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The Growth of Democracy

Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis in Good Housekeeping.

GONE forever the time when Europe said the republic was an experiment. But yesterday Lord Macaulay was giving us forty years, asking: "After America's Niagara, what?" Yet, during the month when our people celebrate the Americanism of Washington, there was this year a victory for democracy that startled the world. Think of it! At noon of the birthday of Abraham Lincoln one-quarter of the human race formally proclaimed their government to be a republic and ended centuries of autocracy. The leaders of that great movement in China are almost without exception young men who have studied in American universities. Here they had witnessed the victories of democracy. Our political democracy had diffused liberty; educational democracy had diffused knowledge; industrial democracy had diffused property; ecclesiastical democracy had diffused morals. On yesterday's yesterday France became a republic, and Switzerland soon followed. But yesterday Portugal became a republic.

This year, 1912, has brought to the United States an educational commission from England. Think of it! The country of John Milton going to school to the republic! This year has brought commissions from Italy, Germany, Russia, Japan, and China. Our people should celebrate this Independence Day with peculiar ardor and enthusiasm, for the time has come when America is the educator of all the world in liberty and free institutions.