II.

Whenever I am asked to point out the causes of the remarkable events which have recently occurred I feel impelled, first of all things, to write down three numbers and hold them before the inquirers eye---1689, 1789, 1889. For three centuries Eighty-Nine has been the year of jubilee, the day of peaceful accomplishment, the hour of complete fruition. It would seem as if, in Anglo-Saxon history, liberty moved in an orbit whose period was a century--as if progress came in recurrent cycles of just a hundred years. As if some mystic impulse akin to that which causes the bees to swarm and the stork to migrate affected this race of liberty-lovers and compelled it to mark each century's close by some notable event of especial significance to the human race in its never ending struggle for individual equality and collective right. These have grown more and more

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significant and their relations to antecedent growths have become more and more distinct.

We see clearly now, that each antecedent century was but a period of incubation during which the great idea which appeared at its close was germinated. The progress has been continuous but the result is marked by successive upward steps the planes of which rest on the solid basis of a hundred years of thought, of toil, of suffering and of blood. There is no conflict between the great ideas thus evolved but each grows out of those that went before, as naturally as the oak out of the acorn. The period of commotion, perhaps of conflict that precedes the climax, may seem like destruction. The weak and narrow-minded may bewail its fierceness and intensity. Those who worship the Moloch who forges fetters for the present out of the darkness of the past, may mourn the downfall of existing institutions, the overthrow of accepted

theories and the establishment of new and untried dogmas. Their alarm is but the weakness of folly and the apprehension of ignorance. The convulsion that fills them with dread is but the bursting of the acorn-shell. The strange new growth which they count as noxious and malign is but a new variety of the oak possessing a stronger fiber and destined to develop a sturdier trunk and wider stretch of limb. At the first of these great epochs, a nation declared itself greater than its King; at the second a child affirmed its right to walk without a mother's guidance and controlling hand; at the third a people cradled with another, avowed and maintained their right to self-direction and control. Monarchy fought furiously for its supreme prerogative; the mother-land rained blows and curses on the presumptive colonies; the sturdier twin met the foolish aspiration of its weaker fellow with slaughter and subjugation. Yet

~~yet in each case~~

yet in each case the right triumphed. The people degraded the sovereign but exalted the throne; the American nation became the pride of the English people; the new republic the safety and support of the one from which it separated. Three great revolutions mark three momentous epochs--three harmonious chords in the great oratorio of progress. The lesson that they teach is well worth the world's attention.

1689.

The struggles of the English people for self-government had been long, ~~tedious~~ and bloody. Seventeen centuries lay between the wicker skiffs and the wooden walls that had established ~~her~~ their sovereignty of the seas. The Heptarchy had been dissolved by ~~with~~ conflict and its residuum cemented with blood. The Roman had been conquered and driven out. The Norman and the Dane ab-

curbed

The barons had curbed the power of John with a strong hand. Jack Cade with his rabble of oppressed and starving hinds had burst the barriers of fear and clamoring for bread, for the mere right to live, had hurled themselves upon the mailed retainers of feudal oppression of power, demanding with a pitiful instinct of justice, that the purchasing power of labor be increased in order that the poor might live. Watt Tyler and his followers, thirty thousand strong, had encamped about the Tower of London with the ennobling demand "We will make us free forever, our heirs and our lands". Cromwell had come out of the fens, had checked the power of monarchy, baffled the intrigues of aristocracy and showed, not only that the people might rule themselves through freed, self-appointed leaders representing the popular thought, but might grow mighty and prosper, without scepter or sovereign. With his death had come again the Stuarts and absolutism. For thirty years the people of England, who had

tasted liberty and tested self-government under Cromwell, were bowed again beneath the heel of pride and yielded once more the to exactions of a foolish and arrogant legitimacy. Then, after when another a generation had risen upon the stage, fired with the glory of their father's achievments, unwern by the pain and woe and impoverishments of war, full of self-confidence and emulation of a glorious example, the people of England rose up in the quiet majesty of conscious power and drove the prince, who, though accounted legitimate was in spirit a usurper, not merely from the throne but from the land. The ferment of freedom extended thr throughout the whole domain and lifted peer and peasant alike to the highth of self-assertion and the plane of voluntary self-government. Then for the first time the people assembled "in convention," consecrating that word forever, to the assertion of popular sovereignty and making such voluntary, informal ass-

semblage lawful in all times as the ultimate means of expressing a nation's will and declaring the birth of a new government. They were not ready yet to march without the semblance of a scepter at their head. ~~So~~ From over the stormy sea, therefore, they called the stern and silent man who had already conquered a kingdom from the fiercest foeman of that time, ~~who~~ had dared to appeal to the whelming waves as an ally against oppression and had consecrated to liberty and self-government what his sword had won.

Thus So the first great Anglo-Saxon revolution became a fact and ~~in 1689~~ the joy bells echoed throughout England, as William, stumbling, kissed her soil, and hand in hand with his sagacious queen recieved the plaudits of a liberated people. This was 1689.

~~1789.~~

I should

1789.

I should not need to dwell upon the luster that surrounds the second member of this divine trinity of numbers, were it not ~~for the fact~~ that, with a foolish desire to perpetuate the memory of conflict rather than the glory of achievement, the American people have been accustomed to regard the ~~hour~~ day which first gave voice to the aspiration, rather than that which marked the final accomplishment of nationality, as the birth hour of our liberty. For two hundred and fifty years the Anglo-Saxon stock had been domiciled on the soil of America. The seed of liberty had ripened quickly in the new world. Solitude has ever been the nurse of power. The wilderness is always a hotbed of aspiration. Men who are alone with God come quickly to outstrip their fellows. The Old World pitied the isolation of her colonies, little dreaming that

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the distance that lay between them and the parent stock, would prove a sure incentive to manhood of a stronger growth than she had ever known. Transplanted to virgin soil, Puritanism hardly felt the check that came with Cromwell's death. Whether Charles, James or William ruled in London, mattered little to the sturdy founders of an empire, who felt within themselves, year by year, the impulse of self direction and central growing stronger and stronger. Already before the first Congress met, the germ of nationality had burst its shell. Jefferson did not originate the Declaration of Independence. He merely phrased the people's thought. It was not the men who met in Philadelphia who laid the foundations of the American Republic, but the people whose irresistable aspirations compelled them to the course they adopted. Massachusetts and North Carolina were linked together by stronger bonds of union before the Declar-

tion was published---when the people of the Southern Colonies sent aid and comfort to the stricken patriots of Boston---them have ever united them since. It was not the wisdom of her statesmen or the merit of her leaders that established the Republic, but the invincible determination of the people---an Anglo-Saxon people made strong and self-reliant by two centuries of conflict with barbarism and the wilderness, and by that isolation which a thousand leagues of ocean gave. They who came, looked back to England as indeed a mother country. In their children's hearts however, green each at first indeed the tie was weakened until long enough before the conflict occurred, an Anglo-American type had become established. Interest and aspiration had ceased to bind the people to the parent isle and hope looked forward with assured certainty to a mighty empire beneath the setting sun.

It was not the war of the Revolution that separated us

from the mother country. The severance was complete before it began. When the Congress formulated the declaration that we were a free and independent people there was no mistake of mood or tense. It was no prophetic declaration but merely the formal assertion of an accomplished fact. ~~It needed not the establish-~~ and hardly required the establish-ment of a new government. It needed not the overthrow of any social system. The people, ~~who are to-day~~ one day the subjects of Great Britian awake ~~tomorrow~~ the next to find themselves allegiants of a sovereignty, asserted but not created, that first Fourth of July. The Colonies, already for nigh a hundred years, had been self-~~protective~~ supporting and, in the main, self-~~controlling~~ protecting organisms. They had conquered for Great Britain more territory than she had ever before possessed and held it, not merely againgt the savage but also against the Frenchman on the North, and the Spaniard on the South. They had become not only controllers of their own

destiny but conquerors of those over whose subjugated subject realms the flag of Great Britain waved a mocking symbol of usurped power.

When the struggle began was no doubt a surprise to both the combatants. The English monarchy seemed learned the difference between ravaging our coasts and conquering a people, every man of whom felt himself the peer of a monarch in the divine right to rule. When the end came "Eighty Nine" was again glorified. The years of conflict and of doubt gave way to certainty. Again a "Convention" of the people marked the birth of a new nationality. Battle and bloodshed and triumph had made it possible for a free people to act for themselves under such forms as they might devise. After due deliberation they had determined to establish an independent nation on the American continent. This nationality was not an accident but a growth. "Seventy-Six" had marked the assertion of liberty and right. "Eighty-

Nine~~teen~~ the ~~epoch~~ era of crystalization and certainty. Then it was that the nation was really born, the republic organized and an epoch of self-government inaugurated.

1889.

Eighteen Hundred and Eighty-Nine! What shall I say of it? What can I say of it that every one who reads these words does not already know? It too has been the era of fulfillment. The germ of a new nationality had ripened in the pericarp of the old. For ~~the~~ one hundred years the American Republic had sheltered two peoples. Year by year, they had grown more and more distinct. Each had crystalized about its own specific center. Alike yet unlike, they had grown side by side hardly aware of the unseen forces which were ~~forcing~~ dragging them assunder. Like rays of sunlight they had slowly but certainly diverged. The cord which a child's

hand might have spanned at the beginning, when a century of growth had ended, subtended an arc which touched almost the antipodes of human thought.

The government of the United States existed something more than a hundred years estimating its duration from the date of the famous Declaration of Independence. This was accurate enough so far as its relations to Great Britain were concerned. The Mother country lost a dependency, or a galaxy of dependencies rather, on that day; but the Federation of the world can hardly be said to have gained a state at the same time. The United States rightly began its national existence with the adoption of a constitution in 1789. It existed under and by virtue of that constitution, variously changed and modified, one hundred

years. At the end of that period it is true, it still nominally existed, but the process of disintegration had proceeded so far that dismemberment was inevitable. From that time on, its history is only that of the various stages of disruption. As an actual, vital force in the family of nations, therefore, the first great Republic may be said to have been in existence exactly a century.

Why did it not endure a thousand years? Why indeed did it perish at all?

Three distinct answers have been given to these questions. One, by that class of thinkers who believe that monarchy to be the only guaranty of stability. They of course see in the dismemberment of the Union another evidence of the weakness and unreliability of a Republican form of government. According to them the democratic experiment, tried on the greatest scale and under the most favorable auspices had proved a failure. So far as a

single nationality is concerned, this is true. The ~~present~~ government of the United States undoubtedly did prove unable to control and harmonize—in other words to govern—the people inhabiting its territorial limits; but the question of self-government—government by the people, in some form or on of some type, has certainly not been decided in the negative. ~~The only question that has been decided~~ The only thing thus far determined is that the government of the United States, as at first organized and as it subsequently developed, was not adapted to hold in prosperous and harmonious relations all of its constituent elements. The democratic principle still remains, somewhat modified, if it is true in a part of the original territory, but not abandoned in any of it.

This fact furnishes the basis on which the second answer, certain to these interrogatories is predicated. It is asserted by those swift generalizing doctrinaires, that the fate of the Federal

Union, is but another instance of the fatal thirst for empire. They tell us that the scope of territory they embraced became so great that the nation simply fell apart from its own unwieldliness. There is not a shred of reasoning to support this theory. It is useless to cite examples from history. The examples themselves rest merely on assertion. There is nothing but bare rhetorical assumption that can be cited in support of the generally received idea that even the Roman Empire grew top-heavy by conquest and perished from over-extension of its territorial limits. Every fact of her history proves the contrary. It is true that Rome had no assimilative power. What she took she held by force. The Roman eagle mated with nothing else, yet despite this fact, it is unquestionable that the causes of her downfall were to be found at the very center of her power within the walls of the seven-hilled city itself. If Rome ter-

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ritory had been no greater than that claimed by the wolf-suckled free-booters of the Tiber and the same elements of weakness had crept within the walls the city must have fallen. It was not extent of territory but the decay of Roman manhood, the loss of central, cohesive, unifying force, that precipitated the doom of Rome. The legionary had become a hireling and conquered without Romanizing. The nation had ceased to be homogeneous in purpose and impulse. The East had half separated from the West. It was no longer true that all roads led to Rome. The capital of the empire, as one of its great chieftains declared, was no longer on the Tiber but where the eagles of his legions flew. It had ceased to be Roman and remained only an organized force that might be shifted from Rome to Byzantium; from Massilia to the banks of the Euphrates. It was a garment which might fit my shoulders, which one might wear to-day and another to-morrow

row; which might be parted between two or stolen by Gaul or Oriental, without significant change of character. It was so complete an organism that it took centuries to destroy its form but its vital characteristic force was dead before an usurper dared to seize or rend.

But even if the commonly accepted theory of territorial unwieldliness were established as the prime cause of the decay of other governments, it could not, with any show of reason, be applied to the government of the United States. Steam and electricity have not only annihilated time but they have also eliminated space as an element of governmental problems. Practically, government is now omnipresent in the very person of the ruler, in every part of his domain. There was not a hamlet in the United States in which the President of the Republic

could not address her citizens or instruct his officials every day without leaving his chair in the White House. San Francisco was just as near as Baltimore.

Besides that the press supplies in modern times the means of universal knowledge. The specific need of one section was as fully known to the other as it was possible for a mere observer to expound it. The people of New England were as fully informed of the wants of California as of their own, and both were equally well understood at the Executive Mansion and represented with equal ability in the halls of Congress. Virginia was no nearer the seat of government than Minnesota--in fact not half so near. The apprehension of the fathers that the states contiguous to the seat of the Federal government might unduly influence its character, was curiously set at naught by the enginery of modern civilization. There were fifty seven tel-

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ograph wires between Washington and New York a single one, more than sufficed for the intercourse between the Capital and Richmond. There were more, it is true, but they only served to connect the great commercial metropolis with its source of supply. There was no lack of knowledge of the ancients. The uttermost parts of the earth were next-door neighbors. Every fact of the life of the farthest border was known at the center in an hour. Events were practically simultaneous. Facts were a part of the universal knowledge whwrever they occurred. Sentiments were not transmittable by the Morse alphabet. The East knew the facts of the South and the West, and these in like manner and general knowledge of the externals of each other's life. What the East did not know and did not comprehend was what the South or West thought and felt in regard to the facts of their own respective lives. It was neither extent of territory, nor

unfairness of representation, nor weakness of the republican principle, that destroyed the unity of the great Republic, but that polarization of thought and sentiment which is an inherent characteristic of all English-speaking masses—that impulse which distinguishes the Anglo-Saxon from all other peoples of the world,—making it not merely the great colonizer of the earth but the founder of distinct but harmonious empires. The very force which unites the English people divided the Republic.

The third answer given to this inquiry is that dismemberment was the result of party strife and factional discord. As a reason for the known result, this is even more fallacious than those previously considered. That parties and factions were active instrumentalities, no one can deny. In every movement under a popular form of government there must be leaders and follow-

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ers--parties and factions. These are not causes, however, but the indices of the causes that underlie such movements. Parties ar are but the fruitage of popular sentiments. Factions are simply attempts to control parties. Political leaders may create factions but they can never secure control of a party in a republic except by going in the direction the party desires. In a democracy the real leaders are the only forerunners who search out the way to the goal the multitude are seeking. In the present case, however, there was no factional or partisan interest involved in the fact of separation. Those who took the initiative in that direction not only had control of the government but the apparent power to retain a predominant influence therin for a generation. The only question with them was whether they could peacefully and prosperously maintain that supremacy which they deemed essential to the domestic peace and secu-

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rity of the section they more immediately represented, very wisely, I think, they decided that they could not. So that the steps they took instead of being in derogation of constitutional government and an evidense of the weakness of the republican idea are really conclusive proofs of its strength and a guaranty of its perpetuity.

If there be any one cause outside of the inherent tendency of the English people to governmental polarisation, which may be said to have been especially instrumental in producing the result which is so variously regarded by different minds, I should say it was the universality of the belief on the part of the people of the most highly developed, and, in one sense the controlling section, that such a result was an impossibility. This curious over-confidense was chiefly the result of a hundred years of constant re-iteration and was strengthened by the pe-

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culiar immunity of the first century of the national existence from serious internal discord, its remarkable success in two European wars, the glamor of a successful war of conquest and aggression, and the suppression of an armed rebellion of unusual proportions. These facts had removed all apprehension of such a contingency and induced a confidence in the ~~perpetuity of~~ the ~~existing~~ national organizations which not only prevented ~~any~~ the adoption of measures ~~being adopted~~ intended to secure ~~that result~~ it but induced them to regard with ridicule and contempt all ~~predictions of such a result~~ all hints of its termination character and to shut their eyes upon all ~~tendencies in that direction.~~ indications of a tendency to subdivision They ~~thought~~ regarded the Federal Union ~~was~~ as destined to be perpetuated simply because it was American, without effort, care or ~~a wise foreseeing of influences~~ any regard for inherent forces tending to disruption. With nations as with men, the over-confidence which leads to ~~a~~ neglect ~~of reasonable~~ arise precaution ~~and the adoption of measures securing and perpetua-~~

~~ting the essential elements of success~~, is the most dangerous of all ~~intellectual~~ conditions. ~~It~~ He was a wise man, though ~~his name is~~ unknown, who wrote in that necropolis of genius, the columns of a ~~modern~~ newspaper, the words: "England owes ~~her unity~~, her glory to the constant apprehension of invasion." The United States feared no peril--least of all dismemberment and so neglected ~~the~~ causes that ~~led and the indications that pointed to it~~ a child might see could not only lead in that direction but if unchecked must eventually produce that result.