

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE.

1861.



AUGUSTA:  
STEVENS & SAYWARD, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.  
1861.

ADDRESS

OF

GOVERNOR WASHBURN

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

LEGISLATURE AND COUNCIL,

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

FEBRUARY 22, 1861.

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Printed by order of the Legislature.

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AUGUSTA:  
STEVENS & SAYWARD, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.  
1861.

*To the Senate and House of Representatives :*

In compliance with your request, I have the honor to transmit a copy of the Address delivered by me before the members of the Legislature and of the Executive Departments of the State Government, on the 22d of February, instant.

ISRAEL WASHBURN, JR.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,  
Council Chamber, February 25, 1861. }

## ADDRESS.

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*Mr. President: Mr. Speaker: Gentlemen of the Senate,  
and of the House of Representatives; and of the Ex-  
ecutive Departments of the Government:*

The day of which this is the Anniversary, is sacred and memorable as that which gave birth to WASHINGTON. And we but do an act of kindness to ourselves and to the age, when we show by fitting manifestations and ceremonies that we appreciate and honor his transcendent virtues, and his invaluable services in the cause of Liberty and the Rights of Mankind.

A character so simple and majestic, and a life so pure, so benignant and so great, have seldom, if ever, appeared upon the theatre of human affairs. The vastness of the issues and the grandeur of the results enfolded in the event which it is our privilege to commemorate, hallow and consecrate the birth day of the Father of his country forevermore.

For the beneficence of these results has not been limited to the times in which he flourished nor to the land in which he lived and died. They have been felt and will continue to be felt throughout the civilized world; and their influence will cease only,

“ When wrapp'd in flame the realms of ether glow,  
And Heaven's last thunders shake the world below.”

But their more immediate and perceptible influence has been seen in the great Republic which he founded. And that he was its founder, so happy and glorious was his life and example, forms not his chief title to our gratitude and reverence and love. It is rather in the manifestation in him of the qualities of justice, wisdom, patience, firmness, perseverance, humanity, and unconquerable loyalty to the right, so marvelously joined and fused, that the extent of our indebtedness for the gift of WASHINGTON, lies.

Profitable at all times as is the contemplation of the character and example of this great man, they are most valuable in those hours of danger and peril, from which no people are exempt, when the infirmities and passions incident to all human limitations, incite men in the blindness of impatience or jealousy or recklessness or injustice to wild and ruthless assaults upon the foundations of the State.

In such times the voice of that great Life becomes audible to us, saying, There is nothing on earth eternal but Truth, nothing divine but Humanity, and nothing invincible but Charity. In this school let us be pupils; and as in the presence of that august and benignant form, let us learn to be just, patient, long-enduring and kind, as also, to stand like an anvil in defence of the vital principles upon which alone, as he believed, could be established a government of liberty and justice. By the arts with which he founded this government, let us endeavor to preserve it.

From a study of these we shall be encouraged to hope and labor in every season of peril and darkness—to persevere under difficulties and to strive against all obstacles, however formidable they may seem, looking with faith and patience to the end.

When madness sways the minds of men, and the waves of disloyalty and sedition are lashed to fury by sectional strifes and jealousies, from whom but Washington, shall we learn to say to the troubled sea, ‘Peace, be still’?

And now that the ark of the Union is drifting with unskilful if not treacherous pilotage, among the breakers of secession, what chart but the “Farewell Address,” shall be consulted if we would save it from foundering in the dark and turbulent waters that encompass it?

Turning aside, as the suggestions of this day invite us, from the fret and fever of these unhappy times, let us revert in our minds to those great events in American history with which the name of Washington is forever associated. Following him through the war of the Revolution—the privations, sufferings, disasters, disappointments, discouragements—the neglects, the ingratitude, the treasons, the defeats of that long and almost hopeless struggle, we shall see how he overcame them all, and by his wonderful genius even transmuted them into the ministers of his success. We shall next attend with him upon the sittings of the Convention which framed the Constitution, and over whose deliberations he was by a unanimous vote called to preside, and find that to his influence and wisdom the

country is largely indebted for an organic law so admirable in its provisions and so wisely adapted to the wants of the people. And when this great work is completed we shall see him inaugurated as the first President of the Republic, upholding with a firm hand the organization of the State during the first eight years of its existence, amid the storms of controversy and the strifes and clamors of faction. And so that when his public life was terminated, it was truly said of him by the greatest of his successors, "His was the singular destiny and merit of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war for the establishment of its independence ; of conducting its councils through the birth of a government new in its forms and principles until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly train ; and of scrupulously obeying the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military, of which the history of the world furnishes no other example."

And now who is there among us all that believes that this Government so benificent, so wise, so indispensable to the prosperity and happiness of all the sections and all the people, is to be broken up and destroyed rather than it should be kept faithful to the ideas and objects for which it was created? How can this Union be broken up? By what infernal alchemy shall its dissolution be effected?

But it cannot be destroyed, and in the end no one will desire its destruction. There are laws of greater force than the enactments of Legislatures and Congresses, mightier than the ordinances of Conventions, stronger than sec-



tional feelings and passions, which have determined this question and made the Union of these States inevitable and enduring.

A Virginian, speaking in view of the present condition of affairs, of the bonds which unite the States, says :

“Material interests bind them ; rivers bind them ; railroads bind them ; trade binds them ; mutual wants and necessities bind them ; the laws of production and manufacture bind them ; the ice of the North and the tropical fruits of the South bind them ; safety against foreign danger binds them ; the kindred blood that flows in myriad of veins binds them ; the most perfect Constitution that ever was formed by man binds them ; the memories of the past bind them ; the yet unfulfilled destiny of this great nation binds them ; a thousand influences, seen and unseen, all conspire to bind these States together in indissoluble bonds.”

Aye, and let me add, Mount Vernon binds them—the tomb of him who was “first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen,” binds them.

A beautiful village in our own State contains the ashes of one who was the confidant, the friend most dear, most constant and most loved, of Washington. And there is no power nor authority beneath the sun, that shall avail to separate the tombs of Washington and Knox. In all these bonds consists the true Union of the States ; and those which have thus been joined together, nor man nor fiend shall put asunder.

By the services, by the character and by the incomparable life of Washington—by the grandest example in human history, by our love for virtue and goodness—by our faith in God and good men, and in the civilization of the age; by our attachment to the institutions of the land; by all great memories and hopes, let this day be celebrated by the American people, that its educating and ennobling influences may be felt and quickened in all their hearts. And the joyous bells that year after year shall ring in the memory of Washington, will at the same time

“Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
 For those that here we see no more;  
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
 Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
 And ancient forms of party strife;  
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,—  
 The faithless coldness of the times;  
 Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
 But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
 The civic slander and the spite;  
 Ring in the love of truth and right,  
 Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,  
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
 Ring out the darkness of the land,  
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.”