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THE  
ANNUAL ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Maryland Historical Society,

On the Evening of December 17th, 1866,

BY HON. WILLIAM F. GILES.



BALTIMORE:  
PRINTED BY JOHN MURPHY & Co.  
182 BALTIMORE STREET.  
1867.



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## ANNUAL ADDRESS.

To live in the memory of those who shall survive us, is not to die. To be remembered when we are gone, has been an animating motive with the men of every day and of every generation. This sentiment has manifested itself in a thousand ways. It is seen in the countless efforts that man has made to blunt the iron tooth of time, and save from oblivion his name and the record of his life. It speaks to us from the magnificent cemeteries of earth's mightiest cities, as from the secluded country grave-yard where "the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep." It appears in all that our race has done throughout its long history, to link and bind the perishing scenes of earth, to an immortality which belongs alone to the deathless spirit. From the pyramids and catacombs of Egypt's earliest civilization; from the hieroglyphics which cover the long resting places of her embalmed dead; from the sculptured monuments and statues of Grecian and Roman art; from all that man has done in the olden time, to perpetuate his name and the memory of his life with those who should survive him, how clear and full to us is the evidence of the presence of this all pervading sentiment and yearning of the human heart. This voice, which comes to us so clear and unbroken from the dead past, is re-echoed by the living present. Else why so many journals; so many auto-biographies; so many efforts that we make to link our names to something of earth that seems more enduring and abiding than ourselves? It seems therefore to be an ever present desire in the human breast, that "although our

bodies moulder, we would have our memories live"—placed there, no doubt, by the wisdom and goodness of our Creator, that it might ever be to man an incentive to a life of active benevolence and noble action. That, as he was seeking to place his life and his character before the judgment of posterity, he should adorn them with those unselfish and noble actions which alone could assure to him the approval of that distant and therefore impartial tribunal. We can thus perceive, that this motive could not but act most beneficially in forming the characters and shaping the lives of men.

And what has it not enabled him to accomplish and endure in all the ages that are past? To escape the common fate, "*to die and be forgotten,*" genius and learning are ever putting forth their mighty energies. The ambitious heart in every age, yearning for immortality, has foregone all the enjoyments of the present. It is therefore alike due to noble and unselfish action, as to our own sense of gratitude, and the yearnings of our own hearts, that the men of every day should preserve and transmit to posterity, the materials for true and impartial history. That they should preserve the fleeting records of the lives of great and good men who have been an honor to our race; and the light and joy of the nation which was blessed by their presence. This duty has been but imperfectly discharged in the ages that are past. And as a consequence of this failure, how much of the material for history and biography has been swept away by the stream of time. How much has been destroyed by the wars which have desolated our earth, or has mouldered away and been lost and forgotten. During that long night which shrouded Europe, from the passing away of the Roman Empire to the dawn of modern civilization, how many (we know not) of the manuscripts and records of that

remarkable people were trodden beneath the foot of Rome's Barbarian conquerors ?

The library of Ptolemy Philadelphus, at Alexandria, contained, according to Gellius, 100,000 volumes, all in rolls. This was burnt by Cæsar's soldiers. Constantine and his successors established a magnificent library at Constantinople, which in the eighth century was said to contain 300,000 volumes. They were destroyed by the order of Leo Isaurus. In the latter part of the fourth century, the library at Alexandria was again destroyed. And we have marvellous accounts of the extent and value of the last Alexandrian Library, destroyed by the Saracen conqueror Amrou, in the seventh century. When we remember that this all took place before the invention of printing, and that of the many thousand volumes destroyed in these libraries, there were but few if any duplicate copies in the world, we can form a faint estimate of the loss that history, science and art sustained by the destruction of these valuable depositaries of the learning of the age. Archbishop Spalding of our city, in a lecture on the origin and history of libraries, says, "that it is a fact no less undoubted than it is lamentable, that the great body of ancient books has been lost. That we are not perhaps at this day in possession of one-tenth part of the standard works which were once classical in Greece and Rome. That of one hundred and forty books which it is known that Livy wrote, only thirty-five now remain. Varro, the most learned of the ancient Romans, is known to have written no less than five hundred volumes, of which but two have come down to our day. Dionysius Halicarnassus wrote twenty books of Roman Antiquities, of which but eleven are extant. Of the forty books of history composed by Polybius, but five now remain ; while of the same num-

ber by Diodorus Siculus, but fifteen have reached our time. And who that has read the charming lives by Plutarch, has not regretted the entire loss of more than half of that beautiful collection.”

Such is the account which is given us of the destruction of Roman literature alone. And what a loss would it have been to the Continental nations of Europe, and the jurisprudence of every land, if the great code of the Emperor Justinian and his *Pandects* had not been discovered in the twelfth century. They had slept the sleep of ages, having disappeared in the latter part of the sixth century. For all that we now possess, we are largely indebted to the piety and devotion to learning, of that Church, which had superseded the worship and idolatry of the last Great Empire; and had erected her religious establishments in so many parts of the earth, once governed by Rome.

They had, not only in the ritual of their Church, preserved the language of that mighty people in its purity, but their monasteries were the only secure depositories of the manuscripts and works of the learned, for some five centuries; from the close of the sixth to the commencement of the eleventh century. For, during most of this long period, there were no public libraries outside the Church; and few private collections. But almost every Cathedral and many monasteries had their libraries; in which, during the middle ages, so many works of classic literature that had survived the wreck and pillage of Rome, were saved. And not only did the Church save from destruction much of the learning and literature of the old world; but to the life of seclusion, retirement, and patient industry of the monks of that period, we are indebted for the multiplied copies of the most valuable manuscripts. Some of these libraries contained many thousand volumes.



The monastic library of Novalesse in Piedmont, contained more than 6,000 volumes; that of St. Benedict, sur-Loire in France, 5,000, and that of Spanheim, in Germany, had upwards of 2,000 volumes. These comprised works of all ages and countries, and on all subjects. So that when the art of printing was invented by John Guttenberg, in the fifteenth century, there were manuscript copies of many of the most precious works of antiquity in almost every country of Europe, ready to be set up in type, and sent by the magic of the printing press, over the world.

To show how valuable and extensive are some of these collections, I will only mention the library of the Vatican at Rome, founded by Pope Hilary, in the sixth century. It contained in 1848, besides 400,000 printed volumes, 80,000 manuscripts, entirely matchless anywhere else. Some of these manuscripts go back to the third century, and are therefore the earliest books known to exist. But the best and most reliable materials for history, are more liable to perish, and be lost and forgotten, than these works even in manuscript, of the learned of any age.

They are, the newspapers of the day: the letters of prominent men who take an active part in the public transactions, the pamphlets in which public affairs are discussed; and the private journals of individuals. Pitkin, in his preface to the political and civil history of the United States, says: "The numerous publications relating to individuals who acted a conspicuous part in the political scenes of this period, not only give the characters of the individuals themselves, but also furnish many important historical facts." He again remarks: "Much of the Revolutionary history of the United States, is only to be found in the private papers of those who were principal actors during that period:

and whenever the letters of General Washington, and the papers left by Samuel Adams, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, shall be given to the public, a great addition will be made to the stock of materials for American History.”

Thus wrote this historian in 1828. Since which period, these letters and papers have been published; and we can now fully endorse the remark of Mr. Pitkin: Every one, we think, will arise from the perusal of the letters of Washington, with the conviction, that he had never before, truly known the difficulties and trials of that great struggle; and had no full conception of the character and ability of its matchless leader. And what a flood of light do the letters and papers of John Adams, Samuel Adams and Jefferson, throw upon the great questions which agitated the American people of that day; and which led finally to the separation of the colonies from the mother-country. If these letters and papers had been lost or destroyed, how much of valuable data for the history of that noble contest would have passed away, without the hope of ever having their place supplied. Of the proceedings of the Convention, which at a later period of our history as a nation, formed our present noble Constitution, how little was known until the publication of the notes of debate, taken by Mr. Madison, and purchased and published by Congress, in 1839. And even at this day, how much of our early colonial history can only be found in the musty and decaying records of our public offices.

From an interesting report made in January last, to the Governor of this State, by Gen. Mayer, to whom the State Papers of Maryland had been submitted for examination and classification, I make the following extract:

“The ante-revolutionary papers now submitted to me are in a very fragmentary and decayed, as well as imperfect and unconnected condition. It is manifest, that large portions of them were either entirely lost, or so injured by mildew as to have been long since thrown away. Some of the bundles literally dropped to pieces in attempting to open them.” And this might have been the condition of all our public papers, if the Legislature had not, by resolution, in 1846, deposited with your Society for safe-keeping, several bound books and many valuable papers belonging to the archives of the State. A Trust which has been faithfully discharged by the Society to the present time. If, therefore, public documents and State papers, in the archives of your Government are so liable to injury and loss, what must be the inevitable fate of that most precious source of true and impartial history, the letters and papers of prominent men of any age, if left to the chances of private and family preservation. In our young, but rapidly developing country, where our people seem to be as migratory as the Phœnicians, of old, what chance for the preservation of such relics, unless we can gather them into some safe depositories like ours, where they will be guarded and preserved. To meet this want and supply this deficiency, Societies, such as this, have been established.

Ours was incorporated on the 8th March, 1844; and its objects, as expressed in its charter, was “to collect, preserve, and diffuse information relating to the civil, natural, and literary history of the State of Maryland, and American history and biography, generally.” How well and faithfully it has fulfilled certain of these duties, let your library of historical works, your very extensive collection of Colonial manuscripts, records and journals, and your galleries attest. The catalogue of the manu-

scripts, maps, medals, portraits, &c., of the Society, forms a book of forty-five pages, and the whole presents a collection most interesting to every Marylander; and which will remain a safe depository upon which future historians may rely in their search after truth. Of the original twenty-two incorporators of this Society, I am happy to know, that now, after the lapse of twenty-two years, ten still survive, many of whom are, as they ever have been, among the most honored and useful members of the Association. Their love for and devotion to the objects of our Society, seems to have experienced no abatement in the lapse of so many years. And now, with all our valuable collections; with a library of over 10,000 volumes, of choice works, and quite full in the historical Department; with our commodious and beautiful rooms; with nearly three hundred members, composed largely of the young and the active, (who may reasonably count upon many years of usefulness,) with ample resources for all the current expenses of the association; and with a permanent fund for our publication and other expenses, the gift of one of nature's nobleman; a bright future awaits this Society, if the spirit which led to its formation, and has heretofore directed its operations, shall continue to preside in its counsels.

And is their not every thing in the circumstances attending the settlement and subsequent progress of our State, to cause us to love her history and her institutions. Do not her sires in every trying hour of their country's history, challenge our admiration, and call upon us, not to permit the laurels which encircle their brows to fade, or their bright fame to be covered by the dust of time. The seeds of liberty were to be found in the Charter of our State. For it secured to those who might emigrate, an independent share in the legis-

lation of the province; of which the statutes were to be established with the advice and approbation of the majority of the freemen or their deputies.

Representative Government was thus indissolubly connected with the fundamental charter. Of George Calvert, who first projected the Colony, and to whom the Charter was to have been granted, Bancroft, in his history of the Colonies, says: "He deserves to be ranked among the most wise and benevolent lawyers of all ages. He was the first in the history of the Christian World, to seek for religious security and peace by the practice of justice, and not by the exercise of power; to plan the establishment of popular institutions with the enjoyment of liberty of conscience; to advance the career of civilization by recognizing the equality of all christian sects." He died before he received his patent, but it was granted and confirmed to his son, Cecilius Calvert, who, succeeding to his father's fortune, carried into execution that father's intentions in reference to the colony he proposed to settle. The right of every colonist to be present either in person or by deputy, in the Legislature, and perfect religious freedom were the two memorable features in the character of the Maryland institutions. Listen to the oath prescribed for her Governor: "I will not by myself or any other, directly or indirectly, molest any person professing to believe in Jesus Christ, for or in respect of religion." 'Tis true! that in after years, the religious intolerance which prevailed so long in the mother country, extended to Maryland, and led here to the establishment of one sect, and provision for its support by law. The General Assembly, in 1692, passed an act establishing the Episcopal Church, and dividing every County into parishes, and laying taxes for the support of its ministers. And the usual history of all State religions was not

varied in this instance. Other sects and denominations were denied the liberty of free, public worship. But these disabling statutes were soon removed, except in the case of the Roman Catholics, who remained subject to their unjust provisions until the era of our revolution. It is a sad comment upon our poor human nature, that, in a colony which was established by the members of this Church, and which grew up to power and happiness under their mild government, they alone, of all outside the pale of the Church of England, should have remained the only victims of religious intolerance for so many years. The Convention of this State which met in 1776, in the bill of rights, which prefaced the Constitution they framed, restored that religious liberty which had been the pride and honor of Maryland in its early history. Article 33, says: "That as it is the duty of every man to worship God in such manner as he thinks most acceptable to him, all persons professing the Christian religion are equally entitled to protection in their religious liberty; wherefore, no person ought by any law to be molested in his person or estate on account of his religious persuasion or profession, or for his religious practice," &c. It was a great act as far as it went, and worthy of the great men who planted their Government upon such free and ennobling principles. But they left their Hebrew brethren still disfranchised. It was reserved for our day, to cancel this injustice. By the act of Assembly of 25th February, 1825, and its confirmation by the succeeding Legislature, all disabilities upon that portion of our fellow-citizens were removed. But although religious intolerance prevailed for a time in our State, there was something in the character and genius of its people, which deprived it of its worst features. No fagot and stake, no dungeons, no gallows or whipping-

post, for any act of religious worship ever disgraced the soil of Maryland. Descended from a member of that peaceful sect who found in this Colony, freedom to worship God after their simple form of devotion, I feel it to be no less a duty than it is a privilege, to refer on this occasion to that noble spirit of Christian toleration which, (with the exceptions I have mentioned,) has been the honor and the wise policy of our good State. And I commend it in all its full scope and meaning, to the men of this generation. The form of man's adoration of his Creator and the mode and manner of the worship he renders Him, should be ever held sacred and beyond the reach, not only of human legislation, but of every species of attack, persecution or censure. With an open Bible and a free press, which is our glorious inheritance, religious errors, like all others, may well be left to the domain of reason and argument. No form of religion has ever been destroyed by persecution. It has been no less eloquently than truly said, that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. If our early Colonial history be full of interest and satisfaction to every Marylander, that satisfaction and interest is deepened and increased when we contemplate the great part they acted in our struggle for independence. At its commencement she was ranked by Burke, an impartial observer, with Virginia, as one of the leading Colonies of the Continent. In his celebrated speech "on Conciliation with America," arguing against the policy and the injustice of the system of taxing the Colonies then pursued by the British Parliament, he said, "He must be grossly ignorant of America, who thinks that without falling into this confusion of all rules of equity and policy, you can restrain any single Colony, especially Virginia and Maryland, the central and most important of them all." And her sires in that

eventful struggle, did justice to the high character of their State; so that at its close, Maryland still held the prominent position assigned her by the English orator and statesman. But of the leading part taken by the statesmen of Maryland, in that able discussion of the rights of the Colonies, that war of words and pamphlets, which preceded the clash of arms, how little is known to the men of our day. How many of this generation know anything of Daniel Dulaney, the younger, and of his great argument against the Stamp-Act. In his day, no orator or lawyer was more widely known than he. And now, his name seems to have passed from the memories of men; known and remembered only by the members of his own profession who may have read his great opinions published in the first volume of our Maryland Reports; opinions considered in his day of as high authority as judicial decisions; and therefore properly appended to the reports of the earlier decisions of our Courts. And of the men from Maryland who, as her representatives, signed the Declaration of Independence, but little is known by the great body of their countrymen; who to day, are reaping the benefits of their great and heroic act. Eighty-four pages in Sanderson's biography of the signers, and a brief memorial of Mr. Carroll, read some years since before this Society, by one of its members, is all that has ever been written of them to my knowledge. And what is now known of the able statesmen of this Colony, who in 1775 and 76, discussed the great and important questions of that day, with an ability not surpassed in any of the Colonies; and who guided and directed this Colony from its state of vassalage and dependence, through the troubled waters of revolution, to its place as one of the independent States of the new Confederacy. In the several conventions which met at



Annapolis, at that eventful period we ever find prominent, the names of Chase, Tilghman, the two Carrolls, Paca, Plater and Goldsborough. They were the committee elected by ballot to whom was committed the important duty of preparing a bill of rights and form of government for the infant State. And that they and the convention did their duty well, is seen in the fact, that the form of government they then prepared, remained as the constitution of the State for sixty-two years. In the twenty-eight years that have elapsed since its repeal, we have had three constitutions formed, and it has been the opinion of many, that we have not improved on the work of our fathers. They did their work well, and gave us liberty regulated by law; the ample protection of individual rights by an impartial judiciary; and the Legislative <sup>we</sup> ~~the~~ and paramount power of the government, committed to a body who should meet annually to consult and act for the great interests of the State. The memory of such men we should treasure up; and we should ever feel that it is a duty we owe them, for what they did, to make their names and lives familiar as household words. In the study of their thoughts and the contemplation of their deeds, we shall find ourselves escaping from the selfishness and partizanship of the day, in our efforts to attain that noble and unselfish patriotism which animated them, and glowed in all they said and did—we should return from the contemplation of their lives, purer and better men. They were with the advance in that great struggle for freedom and the rights of man.

Before the declaration of July 4th, 1776, made in Philadelphia, was known in Maryland; and nearly a month before it was engraved <sup>0550</sup> and signed, these men of Maryland and their colleagues in the convention, had put forth their Declaration of Independence. On the

6th of July, 1776, the convention caused to be entered on their journal a declaration which, after a recital of their wrongs, and an eloquent vindication of their rights, closes in the following language, "For the truth of these assertions we appeal to that Almighty Being, who is emphatically styled the searcher of hearts, and from whose omniscience nothing is concealed. Relying on His Divine protection and affiance, and trusting to the justice of our cause, we exhort and conjure every citizen to join cordially in defence of our common rights, and in maintenance of the freedom of this and her sister Colonies." And when the clash of arms came, the sons of Maryland answered this appeal; and made good this declaration upon many a battle field of the revolution. And from no subject of contemplation can we derive more gratification, than from a review of the heroic part taken by the men of our State, in that war which resulted, after long years of suffering and trial, in the independence of the Colonies.

In June, 1776, the Maryland Convention resolved, that that Province would furnish a flying camp of thirty-four hundred men to act in the middle department; that is, from the Province of New York to Maryland; to be divided into four battalions of nine companies each. The convention elected the officers of the battalions then about to be raised. And on July 6th, 1776, the day the convention made its declaration of independence, Col. Smallwood, who had been elected colonel, was ordered by the convention to proceed immediately with his battalion to Philadelphia, and put himself under the orders of Congress, and the Continental officer commanding there. And also, that four independent companies from Talbot, Kent, Queen Anne's and St. Mary's counties, proceed immediately to the same destination and put themselves under the

command of Col. Smallwood, subject to the further orders of Congress. And so prompt was their obedience to this order, that on the 11th of the same month, six companies of the battalion, stationed at Annapolis, and three companies stationed at Baltimore Town, the whole under the command of Col. Smallwood, started on their march to Philadelphia. They reached the Continental army about the 1st of August, in time to act an heroic part on the bloody field of Long Island.

In Lord Sterling's report to General Washington, of this disastrous battle, dated August 29th, 1776, he says, (after describing the position taken by the forces under his command,) "in this position we stood cannonading each other, till near eleven o'clock, when I found that General Howe with the main body of the army was between me and our lines, and I saw that the only chance of escaping being all made prisoners, was to pass the Creek near the Yellow Mills; and in order to render this more practicable, I found it absolutely necessary to attack a body of troops commanded by Lord Cornwallis, posted at the house near the Upper Mills. This I instantly did, with about half of Smallwood's regiment, first ordering all the other troops to make the best of their way through the creek." Look at that little band of five hundred young Marylanders on that disastrous field, thus thrown forward as the forlorn hope, to hold in check the whole British army, numbering many thousands, to give time to their fellow-soldiers to escape. See them wheeling, and led on by their heroic leader, attacking the advancing British with unparalleled bravery. It was a contest which could result to these young soldiers, only in death or a long captivity in the prison ship; but they never faltered, and Lord Sterling says they made five or six several attacks on the British column. Washington's

eagle eye was on them, and as they rushed on he exclaimed, "*My God, what brave men must I this day lose.*" They seemed likely to drive back the foremost ranks of the British; and when forced to give way by overwhelming numbers, they rallied and renewed the contest. They were surrounded but they still fought on; and were nearly all cut to pieces, or taken prisoners. Nine only succeeded in regaining the American lines. I wish I had their names. They should be inscribed on the muster-roll of fame. These young martyrs of liberty should not sleep unwept and unhonored in their early graves. They should take their places in men's memories with Warren and the heroes who fell at Lexington and Concord. And time, which buries in oblivion so much of human achievement, should year after year, only freshen the laurels which cluster around their brows.

The biographer of General Greene says of him; that he was confined to his bed in the City of New York, with a fever, within hearing of the sound of the battle on Long Island; and that he was much disturbed when intelligence reached him of the reverses experienced by the troops lately under his command; but when informed of the terrible slaughter sustained by Col. Smallwood's regiment, his favorite Corps, composed for the most part of young men of family, and in a high state of discipline, he burst into tears; declaring that superadded to the amount of private sorrow, which that disaster must occasion, the cause of freedom had experienced in it, a loss which no time could repair. And at the battle of White Plains the shattered remnant of Smallwood's heroic regiment was again in the hottest of the fight, the bravest of the brave.

The organization of this flying camp was so defective in many respects, that it was disbanded in Dec., 1776, and a brigade of regular troops to be attached to the

Continental army, was raised by Maryland. This brigade was composed largely of the men and officers of the flying camp, and was placed under the command of Smallwood, appointed a Brigadier-General early in 1777. In the spring of this year, this brigade to be ever afterwards known and celebrated in history, as the "*Maryland Line*," joined the Continental army under the Commander-in-Chief in the Jerseys. They fought well at Brandywine and Germantown, though separated from their gallant leaders, Smallwood and Gist. Those two officers had been detailed by the Commander-in-Chief to proceed to Maryland; and take charge of the militia, suddenly called out to join in the defence of Philadelphia. The Maryland Line then formed into two brigades, was placed under the command of General Sullivan, and in those two bloody actions, gained for itself a character for discipline, valor and endurance, which was never tarnished in its subsequent history. It remained with the army under Washington during the years 78 and 79, sharing in all its trials, privations and patient endurance. In the spring of 1780, when it became necessary to send reinforcements to the South, the Maryland Line with the Delaware troops were selected. On the morning of the 17th of April, 1780, with the Baron De Kalb at their head, they left Morristown in New Jersey, and commenced their long march to join the army of the South. They were soldiers worthy of such an heroic leader, and well did their after history justify the selection made by Washington on this occasion. At Camden, Eutaw and Cowpens, they gained for themselves imperishable renown; and nobly sustained their early reputation for coolness in the hour of danger. On the disastrous field of Camden, after the flight of the militia, except one regiment from North Carolina, commanded by Col. Dixon, the

Maryland Line with this brave regiment of Dixon's, were left alone to oppose Cornwallis' army, surpassing them in numbers and already flushed with a certainty of triumph. Says the biographer of Greene, "this heroic remnant of the army under the command of De Kalb, Gist, Smallwood, Williams, Howard and Dixon, fought with intrepidity and desperate resolution." They could not save the day; but wrote their fealty and their devotion to liberty on that crimsoned field, with the heart's blood of the invader's legions. Their gallant leader fell, covered with wounds. Congress thought proper, after this reverse, to recall General Gates, and General Greene was appointed to the command of the Southern army. He assumed the duties of that important position on the 3d of December, 1780; and such was the universal confidence in him, and such his great abilities as a military leader, that he was soon able to resume the offensive, and early in January, 1781, he was able to dispatch Morgan with part of the Maryland Line, under Col. Howard, Col. Washington's dragoons and a few militia to take position on the British left. This movement led to the battle of the Cowpens, on the 17th January, in which the Marylanders with Washington's dragoons, bore an honorable part, and at a most critical period, by their gallantry, saved the day; and gained for their country a decisive victory. On the celebrated and masterly retreat of General Greene through North Carolina, the heroes of the Cowpens, now led by Otho Holland Williams, one of Maryland's bravest sons, protected the rear of the American army. Forgetful of themselves and bent exclusively on the preservation of those they were appointed to protect, these brave troops confronted difficulty and danger, and submitted to privation and hardship with a perseverance and a self-devotedness rarely equalled in the records of war.

They never relaxed their vigilance until Greene had placed the river Dan between his exhausted troops and the advancing British. When Greene again entered South Carolina, the Maryland Line was with him, and participated, on the 8th September, in the bloody battle at the Eutaw Springs, which closed in a glorious triumph for the American arms. General Greene, in his despatch to Congress, describing the crisis of the engagement, says: "In this stage of the action, the Virginians under Lieut. Col. Campbell, and the Marylanders under Col. Williams, were led on to a brisk charge, with trailed arms, through a heavy cannonade and a shower of musket-balls. Nothing could exceed the gallantry and firmness of both officers and men upon this occasion. They preserved their order, and pressed on with such unshaken resolution that they bore down all before them. The enemy were routed on all quarters." Thus did the sons of Maryland answer the appeal of the Convention of their State, and nobly sustain Maryland's declaration of independence of the 6th July, 1776. Of their gallant leaders how little is known by the men of this generation! Two brief memoirs by members of this society, one of the Baron De Kalb, and the other of Gen. Williams, and two brief sketches of Williams and Howard in the National Portrait Gallery, are all that have been specially done, to my knowledge, to transmit the memory of their heroic lives to posterity. Who knows anything now of Gen. Gist, or Col. Gunby, or Col. Josias Carvill Hall? And how little is comparatively known by the men who now crowd our streets of the great part taken by the brave and gallant Howard in the war for our independence. Massachusetts has been more just to the memory of her illustrious dead; she does not permit their names to be forgotten, or their sacrifices for their country to pass from the memories of

men. Our libraries contain many biographies of her distinguished men, distinguished either in the camp, at the bar, or in the senate chamber. Her sons of the present day have been in this particular just to their fathers and true to themselves. They have thus placed before the coming generations the bright examples of the lives of her illustrious men. Through these biographies they live again, and ever teach their countrymen the lessons of devoted and self-denying patriotism. Let the young men of Maryland, members of this society, from the ample provisions laid up in our archives, be as true and as just to the great dead of our own State. There is no field of labor from which they will return with a richer reward, or with more purified and elevated feelings; there is no surer way of re-kindling the fires of patriotism in our own bosoms, than by the study of the lives and sacrifices of the great statesmen and heroes of the past generation. Let memory recall the great facts attending our struggle for liberty, and the sacrifices which our fathers so cheerfully made in that day of trial; and it will do more to strengthen our love for our country than any contemplation of its present greatness; for it is ever true that historic memories fire a people with valor and patriotism. If our love for its wise and and noble constitution is growing faint and feeble, let us visit Marshfield, and recall the eloquent and unanswerable defence of the Constitution by its great expounder. One of the saddest signs of the times is the fact, that for the last twenty years the old-fashioned celebrations of the 4th of July, by orations upon the acts and men of the revolution, seems to be no longer the fashion. A late writer upon the "Decline of the Roman Republic," says: "All political systems contain within them the principles of their own death; and political progress, as we call it, is only the slower road



to that end to which all human institutions, so far as we have had experience, must come at last." I would not take so gloomy view of human institutions. I would be more inclined to agree with Sir James Mackintosh, "Experience may, and I hope does, justify us in expecting that the whole course of human affairs is towards a better state." But let us remember, that when a nation forgets her illustrious dead, the shadows of decay are already falling on her.

When the war of our revolution broke out in 1776, it found a young man living in the immediate vicinity of Baltimore Town, on his own patrimonial estate, with everything around him that wealth and high social position could give to render his home attractive. But he put the joys of home and the sweet intercourse of social life aside. He turned his back upon them all for a season; for above them all he heard, and answered, the cry of his suffering country. When Maryland first called her sons to her standard, and formed her flying camps, he left his home, to be a dweller there no more until the independence of his country should be recognized, and a position gained for her amid the nations of the earth. He was then in the twenty-fourth year of his age, and the Convention discerning his merit at that early day, appointed him a Captain in the regiment placed under the command of Col. Josias Carvill Hall. This regiment being disbanded, for the reason I have heretofore stated, after a few months' service, and the seven regiments having been raised and organized by Maryland to be attached to the Continental army, the young Captain was appointed Major in the fourth regiment, under his former commander Col. Hall.

Entering the room in which the business meetings of this society are held, you will see his portrait, immediately over the full length likeness of Lord Baltimore.

His commission is dated the 10th of April, 1777. On the 1st of June, 1779, he was appointed Lieut. Col. of the Fifth, and after the battle of Hobkirk's hill, he succeeded to the command of the Second regiment, upon the death of Lieut. Col. Ford. Every Marylander who studies the history of the revolution, will feel proud and grateful that Col. John Eager Howard belonged to our State. He will rejoice that in her day of trial, she had such a son to defend her cause, and to lead her regiments to battle, and so often to victory. The division to which his regiment was attached at Germantown, behaved with great bravery on that bloody field; and around and in front of the large mansion, known as Chew's house, again and again repulsed the enemy. The house was on that day garrisoned by a British regiment; and was of course the subject of frequent attacks by the Americans, until the thick fog and smoke hid everything from view. And here I would mention one of those romances in real life which history sometimes presents to our view. This old mansion before which our young officer cheered on his unflinching soldiers to the thickest of the fight, and from whose windows the bullets flew so fast that periled his life at every moment, was to become to him in after years most dear. When the purple tide of war had swept by, and peace and independence had blessed the land, our young soldier was to seek and find in it his future bride and the mother of his children.

In the battles of White Plains, Monmouth and Germantown, he displayed that unflinching courage which ever afterwards so distinguished him. He went South with the Maryland Line, and at Camden, Cowpens and Eutaw Springs, he exhibited a gallantry and firmness which no danger could shake, and a decision of character and clearness of judgment which no complications

of battle or sudden emergencies could embarrass. He was one of those heroic spirits in whom General Greene reposed his hopes, in his noble determination to recover the South or perish in the attempt. In Howard he found a spirit worthy of his friendship and confidence, and he gave them to him in no stinted measure.

The battle of Eutaw Springs was fought on the 8th of September, 1781. Greene, writing to a friend in Maryland, in November of the same year, says: "This will be handed to you by Col. Howard, as good an officer as the world affords. He has great ability, and the best disposition to promote the service. My own obligations to him are great, the public's still more so; he deserves a statute of gold, no less than Roman and Grecian heroes: He has been wounded, but has happily recovered." He gained his brightest laurel at the battle of the Cowpens, where, assuming to himself the responsibility of the act, he wheeled his regiment and charged upon the advancing British column, superior to his own command, and at the point of the bayonet swept them from the field. And this is the first time in the history of the war, in which the bayonet was successfully used by the American troops. And on the red field of Camden, when the militia of Virginia and North Carolina had given way, and Gates had given up all for lost, and had left the field, Col. Howard distinguished himself with those who stood their ground and prevented the utter destruction of the American forces.

After the close of the war, to whose successful issue his services in the field had so largely contributed, he returned to his home near our city, to enjoy the repose and quiet of domestic life. But like his beloved Commander-in-chief, those great qualities of ardent patriotism, clearness of judgment, and firmness of purpose which had so distinguished him in the field, were no

less necessary to the civil government just starting upon its untrod path, and Col. Howard was not permitted to remain long in the seclusion of his own home. In November, 1788, he was elected Governor of this State, succeeding his old commander Gen. Smallwood. And he was re-elected for the two following years; subsequently, in the autumn of 1796, he was elected to the Senate of the United States, and remained a member of that body until the 4th of March, 1803. In November, 1795, he was offered by Washington the office of Secretary of War, which he declined on account of delicate health; and two years afterwards, when in view of a threatened war with France, Washington was called on again to lead the armies of his country, he named Col. Howard for the office of Brigadier-General. He lived to a good old age, and was permitted to see the full fruition of all his hopes for his beloved country. He lived to see the small town of Baltimore, of less than ten thousand souls at the close of the war, expand to a city of seventy-two thousand inhabitants, and beginning rapidly to encroach upon the stately park which surrounded his paternal mansion. He died on the 12th of October, 1827, in the 76th year of his age, respected and revered by the men of his native State, who had looked up to him as a connecting link between the two centuries. I recollect, as a student of law, marching with the long and imposing civil and military procession which followed his remains from his residence at Belvidere, to the Episcopal Cemetery, in the Western part of the city. When the news of his death reached the far off South, the people of the State, on whose soil many of his heroic actions during the war had been performed, shared the general grief at his loss. When the Legislature of South Carolina met in the winter following, it passed unanimously, the following

beautiful tribute to his memory. "It becomes a grateful people to cherish and perpetuate the memory of the brave and good; to remember with gratitude their services, and to profit by their bright example.

"The heroic band of the revolution who fought that we might enjoy peace, and conquered that we might inherit freedom, deserve the highest place in the grateful affections of a free people.

"Among the master-spirits who battled for independence, we are to remember with veneration the late patriotic and venerable Col. Jno. Eager Howard. His illustrious name is to be found in the history of his country's sufferings and the annals of his country's triumphs; in the day of peril and of doubt, when the result was hid in clouds, when the rocking of the battlements was heard from Bunker Hill to the plains of Savannah, when danger was everywhere, and when death mingled in the conflict of the warrior, Howard still clave to the fortunes of the struggling Republic. Of all the characters which the days of trial brought forth, few are equal, none more extraordinary. He was his country's common friend, and his country owes him one common inextinguishable debt of gratitude. South Carolina, with whose history his name is identified, is proud to acknowledge the obligation." And then, after a brief recital of his achievements in the battles of the South, it closed with the following resolutions:

"*Resolved, therefore,* That it was with feelings of profound sorrow and regret that South Carolina received the melancholy intelligence of the death of Col. Jno. Eager Howard of Maryland:

"*Resolved,* That the State of South Carolina can never forget the distinguished services of the deceased;

"*Resolved,* That the Governor be requested to transmit a copy of these proceedings to the Governor of Maryland, and to the family of Col. Howard."

These resolutions present the spectacle of one State sharing in and sympathizing with the sorrows of a sister State at the death of a distinguished son, whose loss both so deeply regretted. And to show in what estimation he was held by the country at large, the President of the United States (Mr. John Quincy Adams) attended his funeral.

I have given this brief sketch of Col. Howard to show to the younger members of this Society that we have on the roll of Maryland's distinguished sons, many whose lives and characters well deserve their study, and the efforts of their young and vigorous pens. In no way is history taught or learned so well as by biography; and he who prepares himself to write of the life and character of any of earth's great benefactors, will, when his work is done, find himself with a thorough knowledge of the general history of the country or period in which his subject has lived and acted.

I have said nothing upon this occasion of the great battles and contests of our late deeply to be regretted civil war. I would not tread upon the ashes of the late conflagration. The time to write the history of the *Great Rebellion* has not yet come. All we should do is, to collect and preserve the data and material from which some future Prescott, when passion shall subside, and the causes which led to it shall be removed from the field of politics, may give the world a clear and impartial history, in which he shall "nothing extenuate nor set aught down in malice." All that I would say is, that wherever in this contest which so often divided the members of the same household, the sons of Maryland were found, they exhibited the same heroic courage which the history of our country shows, their fathers possessed in the days of the revolution. And all I think will now rejoice, that Maryland at its close stands

where she stood at its commencement, one of the central states of a great confederacy.

Maryland, land of my birth, my father's land; may thy prosperity be as enduring as thy granite hills; and thy justice and thy actions be ever as clear and unsullied as the streams which leap from thy mountain sides. May thy civil and religious freedom know no abatement in all the ages that shall come; but may'st thou ever remain, "*the land of the free,*" as thou hast ever been "*the home of the brave.*"

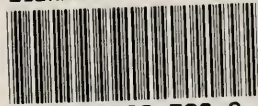








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