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THE  
PRESERVATION  
OF THE  
REPUBLIC.

AN ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES AND CITIZENS  
OF PROVIDENCE,

JULY 4, 1862.

BY AUGUSTUS WOODBURY.



PROVIDENCE:  
KNOWLES, ANTHONY & CO., CITY PRINTERS.  
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CITY OF PROVIDENCE.



RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL, JULY 14, 1892.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of this body be, and they are hereby, tendered to Rev. AUGUSTUS WOODBURY, for the able and eloquent Oration delivered by him at the late municipal celebration of the anniversary of American Independence.

RESOLVED, That the Committee appointed to make arrangements for that celebration be, and they are hereby, authorized to request a copy of said Oration for publication, and to cause five hundred copies of the same to be published in pamphlet form, for the use of the City Council.

Witness: SAMUEL W. BROWN, CITY CLERK.

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## O R A T I O N .

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MY FELLOW COUNTRYMEN :—

There is no subject to demand our attention to-day other than this :—THE PRESERVATION OF THE REPUBLIC. For the second time in our history, this anniversary occurs amid the strifes of civil war. The demonstrations of popular interest, which mark the day, commemorate not alone the fidelity of those who founded the Republic, but also the valor of those who are attempting to preserve it. The men of the nation on the field of battle, the women of the nation in the hospital and at their homes, are alike contending for civilization, loyalty and freedom, against barbarism, treason and slavery. The conflicting ideas of our national life interchange hostilities at the point of the bayonet and the cannon's mouth. The prairies of the West, the hillsides and valleys of Virginia, the islands of the South and the waters of the Mississippi, have witnessed the sacrifices, the exploits, the brave living and noble dying, which seem to recall the heroic ages. The catalogue of names which have shed new lustre on American history, has become almost too tedious to recite. The

army and the navy, the council board, the Executive chamber, have shown, that for bravery, skill, administrative power and knowledge of affairs, the sires of '76 have no cause to be ashamed of the sons of '62. Now, as then, the martyrs to the cause of a nation's independence, leaving a trail of glory as they have passed away, above the smoke and din of battle, are manifesting the supreme value of liberty. Divine Providence, subjecting the nation to this severe discipline of strife, is proving to us, that national existence and the blessings of a free government, which demanded of the fathers a sublime patience and untold suffering, are worth, to the sons, all the treasure, tears, toils and blood which now they cost.

When the rebellion, which has convulsed the nation, first made itself manifest in arms, few persons looked forward to a long continuance of hostilities. The whole movement seemed so anomalous; the interests of humanity and civilization were so averse to the attempt of the Southern States to destroy the government which had nurtured them into importance and power; and the object for which the disruption of the Union was inaugurated—the perpetuation of negro slavery—was so abhorrent to the moral sense of the civilized world, as to cause all right-minded persons to suppose that the war would be of short duration. Surely, the enlightened conscience of mankind must condemn an enterprise which, if successful, would restore the ages of barbarism. An undertaking like that must certainly be shamed into absolute impotence at its very commencement. At home, there was needed but the uprising of the people of the Northern States,—the unexpected union of all parties and all opinions, in



behalf of the existing government, the unlooked-for development of the sentiment of loyalty to ideas and institutions, to assure the people of the South that their dreams of the success of treason were a delusion. The political wickedness, that sought in anarchy an outlet for its rage, must shrink appalled from the schemes which it was plotting, as it saw the certainty of their failure—and in their failure its own terrible and disgraceful fate. Abroad, there could be no sympathy with a cause which had nothing to recommend it but its audacity and its pretensions. England, the professed friend of freedom, could not strike hands with those who were attempting to subvert a government which was pledged to liberty. France, the professed friend of order, could not make a league with a pretended confederacy, whose bond of union was a rope of sand, and which could result in nothing but continuous anarchy. Russia, taking her place in the front rank of nations, by the emancipation of her serfs, could have no feeling of respect for the struggles of a power whose very existence is a shame to the humanity of our age. Italy, liberated from the yoke of tyrants, by the honorable valor of Victor Emanuel and the fearless genius of Garibaldi, could only look with loathing upon an enterprise which was at variance with all the ideas for whose sake she has suffered through so many years. Spain, slowest and most tenacious of nations, could furnish no aid or comfort to a people who had tried once and again to wrest from her the brightest jewel of her ancient crown. Thus, many persons reasoned, and thought that a cause, which, in itself intrinsically weak, had no right to expect assistance from foreign powers, must soon come to an untimely and ignominious end.

Two unexpected characteristics of the struggle were not taken into account. One was, the desperate earnestness of the rebels themselves; the other was, the effect of the pressure of self-interest upon the two leading powers of Europe. Added to the latter, was the growing jealousy towards free institutions—and towards a Republic that was successfully vindicating their power, on the part of the monarchical governments of the old world. The Union, in its integrity and prosperity, is a perpetual menace to the stability of the thrones of Europe, because it is proving the capacity of the people for self-government, and is a perpetual protest against the Divine right of kings. Yet, the administration of Mr. Lincoln, pledged to the support of the ideas of the age, was warranted in anticipating from the civilized powers of the world, the most cordial expressions of interest, the fullest countenance and the readiest co-operation. The progress of events has proved that these were not needed; but we certainly were justified in hoping for their manifestation.

During the last year, it has been clearly proved that the rebellious States were really determined to dis sever their connection with the federal Union. They were thoroughly in earnest. With all the passionate fervor for which the people of a Southern clime are distinguished, they were ready to go to all extremes for the accomplishment of their purpose. They have made great sacrifices; they have suffered great privations; they have endured unwonted toils and hardships; they have bravely confronted danger and death. We cannot but confess, that their perseverance in the midst of difficulties, their pertinacity, their persistent confidence in ultimate success, even in the midst of discouragement,

ments and disasters, are exceedingly creditable to Southern character. Their declaration of independence was not a mere paper pronunciamiento. They have proved that they were willing to stand by it and defend it. They have shed much blood for its sake. They have exhibited considerable ability, and much vigilance, shrewdness and daring. In a just cause, they would almost seem to have deserved success.

But there is something in the principle for which they are contending, which warps the judgment, infects the reason with strange sophistries, distorts the moral perceptions, corrupts the conscience, and hardens the heart. Its dishonesty, its falsehood, its disregard of the most sacred obligations, its desecration of the most solemn oaths, compacts and sanctions, its utter shamelessness and savageness, have effectually neutralized all the virtues that would naturally be educed among a people that professed to be struggling for freedom. It depraves man; it unsexes woman. Treason, always unlovely, especially so when it is directed against a beneficent government, becomes absolutely abhorrent in the aspect which it has presented among the American people. It is a matter of profoundest sorrow, that the energy and enthusiasm, which it has manifested, should be so grossly and so wickedly misdirected. The loyal supporters of the government could not readily understand the desperate nature of the strife to which they were called. We hardly knew that we were really at war with an alert and resolute foe, who was determined to ruin, when he found that he could no longer rule the government. We could scarcely believe it possible, that American institutions could have developed a movement so utterly contradictory to all our theories.

and so suicidal in itself. My fellow citizens, it is not an American institution that has engendered this strife. It is an institution foreign to the policy which the fathers of the Republic desired to inaugurate,—foreign to the principles which they endeavored to enunciate,—foreign to the civilization which they wished to establish, and foreign to the empire of humanity which they struggled to found. They hoped, that in the mighty growth of freedom, this poisonous parasite would wither. Their hope was vain ; for, as the tree of liberty spread its branches to the sky, the clinging vine wound itself more closely around them, till nothing but the sword could free them from its deadly embrace. We have been rudely awakened to a knowledge of its true character, as we have been forced to gather its bitter fruits.

It has also been clearly proved, that the loyal people of the nation must preserve the Republic by their own unaided exertions. But little sympathy and no aid from abroad are to be expected. Russia, true to her traditions, and now pressing forward in a new career of greatness, was cordial in her expressions of friendship. Italy was occupied with her own great strife for freedom. Spain looked coldly on, an almost indifferent spectator. France and England, falsifying all former professions, acknowledged the belligerent character of both parties, and stood ready to recognize the Southern Confederacy as soon as a moderate degree of success on the part of the rebels would warrant such a measure. The governments of those two countries professed and proclaimed a neutrality, all whose disadvantages were intended to fall upon the United States, and all whose benefits were designed to accrue to the rebels in arms.

There have been, and are still, in the kingdoms of Europe, large parties of men giving tone to the government, who, unquestionably, would rejoice at the hopeless severance of our national ties. The young Republic of the West, in its rapid and powerful growth, was becoming a too important power among the nations. Democracy was intrinsically feeble; and, if the experiment of self-government should prove a failure on the very field which it had chosen, and which furnished the best opportunities for success, the thrones of Europe were safe for centuries. The struggling masses of European peoples could have no further incitement to seek in revolution the cure for the ills of tyranny. Were Republicanism proved, by its own want of success, to have no elements of stability and no inspiration to loyalty, and to become only the parent of civil discord, the monarchists of the old world would have an irrefutable argument against all the reasonings of the advocates of liberty. So, the statesmen of England told the world that the "bubble of Democracy had burst." So, the potentates of Europe began to look upon the United States as a power which could be of no further importance in deciding the destiny of human civilization. So, the monarchical party went as far as it dared, in giving assistance and encouragement to the revolted States. But there is no logic like the logic of events. There is no argument like the argument of success. Franklin declared, in 1777, that the cause of the American colonies then was the "cause of all mankind," and that the soldiers of the Revolution "were fighting for the liberties of all men as well as their own." The cause of the United States to-day has not changed its character. It is still the "cause of all mankind." Now,

as then, we are fighting for the liberties of all men, as well as our own. Our soldiers, in the field, have proved, by their brave exploits and their continued victories, that they understand the nature of the contest. Let our statesmen, in council, be as wise in their policy, and our country will become—as once it was fondly hoped—“the pole-star to which, from all sides, the eyes of struggling nations turn.”

But on what plea has the preservation of the Republic become the necessity of our times? They, whose parricidal hands have been raised to destroy the mother who has nursed them, must present to the enlightened conscience of mankind some justification of their conduct, if they wish to escape universal condemnation. They, who desire to divide the Republic, must offer some defence for their action. If the Republic represents the best government in the world; if it means peace, civilization and human progress; if the Union is, to all nations, the symbol of liberty and law, then it must follow, that they, who are attempting its destruction, must be charged with the guilt of a crime against humanity! What have they to answer to the charge? We must remember, that this contest, relieved of the different prejudices and partizan selfishness which gather about it on either side, is to be decided, not in the present age, but before the tribunal of history, which, with calm and unimpassioned judgment, is to weigh the cause. Behind the minor pleas, which are offered, and which are merely preliminary to the trial—such as the maintenance of state sovereignty, the fear of interference with local institutions and the rights of property, the apprehension of unjust and oppressive measures on the part of the ruling Administration, the



gradual but certain rise to superior power on the part of the free States, and others like these—behind all, I say, is the great plea which absorbs all, the Right of Revolution. The revolting States claim that they are contending for their independence, and draw a parallel between their own struggle and that of the fathers of the Revolution. Never was there a more unfounded claim, or a more fallacious inference. The fathers were struggling against a despotism, hateful to all sense of justice and destructive of all principles of liberty. They were rebels against an oppressive and tyrannical government, which allowed them no share in its administration. But the rebels of our day are striving to perpetuate a despotism, as hateful as any that the world has seen. They have taken arms against a mild, beneficent, forbearing government, whose gift of freedom and whose offer of participation in the direction of affairs, they reject with scorn.

What is the Right of Revolution? It is the last resort—the *ultima ratio*—of an oppressed people, when all other means have failed, to secure the possession of rights and liberties which are endangered, or to regain them when they have been lost. I firmly believe in that right. It is the salvation of the people from the encroachments of a rapacious, unscrupulous and cruel despotism. When the popular voice is hushed; when popular representation is refused; when popular liberty is trampled under foot—then the people have the right to turn against the oppressor, and to achieve their independence, if possible, by the weapons which God and nature have put into their hands. The progress of civilization tends to induce obedience to unjust laws, while there is a hopeful prospect of their repeal. But

when that prospect is hopeless, civilization demands revolution, for the sake of justice itself. While men submit to a particular oppressive enactment, they assail, with all disposable force, the system from which it proceeds. Thus, as intelligence widens, and the ideas of popular justice and popular liberty become better understood, local outbreaks become less frequent, while, as the ultimate, revolutions become more powerful and more wide. The victories of peace are achieved by the revolutions of opinion. When war can no longer be avoided, the victories of freedom are achieved by revolutions of force. "There can be no doubt," says Henry Thomas Buckle, speaking on this point with equal wisdom and vigor, "There can be no doubt, that this change is beneficial; partly because it is always good to rise from effects to causes, and partly because revolutions being less frequent than insurrections, the peace of society would be more rarely disturbed, if men confined themselves to the larger remedy. At the same time, insurrections are generally wrong; revolutions are always right. An insurrection is too often the mad and passionate effort of ignorant persons, who are impatient under some immediate injury, and never stop to investigate its remote and general causes. But a revolution, when it is the work of the nation itself, is a splendid and imposing spectacle, because to the moral quality of indignation produced by the presence of evil, it adds the intellectual qualities of foresight and combination; and, uniting in the same act some of the highest properties of our nature, it achieves a double purpose, not only punishing the oppressor, but relieving the oppressed." It is true, that there is such a thing as a destroying revolution as well as a preserving revolu-



tion. The latter is indeed a magnificent exhibition of the will and power of a people. The former is a spectacle which has no element of sublimity other than the terror which it excites. A people, rising against the prescriptions of a long-existing despotism, and successfully disputing the assumed prerogatives of ancient tyranny and wrong, commands the admiration of all men. A people, in the interest of injustice, attempting to assert the rights of oppression against the progress of ideas and the welfare of the human race, commands their detestation. A people, deluded by false ideas of independence, voluntarily committing suicide, by resisting the requirements of justice and rejecting the offers of freedom, commands their pity.

The Right of Revolution, which the fathers of the Republic asserted, was evolved from the first of these movements. A revolution, such as was that which resulted in our national independence, was "a splendid and imposing spectacle." The nations of the world looked upon its progress with amazement, and its event with undisguised approbation. It was the vindication of the power of ideas over the mere force of armies and fleets. It was the united action of a people, few in number indeed, and scattered over a wide territory, but strong in the might of a noble purpose, and utterly invincible in the faith of great principles. On the fields of the war of the Revolution, the power of a people for self-government armed itself against the power of kings. Democracy contended with monarchy for the possession of the Western Continent. So far as events are concerned, the history of the Revolutionary war has no remarkable characteristics. The armies were few in number. The battles were scarcely more

than skirmishes. The sieges were but little more than obstinate blockades. The campaigns were not much greater than marches and counter-marches—alternate advance and retreat. New England was saved by a few companies of militia, acting almost independently of each other, even in battle, and then melting away. New York was preserved by the accidental discovery of a shallow conspiracy. The Middle States were freed by a few nocturnal adventures. The South was delivered by partizan warfare of the most irregular kind. The most interesting operations of the war were at Bunker Hill, at the beginning, and at Yorktown, at the close—paralleled, it may be, in our time, by Bull Run and Richmond. The rest were the different acts of a drama, whose closing scene was the freedom of a continent. That, in brief, is the story of the Revolutionary war. The soldiers were undisciplined and the officers unpracticed. Compared with the gigantic movements of European armies, and the training of the regular soldiers of the old world; compared with the immense array and the sanguinary battles of the present contest, the war in which our ancestors were engaged was an insignificant affair. But there is a force behind fleets and armies and above the clouds of battle—an invisible, sometimes incomprehensible, almost always invincible, force—the concentrated, earnest energy of a people who are willing to dare and to endure all things for their liberty. The three millions, flinging their patience into the scale, fairly outweighed the thirty millions with their brute strength. What gives that war of our fathers such interest for ourselves and such value in the progress of civilization, is its character as a struggle for great principles and ideas. For the realization

of such ideas, and the application of those principles to national life, as they were expressed in the Declaration of Independence and afterwards consolidated in the Constitution which made the United States a power in the world, the right of revolution was affirmed—was maintained—was established. It was the right of revolution against the power of tyranny. It was an enterprise undertaken with earnestness, yet with sorrow; for England was the mother country still. When all other means and measures failed to secure the freedom of the people, the sword was taken, and was taken not in vain. The contest ended, as all such contests must end, in the complete triumph of civilization, humanity and justice.

But what security was there against the repetition of those scenes? The fathers affirmed the right of revolution. In the throes of the contest the nation was born. What should prevent, in future years, the birth of other nations? How should all the various parts be held together, so that, to the end of time, a people, living in the practice of Democratic theories and successfully governing themselves, should dwell beneath one flag—shielded beneath one broad aegis? The fathers could not ensure the nation against treason. But they did ensure it against revolution. Whatever could be done to preserve the Republic, by placing around it the safeguards of popular protection, they did. They removed the dangers of revolution by removing all occasion for it. They left to the people the power and the opportunity of governing themselves. What was wrong in the government could be rectified by the people, because in the people the government itself resided. The source of all power was in the people.

They were really the rulers ; and, if those whom they had chosen to do their bidding usurped despotic power, the people always had the remedy in their own hands. The redress of all grievances, whether fancied or real, was to be found within easy grasp of the people's all-reaching hand. There is no such right—there can be no such right in our country—as the Right of Revolution. For, by the very compact which is the charter of the nation—by the Federal Constitution—the people are the sole judges of their own wrongs, and the sole executive of their own will. The means of a peaceful removal of all troubles, causes of dissension, sources of strife, occasions of war, are with themselves, and are provided for them by the terms of the instrument to which they give a silent or a public assent. Thus, the different departments of government—the judicial only and wisely excepted—are placed in the control of the people, at stated intervals of two, four and six years. Upon all public officers rest the sanctions of the most solemn oaths. The privileges of debate, in public assemblies and in the halls of legislation, are restricted only by the rules of parliamentary courtesy and order. The suffrages of the people are, with trifling exceptions, made as free as consists with the salutary preservation of public tranquillity. Whatever abuses may be connected with the practice of voting, and to whatever corruptions it may be exposed, the ballot-box still continues to be as just an exponent of the popular will as can be possible among any people. Even to prevent the abuses of power in individual instances, the poorest and meanest offender against his country's laws must be tried before a jury of his countrymen, whom he has the right to challenge if not to select ; while the chief

magistrate himself, coming from the people and returning to the people in the short period of four years, is liable, in his brief career of power, to be impeached, for any betrayal of his trust or malfeasance of office, by the direct representatives of the people, and tried by the conclave of the representatives of the different States. Moreover, the Constitution makes provision for its own amendment, when that becomes necessary by the changes of time and the demands of the country, by reference to the people as the fountain of authority.

Thus, by all the methods which the wisdom or the experience of centuries of human life could suggest, did the fathers provide against the terrible scourge of civil war growing out of revolution. As they did not anticipate that any generation of American citizens could be so far lost to all sense of justice, all regard for truth and all love of country, as to plot the overthrow of the government which was at once the source of power and the safeguard against domestic and foreign foes, they made no provision for such—to them inconceivable—contingency. As they did not anticipate that any portion of the American people—the fruit of their own loins—would be so base as to seek to avenge a defeat at the polls by taking up arms against the Republic, they could adopt no measures having such an object in view, except to treat that action as the very worst of treason, and those who should be engaged in it as the very wickedest of traitors. Let us not attempt to dignify this basest of all crimes by the name of revolution. It is—it can be—nothing less and nothing more than armed treason and rebellion—treason and rebellion the most repulsive in their aspects, and the most iniquitous

in their characteristics, of any that the civilized world has ever witnessed.

Nor let it be dignified by the name of "a struggle for independence." Earl Russell, echoing the voice of a party which has always opposed him, may attempt to excite some sympathy for the rebellious States, by declaring the civil war in this country to be a "struggle for power on the part of the North, and for independence on the part of the South." Never was there a greater fallacy. The struggle for power in this country has always been carried on by the peaceful strife of the suffrages of the people. For a long term of years, the seat of power has been in the Southern States. They have been able, by various means which it is not now necessary to specify, to control all departments of the government. The institution of slavery, by its false interpretation both of Divine and human laws, by its flagrant violations of the spirit of the Constitution, by its insolent assumptions of superiority, by its aristocratic pretensions, by its alliance with the profits of trade and the rewards of party, has proved to be an element of great political power to those who were its representatives. Gradually, as the moral intelligence of the nation increased, and the love of freedom gathered strength, the institution of slavery was weakened. Its triumphs of late years have been worse than defeats for it—apples of Sodom, fair without but full of bitterness and ashes within. Gradually, the spirit of liberty pervaded the hearts of the people. It took form, at last, at the nation's call. Year by year it increased in power, till at last, by peaceful, legal, constitutional means—such as our fathers had devised—it placed its hand upon the sceptre of state and assumed the gov-

ernment of the Republic. That was the struggle for independence, resulting in the victory of freedom. The spirit of slavery, blind with passion, mad with rage, exasperated by defeat, feeling its power slipping from its grasp, lifted its hand, with murderous intent, against the nation's life. It would not submit to the will of the majority. It refused to bow to the verdict of the people. Rejecting terms of peace, it made its declaration of war. Taking the sword, it is fulfilling the Scriptural declaration, that it shall "perish by the sword;" for the fate of the institution of slavery is determined. It may strive to avoid it. It may seek the means of prolonging its life through a few short years. But the movements of freedom are forward—not backward. At every fall of the ensign of secession, there must fall with it a link in the fetters of the slave. Our opponents have been willing to destroy the Union for the sake of slavery. They must not complain if we find it necessary to destroy slavery for the sake of the Union. The time is coming, when the preservation of the Republic will be the permanent triumph of liberty. Already is the Capital freed from the burdens of oppression. Already are the wide territories of the West consecrated to freedom. State after State will hear the joyful sound which rings in the "acceptable year." As the triumphs of the Union extend, and the flag, around which gathers a nation's hope, once more floats in triumph and peace, the air will no longer be burthened by the sighs of the slave. The Union means peace, and the Union means freedom for all within its borders. The Republic, disenthralled, is rising from the heat of this great contest, shaped, in its colossal proportions, in the mould of virtue and justice. It will go forward in



the way which Providence has marked, exercising its beneficent might for the good of all kindreds and peoples, and leading the world in the advance of ideas and the progress of civilization !

Fortunate for us, that this magnificent undertaking has, in the decrees of Providence, been committed to the direction of him who now bears the title of "The President of the United States." The plain republican whom the West has given us, has, in a wonderful degree, succeeded in winning the confidence of his countrymen. His honesty of purpose, his sincerity of heart, his practical sagacity, his incorruptible integrity, have received, as they have deserved, our unalloyed commendation. Fully alive to the responsibilities and the duties of the hour, looking with clear eye through all the sophistries of partizans on the one side, and all the rhapsodies of enthusiasts on the other side, he sees precisely the right measure to be adopted and the time for its suggestion. He takes no step backward, because every step which he takes, dictated by the purest patriotism, is a step sure and steadfast. We thought him to be simply an honest man, and rejoiced that at last we possessed an honest man in our politics. We have found him to be a statesman worthy to sit in the chair once occupied by a Washington. Learning to look beneath the ungainly and, as some may think, uncouth exterior, we value more the genuine, unchallenged manhood, which there we find, than the external polish which glosses over political villainy. In honoring him, we honor ourselves. Judging from his past acts, we have the right to expect, in the future, still better and greater deeds. I may have no spirit of prophecy, but, nevertheless, I venture to predict, that when the



historian's pen shall write the record of our century, it will trace no name more honored, none more revered—to be lisped for generations by the infant's tongue and tremble on the lips of age—than that of ABRAHAM LINCOLN!

We have the satisfaction of feeling a grateful pride in the part which the State of Rhode Island has taken, through its authorities and its people, in the preservation of the Republic. Through all classes and conditions pervades the same spirit. Our adopted citizens, in this as in other communities, rivalling in patriotism those who are “native here and to the manner born,” have freely shed their blood for the defence of the land that has given them asylum. In the enterprises of freedom, all lines of distinction fall away, and, shoulder to shoulder, stand our citizens regardless of the ties of birth. For to each and all there has been but one country and one cause.

Nor let the deeds of woman be forgotten. Here, as throughout the loyal States, she has risen above the weakness of her sex, and demanded the opportunity of sacrifice and duty. In the hospital, dark with pain and disease, she has proved the angel of consolation, and has wreathed the horrid front of war with flowers of gentleness and charity. The daintiest fingers have been actively employed, while she who could, with rigid economy, only spare an hour from her household tasks, has given that widow's mite—“all the living that she had”—to the mitigation of the soldier's lot. As her sufferings are remembered in her anxieties and griefs, and her unwearied labors are kept in mind, let woman be forever honored in the grateful esteem of the American people.

In the days of peril, Rhode Island has always been found faithful. She has proved, even in her own case, that rebellion could not live within her borders. She has never faltered in the field. She has never failed in council. The commendation which was passed upon her troops in the war of the Revolution, may safely be passed upon them in the war of the preservation. Now, as then, her merchants and men of wealth have manifested their unselfish patriotism by deeds of generosity not surpassed and scarcely equalled. Now, as then, the homes of the people have borne witness to the greatest sacrifices cheerfully made, and the most arduous duties faithfully performed. Now, as then, the life-blood of her sons—Slocum, Ballou, Prescott, Tower, Tillinghast, Pearce, Bartholomew and their brave compatriots—has consecrated her history. Now, as then, she has given to the nation, almost upon the same fields, a general second to none. In the war of the Revolution, she sent NATHANIEL GREENE, the trusted friend of Washington. In the war of 1812, she gave to the country, OLIVER HAZARD PERRY, the hero of our Western lakes. In this great strife for the Union, she has contributed her adopted son, fit to stand with them in the reception of a nation's confidence and love, and equal to the position—the Chevalier Bayard of the war, *sans peur et sans reproche*—AMBROSE EVERETT BURNSIDE!

My fellow countrymen, there is but little more for me to say. The occasion itself speaks. Events make their appeal. History grows from the words and acts of this glorious hour. The time for speech passes. The time for action comes apace. We have more conflicts of love and duty to meet; more deeds of self-devotion to perform. The victories which we have won should

arouse our enthusiasm, to gain still larger triumphs. The defeats which we have suffered, even though they bring us sorrow and humiliation, should yet deepen our earnestness and increase, even as they try, our faith. The warfare of ideas in this great contest is not to be ended in a day. The prize is too costly, and the stake too great, for that. Let us then lift up our hearts and hands; be encouraged, emboldened, inspired, for every brave and noble duty. Whatever this crisis of a nation's life may demand of us, let us be ready to give it, even though it be the last and greatest possession—our very lives. The unsuccessful heroism of the army of the Potomac, and its gallant and skillful General, in front of Richmond, tinged with sadness the rejoicings of the day, while it commands our admiration, should incite us to emulate it upon more fortunate fields to grander results. The brave deeds of the living, the sacred memories of the dead, invoke us to be true to the duty which the hour brings.

Let us take counsel of our hopes; let us use our opportunities; let us faithfully employ the time. We may go to the field and share its dangers. We may remain at home, and there perform the duties which our patriotism commands. Cherishing a love of country, a love of freedom and a love of justice, in every place, we shall be able to do some work in behalf of our great cause. Then, when the task is finished, and the nation stands free from the danger of domestic insurrection and foreign war, great, noble, forever secure and forever strong, each one of us may have the proud consciousness of fidelity, and say:—"I, I ALSO HAVE AIDED IN THE PRESERVATION OF THE REPUBLIC!"





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