



*The Fourth  
of July  
in  
London*

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There have been many memorable *Fourths* of July in London during the past 141 years, but a new and deep emotion lay behind this year's celebration of the anniversary of American Independence. The ceremonies, as the London "*Times*" observed, "were pregnant with the drama of great events." By the King's wish, the Stars and Stripes flew from the Victoria Tower of the Houses of Parliament; the Welsh Guards played American airs at the changing of the Guard at St. James's Palace; many distinguished Englishmen attended Mr. Page's reception, paying honour to the American Ambassador not less than the American nation. Mr. Balfour and Sir William Robertson were the guests of the evening at the dinner of the American Society. The speeches of Mr. Page and of the British Foreign Secretary — speeches instinct with the spirit of the unexampled crisis, to the height of which America has risen — are reproduced in the following pages.



## Hon. Walter Hines Page.

FOR 140 years American citizens celebrated the birthday of the Republic, reminding one another of their political, social and religious freedom, and during that period their liberties had been extended and fortified by their keeping in mind that the remedy for the shortcomings of democracy was the application of more democracy. Thus that anniversary has become the most sacred day in our calendar. Every American present can picture to himself that august spectacle of the millions of their fellow-citizens assembled to-day in every State to celebrate with reverence, if with noise, the immortal structure of government and of society which our fathers fashioned out of their ideal.

### *A NEW ERA IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY.*

We have now begun a new era in the history of the world. Hitherto we have been concerned chiefly with the development and the extension of liberty at home. We have now entered upon a larger crusade to help in an extension of liberty in this Old World, since the foundations of liberty throughout the whole world have been assailed.

We have committed ourselves to this crusade because otherwise we could not keep our future birthdays worthily. And whither does this commitment lead us? It leads us first to victory and then it leads to our making sure that this victory shall be permanent. And then whither does it lead us? It must lead us inevitably and joyfully to a definite and a permanent understanding with all other steadfast friends of freedom.

### *THE STEDFAST FRIEND OF FREEDOM.*

This kingdom is the steadfast friend of freedom. In the celebration of this birthday we therefore dedicate ourselves not only to our own ideals but likewise to the additional task of strengthening our close friendship with this other great branch of the English-speaking world. I call on every American who hears my voice thus solemnly to dedicate himself to this most important task in the whole world. It is the earnest wish, I might say the dearest wish, of every American here to dedicate himself to this task. More than that, it is the earnest wish of every true American everywhere. Let us now, remembering that during our residence here we have enjoyed the hospitality of this land and made lifelong friends here, give ourselves to making a closer understanding, that the unity of these two peoples and these two Governments shall become the immutable basis of sympathetic relations for ever.



Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour.

ON this anniversary in every part of the world American citizens meet together and renew, as it were, their vows of devotion to the great ideals which have animated them. All the world admires, all the world sympathizes with the vast work of the great American Republic. All the world looks back upon the 141 years which have elapsed since the Declaration of Independence and sees in that 141 years an expansion in the way of population, in the way of wealth and of power, material and spiritual, which is unexampled in that period, and, as far as I know, in the history of the world.

We of the British race, who do not fall short of the rest of the world in our admiration of this mighty work, look at it in some respects in a different way, and must look at it in a different way, from that of other people. From one point of view we have surely a right to look at it with a special satisfaction, a satisfaction born of the fact that, after all, the 13 colonies were British colonies; that the 13 colonies, in spite of small controversies, grew up, broadly speaking, under the protection of England; that it was our wars, the English wars with Spain

in the 16th century, with Holland in the 17th century, and with France in the 18th century, which gave that security from external European attack which enabled those 13 colonies to develop into the nucleus of the great community of which they were the origin.

*BORN OF THE SAME STOCK.*

We British may also surely, without undue vanity, pride ourselves on the fact that the men who founded the great American Republic, the men whose genius contrived its constitution, their forefathers who, struggling in the wilderness, gradually developed the basis of all that has happened since, were men speaking the English language, obeying and believing in English laws, and nourished upon English literature; and although we may say that the originality and power and endurance were theirs, they were men of our own race, born of the same stock, and to that extent at least we may feel that we have some small and not insignificant part in the great development which the world owes to their genius, courage, and love of liberty.

In that sense we may well look with peculiar pride and satisfaction upon this great anniversary. There is, of course, another side to the question. The 4th of July is the anniversary of the separation, the final political separation—not, thank God, the final separation in sentiment, in emotion, or in



ideal—but the final political separation between the thirteen colonies and the Mother Country. We of the Mother Country cannot look back on that event as representing one of our successes. No doubt there was something to be said, though perhaps it is not often said, for those on this side of the Atlantic who fought for unity, who desired to preserve the unity of the Empire. Unity is a cause for which the American people have sacrificed rivers of blood and infinite treasure.

#### *THE BASIS OF EQUALITY.*

I am not going into ancient history, but the mistake we made, an almost inevitable mistake at that particular period of the development of the history of the world, was in supposing that unity was possible so long as one part of the Empire which you tried to unite, speaking the same language, having the same traditions and laws, having the same love of liberty and the same ideals, would consent to remain a part of the Empire except on absolutely equal terms. That was a profound mistake, a mistake which produced a great schism and produced all the collateral, though I am glad to think subordinate, evils which followed on that great schism.

All I can say in excuse for my forefathers is that, utterly defective as the colonial policy of Great Britain in the middle of the 18th century undoubtedly was, it was far better than the colonial policy

of any other country. Imperfectly as we conceived the kind of relations that might, or could, bind the Colonies to their Mother Country, thoroughly as we misconceived them, we misconceived them less than most of our neighbours.

#### *A GREAT CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERIMENT.*

I went on Monday last to the ceremonial at Westminster Abbey in which the 50th anniversary of the Constitution of Canada was celebrated. There is a great difference between 50 years and 141 years. It took us a long time to learn the lesson that if you want to make an Empire of different widely separated communities of the British race you must do it on terms of absolute equality. We have learnt the lesson and in our own way we are now carrying out a task as great, as momentous as—even more difficult than—fell to the great and illustrious framers of the American Constitution. We are endeavouring to carry out by slow degrees an Imperial Constitution which shall combine this absolute equality of different communities with the machinery for the perpetual attainment of common Imperial ends.

But that great experiment was begun in its fullness only 50 years ago, within my lifetime. It will take the lifetime of many generations of statesmen all over the world in this great and scattered Empire to bring it to a full and successful fruition. It is



impossible not to speculate as to how many ills would have been spared us if in 1776 those who preceded us could have foreseen the future and understood wherein the true path of political wisdom lay. Many people have plunged in endless speculations as to what would have happened if there had been no violent division between the two great sections of our people. I do not follow them in those speculations. No man can do so. No man can say what would have happened if a country which has now 100 millions of population, with infinite resources and admirable organization, had never formally been separated from these small islands. But this at all events would have happened. The separation, if and when it had occurred, would have been a friendly separation.

#### *A TRIUMPH IN ITS TRUE PERSPECTIVE.*

There would never have been a memory of the smallest kind dividing the feelings of those, every one of whose emotions moved in the same key to be directed towards the same end. That would have been a great gain. It is a loss to us in this country. I almost venture to say it might have been in some respects a loss to those of you, the great mass of my audience, who own a different allegiance. It would have been an infinite gain if there had been no memory in either of the two nations which pointed to sharp divisions, to battles lost and won, with all the evils of war, with all the evils

of defeat, with all the evils, almost as great, of victory, if any sting or soreness remained behind.

If I rightly read the signs of the times, a truer perspective and a more charitable perspective is now recognised and felt by all the heirs of these sad and ancient glories. Heaven knows I do not grudge the glories of Washington and his brother soldiers. I do not shed tears over the British defeat which ended in the triumphant establishment of the American Republic. I do not express any regrets on that subject. My only regrets are that the memories of it should carry with them the smallest trace of bitterness on our side. I do not know why there should be. I think it may properly carry memories of triumph on your side, but it should be a triumph seen in its true perspective, and by this true perspective seen in such a way that it does not interfere with the continuity of history in the development of free institutions, with the consciousness of common kinship and common ideals, and the considerations which ought to bind us together, and which have bound us together, and which day by day and year by year, generation by generation, and century by century are going to bind us still closer together in the future.

#### *UNITY IN A WORLD TASK.*

Therefore I rejoice to find myself joining with my American friends in celebrating this



great anniversary. Hitherto, from the necessities of history, battles that have been waged on American soil have been battles waged between peoples of the same speech and of the same traditions. In the future the ideas which, even in the moment of struggle, were always fundamentally and essentially the same, will find a sphere of action outside even the ample limits of the United States, and bind us together in a world task. That is the great thought. We are not brought together in this colossal struggle; we are not working together at this identical moment—this great and unsurpassed moment in the history of the world—aiming at narrow or selfish objects, or bound together partly by antiquated traditions. We are working together in all the freedom of great hopes and with great ideals. Those hopes and those ideals we have not learned from each other. We have them in common from a common history and from a common ancestry. We have not learnt freedom from you, nor you from us. We both spring from the same root. We both cultivate the same great aims. We both have the same hopes as regards the future of Western civilization, and now we find ourselves united in this great struggle against a Power which if it be allowed to prevail is going to destroy the very roots of that Western civilization from which we all draw our strength. We are bound together in that.

## BOUND FOR EVER.

Are we not bound together for ever? Will not our descendants, when they come to look back upon this unique episode in the history of the world, say that among the incalculable circumstances which it produces the most beneficent and the most permanent is, perhaps, that we are brought together and united for one common purpose in one common understanding—the two great branches of the English-speaking race? That was the theme on which the Ambassador dwelt. That is the theme which I have endeavoured to develop. It is a theme which absorbs my thoughts day and night. It is a theme which moves me more, I think, than anything connected with public affairs in all my long experience. It is a theme which I hope you will dwell upon; a theme which I hope and trust you will do your best to spread abroad in all parts of the world, so that from this date onwards for all time, we who speak the common language and have these common ideals, may feel that we are working not merely for ourselves individually, nor even for our joint interests, but that we are working together for the best interests of the whole of mankind and for the civilization not only of the Old World but of the New.

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