happiness, won from the strong hand of arbitrary power.

Pius the Ninth stood forward, hopeful of man and trusting in God, the pioneer almost of the great liberal movement in Europe. As a distinguished American statesman at the time eloquently observed—"There is hope in the real sublimity of his genius ; there is hope in his calm and Christian, yet unfaltering courage ; there is hope in his direct practical sagacity ; there is hope in the beneficence and wisdom with which he looks to and relies upon the masses of his countrymen ; there is hope in the unassailable purity of his life ; in fine, there is hope in a rare combination of intellectual and moral excellences, fitting him for the love and leadership of a reviving people. If resurrection to the Roman be possible, we may expect it now."

Pius spoke, and the great heart of Europe was moved from its depths. But with all that was good, unhappily for the cause, its dregs and filthy settlings rose also to the surface. Millions of the just, laborious and faithful friends of human progress stood expectant, ready, as it were, to seize and speed on its sparkling

way the "torch of Liberty." Would they had controlled its progress! Had such been the case, the fantastic movement that ensued, attended with rapine, violence, disregard for order and law, contempt for the common rights of person, property and conscience, even the shedding of innocent blood, had never taken place. Providence did not so will it. A bitter experience was decreed, as a probation in which further to mature the good, and purge away the evil then uncovered, that had so long lain hidden and almost unknown; wherein to teach that "freedom's battle" seldom proves the victory of a day.

In all times of revolution or unusual commotion, those having the least to lose, and who possess in least degree that sacred respect for the rights and feelings of their fellow-men which religion imparts, because less scrupulous, are more prominent. Thus it was in the great liberal movement abroad. The few shoved aside and assumed to lead the many; with the unhappy result we witnessed, and have not ceased deeply to deplore.

At first, so bright was the promise, so many elements of strength and hope appeared, we thought we saw

"Some pure, redeeming Angel sent to free
That fetter'd land from every bond and stain."

But disappointment and disgust too quickly succeeded. The true friends of Freedom, and their honored guide, compelled by conscience and duty, retired from the contest.

From thence the movement of 1848 is known by its fruits. It triumphed in suffering and disaster to the wise and the good; in crude theories and impracticable schemes. The private loss and grief caused by it can never be measured. It plundered religion; disregarded the rights of conscience; showed valor alone against those, by their sacred calling, men of peace; violated the abode of charity, expelling upon a cold world the counterparts of those valiant women, who, in our own midst, vie with each other in obedience to its self-denying precepts, challenging the respect and confidence of all. The monument which time and the Vandal spared, it spared not. Even the Samaritans of the Alpine way-side—those meek and venerable men, who, amid the glacier

and threatening avalanche, have for centuries devoted themselves to succor the fainting and frozen traveller—it rewarded for unselfish deeds of mercy with pillage and outrage.

Was all this, fellow-citizens, done in the spirit of that Liberty, at whose shrine we this day present our grateful offerings? or was it not rather dictated by the impure spirit, who has ever sought her chosen triumph in a reign of terror, or of blood?

But Liberty is not departed with those patriots of '48. It survives and bides its time, warned as to the future by lessons of valuable experience. Europe has not within her bosom one true friend of Liberty the less; she has learned, however, whom to trust when her freedom is again at stake; that true patriotism is the result of true principle; and that the man who rejects faith is not to be trusted with life, person or property, much less the liberty of a whole people.

Reaction at present prevails in almost every nation of the Old World, a natural result of the falsely directed movement I have attempted to portray. Everywhere the hands of government are strengthened at the expense of the subject, and in flagrant violation of his rights. It does not follow, however, that all who acquiesce approve, or have surrendered the hope of a better future. They prefer indeed order to anarchy, even absolute rule to the unprincipled dictation of a mob; but the true friends of liberal principles are everywhere, in the court and camp, in every department of private and public life.

An error of many, peculiarly grievous at the present time, confounds friends of religion with the enemies of liberty. It assumes that the Church, embracing in her fold France, Austria, and Southern Europe, because she accepts existing governments—those for example of Paris, Vienna, and Naples—identifies herself with and approves them. They who thus err simply mistake the character of her mission. That mission is not to organize or destroy governments, but to make better citizens and subjects by making better men. She is of no government, and yet of all, and in one sense above all. She accepts thankfully from the State for herself, yet as her right, liberty of action, but not as the price of adhesion to that which is vicious or bad, or acquiescence

in what is unjust and oppressive. While inculcating due obedience to authority, she disclaims slavish submission as beneath the dignity of the man, the duty of the Christian. When right requires force to make itself respected, or war becomes the condition of securing peace, an appeal to the sword itself is not without the rule of positive duty. The union known as that of "Church and State" is never holy, and ever wrong. As history amply proves, it can benefit no form of Christian profession, and the sect which from inherent weakness seeks support out of itself, ever falls with the power that sustained it. In the Church, State connection, often compelled, a choice of evils or the result of controlling circumstances, never voluntary on her part, dwarfs or weakens her efforts, and often clouds over her more spiritual features. Out of the contact have mainly grown the scandals, errors, and oppressions, faith and charity alike lament, and which, by the malicious or unthinking, are laid unjustly at her door.

Freedom, in fulfilling her sublime mission, the Christian Church has ever sought. Magna Charta, wrung by prelates and barons from a tyrant, asserts in emphatic terms this "liberty of holy church." On a recent occasion one of her highest, most faithful ministers, giving his benediction to the emblems of war as instruments of pacification and public order, in his address to the representative of power almost imperial, used the fearless words:—"The religion which you love asks neither privileges nor favor from you, it only asks—liberty to live and to do good."

Thus, in fine, the Church demands for herself liberty of action under civil rule in all its forms; at the same time commending to respect and observance those great and sacred principles of equality, equity and justice, which should lie equally at the foundations of every system of human government.

Her faithful children, clerical and lay, left to a perfect liberty of discussion and individual preference, are freely, throughout the world, consistent republicans or otherwise as inclination and duty may dictate.

It would not become us on this day, my friends, to separate without at least a passing mention of the land, not last, I am sure, in your thoughts and affections.

“Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land?”

The universal love of country, common to all, is never distant from the Irish heart, but entwined with its every fibre. To those of us who connect with Ireland the honor of birth or parentage, it shall ever be a duty, pleasing but sad, to think of her, lovely and beloved, even in her ruins.

“Hushed is the harp—the minstrel gone.”

Since this anniversary last called us together, one whose name and memory are cherished, has passed to the land where the harp never rests, with strains of praise and joyful harmony—one who possessed to its core, an Irish heart; who threw around the music of his country a classic garb, and gave it a minstrelsy high poetic expression. Through him

“The stranger has heard her lament on his plains,
The sigh of her harp has been sent o’er the deep;”

so that the Irish melody now preserves to many lands the tradition, at least, of Freedom; and on the banks of the distant Vistula, adapted in a Polish sense, gives expression to the laments of that wronged and gallant people.

“Erin! the tear and the smile in thine eyes,
Blend like the rainbow, that hangs in thy skies.”

Thus sang the patriot minstrel, of his native land, and what words more suggestive of her attitude, at once the favorite of nature, the victim of man’s cupidity, with a smile from her true heart for the many gifts of God, a tear at their perversion.

What country has ever presented a contrast so great, of natural and moral condition? We see her possessed of sources of prosperity seldom surpassed, a soil distinguished for fertility and variety of product; inland waters, and a coast adapted to internal and external commerce; the facilities and *materiel* for mechanical and manufacturing industry, with mountains rich in mineral wealth, power for the looms of a continent; and above all, a people, active and industrious, with intelligence to appreciate, the tact and energy to appropriate, the blessings Providence confers.

Such is Ireland as nature presents her to us. Why is a picture, its ground-work thus rich in promise, filled out and finished from the reality, not the emblems of want, desolation and suffering? I will not dwell, my friends, upon the scene, or oppress your feelings with its melancholy details. We see in them, in short, the results of provincial position and alien rule; vicious legislation and selfish policy; a war of races and of creeds, unexampled for duration and intensity. It is the part rather of patriotism and wisdom, to look at the past as experience alone, and seek in the future a remedy for its sad realities.

That remedy for Ireland is a vexed question, her position a problem, for which the statesman, the economist, the philosopher, even the bigot, has each his solution. I should in vain attempt that which confounds experience and sagacity the most thoughtful.

But with all this there is hope for the future. Ireland has within herself the materials for national greatness. She has indeed long made brick without straw under the tasking hand of oppression, but ever in hopes of the Canaan which cheered in their bondage the "Chosen People" of old. Adversity has not subdued her strong heart, or blunted her desire for enjoyment of the blessings which Freedom confers. Although it now seems almost as if

"Every bright name, that shed
Light o'er the land, is fled,"

yet, when the time is at hand, one shall arise, fit leader of her people to the reward of long and patient suffering.

There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, who takes account of national fidelity to principle, and will in His own good time reward it. Ireland has truly been the martyr of a principle, severely a sufferer for conscience. By that suffering her cause is blessed; through it she will arrive at the goal of her aspirations.

"Erin! Oh, Erin! though long in the shade,
Thy star will shine out, when the proudest shall fade."

These are prophetic words:—The Poet-Seer shall yet triumph in the success of his prediction.