

## Rise and Growth of Our Nation.

Nations do not grow as in olden times slowly and silently like the sturdy oak of the forest, but deafen the ears of the cool observer with the roar of their sudden uprising. Preceding nations lived half their life before they reached any degree of maturity. Rome was a babe for 1000 years Japan and China have for thousands of years been nursed in the lap of time and today they do not show marks of advancement that characterized America a century ago. Contrast if you will the countries of Greece Phoenicia and Egypt with that of our own new America. It took ten centuries for Greece to attain her boastful superiority. Egypt and Phoenicia lived for 2000 years to reach but the shadow of the advancement of that of our own delightful country. Can we not then with a feeling of pride boast of our rapid progress. Think for the moment — 400 years ago no settler had ever set foot on American soil. Can you place yourselves in those days. Picture yourselves in company with that body of abused and persecuted but fearless pilgrims planning in the cabin of the Mayflower a code of laws for mutual strength and protect-



con. See them now with a strong faith in providential care and guidance united by a bond of love and liberty leave the wave beaten sides of that faithful old ship to find a home in a wild and barren country. Feel the chill creep over you as you lie in breathless terror listening to the savage beast pawing and growling at the door of your low log cabin. Feel the terror that comes when the savage warwhoop falls upon your ear. Endure the bitter cold of that first winter and pass its long dreary months in that dark and lowly hut where the life giving sunbeams are debarred entrance by the oil papered windows. Endure the bitter agony of seeing death take the life from half your number. Conform yourselves to these and you experience but some of the hardships endured by our forefathers in giving birth to our United States of America.

Her growth likewise met with hazardous difficulties. How great were American liberties endangered by the revolution. How near the verge of national destruction was United States in the war of 1812. Who thought that the weak and feeble state that had no more than thrown off the revolutionary garb or laid aside the blood stained sword could cope in a bloody conflict with the then greatest nation of the earth. What nation had worse prospects of maintenance or was looked



upon with more profound certainty of destruction than United States in the civil war. There has never been a nation that has through such hazardous difficulties made such wonderful and rapid progress. Compare our advantages with other nations. Where can you find a more enlightened people with the educational advantages more applicable to the masses. Travel the world over and you can find no better form of government or a more complete system of trade. Our statesmen are among the foremost in the world. Name a nation whose statesmen commanded more respect or attention than Franklin Washington Hamilton Jefferson or our honored James G. Blaine.

It is a pleasant thing to think of the present and look back over the rugged past but not so when we think of the future and our trend toward it. Born and cradled in hardships and reared in prosperity we forget that we have a destiny — and what is it? In determining this will the history of the past be of any weight with you? It forms a matter of much learning and more — it corresponds to interests more real and more direct than mere historical erudition and criticism, to broader sentiments and more full of life than those of mere curiosity. We see in them our own fate and destination. From them we see ourselves but a repetition of by gone ages. Our lives in their essentials are but Roman and Grec-



can live. The past is but our future and because it is so it becomes our oracle speaking our destiny in bold tones of prophecy instruction and authority. The death of Rome foretells our death. But why should a nation die, is it possible that nations have a grave? Ah yes! Turn the pages of the world's history and read the accounts of dead nations. Let the light of ages 2300 years ago flash upon your soul and there you can see pompous Greece in all her magnificent splendor. Draw back the curtain of antiquity and look in upon ancient Egypt 3000 years before Christ. Dig down 1500 years in the soil of time and there you can find fossil Rome.

Call the roll of these extinct nations and hear the verdict. Egypt! Dead, from the pyramids of Ghizah between the verdant valley of the Nile and the Libyan desert beyond comes the pealing chorus, Dead! Her obelisks and sphinxes are monuments to her glory and honor. Assyrian civilization! from the charred walls of the elegant and princely Ninevah and the exhumed ruins of Calah comes the echo - Dead! Babylonian Empire answer! - Dead! The Hanging Gardens the temple of Belus and the ruins of queenly Tyre repeats the answer Dead! The temple of Diana at Ephesus answers Dead at the call of Persia. Greece stand up! The acropolis crowned with the beautiful Parthenon, the silent voices of Miltiades Themistocles Solon Aristides and the



battles of Marathon Salamis and Thermopylae in one grand chorus answer: Dead. Rome answer! The fragments of the marble baths, the ruins of the Pantheon answer Dead. The forsaken Coliseum and walls of mouldering fortress es portray the glories of princely Rome.

Are we to meet a like fate? Is it possible that America loved America is to be a ruined and forgotten nation? Ah yes! How can we be surprised at this knowing as we do that older nations greatest in their day have fallen caused by some of the same and similar forces that are working in our midst today. We can not, justly, as we are wont to do, accuse them destitute of virtue liberty or reason or condemn them for their errors when we with all of our boasted civilization and progress are following a course so similar. Greece before her fall was the greatest nation of her day. Rome too was without an equal and so America though she vies with all nations in progress may follow the course of her sister nations.

What forces have we in common to which those older nations succumbed — Political bribery that evil which worked the destruction of Rome is an evil familiar to Americans. What killed Egypt and Babylonia? Their own moral depravity and lechery too vices which America knows too well.

It was but timely action that prevented France from being destroyed by the licentiousness of her



people

Fraud and trickery, evils of past ages stalk abroad unrestrained in our own free America.

Run that portical daughter, that ideal, so to speak, of destruction coupled with that most pernicious vice — trashy literature is eating away the very vitals of this nation. Who does not see these unremitting vices marching abreast, urged on by the blindness of the public and weighing most heavily upon us. The youths of this land are the pillars of her stability, and in their minds do we see all manner of vice implanted.

With these and other enemies how can a nation maintain itself? Unless a merciful God prevents America in a few short years will have passed into the region of history. In the same necrology of nations will her name be penned. Though overcome by evils the good that she has done will not be forgotten. Her works will ever be honored and by the world will she be fondly remembered as like Hercules, "treacherously slain in the midst of his unfinished labors".

D. F. Wickman