Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections

http://archives.dickinson.edu/

Documents Online

Title: "National Days," by Albert Ritchie

Format: Commencement Oration

Date: July 14, 1853

Location: Orations-1853-R598n

Contact:

Archives & Special Collections Waidner-Spahr Library Dickinson College P.O. Box 1773 Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

hatinal Days

Every country has its herrie age. It is they period whose noble deeds gave bish to the nation. a nationis manning is filled nith recollections of this heroice age, which throw a hollowed influence over all its after life and will ever the a lustre around its fading name. which a people delights to dwell, as upon the brightest of their history; when parnot; cens nas glong and Every man a patrios; when actions stamped the impress of a man" upon Each brown and "Every action Lended to his country's steamers. This is the perior upon which the historian loves to dwell: dipo his per and draws inspiration for his holiest themes. Here the philosopher may delve into the human character, and here, the prophet may read in the Leem ing mystery of svento and foretell the country's future. This is the age from which a nationis festal days are drawn; Those annual days of rejuicing when a

peoples heart grows name with patriotisms, and swells with the recollection of Early greatness. Every nation much have its featino days. Days, at whose periodic returns.

its people may mingle in one universed.

celebration in honor of the Law age that V

gave them birth - when a glorious pash sheds a pleasing influence form the land which it made noble commence two when the Telken cond of memory makes us feel as if the spirits of our Country's dead were hovering around and looking with deep lives Trophytic The homes where once they lives Tach fainter trace that memory holds, Lo sweetly of defeartes years, In me trow flance the dout beholds. and all that mor was at once appears", The recurrence of these Jestinals awakens is memory calls up the Icenes of other mere the deeds of yesterday, The past some acted over agains and, as its were. The soul's spirit beholds the fields upon which its Lashous fought. It sees the glistening

of their swood and the res. Hashing of their funs, It hears the drew as it beats the strong charge, and the bugle notes that proclaims them victors. The French term to the times when napoleonis Itas was touching its meridian, and thence they draw their festal days. hapolenis memory is the dearest idot the French possess, and as the annuissary of some nighty bassle downs upon them, by association's mystic chain, they behold Their chieftain as in the days of his flory. hus he still storms some bristling castle; now, with ney and murat, he throws his for heres into one impulsive charge; here comes The sumbling of his firm Imperial Gauss; There lie the plains of Linder, and hero loom up the heights of Labin. Lum to the intrepio Liviso, Whereever he may be found on the day of his country's rejoicings, his he ask is this resting on titos mountain Clippo, and his Liberty. And Ireland, om her ferand near a cheerful look. Whether upon his native Those, on is a Tranger Land, the Im of Erio rejoices at the

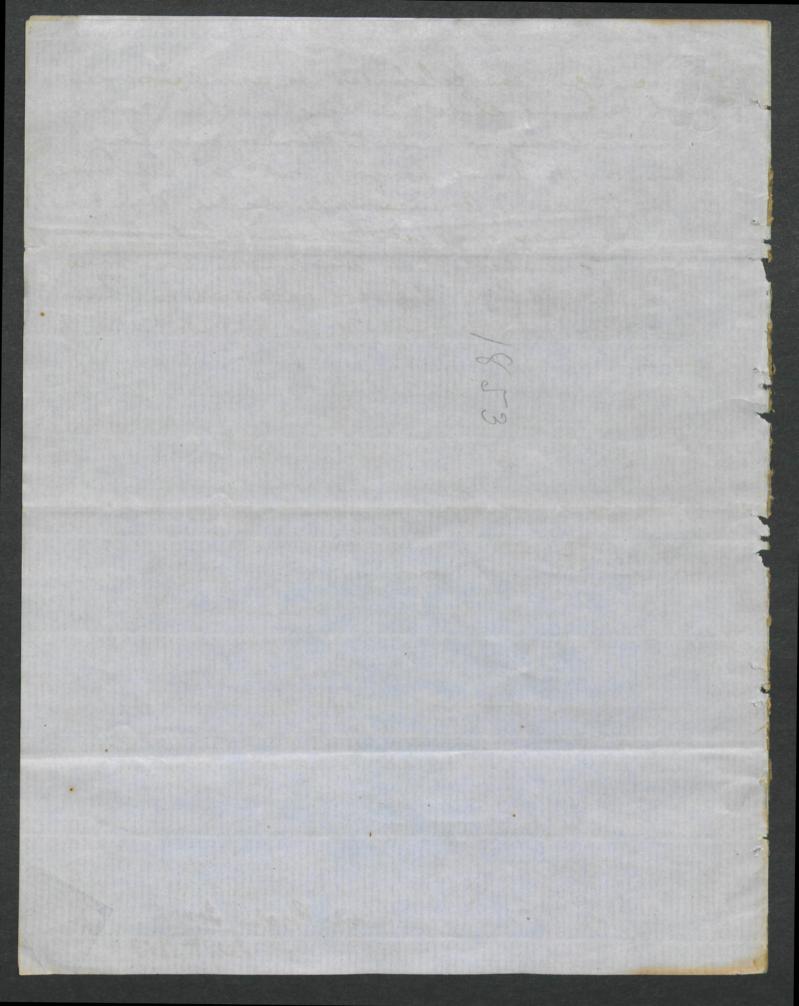
down of It. Patrick, and, though he heaves one Ligh for his country's present fate, he Theo feels a pride in the memory of what it has been. He remembers when Ireland nes smiling with Joy, he sees it now neeponly mishes to line to Shike one blow for his faller land, while Emmets whispers in his "there still is hope". Englands brightest aminerous is their of the Day on which napoleon yelled to her throne. Then the beholds again the augul field of moseslos and them the thouts to The welking then favorite air -"Rule Britania". and america has hational days. High in her was for Independence stood one, to whom his " country's call was as the call of God : By whom his Countries troops were les In victory though napoleonis Conqueror mas his for that me mes - moshington; whose Every End he aimed at, was his countries. Sod's and Loutho". americano melo forever honor the day that fave him bith. Here is one other day that a mericans hold sacred. The one that mas

at once, the birth-Day of america and the resurrection of Liberty, When the Declara. him of Independence was amounted and the american LeMoth creates, at the recollectimes of this day, Even the beter as Loldier, trembling with ego, ville from manus with Enthusiasus, and as he recounts He history of his battles, " nico shoulder his crutch and show how fields be this day me should honor the memory of our Fathers, he should look upon the Land they left us and; admiso the stability of its Institutions, and rejuice at its happiness. Luch are hatimas Days Inbiles. Days, which, by their recurrence, fine strength and dissolitize to a government; whose influences is wholesome, vistuous and noble. It is at these festivals that a people's love of Country and fileal constancy is increased. Here vergus no Lecharian spirit, in these Hoys the Denon of Discond is chained: the Thise of karty is forgother; and the mass, as one man, comes forward to their conn-Trys feet: There offers up the fresh outpoinings of a grateful heart. and there dweary new allegiones To long as a perfole remembers their

heric age and celebrates its anniversaries with becoming zeals, is long is their countries future Encouraging. Dark clouds may hang upon our hatimal horizon, but a pilgrinage to the mecca of america vill dispet them.

And, hence, me feel that while american sementers that markings mas bonus. That the star of Liberty ascenses, on that Lackson fought, is long is american safe

Albert Rischie Loty 8 :- 1853



Commencement Oration of Albert Ritchie, Class of 1853 Transcribed by Tristan Deveney, June 2008 Edited by Sarah-Hazel Jennings, June 2008

National Days

Every country has its heroic age. It is the period whole noble deeds gave birth to the nation. A nation's memory is filled with recollections of this heroic age, which throw a hallowed influence over all its after life and will even shed a lustre around its fading name.

The heroic age is the one upon which a people delights to dwell, as upon the brightest of their history; when patriotism was glory and every man a patriot; when actions stamped the "impress of a man" upon each brow and "every action tended to his country's greatness. This is the period upon which the historian loves to dwell: it is the fountain in which the poet dips his pen and draws inspiration for his holiest themes. Here the philosopher may delve into the human character, and here, the prophet may revel in the deeming mystery of events and foretell the country's future. This is the age from which a nation's festal days are drawn; those annual days of rejoicing when a

people's heart grows warm with patriotism and swells with the recollection of early greatness.

Every nation must have its festive days. Days, at whose periodic return its people may mingle in one universal celebration in honor of the land age that gave them nationality birth – when a glorious past is brought forward into the present and sheds a pleasing influence over the land which it made noble. Commemorative Days, when the silken cord of memory makes us feel as if the spirits of our Country's dead were hovering around and looking with deep interest upon the homes where once they lived. Prophetic days, when,

"Each fainted trace that memory holds,

Lo sweetly of departed years,

In one broad glance the soul beholds

And all that once was at once appears".

The recurrence of these festivals awaken all the charms of association. Then the memory calls up the scenes of other days, and there they stand as if they were the deeds of yesterday. The past is acted over again and, as it were. the spirit soul beholds the fields upon which its fathers fought. It sees the glistening

of their swords the red flashing of their guns. It hears the drum as it beats the shining charge, and the bugle notes that proclaim them victors.

The French turn to the [one word illegible] when Napoleon's star was touching its meridian, and thence they draw their festal days. Napoleon's memory is the dearest idol the French possess, and as the anniversary of some mighty battles dawns upon them, by association's mystic chain, they behold their chieftain as in the days of his glory, find he still storms some bristling castle; now, with Ney and Murat, he throws his fortunes into

one impulsive charge; here come the rumbling of his fine Imperial Guard; there lie the plains of [Linden?], and here loom up the heights of Labin.

Turn to the intrepid Swiss, wherever he may be found on the day of his country's rejoicings. his heart is this resting on [one word illegible] mountain cliffs, and his bosom swells with memories of Lell and Liberty.

And Ireland, on her festal day, strives to drown her sorrows and wear a cheerful look. Whether upon his native shore, or in a stranger land, the son of [Eire?] rejoices as the

dawn of St. Patrick, And though he heaves one sigh for his country's present fate, he still feels a pride in the memory of what it has been. He remembers when Ireland was smiling with joy, he sees it now weeping with woes, and then he feels as if he really wished to live to strike one blow for his fallen land, while Emmett whispers in his "there still is hope".

England's brightest anniversary is that of the Day on which Napoleon yielded to her throne. Then she beholds again the awful field of Waterloo and then she shouts to the [one word illegible] her favorite air – "Rule Britania".

And America has national days. Nigh in her [one word illegible] for Independence stood one, to whom his "country's call was as the call of God."

By whom his country's troops were led to victory though Napoleon's Conqueror was his foe. That one was Washington; whose "every end he aimed at, was his country's, God's and Truth's". Americans will forever honor the day that gave him birth.

There is one other day that Americans hold sacred. The one that was

at once, the birth-day of America and the resurrection of Liberty. When the Declaration of Independence was announced and the American Sabbath created. At the recollections of this day, even the veteran soldiers, mumbling with age, will grow warm with enthusiasm, and as he recounts the history of his battles, "Will shoulder his crutch and show how fields are won"

On this day we should honor the memory of our fathers. We should look upon the land they left us and; admire the stability of its Institutions, and rejoice at its happiness.

Such are national Days Jubilees. Days, which by their recurrence, give strength and durability to a government; whose influence is wholesome, virtuous and noble. It is at these festivals that a people's love of country and filial constancy is increased. Here reigns no sectarian spirit. In these Days the Demon of Discord is chained; the strife of party is forgotten; and the mass, as one man, comes forward to their country's feet: these offers up the fresh outpourings of a grateful hearts. and these swears new allegiance.

So long as a people remembers their

heroic age and celebrates its anniversaries with becoming zeal, so long is their country's future encouraging. Dark clouds may hang upon our national horizon, but a pilgrimage to the Mecca of America will dispel them.

And, hence, we feel that while Americans remember that Washington was [one word illegible], that the star of Liberty ascended, or that Jackson fought, so long is America safe.

Albert Ritchie Jr. July 8 1853