

THE CELEBRATION.

On Sept. 14th, 1888, at two o'clock A. M. the exercises were opened with a musical selection by Cappa's band, at the close of which Col. Hans Mattson, the presiding officer, delivered the address of welcome. He spoke as follows:

The discovery of America was the greatest event which had taken place from the days of Christ till the time it was made, but the settlement of America by the right kind of people was, in its beneficial effects upon the human race, a matter of still greater importance. It seems like an order of divine Providence that this new world was left in its natural or savage state during all the dark centuries of schooling and of experiments in Asia, Africa and Europe in order that it might remain a virgin soil for the higher civilization which was to follow. To establish this civilization, based upon true principles of government, required not only wisdom and strength, but toleration, brotherhood, justice and exalted virtue. The people chosen for that great work came from different countries and different conditions of life—the English Pilgrims to New England, the Dutch, the Swedes, and the Quakers to the middle country, the English Cavaliers, the Scotch Highlanders and the French Huguenots to the South—and in them all, combined and intermingled, were found the elements of body and of mind, which have given to the world its best government, its greatest nation and its highest civilization. Since the English were the largest in

number their language became the language of all, and for that reason perhaps history has been partial in favor of those who first spoke it. Memorials and anniversaries have often been celebrated over the landing of the Pilgrims and the valor of the knights—their just praise has been written and sung a thousand times, so that their honored names have become precious household words among the generation of our day, while the others have been often forgotten or ignored. Fully recognizing the merits of all, we have assembled here to-day from many parts of the United States to commemorate a great historical event in celebrating the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the landing of the Swedes on the Delaware and to do honor to their memory in prayer, song and speech, and to this intellectual feast I bid you all a hearty welcome.

Prayer was offered (in the Swedish language) by the venerable apostle of the Swedish Lutheran church, Prof. T. N. Hasselquist, D. D., of Rock Island College, after which "Wårt Land" was sung by the chorus.

Hon. W. W. Thomas, Jr., of Maine, late United States minister to Sweden and Norway, delivered the oration, as follows:

Two hundred and fifty years ago there came sailing into Delaware bay a Swedish ship-of-war, the *Kalmar Nyckel*, accompanied by a smaller vessel, the *Fogel Grip*. These two ships had on board the first Swedish colony of America. It was in the early spring of the year 1638. For more than six months these colonists from Old Sweden had been tossed upon the ocean, and now so delighted were they with this New World that they called the cape on which they landed, Paradise Point. The Swedes acquired, by fair purchase from the Indians, an ample domain on the west bank of Delaware bay and river, stretching from Cape Henlopen to the falls near

Trenton, embracing nearly the whole of the present State of Delaware, as well as a goodly portion of Pennsylvania, and extending westward without bound or limit. The colonists immediately built a fortress, which they loyally named Fort Christina, after their youthful queen; and they called their young state New Sweden, a name at once commemorative of the past and auspicious of the future. The Swedes found the climate pleasant, and the soil fertile. They built new settlements along the Delaware, and they received important accessions from the mother country. The earth returned to them its increase in bountiful measure; their flocks and herds multiplied; they lived in peace and friendship with the red men, and in every way made a prosperous beginning in colonial life. But a cloud hung over the infant state. The Dutch at New Netherlands saw with a jealous eye this young and thriving rival established on their borders, and by many methods sought to intimidate and drive away the Swedes. At last, in 1655, the Dutch suddenly appeared in Delaware bay with a force of six or seven hundred men and seven ships. Their coming took the Swedes by surprise. The troops of the enemy outnumbered their own four to one. The Dutch first took Fort Trinity and then Fort Christina, and with these fortresses all New Sweden fell under the sway of Holland. Yet this conquest did the Dutch but little good. Only nine years later the English captured New Netherlands, and with it New Sweden; and the central portion of this continent passed forever under the dominion of the English speaking race.

New Sweden as a distinct political organization, under the Swedish flag, existed but for seventeen years. Yet, brief as was its life, this little colony occupies a memorable place in American history, and has left a lasting impress upon this continent. Many of the Swedish colonists continued to live on the banks of the Delaware; and their descendants have ever been, and are to-day, among the most influential and honored citizens of the three States of Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey. The man who as member of the Continental Congress gave the casting vote of Pennsylvania in favor of the Declara-

tion of Independence was a Swede of the old Delaware stock, John Morton. And when civil war burst upon the land, it was a descendant of New Sweden, the gallant Gen. Robert Anderson, who with but a handful of men calmly and bravely met the first shock of the rebellion at Fort Sumpter. Surely love of freedom and patriotism, and state-craft and valor came over to America, not only in the *Mayflower*, but also in that Swedish ship the *Kalmar Nyckel*.

And New Sweden will ever be illustrious from the principles of true humanity which distinguished its founding. The idea of New Sweden originated in the mind of Gustavus Adolphus, although it was not until after his death that the plan was carried out by his great chancellor, Oxenstjerna. It was the intention of the Swedish King that this colony should be an asylum for the oppressed of all nations; a free state, where all should have equal rights, and enjoy to the fullest extent the fruits of their own labor. Slavery should never exist within its borders, for, said Gustavus, "Slaves cost a great deal, labor with reluctance, and soon perish with hard usage." Wise words these! Had America adhered to this enlightened policy of the founder of New Sweden we would have been spared our civil war, with all its untold suffering and cost.

Such humane principles were the rule of action within this little state. Not only this, but they were conspicuously carried out by the Swedes in their dealings with the Indians. The land was bought of its original possessors by honorable purchase. Trade between the white man and the red was fair and square. The Swede always kept his word with the Indian and never abused nor cheated him. In return the dusky children of the forest bestowed upon the fair-haired sons of the Northland their respect and love. They dwelt in peace and friendship together; and no Indian would ever raise his hand or his tomahawk against a Swede.

William Penn arrived on this continent in 1682, forty-four years after the Swedes. He landed near the site of Fort Trinity, within the limits of New Sweden. It was the Swedish settlers and their children who received the good Quaker,

welcomed him to the New World, and entertained him with kindness and hospitality. It was the Swedes also who acted as Penn's interpreters with the Indians. How could it be otherwise than so keen an observer as Penn should learn from his hosts and interpreters their manner of dealing with the red man, and be impressed with its success. Precisely as the Swedes had done before him, Penn acquired land of the Indians by purchase, treated them kindly, and kept faith with them. Penn had been justly praised for his peaceful and humane policy toward the red men. I would not pluck a leaf from the laurels with which America has crowned the great Quaker. But "honor to whom honor is due." Impartial history records that the honor of originating this policy on this continent is due, not to Willam Penn, but to the Swedes of New Sweden. Penn, in a letter, mentions his kind reception by the Swedes and praises their industry and their respect for authority. He goes on to say: "As they are a people proper and strong of body, so they have fine children, and almost every house full; rare to find one of them without three or four boys, and as many girls; some six, seven and eight sons. And I must do them right — I see few young men more sober and industrious." Verily a keen observer was the good Quaker! Strong industrious lads, fine looking girls, and houses full of children. These we all recognize as characteristic of the Swedish race.

The French have a saying, "It is the first step that costs." This is true. It is the first step also which is memorable. The beginnings of things most excite our interest and admiration, and it is to the founders of empires that history assigns the first place. New Sweden will ever occupy a post of honor in the annals of this country, because it was the first step in a Scandinavian immigration to America which has now become alike grand in proportions and beneficent in results.

How much influence New Sweden has had upon this immigration it is difficult to say; but surely the fact that there existed in America a colony of Swedes founded by Sweden's greatest king, must have had its effect upon Swedish thought

and action. Yet throughout our entire colonial period and indeed during the earlier decades of the republic Swedish immigration was insignificant. In the ten years from 1820 to 1830, the entire number of alien passengers arriving in the United States from both Sweden and Norway was but ninety-four, — less than ten persons a year, from both countries. Since then the number of Scandinavians seeking homes in America has, with some fluctuations, rapidly increased; but it was not till 1863—only twenty-five years ago—that the emigration from Sweden began to pour in upon us, with that mighty tide, which constitutes one of the marvels in the movements of races of men upon this globe.

In the decade beginning with 1863, the number of Swedes arriving in ports of the United States suddenly increased to more than 10,000 and then to more than 20,000 a year. In 1880 there came to us in round numbers 40,000 Swedes, in 1881, 50,000, and in 1882 the Swedish immigration culminated with a grand total of 64,607 souls. Think of it! What a grand army of labor, more than 60,000 strong, more than a regiment a week, that in the brief compass of a single year, sailed over the ocean to our shores, from Old Sweden alone, to help subdue our forests, reclaim our wild lands, open our mines, build our cities and railroads, and in every way develop the vast resources of our own broad land.

In 1878 Sweden took her place, as the third power in the world, in the number of immigrants sent to our republic, and this position she has maintained up to and including 1886. For nine successive years, there have arrived among us more emigrants from Sweden than from France, or Italy, or Austria, or Russia or any other realm on earth, save only the British Empire and Germany. For the eight years from 1880 to 1887 inclusive, Sweden sent us the magnificent total of 311,249 of her stalwart sons and fair daughters—an average of nearly 40,000 a year. When we reflect that the entire population of Old Sweden has at no period reached 5,000,000, the Swedish exodus to the United States during the last quarter of a century becomes phenomenal, even in the wonderful history of American immigration.

Should this marvelous immigration continue—and all signs indicate that it will—the day will surely come when the United States will contain more citizens of Swedish descent than Sweden herself; and we will be not only the newer but the greater Sweden as we have already become the greater England.

What states does this vast stream of Swedish emigrants enrich with its flood? It is an interesting fact, that, with few exceptions, as the French in Canada, emigrants from Europe take up the same relative position in America they occupied on the continent of their birth. In fact there seem to be certain fixed isothermal lines between whose parallels the emigrants from the Old World are guided to their homes in the New. Thus the Germans from the centre of Europe settle in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and our other middle states; the French and Spanish from Southern Europe and the shore of the Mediterranean, make their homes in Louisiana, Florida and all along the Gulf of Mexico; while the Scandinavians from the wooded North fell the forests, and build their log cabins throughout our entire Northern range of states, from Maine to Oregon.

Here, standing midway the continent is one of this northern wooded range—the young, great, growing state of Minnesota, the empire state of the new Northwest. Guided here perhaps, by the north star in your escutcheon, or by your good friend Colonel Mattson, and finding a soil, climate and nature similar to their loved fatherland, the fair-haired, blue-eyed children of the North, have cast in their lot with you, and here they have made the desert to “rejoice and blossom as the rose.” Including all persons of Swedish descent, Minnesota reckons to-day nearly 200,000 Swedes within her borders, and as a Scandinavian state she stands easily first in the Union. Minnesota is in fact if not in name the new Sweden of to-day, and here, in the midst of this great Swedish element of our land, in this magnificent temple dedicated to the triumphs of industry, on this spot, which though a howling wilderness for two hundred years after the Swedes first landed on the banks of the Delaware is now the site of the twin me-

tropolis of the great Northwest teeming with the life and activity of nearly half a million souls—here, I say, it is fitting and proper that we should celebrate, as we do this day, the quarter-millennial anniversary of the founding of the first new Sweden in America.

Wherever, in this broad land, the Swedes fix their habitations, whether it be among the forests of Minnesota or Michigan or on the prairies of Illinois or Iowa; everywhere they are noted for their honesty and industry, their economy and thrift. Our Swedish settlers live within their means, buy no faster than they can pay, and do not run in debt. No other foreign race learn our language so quickly, or speak it so correctly and free from foreign accent, and none, I think, so speedily embrace our American ideas, and become so thoroughly assimilated with us, and so completely Americanized. Our Swedish fellow citizens do not try to subvert our institutions. There are no Swedish anarchists, or dynamite bomb throwers. Order-loving, as well as liberty-loving, God fearing and law abiding, the Swede seeks to know the law of the land, not to break, but to keep it. And when rebellion threatened the nation's life the Swedes were found fighting for freedom and union in this land of their adoption; yes, fighting as gallantly for the starry banner of America as their ancestors fought for the yellow cross of old Sweden. If you seek for the Swedes, you will scarcely find them in our jails or penitentiaries; you will meet them engaged in peaceful industrial pursuits, in our workshops and factories, or, most largely, upon the prairies and in the back woods of the great West where, by honest toil, they have converted millions of acres of wild land into fertile farms and happy homes. The Swede also brings with him, from his old home, the fear of God, the reverence for the Bible, the respect for sacred things, and the strict observance of the Sabbath; and it is my belief, that no immigrants of to-day, in both faith and works, so closely resemble the sturdy pilgrim fathers of New England as the Swedes. I respect and esteem the emigrants that come to us from all christian nations—from Ireland, from

England and Scotland, from Germany and Italy and Russia and France, and those Scandinavians from Norway and Denmark who share in common with their cousins, the Swedes, many of the virtues I have enumerated; but I know I am simply repeating the universal verdict of Americans when I say that no immigrants in this world, make better citizens of this great republic than the sons and daughters of Sweden.

My friends, no celebration of New Sweden would be complete without at least a brief mention of its illustrious founder. Undoubtedly the greatest character Sweden has ever produced is Gustavus Adolphus. His life and deeds belong, not to Sweden alone, but to the world. He stands out in history the hero of the great war of the seventeenth century; that war, which for thirty years, shook the continent of Europe to its foundations. That war, as you know, was the gigantic contest between freedom in thought and religion, and papal and imperial despotism; between the pure teachings of Luther, and the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition. After twelve long years of battle, the armies of the emperor under the great generals, Tilly and Wallenstein, were everywhere victorious; the protestant princes were beaten, divided, disheartened, and the free cities of Germany lay bleeding at the feet of the imperial cohorts. Freedom of religion seemed about to be crushed out of continental Europe. Then what! A little band of 13,000 Swedes sails from their home in the Northland across the stormy Baltic, and lands on the shores of Germany. But at their head is their golden king, "the lion of the North," Gustavus Adolphus. "Oh! ho!" cried the emperor, Ferdinand, "we have another little enemy come against us." And his courtiers laughingly replied, "The Snow-King will melt as he approaches the Southern Sun." But the great commander was not made of stuff that melts in the sunshine. "He is one of the seven generals of the world who have revolutionized the art of war," said Napoleon the Great. "To pray often, is almost to conquer," said Gustavus himself. His march was a succession of victories. The protestant princes took heart and rallied under his standard—

the free cities opened wide their gates to welcome his victorious legions. Conquering and to conquer, he swoops across Europe from the Baltic to the Danube. He meets and routs the grandest army of the empire, under the veteran Tilly, hero of a hundred battle fields, and his victorious march is stayed only by the eternal hills of Switzerland.

From the Alps to the Polar Sea the power of the great Swedish king is supreme. No man ever wielded that wide stretched power before. No man since. But the forces of the empire and the inquisition rally once more under that dark and mysterious soldier of fortune, Wallenstein. He entrenches on the field of Lutzen. The Swedish army camp before his entrenchments, and the night before the battle sing the war psalm their great king himself has composed, commencing "Fear not little flock." "Put on your armor. Put on your armor," said his generals on the morning of the battle. But the king refused. "God is my cuirass," answered this soldier of the cross; and galloping to the head of his brave army, himself led the charge and plunged into the hell of battle. That little army of the Lord swept the field in a charge irresistible. They drove the routed legions of despotism before them. But, in the very moment of victory, galloping back into their foremost ranks, comes, wildly charging, the war horse of their hero king, riderless, saddle covered with blood. The great king was dead! But he died in victory—a victory that saved freedom of religion for you and me—for the world, and for all time. Of a truth "The sword of Gustavus Adolphus was mighty as the pen of Luther."

But other great kings adorn the annals of Swedish history. There is Gustavus Vasa, who drove the tyrant Christian from the throne, freed his country, founded the glorious Vasa line of kings, and is revered to-day in the Northland, much as Washington is with us, as "the Father of his Country."

Then there is Charles XII, "the mad man of Europe," "*Kung Karl, den unge hjelte*." King at fifteen, himself places the crown upon his head, and makes no promises to the estates. At sixteen, the mightiest hunter of his realm, he