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Our Rebellion- and poch in History.

Show the most ancient ferried of which we have any conthentic record, down to the present moment, there has been our continual revolution in the plements of barbarow and of civilized society. The spirit of revolution, which has been our of the chief characteristics of the

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Suman race, ever since its Social organizations, has beauthe fuedominant elsment of sectional society. It has learn handed down from generation to generation. until it has found a heritage in every climes whow the face of the earth. The suitores of the world matically divides itself justo four district chocks- Untiquity" The Middle agrs, The Modern Grock," and The Latest Geriod? In the was of these respective spocho there is subodied the whole of frast Events- Embracing the most distant agri which legend, and

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nations over northean, central and Southern Ourope, from which period dates the era of the Meddle liges" This long and dack era was characterized by systems of chiestry and corruption of church and state, culminating in a. revolution which changed the destinice of all Curops. The tide of washall rolled incessantly vier Ourofer and Asia for more than fine Sundred years, The Courader and Saracens, whom the filain of Gersia and Arabia, urr fighting the great latter beturen Laganien

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and Christianity, while the Franke and Laurs, in wisten Ourope, urn struggling for national supremacy. The die of battle, during this great revolution, had sumbled along the rugged mountains of Austria and Pressice, and surefing southward four the feelile plain of Hungary and Poland, at last found scho in the vine clud hills of Staly. But theer long and bloody was had cleaned the church of the foul pollutions of skepticism and infidelity, and, opening the broad feath of Christianity, anakoned a desira for discourse in all

parts of Europe. The resultofall these was the great moral reference tion in Ourope and the discourse of the new world, from which period dutesthe era of the Modern Check" This Era danned whow the world with highter purspects then any the preceding periods. The unde and primative elements of life, that had gained heta foothold in former age, became matura and strengthund in this. The clark cloud of way that shrouded all the Cast in deep gloow, had rolled lack, and, in the interior of peace that followed, Columbia

set sail in his mission to the western world. after the downfall and Elfulsion of the Montegumas from the quen valleys of Mexico, our country because the prey to the ambition desperts of Queles. Set every lask of suriquents that landed on our shore, was freighted with the seeds of Tilesty; and scarely had the attentic court him settled, ere the new of our revolution declared this country for and undefrendent. Almost simultaneously with this declaration occurred the terrible revolution of Travers striking terror to the heart

of event despotic government on the continuet of Ourope, From three events date the era of the Latest Period" Lucing the heriod our country was heralded into the mond of life regardless of latent wils. For nearly righty years all seemed prospervus. The colonies hadquited to gether to form states, and the states. to form a depublic. Under our Republic everythingseemed to be conducin to the wilfar and happines of the profile. Our mans factures had attained a degree of perefiction witherto emknown, Our commercial intercourse with fireign nations nas rast and Estensing - braining

our products into the remotest funds of the Earth, and bringing in return the commodities of every climo, The arts and sciences flourished; and improvements of every kind um bring made; while our septems of common schools and highwinstitutions of learning urn bring establish-Ed all over the land, but, there user latent soils, deep down into the locom of this nation which un incompatible with the safety of our union. Out a few years ago, our four millions of prople in our country, une held in the most abject senitude. The clements of Decession, which had been rooted and grounded in the southern section of our union, had culminated in a great and gigantie was.

Our sefetime of government, having been weakened by internal dissention, was booked whow with doubt from alroad but the tide of war, with all its dion calcunities, came rollingout. It surfit like a maddened terrent our the sunney south, disolating her feetile plains, and carried terror and dismay to every hearthstown. Nor did it and her, but sucht incessantly ourand until the causes which brought on this rebillion together with its advocates, had level busind in our common gran. And from this freewood dates the how End Myannow entering into the haloryou days of one new mission. The dark sloud of was has priced away. The was of

cannon and the din of battle no longer strike turor to our hearts. The brews soldier his come back from the bloody buttle fields of the south and your to his home of quickerds and rest. The gallant Sailors have come from the brigh seas and anchored their ships in the harbor of freace The cries and lamintations of the widow and orphan air no longer heard saw for those who sleep their last sleep in the foul dungeous of the south or have fallen on the bloody field of battle. But while we mount for those who have fallen

in defence of their country, det us be thankful for the inheritance which they left es. Let us remember, that, in their death, this nationis strengthene dud and respendented . They have purified our government at home and competed its respect about. They have marked the afrock in the Eva of which the whole world is to be regenerated - the vilode firtism of the seed to be obliterated, and the fully morarchy of Maximillian to such down to the dipot of unfatheou able infamy. and when this shall have

go down to postivity-Whent, amid the was of clements, The work of matter, and the contestion have be suded, and the shall be suded, and the nations of the south shall be gathered together for the last time, our country sivel be found on the side of right, truth, justicy humanty, and of God.

1865 Junior Prize Contest Oration of Vincent Bierbower, Class of 1866 Transcribed by Krista Gray, September 2008 Edited by Meg MacAvoy, September 2008

Our Rebellion – an Epoch in History

From the most ancient period of which we have any authentic record, down to the present moment, there has been our continual revolution in the elements of our barbarous and of civilized society. The spirit of revolution, which has been one of the chief characteristics of the

human race, ever since its social organizations, has been the predominant element of sectional society.

It has been handed down from generation to generation until it has found a heritage in every chance upon the face of the earth.

The history of the world naturally divides itself into four distinct epochs – "Antiquity" "The Middle Ages," "The Modern Epoch," and "The Latest Period." In the eras of these respective epochs there is embodied the whole of past events – embracing the most distant ages which legend, and

tradition can chronicle, as well as the most civilized times which authentic history can record. In order then that we may more clearly understand the connection between the past and present, it may be well to notice the relation of these different periods to each other, and their combined influence upon the world at the present day. Of that dark and distinct period of "Antiquity," but little is known, save that obtained from visual history and the oral tradition of Herodotus. But, however remote may have

been that period, it is beyond doubt that there was the cradle of the human race, and there were enacted the first scenes of man's trials and temptations. Man, even at that – remote – period, had become cognizant of the great responsibilities with which he was entrusted. He found it necessary, in order to accomplish the Great end for which he was destined, to spread abroad over different parts of the earth, and to civilize those who were yet in a rude and barbarous state. This was accordingly done in the great migration of

nations over northern, central and southern Europe, from which period dates the era of the "Middle Ages"

This long and dark era was characterized by systems of chivalry and corruption of church and state, culminating in a revolution which changed the destinies of all Europe. The tide of war had rolled incessantly over Europe and Asia for more than five hundred years. The Crusaders and Saracens, upon the plains of Persia and Arabia, were fighting the great battle between Paganism

and Christianity, while the Franks and Danes, in western Europe, were struggling for national supremacy. The din of battle, during this great revolution, had rumbled along the rugged mountains of Austria and Prussia, and sweeping southward over the fertile plains of Hungary and Poland, at last found echo in the vine clad hills of Italy. But these long and bloody wars had cleansed the church of the foul pollutions of skepticism and infidelity, and, opening the broad path of Christianity, awakened a desire for discovery in all

parts of Europe. The results of all these was the great moral reformation in Europe and the discovery of the new world, from which period dates the era of the "Modern Epoch"

This era dawned upon the world with brighter prospects than any of the preceding periods. The rude and primitive elements of life, that had gained but a foothold in former ages, became matured and strengthened in this. The dark cloud of war, that shrouded all the East in deep gloom, had rolled back, and, in the interim of peace that followed, Columbus

set sail in his mission to the western world. After the downfall and expulsion of the Montezumas from the green valleys of Mexico, our country became the a prey to the ambitious despots of Europe. But - every lark of emigrants that landed on our shore, was freighted with the seeds of Liberty; and scarely had the Atlantic coast been settled, ere the war of our revolution declared this country free and independent. Almost simultaneously with this declaration occurred the terrible revolution of France, striking terror to the heart

of every despotic government on the continent of Europe. From these events dates the era of the "Latest Period."

During this period our country was heralded into the morn of life regardless of latent evils. For nearly eighty years all seemed prosperous. The colonies had united together to form states, and the states to form a Republic. Under our Republic every thing seemed to be conducive to the welfare and happiness of the people. Our manufactures had attained a degree of perfiction hitherto unknown. Our commercial intercourse with foreign nations was vast and extensive — bearing

our products into the remotest parts of the earth, and bringing in return the commodities of every clime. The arts and sciences flourished; and improvements of every kind were being made; while our systems of common schools and higher institutions of learning were being established all over the land. But, there were latent evils, deep down into the bosom of this nation which were incompatible with the safety of our union. But a few years ago, over four millions of people in our country, were held in the most abject servitude. The elements of Secession, which had been rooted and grown in the southern section of our union, had culminated in a great and gigantic war.

Our system of government, having been weakened by internal dissention, was looked upon with doubt from abroad. But the tide of war, with all its dire calamities, came rolling on. It swept like

a maddened tirrent over the sunny south, desolating her fertile plains, and carried terror and dismay to every hearthstone. Nor did it end here, but swept incessantly onward until the causes which brought on this rebellion, together with its advocates, had been buried in one common grave. And from this period dates the New Era.

We are now entering into the [halcyon?] days of our new mission. The dark cloud of war has passed away. The war of

cannon and the din of battle no longer strike terror to our hearts. The brave soldier has come back from the bloody battlefields of the south and gone to his home of quietude and, rest. The gallant sailors have come in from the high seas and anchored their ships in the harbor of peace. The cries and lamintations of the widow and orphan are no longer heard save for those who sleep in the foul dungeons of the south or have fallen on the bloody field of battle. But while we mourn for those who have fallen

in defence of their country, let us be thankful for the inheritance which they lift us. Let us remember, that, in their deaths, this nation is strengthened and regenerated. They have purified our government at home and completed its respect abroad. They have marked the epoch in the era of which the whole world is to be regenerated – the vile despotism of the east to be obliterated, and the petty monarchy of Maximillian to sink down to the depth of unfathomable infamy. And when this shall have

been done our country will go down to posterity – "Unhurt, amid the war of elements, The wreck of matter, and the hush of worlds".

And when our mission shall be ended, and the nations of the earth shall be gathered together for the last time, our country will be found on the side of right, truth, justice, humanity, and of God.