

Another National Holiday.

J. R. Tyson's Report as Chairman of a Committee appointed by the Historical Society, on the proposition to celebrate the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. April 21, 1855.

The Committee appointed to inquire into the expediency of celebrating the adoption of the Constitution of the United States as a great historical era and to fix the day on which such anniversary should be observed, beg leave to report:

That they have attentively considered the resolution committed to them, and have agreed cordially to report in favor of the expediency of observing hereafter forever the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. They are of the opinion that the time for its observance should be the anniversary of its adoption by the Convention, which was on the 17th day of September, 1787. Its formal ratification by the several State sovereignties can be regarded only as a subsequent stage in the history of a State paper, which was then called into existence. Washington, who presided in the memorable assembly which gave it birth, recommended it to the people, in a communication dated and signed on that day.

It is scarcely necessary for the Committee to give, at much length, the reasons which weigh with them in the above recommendation. Their fellow-citizens can readily anticipate every motive they can urge in favor of its expediency. It is less easy to account plausibly for allowing two-thirds of a century to pass away without celebrating this anniversary as a National Festival, than to give cogent and unanswerable reasons for its observance by a Historical Society.

The State Historical Societies are accustomed to celebrate the day of the landing of their respective founders. These, without doubt, are the commencement of their histories, considered as communities distinct from their confederates. But that which unites them into one political state, and while securing to each sovereignty its separate rights, confers upon all the dignity of forming together a mighty and powerful nation, is the *Constitution of the United States*. As the day of William Penn's landing on the Delaware is properly the era of our historical beginning, as a separate State, so the formation of the Constitution is its second birth, as a member of the Federal Union. As we celebrate the one, why should we not commemorate the other? If, indeed, any part of our country should precede the rest in this common duty, the public might fairly look for such a movement in Philadelphia. The Convention which framed that great State paper sat within our limits; here the Federal procession walked in its honor, on the 4th of July, 1788; and this city was the first capital of the nation under the Constitutional government. Nor can it be doubted that the *genius loci* was favorable to the recognition of one of the sublime glories of the instrument itself. The *rights of conscience*, which it upholds and inculcates, were proclaimed to mankind as one of the corner-stones of the colonial structure of Pennsylvania, above a century before, and were distinctly re-asserted in the successive State Constitutions of 1776, 1790, and 1838.

Our national festivals are two in number. We observe only the Declaration of Independence and the birth of Washington. They are not so numerous but that the Constitution may form a third, without impairing the value and efficacy of the others. Indeed, it seems naturally to follow the anniversaries of Independence and of Washington, as the great monument of both; or as forming at once the crowning stone of the historical building and the foundation of the national pile.

The committee would not underrate the great era of our political independence. They know that it must have preceded the Constitution; as without it the Constitution could not exist. The annual recurrence of this great anniversary has kept alive the name of our colonial wrongs, and has tended to form those elements of character so essential to the independence of free citizenship. The great men who conducted our cause, the unanimity with which our countrymen engaged in a war for principles, the moderation and wisdom with which that war was prosecuted, and its ultimate triumph, must ever be delightful in the retrospect, as proud trophies of national renown. We would therefore perpetuate the Declaration, and hope it may never fade from the patriotic memory. The mighty plan and its accompaniments, the great actors and their individual acts, are as important to be revived and cherished, as the principal event. The political sentiments of the population and the national power to enforce its opinions, render our independence of Great Britain secure and irreversible. It is a fixed historical fact, which, whether we celebrate it or not, must remain for all future time, as incapable of change as the principles which gave birth to it are immutable, or is the physical law which separates the two countries. But is the Constitution so much more secure against external enemies, as to render the celebration of its birth superfluous? Are there no enemies, within or without, who would be willing to lessen our constitutional obligations, and break the common union? Are there none who, from whatever influence, hesitate to sacrifice local in-

terest or partial benevolence to that Catholic charity and comprehensive good which include the whole? From the first letter written by Washington as President of the Convention, to his Farewell Address, he conjured the people to know no narrow limits, to cultivate the feelings of a common nationality, which will unite all together in a common and inseparable connexion. These sentiments of devotion were uppermost in his heart. The extension of our limits and the increase of national power, render these admonitions as wise now as they were in the days of Washington.

When we consider the mighty events which have followed this epoch of a national union,—that the instrument was framed with wise forecast, under the eye of Washington himself, and the great men who surrounded him, that Madison and Hamilton lent their best powers to expound and unfold it, that the union has been the theme of the loftiest praise at home and of the highest admiration from great and good men abroad, that while the destruction of the Union was the secret watch-word of our trans-atlantic foes and its preservation was the dearest wish of the American people, is it not a subject of surprise that no means should have been taken to feed the fire which was to warm our patriotic sensibilities by teaching us to love and revere the great instrument itself? Is it not surprising while so much has been thought and said, and written, of the Union, and the means were revolved of making it incapable of dissolution, that the simple process was not resorted to of celebrating once in every year the formation of that Constitution which is its bond? The Constitution is more important as a bulwark of union than the preservation of the Citadel over was to Rome, or the Palladium to Troy. Without the aid of augury or superstition, our intelligent citizens know that, without its legal authority, as the supreme law, a Union does not exist; and without the moral element of personal attachment to it, as the charter of our political being, it must crumble and perish.

The Constitution of the United States is literally to the State as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. It is their safeguard in prosperity, their refuge in adversity. It secures to them the rights of conscience and republican government, peace at home, and security from external danger. Its superintending eye guards commercial intercourse among the States and with foreign countries, and looks abroad to command honor in the remotest corners of the earth. Unlike other frame works of government, changes can be made under the instrument itself without revolutionary violence. Without it, where are the efficiency of collected numbers, the power of extended empire, the glory of a common renown? With these, added to the keen sense, the cultivated intelligence, the moral virtue impressed upon our people by the conditions of their society, what can prevent this government from controlling the destinies of the world? But strike away the bulwarks of the Constitution and the clamps of the Union are broken; the glorious memories of a common struggle are lost, the boast of a proud nationality ceases, and all the high hopes it fostered, are dissipated and forgotten.

All which is respectfully submitted.

J. R. TYSON,
WILLIAM DUANE, } Committee.
G. W. NORRIS,

The following resolutions were then adopted:

Resolved, That it is highly expedient for this Society annually to commemorate, by some public act, the day on which the Constitution of the United States was adopted by the delegates, met in convention, to wit, the 17th day of September, 1787.

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed to make arrangements for the celebration of this event, on the 17th day of September, 1856, by the delivery of a public discourse in this city, and otherwise, as they may deem expedient, and that the other State Historical Societies be invited to join in this celebration.

Resolved, That the committee enter into correspondence with the other Historical Societies, and request the appointment of a similar committee, in order to fix upon some common plan of action, with a view to its regular observance in such places as may be agreeable to all.

J. R. Tyson, William Duane, J. Jordan, Jr., Edward Armstrong and T. Ward, were elected the committee.

Sale of Real Estate.—James A. Freeman, auctioneer, sold the following real estate, last evening, at the Merchants' Exchange:—

Two story brick house and lot, Filbert street, above Fifteenth, 17th feet front and 76 feet deep, sold for \$2600

Two story brick house and lot, Front street, Southwark, 14 feet front and 58 feet deep, \$1750 ground rent, \$850

Lot of ground, Gulielma street, east of Fifteenth street, 14 feet front and 48 feet deep, \$60 ground rent, sold for \$10

Lot of ground and three story brick house, Gulielma street, east of Fifteenth, 14 feet front and 45 feet deep, \$60 ground rent, \$110

Three story brick house and lot, Bayard street east of Eighth, 13 feet front and 86 feet deep \$29.75 ground rent, sold for \$139

New Store.—Messrs. L. J. Levy & Co.

having nearly finished their new store in Chestnut street above the United States Bank, open it to the public to-day. The front of the lower story is oak, designed with excellent taste, massive and rich, without tawdry embellishment. The whole building will be ultimately appropriated to the several branches of Messrs. Levy & Co's Dry Goods business. At present the second floor is occupied by the Mercantile Library Company. The third is used for the *jobbing* business, and the basement for heavy goods. The principal floor is a splendid room twenty-five feet wide and one hundred and twenty feet deep. The arrangements are particularly tasteful and convenient. The ceiling is arched and handsomely panelled with sky-lights in a part extending beyond the rear of the main building. Several handsome bronze chandeliers, reflected by a large mirror at the extreme end of the room, complete the beauty of the general effect, which is not equalled by that of any other dry goods' store in the country. On the whole it is a great improvement to that part of Chestnut street.

REAL ESTATE SALE.—M. Thomas & Sons sold

at the Exchange last evening, the following real estate: Store No. 95 South Front street, 22 feet 11 inches, by 23 feet 6 inches, to Water street, clear of incumbrance, \$5,100. Four contiguous lots in Richmond street, in the district of Richmond, 40 feet by 200, with blacksmith shop and stable, subject to \$40 ground rent, \$975. Lots on Salmon street, Richmond, 40 feet by 100, with four frame dwellings, \$20 ground rent, \$900. Store, &c., N. E. corner Second and Coates streets, 18 feet by 72, ground rent \$4 97, \$8000. Large lot and brick dwelling, 110 feet on Beach street, between Hanover and Palmer streets, clear, \$6000. Dwelling No. 10 Crown street, 17 feet 10 inches by 87 feet 6 inches, ground rent \$107, \$2,400. Three story brick dwelling, 48 North Front street, 14 by 78 feet, ground rent \$5 60, \$3,900. Three story brick dwelling, north side of Race street, west of Schuylkill Seventh, 18 feet by 140 to Spring street, \$5,450. Three story brick dwelling, south of Miller street, west of Thirteenth, 13 by 61, 5 inches, \$1000. Brick and frame dwellings, S. E. corner of Front street and Franklin Avenue, and lot 17 by 100 feet, clear of incumbrance, \$2000. Two three story brick dwellings and lot, 17 feet 11 inches by 103, west side of Hanceck street, back of Perry street, south of Phoenix, \$2100. Lot of ground north side of Adams street, west side of Amber street, Kensington, 172 feet 7 inches by 150 to Litterly, subject to ground rent of 50 cents per foot, of 75 feet depth, \$425. April 18, 1849.



THE PHILADELPHIA LIBRARY.

A CHANGE OF NAMES NEEDED.—We have often been amused at the awkward predicament in which strangers in our city are frequently placed, from several of our streets north of Chestnut, having two names. The other day, a stranger from country parts, was directed to some place in Arch street. Off he started in search of said street. Being told it was between Market and Race, he of course, when he reached the markets, supposing, naturally enough too, that the street in which the markets were, must be Market street, he went on feeling sure that the next must be the street he was in search of. But lo! when he reached it, and looked for the name, he found not Arch but Mulberry street marked upon the corner.

This rather puzzled him. He stood a few minutes, and then seemed to conclude that probably he misunderstood the direction, and then went on, supposing that it might be above; but when he looked for the name here, he was still more perplexed, for there was not only no Arch street to be found, but no Race street. Being of a modest disposition, he did not then inquire of any one the way, but retraced his steps, till he reached the markets again, when, to his great surprise, he found that the name on the corner here was not Market, but High street. There was left him now no alternative, he must ask his way or never find the place he was in search of. He did so, and was informed that the street he was in was Market st. "But it is High street, on the corner," replied the stranger. "Yes, but it is not called by that name." "Well, then, where is Arch st?" "The

next above," was the answer. "But is not that Mulberry," replied our countryman. "No, that name is not known here," was the answer. "So, by dint of inquiry, and by considerable walking, our perplexed friend found Arch street, and no doubt, the place he was looking for."

Now we do not see the necessity of keeping the names upon the corners of streets when they are never called by those names; it is not only a source of trouble, and calculated to mislead those who are unacquainted with our city, but it appears to us that there is something superlatively ridiculous about it. Why not put upon the index signs the names by which those streets are universally known. April 20, 1849.

THE STATUE OF FRANKLIN.—J. A. McA. writes: "The statue of Dr. Franklin, the gift of William Bingham, Esq., to the Philadelphia Library, was fixed in its niche April 7, 1852. Francis Lazzarini is the name of the sculptor, and Carrara the place where it was executed. The statue cost about \$2500. I find this particular in an old magazine published in 1795. We may say, in explanation of our own statement, made last week, that no modern sketch of the history of the Library Company mentions the name of the sculptor."

Summary Dispatch—May 27, 1855

BEAUTIFUL IRON CASTINGS.—For several days past, connoisseurs and other admirers of art have been charmed with a pair of cast iron dogs, of the greyhound species, exhibited in the Art Union Rooms, in Chestnut street. They are really superb castings, and look not only like marble statuary, but as natural as life itself. The patterns for them, we learn, were made by Mr. Henry Headman, machinist, brother of Mr. F. W. Headman, of mineral water celebrity.