

AMERICAN NATIONALITY.

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A D D R E S S

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BY

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ADDRESS.

By nationality we understand the peculiar genius of a people which animates its institutions, prompts its actions and begets a feeling of common interest and sympathy. It is not the result of any compact, but an instinct of human nature in its social capacity, an expansion of the inborn love of self and kindred. To hate his own countrymen is as unnatural as to hate his own brothers and sisters.

Nationality grows with the nation itself and acts as a powerful stimulus in its development. But on the other side it presupposes an organized state of society and is the result of a historical process. Barbarians have no nationality, because they are no nations, but simply material for nations. It is not only the community of origin and language, but also the community of rights and duties, of laws and institutions, of deeds and sufferings, of freedom and oppression, of literature and art, of virtue and religion, that enters into the definition of a nation and gives vigor to the sense of nationality. Historical reminiscences of glory and woe, whether preserved in monuments, or written records, or oral traditions, popular songs and national airs, such as "God save the Queen," "Ye mariners of England," "Rule, Britannia," "Scots wha hae with Wallace bled," "Allons enfens de la patrie," "Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland," "The Star Spangled Banner," "Hail Columbia,"—contribute powerfully to strengthen the national tie and to kindle the fire of national enthusiasm.

Nationality begets patriotism, one of the noblest of natural virtues that has filled the pages of history with so many heroic deeds and sacrifices. Who can read without admiration the immortal story of Gideon, Leonidas, Cincinnatus, Horatius Cocles, William Tell, Arnold von Winkelried, the Maid of Orleans, John Hampden, Prince William of Orange, Andrew Hofer, George Washington, who lived or died for their country.

True patriotism does not imply hatred or contempt of foreigners, and is entirely compatible with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other nations, just as self-love and self-respect may and should co-exist with the most generous

philanthropy. A narrow-minded and narrow-hearted nationalism which walls out the life of the world and for this very reason condemns itself to perpetual imprisonment in the treadmill of its own pedantry and conceit, may suit semi-barbarians, or the stagnant heathen civilization of China and Japan, but not an enlightened Christian people. True and false nationalism and patriotism are related to each other, as self-love to selfishness. The first is a law of nature, the second a vice. We respect a man in the same proportion in which his self-love expands into love of kindred and country, and his patriotism into love of humanity at large. Washington was always generous to the enemy and was the first to establish amicable relations with England after the conclusion of the American war. The Christian religion, which commands us to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves, tends to purify and elevate patriotism, like every other natural virtue, by emancipating it from the selfish, over-bearing, all-grasping passion of conquest, and making it contributory to the general welfare of the human family. One of the noblest acts of the English nation, as a nation, is the disinterested abolition of the African slave trade.

The events of modern times tend more and more to break down the barriers between the nations, to bring the ends of the earth together and to realize the unity and universality of the human race.

This we must steadily keep in view, if we would understand the distinctive character and mission of the *American* nation, i. e., the people of the United States, who are emphatically called by that name, as the chief bearers of the historical life and future significance of the entire Western Continent.

In discussing this interesting topic, we shall avoid, of course, the whirlpool of party politics, and endeavor to rise above those violent sectional strifes, which, for some time past, have been and are still agitating our country on the question of the true nature of Americanism.

Of all the great nations of the earth none has entered into existence under more favorable auspices and prospects, none is better prepared and more clearly called to represent a compact, well defined and yet expansive, world-embracing nation-

ality, than the American. Our motto: *E Pluribus Unum*, is an unconscious prophecy of our national character and destiny, as pointed out by the irresistible course of events and the indications of Providence. Out of many nations, yea out of all the nations of Christendom is to be gathered the one cosmopolitan nation of America on the strong and immovable foundation of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Those European writers are greatly mistaken, who represent the people of the United States as altogether destitute of a proper history and nationality, as a vague conflux simply of heterogeneous elements, and the weak echo of the old world. We have not only the elements, but the actual beginning of a strong nationality. We have a history, short it is true, but fraught with significant events. We have national monuments, such as Independence Hall, Bunker Hill, Mount Vernon, that "look like prophets and speak like oracles." We have national heroes, great in war and great in peace, patriots, statesmen and orators, from Washington and Franklin to Webster and Scott, of whom any nation might justly be proud. We have a constitution and a form of government, which has long commanded the admiration of the friends of liberty and progress, and attracts emigrants by thousands and millions from all parts of Europe. We have a common inheritance of glory and freedom, and a glowing patriotism that animates every son and daughter of the land. We have the promising beginning of a national literature and an astonishing activity of the press, which is already exerting a marked influence upon public opinion abroad. We have a power of assimilation, which surpasses that of any other people. In general intelligence, wealth and prosperity, we need not be ashamed of a comparison with the leading powers of Europe; and while we are behind them in original creations of science and art, in the extent and value of universities, libraries; museums, and other institutions, which require centuries to be matured, we surpass them all in the rapidity of progress in every branch of life and action, and in bright prospects for the future.

At the same time, it is true, that we are the youngest of all the independent nations, that rank with the great powers. We have hardly entered upon the stage of youth. Our nation-

ality is as yet in a process of formation and consolidation. It may be compared to the "Father of Waters" in his early youth, inviting the tributaries from the Alleghanies and the Rocky Mountains to swell his volume and to carry the wealth of nations on his majestic course of four thousand miles, through "the garden of the world," to the mouth of the boundless sea.

Let us now proceed to an analysis of the different elements, which enter into the composition of the American nationality and will, in their combined action, enable it to fulfil its great destiny.

It is evident to the most superficial observer that the basis of our national character is English. It is so, not only in language, but also in manners and customs, in our laws and institutions, in the structure of our domestic, political and ecclesiastical life, in our literature and religion. It is perfectly idle to think that this country will ever become German, or French, or Irish, or Dutch. Let them emigrate by hundreds of thousands from the continent of Europe, they will modify and enrich, but they can never destroy or materially change this Anglo-Saxon ground-element of the American people.

History pointed to such a result in its earliest dawn upon this western world. It is true, Spain dreamed herself at first the sole possessor of the "New World," and annexed to the coat of arms which she assigned to Columbus and his family, the motto :

A Castilla y à Leon
Nuevo mundo dio Colon.
(To Castile and Leon
Columbus gave a new world.)

And Pope Alexander VI, in the exercise of the supreme politico-ecclesiastical power of the mediæval hierarchy, divided in 1493, the entire western hemisphere between the crowns of Spain and of Portugal. But Providence had decreed otherwise, and history soon set aside this hasty interference with its unalterable course. The northern part of this continent was first discovered by John and Sebastian Cabot in 1497, who sailed under a patent of Henry VII of England, and touched at Labrador and New Foundland one year before Columbus set foot on the mainland of South America. The territory of the United States especially, came from the start under English

influence and was first successfully settled by English emigrants. The sturdy Puritans, who, since their landing on Plymouth Rock in 1620, and ten years later in Salem and Boston, gave tone and character to the six New England States, and whose descendants are the chief pioneers in our western States and territories; the loyal Episcopalians, who planted the first colony in the "Old Dominion" in 1607, and afterwards extended to Maryland, the Carolinas and Georgia; the liberal Catholics, who accompanied Leonard Calvert, brother of Lord Baltimore, to the shores of the Potomac in 1634, and wisely made the new settlement under the name of the consort of the unfortunate Charles I, an asylum for all Christians without distinction of name and sect; the peaceful Quakers, whom William Penn led to the Key-stone State in 1681—however different in their habits and opinions, spoke all the same tongue and came from the same Albion,

" That precious stone, set in the silver sea ;
Which serves it in the office of the wall."

This English element instead of diminishing with the separation from the political control of the mother country, has constantly increased and long since become so powerful as to exclude the possibility of a successful competition of any other nationality or language. It has assimilated to itself the Dutch settlers of New York and New Jersey, the Swedish colonists on the banks of the Delaware, the Spaniards in Florida, and is drawing more and more every day the French in Louisiana, the Germans and Irish in the middle and western States, into its irresistible current.

Upon the whole, we could not wish any better basis for our North American nationality and must regard it as a mark of the special favor of an all-ruling Providence to our country, which, for this very reason, is so far in advance on the older Spanish and Portuguese settlements of Central and South America.

For, of all the modern nations none is more solid, earnest, energetic, independent and progressive, none better adapted to colonize new countries in the West and to regenerate old empires in the East, than the English. Whatever may be their defects and sins, the world-wide power and influence of their

little island-home is certainly one of the most remarkable phenomena in the annals of the human race and can only be accounted for on the ground of an extraordinary strength of intellect and character and an especial design of Providence, which has appointed them to be the pioneers of an enlightened Christianity and constitutional liberty on all the highways of commerce to the extremities of the inhabitable globe.

But with all due regard for good old England, America is by no means intended to be a mere copy or continuation of it. If our nationality, owing to its youth and the many foreign elements still entering into its composition, is less solid and compact, than that of our older brother, it is, on the other hand, more capable of expansion and development; it is composed of a greater variety of material and destined ultimately for more comprehensive ends by the Almighty Ruler of nations, who assigned us not an island but a continent for a home, and two oceans for a field of action.

If ever a nation was laid out on a truly cosmopolitan basis and gifted with an irresistible power of attraction, it is the American. Here where our globe ends its circuit, seems to terminate the migration of the human race. To our shores they come in an unbroken stream from every direction. Even the tribes of Africa and Asia are largely represented amongst us and call our country their home. But whatever may be the ultimate fate of the red man, the negro and the Chinese, who are separated from us by the unsurmountable difference of race, it is evident that all the civilized nations of Europe, especially those of Germanic origin, have contributed and will continue to contribute to our stock. They meet here on the common ground of freedom and equality, to renew their youth and to commingle at last into one grand brotherhood, speaking one language, pervaded by one spirit, obeying the same laws, laboring for one aim, and filling in these ends of the earth the last and the richest chapter in the history of the world. As Europe is a great advance on the civilization of Asia, so we have reason to believe that America will be in the end a higher continuation of the consolidated life of Europe. The eyes of the East are instinctively turned to the West, and civilization follows the march of the sun.

The history of the colonization and growth of this country strongly support the view here taken. The descendants of England were indeed the chief, but by no means the only agents in the colonial period. The Dutch on the banks of the Hudson, the Swedes on the Delaware, the Germans in Pennsylvania and the neighboring States, the Huguenots in South Carolina, New York and Boston, were amongst our earliest and most useful settlers. In a more recent period Scotland, Ireland and all parts of Germany have made the largest contributions to our population. Florida, California and New Mexico are of Spanish origin. The French claimed once by right of exploration and partial occupation the immense central valley from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, and between the Alleghenies and the Rocky Mountain; and although these possessions have long since been ceded to England and the United States, the French element can never be entirely effaced on the banks of the lower Mississippi, or in Canada East.

In the revolutionary war the descendants of the Continental Europeans, especially the Germans of Pennsylvania and Virginia, in proportion to their number, fought with as much zeal and success and shed their blood as freely for the independence of the country as the Anglo-Americans. Some of them, as the Mühlenbergs and the Hiesters, acquired considerable distinction as officers of the army, or members of the first Congress.

But a number of our most eminent revolutionary heroes were not even native Americans, but came from different nations to offer us the aid of their means, their enthusiasm, their military skill and experience in the hour of trial. The Irish Montgomery died for us at the gates of Quebec. General Mercer, who fell in the battle of Princeton, was a native of Scotland. Kosciusko, the Pole, paid his early vows to liberty in our cause, and his countryman, Pulaski, perished for it at Savannah. The noble Germans, Baron de Kalb, who shared with Gaines the glory of capturing Burgoyne and fell in the battle of Camden in South Carolina, bleeding of seven wounds, and Steuben, the pupil of Frederic the Great, and the seven years' war, who left a handsome pension to serve his adopted country

and helped to decide the day at Yorktown, crowned in the new world the high military reputation, which they had previously acquired in the old ; they were amongst the most experienced officers in the American army, and did it essential service, especially by training, with immense labor, the raw recruits, and preparing them for the victories of the battle-field. Our Congress knew well how to appreciate their merits, by erecting to the former a monument at Annapolis, and by voting to the latter a handsome annual pension, to which the legislatures of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York added large donations of land. France threw the weight of her powerful moral influence and material aid into our scale, and sent us the Count de Rochambeau, Baron de Viomenil, and especially the Marquis of Lafayette, the citizen of two worlds, whose name will be handed down to the latest American as well as French posterity, in inseparable connection with Washington. The West Indies gave us Alexander Hamilton, who fought gallantly in the war, and, after its conclusion, organized our financial credit and took the most distinguished part in the formation and defence of our federal constitution, thus joining to the laurels of the battle-field the more enduring honors of peace, like his friend, the father of his country, whom we justly revere and love as "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

Thus all the leading nations of Christendom were actively and honorably represented in the first settlement of our country, and in that great struggle, which resulted in the birth of a new nation, and thus they earned a title to a share in the blessings of its freedom.

Italy and Spain, combined in the persons of Columbus and Isabella, first opened America to the vision of the world. England gave us our language, common law, trial by jury, the spirit of constitutional liberty and the power of self-government. The sons of Germany, Holland, Sweden, France, Scotland, Ireland and Poland helped to plant our first colonies and to emancipate us from British rule. The United Provinces of the Netherlands and the republican confederation of Switzerland furnished the example of a federal union. Our arts are from genial Greece ; our jurisprudence from imperial

Rome; our common school system from Prussia; our literature is gathered from the remotest antiquity of the Mosaic records to the latest productions of English, German and French genius. And finally our dearest treasure, and the only safe-guard of our liberties, the Christian religion, was born in Palestine, and our Protestantism strikes its deepest roots in the land of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin. Our country stands, therefore, even in its early history and constitution, to adopt the language of the distinguished historian of the United States, "more than any other, as the realization of the unity of the race."

When our country, after the close of the war of independence, and the critical period of the formation of a federal constitution, entered upon its peaceful career under a well organized republican government, in the same year, in which Europe was shaken to its very base by the French revolution, it pursued the wisest as well as the most liberal policy with regard to foreign emigration and has maintained it to this day. True to its history from the earliest settlements, it offered a hospitable asylum to all the nations of the old world with a view to their benefit, and its own interest.

Our naturalization laws in connection with the advantages of a new country of boundless extent and untold resources, and the cramped and unsettled condition of Europe, called forth an emigration, which, after the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars, has steadily increased and assumed the character of a peaceful migration of nations, so that our naturalized foreigners must now be counted by millions. The number of emigrants to the United States in 1820 was 5,993; in 1830, 23,074; in 1840, 83,504, in 1850, 279,980; in 1853, 368,643; in 1854, 460,474. Hence the almost fabulous growth of our Atlantic and Western cities, springing up like the creations of romance, and doubling their population in ten, or as in the case of Chicago, even in five years. Of these foreigners by far the greatest proportion come from Great Britain, especially Ireland, and from Germany. In 1854 the German immigrants alone amounted to 250,000, and the whole number of American Germans, including their English descendants, must now considerably exceed four millions.

In the last and the present year, the immigration has indeed

fallen off considerably, owing to the Eastern war, now happily concluded, the high prices of provision and scarcity of employment, and especially also the rise of the anti-foreign and anti-Romanist party, which swept like a whirlwind over our country. This sudden decline of the influx of immigrants may be considered also as a natural and necessary reaction against its excess in previous years, especially in 1854, when the foreign food exceeded our powers of immediate digestion, and thus threatened to decay before our doors and to poison our atmosphere. But this reaction can only be temporary. European emigration, as well as the emigration of our own people from the Eastern to the Western States, cannot and will not be stopped, as little as the course of the Mississippi, or the march of the sun from the East to the West. The westward current of empire will go on, now larger, now smaller, according to the condition and wants of the times, until our immense territory shall be fairly settled with a population answering in some measure, at least, the inexhaustible resources and the world-embracing destiny of America. "Whether for weal or woe," said an eminent American divine in the year 1849,* "the life of Europe is to be poured in upon our shores without restraint or stint, till it shall cause the ancient blood of the land to become in quantity a mere nothing in comparison. God is fast showing, by the stupendous course of His Providence, that this American Continent was designed from the start, not for the use of a single race, but for the world at large. Here room has been provided, with all the outward necessary conditions, for the organization of a new order of life, that may be as broad and universal as the soil it shall cover; and now the material out of which it is to be formed, the elements that are needed for such world-embracing constitution, are made to flow together from every side, for the purpose of being wrought into a new nationality which shall at last adequately represent the whole."

But here the question arises, Do we not lose more by this immigration, in the purity of our national character, than we gain in numerical strength? Is there no danger to be appre-

* *Mercersburg Review*, Vol. I, p. 32.

hended to our civil and religious liberties from a population, a considerable part of which was brought up under the influence of superstition and political and ecclesiastical despotism? Are not all the vices and infidelity of old Europe flowing in amongst us to swell the muddy stream already so fearfully large, of our native corruption? Is it not high time, therefore, to modify at least our naturalization laws and to require a longer preparation for admission to the rights of citizenship?

In answer to these objections, we must first freely admit that a considerable proportion of our foreign population is taken from the most ignorant and most neglected classes of European society. Not a few of them have left their country for their country's good, and would, so far as their influence goes, overthrow the very foundations of Church and State and resolve society into anarchy and chaos. It is even charged upon some governments of Europe—I do not know with how much reason—that they empty their poor houses and prisons into our country, as Spain unwisely did in the earliest settlements of the West Indies and the South. Such an insulting abuse of our hospitality would certainly justify prompt and vigorous measures of remonstrance and repulsion on the side of the general government and the authorities of our sea ports. For every society has certainly a right and a duty to protect itself with all proper means against pernicious influences, which threaten its dissolution.

But supposing even the number of bad elements in our foreign population to be larger than it actually is, there is really less danger to be apprehended from this direction, than from our strictly domestic difficulties, e. g., the single question of slavery. The political influence of naturalized foreigners is almost entirely confined to the ballot box, where their votes are always cast in favor of one of our leading parties, which will ever be controlled by native American statesmen and politicians. To deprive them of their political rights and repel them by unkindness, would only make them enemies in our own household. The noblest and most successful way to remedy the evil and avert the danger, arising from a part of our foreign population in our larger cities, is a vigorous execution of our laws, an increased activity of our benevolent societies,

and the spread of education, virtue and religion. Let us make the foreigners good Christians, and we are sure to make them good citizens. The great change which they have undergone, the new relations and circumstances in which they are placed, are well calculated to open their minds and hearts to the work of home evangelization, and many of them have been reformed in America, who would have died in the prisons or on the gallows of Europe.

Secondly, we must consider the youthful vitality of our country, which is fully able to control the foreign influence and to turn it into the channel of its own national life and general welfare. What might do great injury to an old nation, is assimilated with astonishing rapidity by the American republic and taken up into its organism, or at least made harmless by being scattered over our immense territory. Those noisy and unruly demagogues and infidels, who made so much trouble in Germany, France and Italy in 1848 and 1849, have either sunk into perfect obscurity amongst us, or become quiet citizens, and even if they should retain their foreign feelings and habits and cherish a hatred to our institutions, their children and children's children will inevitably be flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. Thus all foreign emigration only adds to our native strength and resources, and the number and influence of foreigners decreases every year in proportion to the rapid increase of our native born population. It shows a great want of faith in our national vigor and institutions, to suppose that they can ever be overthrown, or even materially changed by foreign influence. America will always be governed by Americans. They are fully able to do it, and any attempt of strangers to wrest this right, so dearly bought in the war of independence, from them, would only prove their fitness for Bedlam. Not unfrequently foreigners, who emigrate from love to our institutions, become the most patriotic Americans, as proselytes are generally the most zealous members of the sect which they join from inward conviction.

But finally, it should not be forgotten, that the great mass of European emigrants, after all, come to our shores to make an honest livelihood, and prove a valuable addition to our national strength and prosperity. They bring millions of money

into the country, and are a powerful element in the development of its physical and intellectual resources. Without them, the United States would hardly contain one third of their present population. Without them our progress would be most materially retarded. The immigrants help us to clear our woods; to till our soil; to work our mines; to dig our canals; to build our railroads and steamboats; to enlarge our cities and villages; to increase our domestic comforts; to fill the ranks of our army and navy, and in the hour of danger to fight our battles; to extend our commerce; to adorn our society; and to promote learning, virtue and religion.

As long, then, as we have such an immense body of land waiting for living men, and such a gigantic task of the future before us, there is no cause to discourage immigration. Let this continent of land continue to attract another continent crowded with men, that they may thus both prove a blessing to each other. How could we cherish a proscriptive spirit without striking at the fundamental creed and glory of our institutions? How could we indulge in hatred of foreigners and shut the gate to the stranger, without insulting the memory of our own fathers and of the fathers of this country? Let us never forget the sacred trust of civil and religious liberty committed to us; never forget our past history, and our comprehensive destiny. Ourselves the children of the pilgrims of a former generation, let us welcome the pilgrims of the present day, and open a hospitable asylum to the oppressed and persecuted of every Christian nation. Favored by the free gift of Providence with a territory, almost as large as Europe, and capable of sustaining ten times the amount of our present population, let us cordially invite and encourage the immigrants, till prairies and forests, and mountains and valleys resound with the songs of living men and the praises of God.

Here are our millions of acres stretching towards the setting sun and teeming with hidden wealth, that must be made available for the benefit of society. Here is room enough for all the science, learning, art, wisdom, virtue and religion of Europe, that transplanted into a virgin soil and breathing the atmosphere of freedom, they may bring forth new blossoms and fruit and open a new epoch in the onward march of civil-

ization. Here is the general congress of the noblest nations of Christendom, the sterling, energetic Briton; the strong-willed, enterprising Scotch; the hard-working, generous Irish; the industrious, deep-thinking German; the honest, liberty-loving Swiss; the hardy, thrifty Scandinavian; the even-tempered, tenacious Dutch; the easy, elegant Frenchman; the earnest, dignified Spaniard; the ingenious, imaginative Italian; the patriotic, high-minded Magyar and Pole,—that they might renew their youth, and laying aside their prejudices and defects and uniting their virtues, may commingle into the one American nation, the freest, the most enlightened, the most comprehensive of all, the nation of the new world, the nation of the future.

We should not be surprised, that hostile collisions take place occasionally between the different nationalities of our land in this their present transition state. For the process of amalgamation has hardly begun; but it is going on with wonderful rapidity, which seems to increase in the new settlements of the western states. In an old country like Hungary, we find the greatest variety of races, Magyars, Germans, Slovacks, Wallacks, Croats, Servians, Illyrians and Wends, speaking as many tongues, without any real process of amalgamation. In Switzerland three languages and nationalities live peacefully together without making any inroad upon each other. The Alsace is still predominantly German, although nearly two hundred years incorporated with France. England, with all its national power, has not been able yet to assimilate to itself the Irish Celt. But in our Republic, one generation, and sometimes a few years, are sufficient to engraft the new branches upon the Anglo-Saxon stem, and to make them partake of the life of the root. And all this is done not by outward pressure and compulsion, as in Russia, which, likewise, tends to russify every nationality and language in its vast dominions, but by the youthful vitality of our system and the silent operation of our free institutions.

The English nationality is a striking illustration of the fact, that different races can coalesce into one and produce something higher and better than the separate elements of which it is composed. For it is a mixture and cross of at least three stocks. The Briton, or a branch of that Celtic race, which,

long before Christ moved westward from central Asia, constitutes, as it were, the root of the English people, still lives in their fearless boldness and love of independence, and gives the name to the empire, "Britannia,"

" Whose march is o'er the mountain-wave.
Whose home is on the deep."

The Anglo-Saxon, one of the most vigorous shoots of the great Germanic or Teutonic family, forms the main stem, which supports the branches and supplies them with strength and nourishment. But it has itself been ennobled and fertilized in the eleventh century by a Norman graft from sunny France. Hence also the English language has received contributions from the noblest ancient and modern tongues, and is, for this very reason, better calculated than any other, to become more and more the language of the world.*

A similar process of commingling of nations is now going on in our country, but on a much more comprehensive scale, and under more favorable conditions, on the basis of the time-honored civilization of Europe, with richer material, and consequently also, with the promise of a greater result. As in ancient Corinth, the accidental fusion of all the metals accumulated in the temples, produced a new metal better than any of its component parts, either silver or gold; so we may fairly

* I cannot refrain from quoting, in this connection, the remarkable eulogy pronounced on the English language by the great German philologist, Jacob Grimm, of Berlin, in the following passage, (*Ueber den Ursprung der deutschen Sprache*, 1852, page 50):

"Keine unter allen neueren Sprachen hat gerade durch das Aufgeben und Zerrütten aller Lautgesetze, durch den Wegfall beinahe sämtlicher Flexionen eine grössere Kraft und Stärke empfangen, als die englische, und von ihrer nicht einmal lehrbaren, nur lernbaren Fülle freier Mitteltöne ist eine wesentliche Gewalt des Ausdruckes abhängig geworden, wie sie vielleicht noch nie einer menschlichen Zunge zu Gebote stand. Ihre ganze, überaus geistige, wunderbar geglückte Anlage und Nachbildung war hervorgegangen aus einer überraschenden Vermählung der beiden edelsten Sprachen des späteren Europa's, der germanischen und romanischen, und bekannt ist, wie im Englischen sich beide zu einander verhalten, indem jene bei weitem die sinnliche Grundlage hergab, diese die geistigen Begriffe zuführte. An Reichthum, Vernunft und gedrängter Fuge lässt sich keine aller noch lebenden Sprachen ihr an die Seite setzen. Da die englische Sprache, von der nicht umsonst auch der grösste und überlegenste Dichter der neuen Zeit, im Gegensatz zur classischen alten Poesie—ich kann natürlich nur Shakspeare meinen—gezeugt und getragen worden ist, sie darf mit vollem Rechte eine Weltsprache heissen und scheint gleich dem englischen Volke ausersehen, künftig noch in höherem Maasse an allen Enden der Erde zu walten."

suppose, that the providential fusion of all the nations of Christendom on this fertile soil of North America, will result ultimately in a race that will surpass all other nations, either Saxons, or Celt, or Germans, or French.

It is not sufficient, of course, that the outward material simply, be gathered from all lands, but it must be worked up into the inward constitution and be converted into one flesh and and blood. It must not be a mixture merely, but an organic union and reproduction of the several reigning elements under a new and universal form. The result must be, not abstract Americanism, or any particularism over against the other members of the civilized world, but such an incorporation of the true substance of the past history of Europe into the American character, as may fairly and fully qualify it to represent the unity and universality of civilized and Christianized humanity.

The destiny and mission of such a cosmopolitan nation can hardly be estimated. It must be majestic as our rivers, magnificent as the Niagara Falls, lofty as the Rocky Mountains, vast as our territory, deep as the two oceans around it, far-reaching as the highways of commerce that already carries our name and influence to the remotest regions of the globe. History points to a boundless future before it, and nothing can prevent it from filling the most important pages in the annals of coming centuries than its own unfaithfulness to its providential trust.

It is a remarkable play of history, that sometimes its first beginnings, even in the shape of superstition and incidental error, foreshadow the end. The first Adam was a type and prophecy of the second Adam, who is the desire of all nations and of every human heart. The very name of Abraham pointed to his countless spiritual posterity and the Messianic blessings that should flow from his seed upon the nations of the earth. The future conquests of ancient Rome were indicated in her name, which means strength, and in the fable of her founders, the sons of Mars who sucked at the breasts of the she-wolf. The reader of the life of Columbus will remember, that the great discoverer, although entirely mistaken as to the geographical position of the new world, and tenaciously

holding to the fancy that he had only touched the extreme Eastern borders of Asia, that Hispaniola was the ancient Ophir visited by the ships of Solomon, and that there was a land-route from Cuba to Spain, viewed his enterprise from the loftiest position and connected with it the boldest designs which transcended the capacities of Spain and his age, as well as his own powers of execution.

It was especially the universal triumph of the Christian religion that entered deeply into his scheme. "He looked upon himself," says Washington Irving,* "as standing in the hand of heaven chosen from among men for the accomplishment of its high purpose; he read, as he supposed, his contemplated discovery foretold in Holy Writ, and shadowed forth darkly in the mystic revelations of the prophets. The ends of the earth were to be brought together, and all nations and tongues and languages united under the banners of the Redeemer. This was to be the triumphant consummation of his enterprise, bringing the remote and unknown regions of the earth into communion with Christian Europe; carrying the light of the true faith into benighted and Pagan lands, and gathering their countless nations under the holy dominion of the Church." His sanguine and pious hopes brought even the deliverance of the holy sepulchre from infidel desecration into connection with the discovery of the western world. He suggested it to the Spanish sovereigns at the time he first made his propositions, and after his return from the West Indies, flushed with the prospects of the vast wealth now to accrue to himself, he solemnly vowed to furnish, within seven years, an army, consisting of four thousand horse, and fifty thousand foot, and a similar force within the five following years, for the conquest of the consecrated soil of the Saviour and the birth-place of Christianity. Thus a holy crusade was to be the consummation of those divine purposes for which he considered himself a chosen agent in the hands of providence.

Perhaps these visionary projects may, after all, be fulfilled, without a crusade, of course, and in a far better and more spiritual form than Columbus dreamed. America must become

* The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus, Vol. I, p. 53 and 54.

one of the high-ways of Europe to the mysterious wealth of Asia, a bridge of nations, a thoroughfare of the march of commerce, freedom, civilization and religion. The settlement of the Western question and the fulfilment of the providential mission of the new world must materially affect the final settlement of the Eastern question and the ultimate fate of the old world. Our growing commerce, the example of our institutions, our press, with its flood of books, pamphlets and periodicals, are already a power for good or for evil in the public opinion of Europe, especially of Great Britain, and a thousand personal ties bind our people to all the nations of Christendom. Our Churches lend a helping hand to every noble enterprise, and will take more and more an active part in the Christianization and civilization of the barbarian tribes of Africa, the vast empires of China and Japan, and the regeneration of the stagnant Churches and sects in Asia, the cradle of the human race and of our holy religion. Thus it is no idle dream or vain conceit to look forward to a time when North America will be, in some sense, the centre of the world, the middle kingdom between Europe and Asia, the great beating heart of humanity itself, sending out the life blood of nations to the extremities of the earth and gathering them into one vast brotherhood of interest and love.

History so far has moved from East to West, from the rising to the setting sun. But the last triumph of this law, which alone is sufficient to secure an eminent place to America for the future, will perhaps be its abrogation. For when history shall have fairly erected its central stage of action on the magnificent theatre of the new world to perform its last and crowning scenes, the extreme ends of the civilized world will be brought together by the power of steam and electricity, the wonderful achievements of modern science, the leveling influences of the press and public opinion, and the more silent, but deeper and stronger workings of the everlasting Gospel. Then Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia will celebrate with America, as one family, the inauguration of the millennium of righteousness and peace, to the glory of Him who made them all and redeemed them all, and whose Kingdom shall have no end.

Such high views on the destiny of our nation, so far from

nourishing the spirit of vanity and self-glorification, ought rather to humble and fill us with a deep sense of our responsibility to the God of nations, who entrusted us with a great mission for the world and the Church, not from any superior excellency of our own, but from free choice and an inscrutable decree of infinite wisdom. Nor should we forget, that there are fearful tendencies and dangers growing up in our national life, which threaten to unfit us for our work and to expose us to the judgment of the Almighty Ruler of the Universe, who is not bound to any particular human instrumentality, but can raise a new generation on the ruins of our own to carry out His designs. It is only in steady view of these dangers, and by an earnest struggle against evil temptations, that we can at all succeed and accomplish the great ends for which Providence has called us into existence.

Young as our nation is, it has already given ample proof of the awful corruption of human nature in its social as well as individual capacity. There is a false Americanism as well as a true one, and tendencies to dissolution reveal themselves along with the elements of consolidation. The revolutionary period already produced two opposite orders of men, the traitor Arnold, the infidel Paine, and the profligate Burr, in ominous contrast with Washington, Franklin and Hamilton, and the former would as certainly have ruined us by their sordid vices, as the latter saved us by their noble virtues. The last few years were uncommonly fruitful in developing the diseases in the youthful organism of our political and social life, and in revealing the dangers which threaten the peace and prosperity of our beloved country.

I will pass by, as less important, the rapid growth of the wildest extravagance and luxury, so dangerous to a republic, and that contemptible mush-room aristocracy, whose only boast is glittering gold, unable to conceal the native vulgarity; the many popular delusions and humbugs, from the spiritual rappings down to the baby-shows; the sophomorical self-glorifications of our fourth-of-July-orators, who set all governments and society of the old world aside, as a great failure, without knowing the alphabet of history; the aping of the worst follies

of Europe in strange connection with an affected contempt of all monarchies and courts; the inordinate passion for offices, and childish fondness for empty titles that has blessed us with so many generals without a division, colonels without a regiment, captains without a company, corporals without a guard, physicians without patients, lawyers without cases, judges without a bench, preachers without charges, professors without a chair, doctors without learning, and which may give us after a while a speaker without a Congress, since we had already for two months a Congress without a speaker, not to mention many other follies and weaknesses which abound in all sections of the country.

But what shall we say of the more serious moral and social evils, which seem to multiply so rapidly on our soil? I need only remind you of the wild and radical tendencies of our youth; the fillibuster spirit which scorns all international laws and rights, and meets only with too much sympathy even among members of Congress; the piratical schemes of our manifest-destinarians, who would swallow, in one meal, Cuba, all Central America, Mexico and Canada into the bargain; the growing rowdyism, and its humiliating influence upon the selection of candidates for high offices; the bloody election riots, that have recently disgraced our leading cities; the utter recklessness of human life, which fills the newspapers so often with heart-rending details of railroad and steamboat disasters; the unbridled passion for the almighty dollar, which fosters a mean and heartless utilitarianism and tends to extinguish all nobler aspirations of the human mind; the bitter party spirit in politics, and sectarianism in religion, which arrays brother against brother and violates truth and justice at every step; the speculative steamboat explosions, the Mississippi repudiations, and the multiplication of dishonest failures and gigantic frauds of public officers upon the people; the alarming number of murders and crimes; and the cowardly fear of many of our Courts of justice to punish them as they deserve; the host of political adventurers and unprincipled demagogues, who disgrace our legislative halls, and sacrifice the interests of the nation to their sordid ambition; the shameless briberies practised in our highest seats of national trust;

the protracted disorganization of Congress itself, which, a few months ago brought the principle of representative government into danger and disrepute; the barbarous outrages in Kansas, which—no matter where the greatest guilt lies—must excite the just indignation of all friends of order and liberty; the unmeasured violence and low personalities of recent Congressional debates, and the bloody desecration of the national Senate Chamber, which has no parallel in the annals of constitutional government, and causes the hearts of all patriots and Christians to weep; and finally the whole pro-slavery, and anti-slavery agitation, which grows more bitter and fearful every day and darkens our horizon with the terrible prospects of civil war and a dissolution of our Union and strength.

I allude to these painful facts, not as a partisan, of course, but as an observer; not as a sectionalist, but as an American, with a sincere love for the whole country from Maine to Florida. No wonder, that, in view of the history of the last two years and the present critical aspect of affairs, some of our ablest and most experienced statesmen begin to look despondingly into the future and to entertain "the gloomy doubt"—I quote the words spoken a few days ago, by the Hon. Edward Everett from the tomb, as it were, of the venerable father of his country—"whether the toils, the sacrifices and the sufferings our fathers endured for the sake of founding a purer and a freer civilization on this Western Continent than the world had yet seen, have not been endured in vain."

Are we really in danger of losing our crown? Is our nationality to rot before it is ripe? Shall the great Anglo-Saxon Republic decay before it reaches the stage of manhood and add another proof to the gloomy reflection of the British poet:

"There is the moral of all human tales;
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past;
First freedom, and then glory—when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption—barbarism at last."

Or are these various signs of degeneracy and corruption merely the wild oats of the young giant, who will in due time learn better manners and settle down upon the sober and peaceful discharge of his proper duties? Are they diseases, not of the heart, but of the skin only, the skum on the surface, an empty

cloud, which may darken our immediate prospects, but cannot affect our ultimate destiny?

We cheerfully embrace the second alternative, mindful of the old Roman practice never to despair of the commonwealth, not even in the darkest days of defeat and humiliation. We may lose confidence in men, but not in humanity; in legislators and judges, but not in law and justice; in governors and presidents, but not in government and liberty. We may condemn and deplore single actions and events, but we dare not despair of history. We may fear for the present, but must hope for the future.

For God rules supreme in infinite wisdom and mercy, and makes even the wrath of man to praise Him. He delivered us from greater dangers than those that now surround us, and will not forsake us, until He has accomplished all His purposes of wisdom through our instrumentality.

But the American people, too, whatever may be said of many of their representatives, are sound at heart; they instinctively condemn those follies and vices; they have in themselves all the vital powers of a vigorous organism, which will work off, we trust, the diseases and excesses incident upon its luxuriant growth.

In view, then, of our past history, which abounds in manifestations of divine favor; in view of the boundless resources of our country, which were certainly not created in vain; and in view of the indications of Providence, both in the old and the new world, and their mutual relations, which point to the Continent of the West as the land of promise and the path of empire, we may well take courage and look hopefully to the future, ever cherishing a pure patriotism and exalted philanthropy, an ardent love of freedom and deep regard for law, fearing God and loving righteousness, pressing forward and onward to the crowning triumphs of Christianity and civilization, and making us a name that shall carry the blessings of peace to the ends of the earth and be pronounced with reverence and gratitude by the latest generations.

