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CHAD R. MANNING, Editor and Prop'r. "CAROLINA, CAROLINA, HEAVEN'S BLESSINGS ATTEND HER." VOL. VIII. HENDERSON, N. C., THURSDAY, MAY, 16 1889. NO. 20.

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DEPEW'S ORATION.

A GRAND TRIBUTE TO THE MEM- ORY OF GEORGE WASH- INGTON.

Thoughts Suggested by the Centennial
of the Inauguration of Our First Pres-
ident—Reflections of an Historical
and Economic Nature.

The following is a synopsis of the
oration delivered by Hon. Chauncey
M. Depew, LL. D., at the Centennial
of the Inauguration of George Wash-
ington, first president of the United
States, from the steps of the Treasury
Building, New York, April 30, 1889.

We celebrate to-day the Centenary
of our Nationality. One hundred
years ago the United States began
their existence. The powers of gov-
ernment were assumed by the people
of the Republic, and they became the
sole source of authority. The solemn
ceremonial of the first inauguration,
the reverend oath of Washington, the
acclaim of the multitude greeting their
President, marked the most unique
event of modern times in the develop-
ment of free institutions. The occur-
rence was not an accident, but a result.
It was the culmination of the working
out by mighty forces through many
centuries of the problem of self-gov-
ernment. It was not the triumph of a
system, the application of a theory, or
the reduction to practice of the ab-
stractions of philosophy. The time,
the country, the heredity and envi-
ronment of the people, the folly of its
friends, gave to liberty after ages of
partial success and substantial gains, this
incomplete victory. Henceforth it had
a refuge and recruiting station. The op-
pressed found free homes in this fa-
vored land, and invisible armies march-
ed from it by mail and telegraph, by
speech and song, by precept and ex-
ample, to regenerate the world.

Puritans in New England, Dutch-
men in New York, Catholics in Mary-
land, Huguenots in South Carolina
had felt the fires of persecution and
were wedded to religious liberty. They
had been purified in the furnace, and
in high debate and on bloody battle-
fields had learned to sacrifice all ma-
terial interests and to peril their lives
for human rights. The principles of
constitutional government had been
impressed upon them by hundreds of
years of struggle and for each principle
they could point to the grave of an
ancestor whose death attested the
ferocity of the fight and the value of
the concession wrung from arbitrary
power. They knew the limitations of
authority, they could pledge their lives
and fortunes to resist encroachments
upon their rights, but it required the
lessons of Indian massacres, the inva-
sion of the armies of France from Can-
ada, the tyranny of the British Crown,
the seven years' war of the Revolution,
and the five years of chaos of the Con-
federation to evolve the idea, upon
which rest the power and permanency
of the Republic, that liberty and union
are one and inseparable. * * *

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

To this declaration John Hancock,
proscribed and threatened with death,
affixed a signature which has stood for
a century like the pointers to the North
Star in the firmament of freedom, and
Charles Carroll taunted that among
many Carrolls, he, the richest man in
America might escape, added descrip-
tion and identification with "of Car-
rollton." Benjamin Harrison, a dele-
gate from Virginia, the ancestor of
the distinguished statesman and sol-
dier who to-day so worthily fills the
chair of Washington, voiced the un-
alterable determination and defiance
of the Congress. He seized John
Hancock, upon whose head a price
was set, in his arms, and placing him
in the Presidential chair, said: "We
will show Mother Britain how little
we care for her by making our Pres-
ident a Massachusetts man, who she
has excluded from pardon by public
proclamation;" and when they were
signing the Declaration, and the sla-

der Elbridge Gerry uttered the grim
pleasantry, "We must hang together or
surely we will hang separately," the
portly Harrison responded with the
more daring humor, "It will be all
over with me in a moment, but you
will be kicking in the air half an hour
after I am gone." Thus flashed athwart
the great charter which was to be for
its signers a death-warrant or a diplo-
ma of immortality, and with firm hand,
high purpose and undaunted resolution
they subscribed their names, this mock-
ery of fear and the penalties of trea-
son. * * *

More clearly than any statesman of
the period did Thomas Jefferson grasp
and divine the possibilities of popular
government. He caught and crystal-
lized the spirit of free institutions. His
philosophical mind was singularly free
from the power of precedents or the
chains of prejudice. He had an un-
questioning and abiding faith in the
people, which was accepted by but few
of his compatriots. Upon his famous
axiom, of the equality of all men be-
fore the law, he constructed his system.
It was the trip-hammer essential for
binding the colonies to imperial au-
thority, and to pulverize the privi-
leges of caste. It inspired him to write
the Declaration of Independence, and
persuaded him to doubt the wisdom
of the powers concentrated in the con-
stitution. In his passionate love of
liberty he became intensely jealous of
authority. He destroyed the substance
of royal prerogative, but never emerg-
ed from popular sovereignty, in-
stitutions broad enough to embrace
the continent, and elastic enough to
fit all conditions of race and tradition.
The experience of a hundred years has
demonstrated for us the perfection of
the work, for defence against foreign
foes, and for self preservation against
domestic insurrection, for limitless ex-
pansion in population and material
development, and for steady growth
in intellectual freedom and force. Its
continuing influence upon the welfare
and destiny of the human race can
only be measured by the capacity of
man to cultivate and enjoy the bound-
less opportunities of liberty and law.

The eloquent characterization of Mr.
Gladstone condenses its merits: "The
American Constitution is the most
wonderful work ever struck off at a
given time by the brain and purpose
of man."
The statesmen who composed this
great Senate were equal to their trust.
Their conclusions were the results of
calm debate and wise concession.
Their character and abilities were so
pure and great as to command the
confidence of the country for the re-
versal of the policy of the independ-
ence of the State of the power of the
general Government, which had hith-
erto been the invariable practice and
its supremacy.

Lowering in majesty and influence
above them all stood Washington, their
President. Beside him was the
venerable Franklin, who, though eighty-
one years of age, brought to the delib-
erations of the convention the unim-
paired vigor and resources of the wisest
brain, the most hopeful philosophy,
and the largest experience of the times.
Oliver Ellsworth, afterwards Chief Jus-
tice of the United States, and the pro-
foundest jurist in the country; Robert
Morris, the wonderful financier of the
Revolution, and Gouverneur Morris,
the most versatile genius of his period;
Roger Sherman, one of the most emi-
nent of the signers of the Declaration
of Independence, and John Rutledge,
Rufus King, Elbridge Gerry, Edmund
Randolph and the Pinckneys were
leaders of unequalled patriotism, cou-
rage, ability and learning; while Alex-
ander Hamilton and James Madison,
as original thinkers and constructive
statesmen, rank among the immortal
few whose opinions have for ages guided
Ministers of State and determined
the destinies of nations.

There were no examples to follow,
and the experience of its members led
part of them to lean toward absolute
centralization as the only refuge from
the archery of the confederation, while
the rest clung to the sovereignty of the
States, for fear that concentration of
power would end at the absorption of
liberty. The large States did not want
to surrender the advantage of their
position, and the smaller States saw
the danger to their existence.
At this crisis the courage and confi-
dence needed to originate a system
weakened. The temporizing spirit of
compromise seized the convention with
the alluring proposition of not proceed-
ing faster than the people could be
educated to follow. The cry: "Let
us not waste our labor upon conclu-
sions that will not be adopted, but
amend and adjourn," was assuming
startling unanimity. But the supreme
force and majestic sense of Washington
brought the assemblage to the lofty
plane of its duty and opportunity. He

helpless wreck upon the ocean, tossed
about by the tides and ready to be en-
gulfed in the storm. Washington
gave the warning and called for action.
It was a voice accustomed to command,
but now entreating. The veterans of
the war and the statesmen of the Rev-
olution stepped to the front. The pa-
triotism which had been misled, but
had never faltered, rose above the in-
terests of States and the jealousies
of jarring Confederates to find the basis
for union. "It is clear to me as A, B,
C," said Washington, "that an exten-
sion of Federal powers would make us
one of the most happy, wealthy, re-
spectable and powerful nations that
ever inhabited the terrestrial globe.
Without them we shall soon be every-
thing which is the direct reverse. I
predict the worst consequences from a
half starved, limping Government, al-
ways moving upon crutches, and tot-
tering at every step." The response
of the country was the convention of
1787, at Philadelphia. The Declara-
tion of Independence was but the pre-
stibule of the temple which this illus-
trious assembly erected. With no
successful precedents to guide, it aus-
piciously worked out the problem of
Constitutional Government, and of
imperial power and home rule, suppl-
menting each other in promoting the
grandeur of the Nation, and preserving
the liberty of the individual.

The deliberations of great councils
have vitally affected, at different peri-
ods, the history of the world and the
fate of Empires: but this Congress
bulted, upon popular sovereignty, in-
stitutions broad enough to embrace
the continent, and elastic enough to
fit all conditions of race and tradition.
The experience of a hundred years has
demonstrated for us the perfection of
the work, for defence against foreign
foes, and for self preservation against
domestic insurrection, for limitless ex-
pansion in population and material
development, and for steady growth
in intellectual freedom and force. Its
continuing influence upon the welfare
and destiny of the human race can
only be measured by the capacity of
man to cultivate and enjoy the bound-
less opportunities of liberty and law.

The pride of the State and the am-
bition of their leaders, sectional jeal-
ousies, and the overwhelming distrust of
centralized power, were all arrayed
against the adoption of the constitu-
tion.

Success was due to confidence in
Washington and the genius of Alex-
ander Hamilton. Jefferson was the in-
spiration of independence, but Hamil-
ton was the incarnation of the consti-
tution. In no age or country has there
appeared a more precocious or amaz-
ing intelligence than Hamilton. He
gave life to the corpse of National
credit, and the strength for self pres-
ervation and aggressive power to the
Federal Union. Both as an expound-
er of the principles and an administra-
tor of the affairs of Government he
stands supreme and unrivalled in
American history. He captured the
people or the whole country for the
constitution by his papers in the Fed-
eralist, and conquered the hostile ma-
jority in the New York convention by
the splendor of his oratory.

But the multitudes whom no argu-
ment could convince, who saw in the
Executive power and centralized force
of the constitution, under another name,
the dreaded usurpation of King and
Ministry, were satisfied only with the
assurance, "Washington will be Pres-
ident." It quieted the alarm and gave
confidence to the timid and courage
to the weak.
He alone could stay assault and in-
spire confidence while the great and
complicated machinery of organized
government was put in order and set
in motion. Doubt existed nowhere
except in his modest and unambitious
heart. His whole life had been spent
in repeated sacrifices for his country's
welfare, and he did not hesitate now,
though there is an undertone of inex-
pressible sadness in his entry in his
diary on the night of his departure:
"About ten o'clock I bade adieu to
Mount Vernon, to private life, and to
domestic felicity, and with a mind
oppressed with more anxious and pain-
ful sensations than I have words to ex-
press, set out for New York with the
best disposition to render service to
my country in obedience to its call,
but with less hope of answering its ex-
pectations."
No conqueror was ever accorded
such a triumph, no ruler ever such a
welcome. In this memorable march
of six days to the Capitol, it was the
pride of States to accompany him with
the masses of their people to their
borders, that the citizens of the next
commonwealth might escort him
through its territory. * * *

Washington was never dramatic,
but on great occasion he not only rose
to the full ideal of the event, he be-
came himself the event. One hun-
dred years ago to-day the procession
of foreign Ambassadors, of statesmen
and Generals, of civic societies and

military companies, which escorted
him, marched from Franklin square to
Pearl street, through Pearl to Broad,
and up Broad to this spot, but the peo-
ple saw only Washington. As he stood
upon the steps of the old Government
building here, the thought must have
occurred to him that it was a cradle
of liberty, and as such giving a bright
omen for the future. In these halls in
1735, in the trial of John Zenger, had
been established for the first time in
its history the liberty of the press.
Here the New York Assembly, in 1764,
made the protest against the Stamp
act, and proposed the general con-
ference, which was the beginning of
the United Colonial action. In this
old State House in 1765 the Stamp
act congress, the first and the father
of American Congresses, assembled
and presented to the English Govern-
ment that vigorous protest which caused
the repeal of the act, and checked the
first step towards the usurpation which
lost the American colonies to the
British empire. Within these walls
the Congress of the Confederation had
commissioned its Ambassadors abroad,
and in ineffectual efforts at govern-
ment had created the necessity for
the concentration of Federal authority,
now to be consummated.

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

As he came forward, the multitude
in the streets, in the windows, and on
the roofs set up such a rapturous shout
that Washington sat down overcome
with emotion. As he slowly rose and
his tall and majestic form again ap-
peared, the people, deeply affected, in
awed silence viewed the scene. The
Chancellor solemnly read to him the
oath of office, and Washington, repeat-
ing, said: "I do solemnly swear that
I will faithfully execute the office of
President of the United States, and
will, to the best of my ability, pre-
serve, protect and defend the Consti-
tution of the United States." Then
he reverently bent low and kissed the
Bible, uttering with profound emotion:
"So help me, God." The Chancel-
lor waved his robes and shouted: "It
is done; long live George Washington,
President of the United States!"
"Long live George Washington, our
first President!" was the answering
cheer of the people, and from the bel-
fries rang the bells, and from forts
and ships thundered the cannon, echo-
ing and repeating the cry with re-
sponding acclaim all over the land:
"Long live George Washington, Pres-
ident of the United States!" * * *

No man ever stood for so much to
his country and to mankind as George
Washington. Hamilton, Jefferson and
Adams, Madison and Jay, each rep-
resented some of the elements which
formed the Union. Washington em-
bodied them all.

Do his countrymen exaggerate his
virtues? Listen to Guizot, the histo-
rian of civilization: "Washington did
the two greatest things which in poli-
tics it is permitted to man to attempt.
He maintained by peace the indepen-
dence of his country which he con-
quered by war. He founded a free
Government in the name of the prin-
ciples of order and re-establishing
their sway." Hear Lord Erskine, the
most famous of English advocates:
"You are the only being for whom I
have an awful reverence." Remember
the tribute of Charles James Fox, the
greatest parliamentary orator who ever
swept the British House of Com-
mons: "Illustrious man, before whom
all borrowed greatness sinks into in-
significance." Contemplate the char-
acter of Lord Brougham, pre-eminent
for two generations in every depart-
ment of human activity and thought,
and then impress upon the memories
of your children his deliberate judg-
ment: "Until time shall be no more
will a test of the progress which our
race has made in wisdom and virtue
be derived from the veneration paid
to the immortal name of Washington."
* * *

We stand to-day upon the dividing
line between the first and second cen-
tury of constitutional government.
There are no clouds overhead and no
convulsions under our feet. We re-
cently return thanks to Almighty God
(CONTINUED ON FOURTH PAGE.)

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