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# THOMAS STARR KING *and the* SECESSION MOVEMENT

*By Ann Casey*

## *Introduction*

... in 1864, at the suggestion of Senator Morrill of Vermont, the old House of Representatives was set apart as National Statuary Hall to which each state was invited to send the statues of two of its most distinguished citizens. The President was authorized to invite the State to provide and furnish statues in marble or bronze, not to exceed two in number, of deceased persons who have been citizens thereof, and illustrious for their historic renown because of distinguished civil or military service, such as each State shall determine to be worthy of this national commemoration.<sup>1</sup>

**I**T TOOK CALIFORNIA sixty-seven years to make its choice and dedicate its statues, but on March 1, 1931, the commission was fulfilled with the unveiling of two bronze figures — one, Father Junípero Serra — the other, Thomas Starr King.

Father Serra's place in California history is a foregone conclu-

sion for it was this Franciscan pioneer who first broke ground in these uncharted parts during the eighteenth century, thus laying the foundation for future growth and development. That he wisely chose the sites of his missions is evidenced in California's cities of today. Furthermore, he introduced the use of irrigation, a most important contribution to these arid regions. Without doubt, the system of mission life which he started in 1769 helped to prepare the way for this territory's eventual transition from a wilderness to the thirty-first state of a vigorously growing nation.

But what of the other man? What part did he play in California's history that he should be so honored? Just as Father Serra served in the initial preparations for California's later statehood, Thomas Starr King helped to preserve that statehood and to give strength to the Union to which it belonged.

Bishop Shahan of the Catholic University of America said of him in the invocation at the dedicatory exercises:

To Thee also, O Lord, are known the splendid civic merits of Thomas Starr King, foremost of the sons of California in the service of our glorious American Union during dark days of war and its many afflictions and sufferings. To his faith in the Union, his incomparable eloquence, his ingenious activity, and his farseeing charity California offers her tribute of gratitude. . . .<sup>2</sup>

George Wharton James, who has made a study of the heroes of California, refers to Thomas Starr King as the foremost citizen of California during the Civil War, but like most Californians of then and now, he was not native born. The Reverend Mr. King, a Unitarian clergyman, came here in his thirty-fifth year in answer to a call from San Francisco parishioners. Little did he dream when he left his Boston home and headed west by ship and the Isthmus of Panama that his activities would extend so far beyond his ministerial duties. They were killing activities for his frail body and he died before his fortieth birthday, but he was destined to live through the crucial years of 1860 to early 1864 in a state that was rife with secessionist sentiment and thus leave his mark on California history.

One wonders what might have happened if the fantastic plans and fanatic feelings of the Southern sympathizers had come to fruition. If they had achieved their plan to take California from the Union, the results of the war might have been decidedly different, for California's importance to the Union was greater than one might gauge, and the danger of her secession more imminent than one might realize. The mineral wealth of the state gave economic stability to the Union. What if this gold from "the bullion safe of the Republic"<sup>3</sup> had gone to the Confederacy? A French

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scholar, M. Alexander Buchner, is quoted in the *Overland Monthly* of May, 1869, as saying,

It is the gold of California which struck the fatal blow to the institution of slavery in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

And Dr. Rockwell D. Hunt speculates:

It California's official attitude was truly a major factor in preserving the Union, would not a contrary attitude have been a powerful factor for victory for the Confederacy, with profound changes resulting in the entire course of American history, including the institution of slavery and the very nature of the government itself?<sup>5</sup>

Was the situation ominous? Apparently it was. Incidents small and great show the intensity of feelings. Harris Newmark recorded in his memoirs that the Fourth of July was not celebrated in Los Angeles in 1863, nor again in 1864, because:

... sectional feeling had grown so bitter on account of the war...<sup>6</sup>

A small incident perhaps, but indicative of the times was the fact that the Bella Union, the principal hotel in town, proudly displayed a picture of General Beauregard on one occasion. This was met with much acclaim!

Southern California was a turbulent center for the secession movement, with vigorous activity in Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and El Monte. And Visalia, in the San Joaquin Valley, is not to be overlooked as "another town where secession spirit ran rampant."<sup>7</sup> There, it was an everyday occurrence for the people in the streets to cheer Jefferson Davis. But these sentiments were not limited to the southern area exclusively for there was an influential faction in San Francisco who favored the Confederacy and there even were those who were hopeful of capturing the Port of San Francisco for the Southern cause. Thus from San Diego to the northern border, trouble brewed, conspiracies were hatched, and disturbances of varying degrees took place.

The whole air, indeed, during the four years of war, was full of plots of southern adherents to overthrow or injure Union influence. Many of these were too fantastic ever to succeed, but the isolation of the state and the indifference of the public mind made the situation one of real danger, even as late as 1864.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, with these things in mind, and emphasized by the fact that 1961 is the year of the centennial of the start of the Civil War, it is the purpose of this paper to take a closer look at the prevailing conditions in our state, so far removed from the historic battlefields, but yet of vital importance to the maintenance of the Union; and, at "the man who saved California to the Union."

## *Conditions in California*



UBERT HOWE BANCROFT, California's voluminous historian, picturesquely refers to the state just prior to the Civil War as "still the elf-child of the Union, never regularly baptized into the family of states. . . ." This "unpurified" child had been the scene of shady politics ever since her obstreperous entrance into the Union in 1850 when she had stood at the door, ready-made constitution in hand, refusing to pass through the customary territorial portals. Her admittance had thrown the scales out of balance in respect to the "free-state-slave-state" ranks, thus causing considerable agitation nationally. Her own political waters were no less placid.

In the decade of statehood which preceded the war, the Democratic party was predominant, with a strong southern flavoring. There was a large southern population which was not easily turned from old ideas and traditions. Slavery still seemed favorable to them, though the practical-minded were ready to admit that the institution was not economically feasible in California. However, these astute southerners had managed to place themselves in positions of power in the machine-controlled party. Civic responsibility to the populace was nonexistent, the prevailing thought among the politicians being "personal gain," and the chief activity was the struggle among themselves for party supremacy.

Two of the most conspicuous men in this party strife were William Gwin and David Broderick. Gwin was one of the Southerners who had carefully laid his plans to secure political power in these new parts.

"... when the gold rush started, he set out for California, resolved to assume the leadership of politics in the new state and secure a seat in the United States Senate."<sup>10</sup>

This, he did.

Broderick was a New Yorker who had been schooled in Tammany Hall politics. He was just as determined to acquire political ascendancy as was Gwin, hence the battle was on — with no holds barred. Gwin, quite naturally, had the support of his fellow southerners who were referred to as the Chivalry Wing of the party, or the "Chivs." Broderick gained the backing of the western Democrats who were of northern birth. At first glance, one might believe this to be a conflict predicated upon principles but actually, it was nothing more than man's contention for power. Thus it was that

... the struggle for supremacy among these self constituted leaders

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furnished the chief element of excitement in state politics until the Civil War, and culminated in the bitter feud between Broderick and Gwin which disrupted the Democratic party and prepared the way for Republican control.<sup>11</sup>

During this decade there was another situation which embroiled the state and particularly enraged the southern counties. This was a geographical question. The southern half of the state was sparsely populated, the principal interests being agriculture and cattle raising, with uncontrolled lawlessness thrown in for good measure. The people of this region thought they were being unfairly taxed in proportion to the more heavily populated north, and also that their representation was less than it should be. The towns were few at this time, San Diego, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara being the remains of the old Spanish settlements whereas the new American element was represented by El Monte, San Bernardino, and Anaheim.

El Monte was the first of these American settlements to be established in Southern California. It was founded in 1851 by Texans and the settlers were commonly called the "Monte Boys." They were boisterous southern Democrats who were not to be taken lightly. They tilled their land well and knew the ways of a good stockman but they also liked their liquor and thought the gun a good way to settle differences of opinion.

In 1850, prior to the coming of this group, Los Angeles had sent a petition to Congress asking to have the southern counties taken out of the state and declared a separate territory to be known as Central California. The next year, greater effort was made to effect this bisection of the state, and so it went through the years of the "fifties." Finally, in 1859, the State Legislature approved a bill which provided for the withdrawal of the counties of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Bernardino. They were to become a separate political entity, bearing the name of Territory of the Colorado. The measure was ratified by the voters of the counties and the birth of the new territory seemed to be an accomplished fact. But fate was not to decree it, for the controversy over the slavery issue had so engulfed the Federal Congress that the discontent of five counties in California did not seem to be a matter of much import.

Indeed, it was the fate of the nation which became the engrossing issue! And so it was that

... the presidential campaign of 1860 was of more than ordinary significance in the political history of California; it was as vigorous as it was memorable.<sup>12</sup>

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Among the supporters for Breckenridge was John B. Weller who had been governor in 1858 and 1859. He stated in a campaign speech:

I do not know whether Lincoln will be elected or not, but I do know that, if he is elected and if he attempts to carry out his doctrines, the South will surely withdraw from the Union. And I should consider them less than men if they did not.<sup>13</sup>

The incumbent governor, John G. Downey, claimed to be a Union man but statements were made by him revealing that he was not without some sympathies for the southern cause. And so it went that Breckenridge, the champion of southern rights, had his supporters, and Douglas, the adversary of slavery, had his. But a third group of Democrats withdrew their support completely, joining the ranks of the newly-formed Republican organization. This splintering was the death blow to the long reign of the party. If the Democrats had been united, they could have carried the state by an overwhelming majority; as it was a Republican vote of 39,000 gave the four electoral votes to Lincoln.

With the approach of the Civil War, a critical situation arose in California. The isolated position of the state, and the lack of close political or economic ties to bind it to the rest of the nation, created a feeling of indifference among most of the northern sympathizers regarding the outcome of the great contest in which the national government was involved. A numerous foreign element in the population further accentuated this attitude of aloofness.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, with the outbreak of the war, feelings were mixed and of varying intensity. The southerner knew what he wanted and a large number of Confederate sympathizers left to join the forces. In turn, some 15,000 men showed their preference for the Union cause by voluntary enlistment. However, not many of the latter were to see active service. Of the remaining California citizenry, the Union sympathizers constituted a majority, but generally speaking, they were rather apathetic toward the whole affair.

A much more vociferous group was one which included former Governor Weller and other high officials. It was their contention that California should secede, not to join the Confederacy, but to form an independent Pacific Republic. This, he said, would free the people for making a choice between North and South and might indeed prove to be the greatest republic of all. The leading advocate of this proposed action was Congressman John C. Burch.

This idea was actually nothing new for in the past:

Whenever the Californians felt that they deserved better mail service, more protection against the Indians, a transcontinental railroad, or additional ports of entry, their dissatisfaction with Washington was apt to inspire visions of a Pacific Republic.<sup>15</sup>

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And so the pros and cons were weighed once again. It was felt that California's gold and the energy and venturesome nature of her people were certainly conducive to this undertaking. As a further inducement, the advocates pictured the North and the South in contention for their trade. But on the debit side, it was recognized that the population was small, and not much support could be counted upon by the neighboring states: the greater part of California trade had been with the northern states so perhaps there would not be a great commercial rivalry after all. And it should be recalled that the federal government had spent considerable sums of money for California's benefit.

During this period, a brilliant scientist, William H. Brewer, was traveling up and down California as part of a team (headed by Professor Josiah Whitney) which was making an official geological survey of the state. This young botanist was a keen observer, equally gifted with powers of expression. He wrote a series of remarkably descriptive letters which were later gathered into a journal. He writes of the proposed Pacific Republic on April 28, 1861:

Without protection, without mails, what would California be? A "Republic of the Pacific" is the sheerest nonsense. A republic of only about 900,000 inhabitants, less than a million, spread over a territory much larger than the original thirteen states, scattered hostile Indians and worse Mormons on their borders — what would either sustain or protect such a country? And the people feel it.<sup>16</sup>

Other letters, penned in the following months, tell of conditions as they existed throughout the rest of 1861.

Mountain View  
Sunday, September 1, 1861

One event of the week must not be forgotten — a grand barbecue of the Breckenridge Democrats (Secession), in a grove about a mile from camp. The Breckenridge party is quite large in this state and is much feared. Some of its men are open and avowed Secessionists, but the majority call themselves Union men, Peace men, most bitterly opposed to the Administration and opposed to any war policy — in fact, are for letting all secede who wish to. They are making great exertions just now, and hope to carry the state at the election next Wednesday. If they do I fear this state will be plunged into the same condition that Missouri is in. There are more secessionists in this state than you in the East believe, and many of them are desperadoes ready for anything in the shape of a row.<sup>17</sup>

Near Mission San José  
Sunday, September 8, 1861

It was election day, and much excitement existed at the several polls passed. This place is Secession.



Photo from Commemorative Book of Unveiling

### JUNIPERO SERRA STATUE

*One of the two statues presented by the people of California to National Statuary Hall, United States Capitol, at the unveiling ceremonies on March 1, 1931. This statue is the work of Sculptor Ettore Cadorin.*



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— Photo from Commemorative Book of Unveiling

**THOMAS STARR KING STATUE**

*The Presentation and Unveiling Ceremonies in Statuary Hall were presided over by Miss Grace S. Stoermer, who represented the Native Daughters of the Golden West, as Past Grand President. Sculptor for this statue was Haig Patigian.*

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There was more excitement in this state than there has been since the days of the Vigilance Committee. But the state has gone overwhelmingly Republican. There was much fear on the subject, from the fact that the Secessionists were united while the Union men were divided into Republicans and Douglas Democrats. But California is still for the Union, one and undivided.<sup>18</sup>

Clayton, at the foot of Mount Diablo  
October 4, 1861

I must fear trouble in this state. I know that the state as a state is loyal — it had shown it at the last election, it has shown it at the recruiting offices. But we have a large desperado population, most of whom belong to the Secessionists — men ready for anything, who care nothing for the cause of either North or South in the abstract, but who would inaugurate war for the sake of its spoils. Then there are others of southern birth and southern sympathies to lead them. A large Mexican population, but semicivilized at best, and who, as a class, hate the Americans with an inveterate hatred, is being incited by the Secessionists, especially in the southern part of the state. Already, over a large region life is very insecure, unarmed men stand no chance, robberies are daily committed by armed bodies calling themselves Secessionists. This does not extend here. It is mostly in San Diego, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles Counties — an immense region, sparsely peopled, and containing much desert. It is the worst in San Bernardino, and while I hope for the best, there is just cause of apprehension for a terrible state of affairs yet in this state.<sup>19</sup>

Indeed, the picture looked dark with the lukewarm Union backers doing little to support the cause while persons of stronger sentiments were making vigorous efforts on behalf of the Confederacy. Fortunately for the state, there was one more group which must be mentioned to round out properly the picture of "conditions in California." This was a group of ardent crusaders who constituted the militant wing of the Republican party. Some noted Californians were in this assemblage, among them Leland Stanford. And the leader of the group, who traveled the length and breadth of the state, from Dead Wood to Rough and Ready, Scott's Bar, Mugginsville, and Oro Fino — eloquently pleading the Union cause — was Thomas Starr King.

### *Activities of the Secessionists*



ALL OUTWARD APPEARANCES Edmund Randolph, a leading attorney of the state, was a Union man. When he had stood before the California Legislature as a candidate for the United States Senate, he emphasized his scorn for those who would attempt to overthrow the lawful government. He declared

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that he had no mercy for anti-Union trouble-makers. Without question, they should be shot as alien enemies. But Edmund Randolph was born in Virginia and in reality, he had the sentiments of a Virginian. He was, in fact, a member of a powerful movement that had every intent to subvert the federal government for he was a secessionist.

The secret group to which he belonged was made up of prominent and wealthy San Franciscans of southern background. The time was early 1861. The shot at Fort Sumter had not yet been fired but war was imminent and this cabal was readying a coup of the first magnitude. The plan was to capture the city and port of San Francisco, including Mare Island and Benicia Arsenal. At the same time, the state government at Sacramento was to be taken.

The members felt confident of success. Each one was to be responsible for recruiting one hundred men and thus form a company. These companies were to be located at strategic points and await the designated time of attack. The recruits would be military adventurers who were sympathetic to the southern cause. But the circumstance most in their favor, so they thought, was that the Commander of the Department of the Pacific was General Albert Sidney Johnston, Kentucky born and bred. The only fact they had not taken into account was that General Johnston was an honorable man and, though he was later to die at the Battle of Shiloh while leading Confederate forces, he would not betray his oath to the Federal Government as long as he was commissioned in the United States Army.

The details of this abortive plan have been distorted and the taint of treason has fallen upon the General but official records and letters show that he had no part in the scheme. To the contrary, he had advance information of the plot and took every precaution to stop it. Thirty-thousand surplus muskets were moved from Benicia to Alcatraz and a shift in officer personnel was effected whereby all key posts were held by men of northern inclination. When Randolph learned of Johnston's actions, and that he would not co-operate with the conspirators, he got his revenge by spreading the lie that the General intended to capture California for the Confederacy. The word was relayed to Washington and plans were made to relieve the southerner of his command.

On March 22 General Sumner was given secret orders to sail incognito for San Francisco. He embarked from New York, passing through the Golden Gate on April 24. But General Johnston,

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unaware of his stealthy dismissal, had already tendered his resignation via Pony Express on April 10, 1861. On April 14 he had written to his brother-in-law, Dr. J. S. Griffin, of Pasadena:

I have forwarded my resignation to the President. I have served faithfully up to the present moment, and will continue to do so until relieved. Until then I will do nothing inconsistent with my obligation to the Government, as an officer. I have consulted with my wife. It brings me face to face with poverty. There is no dishonor in this; but to serve without the proper motive, there would be.<sup>20</sup>

The new commander, friend and admirer of Johnston, reported to the Adjutant-General in Washington on April 28:

I have the honor to report that I arrived here on the 24th inst., and on the 25th relieved General Johnston, in command of this Department. It gives me pleasure to state that the command was turned over to me in good order. General Johnston had forwarded his resignation before I arrived, but he continued to hold the command, and was carrying out the orders of the Government. My departure from New York was not known until the night before my arrival.<sup>21</sup>

Thus an early Union tragedy was averted on the California scene, but the secession sentiment still prevailed and General Sumner felt it, for on that same day, and to the same person, he wrote:

I have no doubt that there is some deep scheming to draw California into the secessionist movement. The troops now here will hold their position on all government property, but if there should be a general uprising of the people it would be impossible to put it down.<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, the southern frenzy seemed to be spread far and wide throughout the state. Harris Newmark recalled:

When the Civil War began, California and the neighboring territory showed such pronounced Southern sympathies that the National Government kept both under close surveillance, for a time stationing Major, afterward General, James Henry Carleton . . . in 1862 sent across the Colorado River when the Government drove out the Texans . . . with a force at Camp Latham, near Ballona, and dispatching another force to Drum Barracks, near Wilmington. The Government also established a thorough system of espionage over the entire Southwest.<sup>23</sup>

In Santa Barbara it was reported that the native population was going secessionist to the last man.

San Bernardino and El Monte were regarded by the authorities as the two dangerous spots. Troops were kept at San Bernardino

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until the end of the war and were stationed at El Monte intermittently.<sup>24</sup>

After a few months in California, General Sumner wrote, on September 30, to Colonel Wright, the commander at Camp Drum:

The secession party in the state numbers about 32,000 and they are very restless and zealous, which gives them great influence. They are congregating in the southern part of the state, and it is there they expect to continue their operations against the government. . . . Put a stop to all demonstrations in favor of the rebel government, or against our own. You will establish a strong camp at Warner's Ranch and take measures to make Fort Yuma perfectly secure.<sup>25</sup>

General Sumner was aware that behind some of the overt demonstrations were certain well-organized groups which were fanatic in their devotion to the southern cause. Union agents were able to join some of these and thus supply detailed reports of their activities.

Many people vowed their loyalty to the federal government but secretly entered into disloyal activities. Two secret organizations, The Knights of the Golden Circle and the Knights of the Columbia Star, were established early. The Golden Circle, for example, had been originally conceived by Dr. George Bickley six years before the war. It was taken up by certain pro-slavery men who were growing uneasy. By the time guns were barking, the organization had a membership of 50,000, mostly in Texas. From there it spread rapidly east, into the north, and west to the Pacific Coast. The number of incognitos in California was unknown, but it was an active and numerous circle of chevaliers in this invisible "empire" that appealed to the zest of adventure as well as to the patriotic zeal.<sup>26</sup>

In August, 1861, a copy of the pledge and constitution of the Knights of the Golden Circle was put into Sumner's hands. It reads:

*Whereas*, a crisis has arrived in our political affairs which demands the closest scrutiny and strictest vigilance of every true patriot as an American citizen; and *whereas*, we view with regret and heartfelt sorrow the existence of a civil war now waged by one portion of the American people against one another; and, *whereas*, we also believe that this war has been called into requisition by the present executive of the United States without the guarantee of the constitution and without the consent of either branch of the American Congress in their legislative capacity, and believing this is an unjust, unholy, iniquitous war; therefore be it

*Resolved*, that we, as a portion of the citizens of the United States, will support the constitution as it now stands, together with the amendments thereunto appended, and that we will strictly adhere to the decisions of the United States supreme court made under said constitution where a difference of opinion has hereto-

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fore or may hereafter occur between the citizens of one state and those of another, or between the state and the federal government, foreign citizens, subjects, etc. Second, be it further

*Resolved*, that, in our opinion, the president has violated the most sacred palladium of American liberty by the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, and thus depriving an American citizen of having the cause of his imprisonment inquired into by the proper tribunal. Third, be it further

*Resolved*, that we are in favor of sustaining the southern states of the American Confederacy in all of their constitutional rights; that we believe an unconstitutional war is now being waged against them to subject them to a taxation enormous and unequal and to deprive them in the end of their species of property called slaves. Fourth, and be it lastly

*Resolved*, that we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our property, and our sacred honor to sustain our brethren of the southern states in the just defense of their constitutional rights, whether invaded by the present executive or by a foreign foe.

OBLIGATION

I, (.....), here in the presence of these witnesses, before Almighty God promise and swear that I will not divulge or reveal any of the secrets of this institution to anyone except I know him to be a brother (or to instruct candidates). I furthermore swear that I will obey the proper authorities when ordered to do so, and that I will assist a brother of this institution in his rights, individually or constitutionally, when required of me by him, if need be with my life. All this I solemnly swear to obey under penalty of being shot.<sup>27</sup>

The more pointed oath declares:

Whoever dares our cause reveal,  
Shall test the strength of knightly steel;  
And when the torture proves too dull,  
We'll scrape the brains from out his skull  
And place a lamp within the shell  
To light his soul from here to hell.<sup>28</sup>

“Secesh” newspapers were a reflection of the times and they felt no compunction in expressing their views. This was particularly evident in such communities as Visalia

... and other cities of the San Joaquin, at Sonoma, and in the Santa Clara Valley. ... In certain of these communities the newspapers boldly championed the southern cause. ...<sup>29</sup>

On Thanksgiving Day, 1862, the *Visalia Equal Rights Expositor* published this version of a prayer which bites with ridicule:

O Lord we thank thee for letting the rebels wallop us at the battle of Pittsburg Landing — for letting them smite us hip and

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thigh, even unto the destruction of 9,600 of our good loyal soldiers, and 463 of our officers; and for giving speed to their legs through the awful swamps of Chicahominy; and, O Lord, most especially do we thank thee for the licking they gave us at Bull Run the second, and assisting our flight from the fatal field; and, O Lord, never while we live will we forget Antietam, where we had 200,000 and they only 70,000 — if they, O Lord, had a happened to a had as many men as we, we'd a been a done gone in — and that friendly creek between us, the mountains that kept our men from running...<sup>30</sup>

It is not surprising that at a later date, General Sumner felt compelled to exclude this paper from the mails, along with the *Stockton Democrat*, the *Stockton Argus*, the *Tulare Post*, and the *San José Tribune*.

By 1863 William Brewer, who had been roaming California for three years, was a little more confident of Union support in the state but he was still aware of the difficulties which it faced. On July 26 he wrote:

Secession would be a yet greater folly than with the southern states. With an immense territory, with a population with less than a million — one-half of which is in a district embracing only one-tenth of the state, the remainder scattered over a territory of over 160,000 square miles, with over 600 miles of seacoast — she would be as an infant; a tenth-rate power could annoy her and crush her resources. Yet, there are many Secessionists — enough to fill the minds of loyal citizens with just cause for anxiety. These may be divided into three classes: the first, small yet formidable, of desperadoes, who have nothing but their worthless lives to lose, and might gain something by robbery in case of an outbreak; second, a class of southern descent, whose sympathies are with the South, who do not wish to see civil war, yet who would glory in the fall of the Republic.

The third, and last, is the largest, and comprises a considerable party, mostly the Breckenridge part of the Democratic party, who at present control and really represent the Democratic party in this state. These call themselves Union men, but deny that the Government has any power to put down rebellion constitutionally, that in fact, the United States was always a “confederacy,” but never a nation. Some of them are active Secessionists, but most are only talking men, who wield some power. Judge Terry, who killed Broderick, you remember, and is now at Richmond, is an example of this class, and many other men who once held office. Were they in power now it is not probable that they would commence active hostility against the Union, but they would throw every means in their power against the General Government.<sup>31</sup>

All this recital of secessionist activities is not meant to convey that California was completely disloyal. To the contrary, there were demonstrations of Union support as well which will be dis-

cussed later, but certain historians have likened California to a border state and thus it was evident that problems should arise from this situation. If feelings ran high for the Southern cause, they could only be countered by equally intense emotions. There was such a man who possessed this fervency of spirit which was based upon his love of country and his undaunted patriotism. He was Thomas Starr King.

### *Thomas Starr King and His Counter-Action*

Alas for the perishableness of eloquence! It is the only thing in the higher walks of human creativeness that passes away. The statue lives after the sculptor dies, as sublime as when his chisel left it. St. Peter's is a perpetual memorial and utterance of the great mind of Angelo. The Iliad is as fresh today as twenty-five centuries ago. The picture may grow richer with years. But great oratory, the most delightful and marvelous of the expressions for mortal power, passes and dies with the occasion.<sup>32</sup>



SO SPOKE THOMAS STARR KING OF DANIEL WEBSTER — and so we of today might speak of Starr King. If indeed he was “the man who saved California to the Union,” oratory was the means which he used, and since “oratory dies with the occasion,” perhaps that is why King is California's all but “forgotten hero.”

On April 28, 1860, Thomas Starr King first set foot on California soil. He had found the passage into the bay through the Golden Gate, with rocks on the one side and a steep mountain on the other, most interesting. He was charmed by the wild flowers carpeting the mountain top. He thought their colors as striking as the October shades of New England. But the city of San Francisco, sprawling over a few sand hills, seemed a strange place to him and he was not sure just how he was going to like it. However, this was going to be his home for awhile. Perhaps after several years, when his church was well established, he and Julia and their small daughter, Edith, could return to the more civilized East. In the meantime, life should be easier and he should get a much needed rest.

The California offer was not the only one he had had to consider. Chicago had wanted him. A \$5,000 salary and a new church were the inducements there. Cincinnati had also been anxious to have him. It had been a difficult decision but he had been preaching and lecturing for eleven years in the East; in the West, he could bring out all the old sermons again for they would be fresh to the new listeners. And he would not need to augment his meager salary



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by traveling the lecture circuit as he had been doing these many years. Thus he had written a friend on the day after Christmas 1859:

When under pressure, I feel the claims of Cincinnati; when alone, so that the attractions of the two posts play unobstructed, I find San Francisco the stronger body. Drs. Putnam, Peabody, Heywood, Hill, Livermore, the brethren in Cincinnati, and lastly and strongest, you, have endorsed the call from the Queen City with very urgent and wise appeals. If I still feel in the core of the heart an impulse to the more distant region, must I not take it as the Providential intimation? . . . I think I shall send in my resignation next week to the society here. It will tear my inward cords as nothing in life yet. But I do think we are unfaithful in huddling so closely around the cozy stove of civilization in this blessed city, and I am ready to go out into the cold and see if I am good for anything. I grieve intensely over the probable disappointment of the Cincinnati brethren. Pecuniarily I think their call is better than San Francisco; and they offer to let me go to Europe, too, which I must now postpone indefinitely. But I do not feel strong enough for the work they need, and I cannot but feel that San Francisco is the more crying call.<sup>33</sup>

Starr King could have had no idea just what that "more crying call" would be but the busy years of his young life had been giving preparation to the heights to which he would attain before his brief life span was finished.

New York City was the birth place; December 17, 1824, the date of birth for this eldest son of a Universalist minister.

The father was a man of high character, good abilities as a preacher and fine social qualities. From him "Starr" inherited his sunny disposition, keen sense of humor and companionable nature. His intellectual gifts seemed to have descended to him chiefly through his mother, a woman of character and intelligence, who early noted and sedulously fostered the studious bent of her talented son.<sup>34</sup>

Six years of his boyhood were spent in the seaport town of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. When he was eleven years old, the family moved to Charleston, Massachusetts, and it was there that he spent the rest of his formative years. His father died when the young Thomas was fifteen thus putting upon him the responsibilities of providing for his mother and five younger brothers and sisters. He had been a capable student, acquiring a good knowledge of Latin and French, and was a likely prospect for higher education but this unhappy turn of events seemed to put an end to all thoughts of future scholarship and a possible professional life. Instead he became a store clerk.

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But his mother, well aware of her son's abilities, coupled with her own love for the best in literature, encouraged his continued study. Together they read the masterpieces. Dante was perused as were the plays of Shakespeare, Plutarch's *Lives*, Grote's *History of Greece*, and Bullfinch's *Mythology*. When he was eighteen, he was able to move up the employment ladder both in status and salary. He became a bookkeeper in the Charleston Navy Yard and with a bit more leisure time, he could spend added hours on his studies. He found great satisfaction in the study of the German language and literature and delighted in talking of Goethe and Schiller and other German poets. The study of philosophy engrossed him as he made the acquaintance of Socrates and Plato.

Teaching in the Bunker Hill Grammar School became his next profession in 1840, and in 1842, he was made principal of the West Grammar School at Medford, Massachusetts. During this period he was preparing himself for the ministry through self-directed study. In 1846 he was ordained.

During the rest of his years in the East, he filled two pulpits; the first two years in Charlestown; the remainder, in the Hollis Street Church in Boston. In these years he achieved a certain degree of fame not only among the members of his own denomination, but further afield through his travels along the Lyceum circuit which flourished from 1840 to 1860.

Large numbers of lecture courses, extending even to the small cities and towns, were liberally patronized and generously supported. In many communities this was the one diversion and the one extravagance. To fill the new demand an extraordinary group of public speakers appeared.<sup>35</sup>

Emerson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Henry Ward Beecher, Edward Everett among others were included in this group.

That he was always wanted with such rivals as those is proof enough of King's power with the people, of his fame as an orator, even before his greater development and his more wonderful achievements in California. His lecture circuit extended from Boston to Chicago. His principal subjects were "Goethe," "Socrates," "Substance and Show," a lecture which ranks next to Wendell Phillips' "Lost Arts" in popularity. Notwithstanding the academic titles King gave his lectures they seemed to have been popular with all classes. "Grand, inspiring, instructive lectures," said the learned. "Thems . . . ideas," said unlettered men of sound sense. It was thought to be a remarkable triumph of platform eloquence that King could make such themes fascinating to Massachusetts farmers and Cape Cod fishermen. In fine phrase it was said of him that he lectured upon such themes as Plato and Socrates "with a premature-

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ness of scholarship, a delicacy of discernment, a sweet innocent combination of confidence and diffidence, which were inexpressibly charming.<sup>36</sup>

Thus it seems evident that he had the power to reach people of all shades of thought and all degrees of learning. This was to be the weapon in his fight for the maintenance of the statehood of California.

The year of King's arrival in California was, of course, the eventful election year of 1860. His fame had preceded his arrival and many were looking forward to seeing the extraordinary young man — and many were disappointed. This "giant" of an orator turned out to be a man of slight stature, not too impressive looking at first glance; but the people went to hear him out of curiosity, only to come away convinced of his greatness. Jessie Benton Frémont was one such person. She was to become a staunch friend. King told her that though he weighed only 120 pounds — when he was mad, he weighed a ton. Jessie Frémont wanted him

... to weigh a ton. She wanted him to get mad at the secessionists bent on destroying the Union and strengthening slavery.<sup>37</sup>

The rest that he had hoped to get did not seem to be forthcoming and one week after his arrival, he was on the lecture platform again. The editor of the *Daily Alta California* commented:

Among the multitude of rising intellects — writers, preachers, lecturers and reformers — at the East, few have acquired so great a reputation, at so early an age as Starr King. Those who wish to hear a live thinker discuss living and vital topics, in a fresh, original, and sometimes startling manner, will do well to attend this course.<sup>38</sup>

The alert pro-Southern *Alameda Gazette* recognized a potential enemy, labeling him an ambitious youngster of dangerous rantings.

King was able to indulge his love of nature that first summer by spending a July holiday in Yosemite but when he returned to San Francisco, the election excitement was on and he had a job to do. None of the expounders of his greatness claim that this is the point where he "saved California" for the obvious fact is that Lincoln carried California only because the Democrats were divided — but he was active in the campaign. He dug out an old ten-year discourse on "Patriotism" which he revived and delivered to his congregation.

Patriotism is unselfish devotion to the idea of a nation, its heaven-inspired soul, its representative office and mission. And anything lower than this form of it here, any interpretation of it equivalent to a defense of every act of every administration, even

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when that act does violence to the spirit of our history and the providential pointings of our call, is a disgrace to ourselves, an abuse to a noble word, and an offense before God. If a country such as ours is to raise no loftier, no more heroic type of national virtue than that, our fertile zones will indeed be barren of attractive fruit. Then we may say, here is America, but where are the Americans?<sup>39</sup>

The following months found him traveling the rough roads of California and Nevada proclaiming his Union sentiments. He went to Sacramento and Hangtown, to Sun Mountain in Nevada, Virginia City, Carson City, and other mining towns in the gold regions. It was a dangerous journey for a Lincoln man but he was able to command the attention of his rough audiences and come through unscathed.

The fact that Lincoln was elected did not mean that California's problem was resolved, rather it portended the dark days that were to follow. Of the fifty-three newspapers in California, only seven had been backers of Lincoln. On the California political scene, there were only four Republicans in the State Senate, and in the House they were out-numbered fifty-four to nineteen. The Governor was a Democrat as were all the delegates to Washington — and most of them gave their sympathies to the South. A strong Union man was needed for governor. This was to be King's next project. Leland Stanford was to be the candidate.

Eighteen sixty-one was a year of decision for California and an equally busy one for Thomas Starr King.

It was in February, 1861, though he was as yet unconscious of the great mission to which he was being called, that Starr King fired the opening gun of his oratorical campaign by giving at a patriotic rally in San Francisco an address on "Washington and the Union." In the month following Starr King delivered one of the most powerful and popular of his addresses, "Webster and the Constitution." A few weeks later he spoke to another great audience on "Lexington and the New Struggle for Liberty." Later themes of his patriotic appeal were "The Great Uprising" and "The New Nation to Issue from the War." These addresses, repeated all over the State, created a great sensation and were listened to by large and delighted audiences.<sup>40</sup>

By this time, William Brewer had made the acquaintance of King and was much impressed by him. In a letter of June 23, 1861, he wrote:

On Saturday night at ten o'clock a flag was raised on T. Starr King's church. He is very strong for the Union, and this was for a surprise for him on his return from up country. A crowd was in the streets as he returned from the steamer. He mounted the steps,

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made a most brilliant impromptu speech, and then ran up the flag with his own hand to a staff fifty feet above the building. It was a beautiful flag, and as it floated out on the breeze that wafted in from the Pacific, in the clear moonlight, the hurrahs rent the air — it was a beautiful and patriotic scene.

Sunday I went to hear him preach. He is a most brilliant orator, his language strong and beautiful. He is almost worshipped here, and is exerting a greater intellectual influence in the state than any other two men.<sup>41</sup>

That summer Thomas Starr King wrote to a friend in the East:

We are boiling over with all sorts of agitation here. The Secessionists have taken great heart since Manassas Junction. There are three tickets for Governor and Congressman in the field, Secession-Democratic, Union-Democratic, and True-Blue Republican. The Secessionists are all of a sudden peace men, and flood the State with documents on the cost of war, its horrors, and the propriety of stopping the fight and recognizing Jeff Davis. Owing to the division of the Union strength there begin to be fears that the Secessionists may get a plurality, and so we are arming, drilling and spouting. Among other forces to save the State I have taken to lecturing again — an hour and a half on “The Confederate States, Old and New.” Last night, I spoke on “Peace, and What It Would Cost Us,” for the benefit of the New York and Massachusetts Volunteers. House packed. Enthusiasm tremendous. Profits for the fund \$1,500. Speech printed before daylight this morning, and now flying over the State by thousands. I am to give another lecture for the same fund in two weeks.<sup>42</sup>

The speech to which he referred was considered to be his best sermon. It must be noted that it was presented at a time when fortunes were turned against the Union. Things looked good for the South and the Secessionists were talking about an “honorable” peace. It was delivered August 29, 1861, at Platt’s Hall. Here are several paragraphs from the oration which caused such a stir among his listeners.

And let us not forget this: When the advocates for peace among us press their arguments upon us against war, be sure to remember that no war is so horrible as *civil* war. And the only danger of war on our soil, at our doors, lies in the triumph, next week, of the eager *peace*-party. They are *so* devoted, of a sudden, to the interests of California! California owes her greatness to the Union, and the American Constitution. And what is their attitude toward these? Are their leaders for the Union? No; they cheer secession. They argue and declaim that a man owes allegiance to his State more than to the Nation: to his State — not the State where he lives; where the American flag covers and tries to ennoble him; where his prosperity wells up, and is assured and guarded — but to the State in which he was born; on which he turned his back; where probably he owns no property, and can be held for

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no duty in any hour; and for which, probably, he is too much a coward to return and fight.

You have seen the game of "Simon," which children play. They sit in a circle, and one stands in the middle and says, "Simon says up," and up go the hands; "Simon says down" and down they go; "Simon says wiggle-waggle," and all heads and hands waver. That is the statemanship of the party that believes in State supremacy, and does not acknowledge the sovereignty of the American Constitution. What has the head of the spurious peace party himself confessed? He waved his finger and said, "I go with my State, Kentucky, and she will be out of the Union in two weeks. He was no prophet, nor the son of one. Kentucky is for Union, and spurns Breckenridge for the traitor. But California trusts nobody that plays the game of "Simon says wiggle-waggle," at the peril of the Constitution. She wants a governor who remembers his oath, and keeps his eye on the Eagle and the Stars. And *only* such a man can sit in her chair of State, whoever may get there.

We do need a peace party here; a serried, serious, triumphant one, that shall save the State against the civil gophers that are now undermining its prosperity, and place a man true to the Union in its highest seat. *Civil* war is our danger. Let the candidate of the Joab party triumph, and set himself against the requisitions of the Government, and seek in the administration of his office, to extend open aid to Mr. Jefferson Davis, and we shall have *civil war*, which will wipe out the memory of such trifles as tax bills from Washington. For the loyal men of California, who owe allegiance first to the Constitution of the country, would bear no such treason. They would arm against it. They would rally. They would sweep the perjurer from his seat. They would send him where Missourians sent Claiborne Jackson. They would keep the Constitution supreme over the Governor's chair. They do this in mercy to the State, as their serious Christian duty; and I know ministers who, if they have not muscle enough to hold a musket, and do not measure enough around the chest to be mustered into service, would be willing to load revolvers for troops, and tear up their Bibles for wadding. If we would have peace in the State, we must show a strong front of Union loyalty. We must turn an ear, stone deaf, to insidious treason. We must look to our powder, and not to what it costs.<sup>43</sup>

A "Home Guard" was formed that year in San Francisco which worked industriously to elect the right governor, among other things. Thomas Starr King was an active participant in the organization. Many years later Horace Davis, a fellow member, gave a first-hand account of their activities. He recalled:

There were really but two tenable positions, for or against the government, and we called on every man to take his stand on one side or the other. . . . Mass meetings were called all over the State, and we sent our ablest and most eloquent men as missionaries. Starr King was especially conspicuous and he travelled over the interior from north to south, firing the zeal of the loyal men. His

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meetings were sometimes disturbed, and occasionally his life was threatened, but take it altogether, it was wonderful that so few real disturbances occurred.<sup>44</sup>

Davis further recollected:

We worked to elect a war governor who would do all he could to uphold the hands of Mr. Lincoln. Of the three candidates, Stanford was the only one who filled the bill. Next we labored to maintain the patriotic propaganda throughout the State, of which Starr King was the great apostle.<sup>45</sup>

Their vigorous efforts brought success and Stanford was elected governor but this was not the end of the oratory. The sermons and lectures continued to pour forth, bearing such titles as "The Confederate States, Old and New," "The Pilgrims," "The Treason of Judas Iscariot," and "The Choice Between Barabbas and Jesus."

Although his expanding church was bringing heavier pressure on his ministry, so widespread was his popularity as a patriotic orator that many people were forgetting that he was a minister at all. Political discourses meant but one thing to them — politics. Leland Stanford broke the news to Starr: there was a campaign on foot to persuade him to run for senator! That was not to his liking. "I would rather swim to Australia before taking a political post," he declared. Politics in the pulpit was enough for him. The campaign died.<sup>46</sup>

There was politics in other pulpits too — in varying intensities and in diverse shadings. Catholic Archbishop Alemany of San Francisco, in anticipation of the oncoming conflict, had issued a pastoral letter which was published in the *San Francisco Bulletin* of February 25, 1861, in which he spoke out against divorces and duels. He concluded by giving equal condemnation to the national divorce and duel which seemed to be looming ahead. The Methodist Church had its Reverend Myron C. Briggs who played an active role and earned a place for himself as a patriotic orator. But not all the churches were pro-Union and those churches which had branches, North and South, such as the Methodist Episcopal Church contributed to grave disturbances.

Some felt it a serious mistake for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, ever to have entered the free state of California.<sup>47</sup>

One of the most outspoken Southern sympathizers was the leading Presbyterian clergyman of San Francisco, the Reverend Dr. William A. Scott, who had come from New Orleans. He enraged some of the San Franciscans by praying for the "presidents" and one Sunday morning found himself hung in effigy in front of the church door and bearing the label, "*Dr. Scott, the Reverend Traitor.*"

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He had an unusually large congregation that morning, but he discreetly omitted the offensive prayer. A few days later he resigned his pastorate and on October 1, departed with his family for the South, where he remained until after the termination of the Civil War.<sup>48</sup>

This praying for "presidents" in the plural was reprehensive to Thomas Starr King and drew a strong response in which he declared of the President of the Confederacy:

He is a representative to my soul of a force of evil. His cause is pollution and a horror. His banner is a black flag. I could pray for him as one man, a brother man, in his private, affectional, and spiritual relations to heaven. But as President of the seceding States, head of brigand forces, organic representative of the powers of destruction within our country — pray for him! — as soon for Antichrist! Never!<sup>49</sup>

On April 27, 1862, the ever-observant Brewer wrote of the dynamic effect of the Reverend King in these words:

T. Starr King delivered a patriotic sermon that night, the anniversary of the fall of Fort Sumter, which, although probably hardly appropriate for Sunday, was nevertheless a most brilliant and eloquent performance. The crowded church could scarcely be restrained from bursting out in enthusiasm during some passages.<sup>50</sup>

And so his words continued to be heard throughout the perilous days and months to follow — words which sought to inflame the spirit of national unity he so highly cherished. He seemed to foresee the greatness this nation could attain if it remained whole and he was willing to give his life for those convictions. We, who are a hundred years removed from his oratory, can never really feel the effect which it had on those earlier Californians because as he himself said, "oratory dies with the occasion" and the printed word cannot properly breathe life into his impassioned speech, but the following address on "The Privilege and Duties of Patriotism" might give some small idea of the persuasiveness of the man and why he has been so honored by the state of California.

I am to speak to you of the Privilege and Duties of American Patriotism.

First the Privilege. Patriotism is love of country. It is a privilege that we are capable of such a sentiment. Self-love is the freezing-point in the temperature of the world. As the heart is kindled and ennobled it pours out feeling and interest, first upon family and kindred, then upon country, then upon humanity. The home, the flag, the cross — these are the representatives or symbols of the noblest and most sacred affections or treasures of feeling in human nature.

We sometimes read arguments by very strict moralists which



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cast a little suspicion upon the value of patriotism as a virtue, for the reason that the law of love, unrestricted love, should be our guide and inspiration. We must be cosmopolitan by our sympathy, they prefer to say. Patriotism, if it interferes with the wider spirit of humanity, is sectionalism of the heart. We must not give up to country "what is meant for mankind."

Such sentiments may be uttered in the interest of Christian philanthropy, but they are not healthy. The Divine method in evoking our noblest affections is always from particulars to generals. God "hath set the solitary in families," and bound the families into communities, and organized communities into nations; and he has ordained special duties for each of these relationships, and inspired affections to prompt the discharge of them and to exalt the character.

The law of love is the principal of the spiritual universe just as gravitation is the governing force of space. It binds each particle of matter to every other particle, but it attracts inversely as the square of the distance, and thus becomes practically a series of local or special forces, holding our feet perpetually to one globe, and allowing only a general unity, which the mind appropriates through science and meditation, with the kindred but far-off spheres. The man that has most of the sentiment of love will have the most intense special affections. You cannot love the whole world and nobody in particular. If you try that, it will be true of you as of the miser who said, "what I give is nothing to nobody." However deep this baptism in general good-will, a man must look with a thrill that nothing else can awaken, into the face of the mother that bore him; he cannot cast off the ties that bind him to filial responsibilities and a brother's devotion; and Providence has ordained that out of identity of race, a common history, the same scenery, literature, laws, and aims — though in perfect harmony with good-will to all men — the wider family feeling, the distinctive virtue, patriotism, should spring. If the ancient Roman could believe that the yellow Tiber was the river dearest to Heaven; if the Englishman can see a grandeur in the Thames which its size will not suggest; if the Alpine storm-wind is a welcome-home song to the Swiss mountaineer; if the Laplander believes that his country is the best the sun shines upon; if the sight of one's own national flag in other lands will at once awaken feelings that speed the blood and melt the eyes; if the poorest man will sometimes cherish a proud consciousness of property in the great deeds that glow upon his country's annals and in the monuments of its power — let us confess that the heart of man, made for the Christian law, was made also to contract a special friendship for its native soil, its kindred stock, its ancestral traditions — let us not to fail to see that where the sentiment of patriotism is not deep, a sacred affection is absent, an essential element of virtue is wanting, and religion is barren of one prominent witness of its sway.

But why argue in favor of patriotism as a lofty virtue? History refuses to countenance the analytic ethics of spiritual dreamers. It pushes into notice Leonidas, Tell, Cincinnatus, Camil-

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lus, Hampden, Winkelried, Scipio, Lafayette, Adams, Bolivar, and Washington, in whom the sentiment has become flesh, and gathered to itself the world's affections and honors. It asks us, "What do you say of these men? These are among the brighter jewels of my kingdom. Thousand of millions fade away into the night in my realm, but these souls shine as stars, with purer lustre as they retreat into the blue of time. Is not their line of greatness as legitimate as that of poets, philosophers, philanthropists, and priests? . . ."

### *NATIONAL PATRIOTISM*

It is a privilege of our nature, hardly to be measured, that we are capable of the emotion of patriotism, that we can feel a nation's life in our veins, rejoice in a nation's glory, suffer for a nation's momentary shame, throb with a nation's hope. . . .

Think of a man living in one of the illustrious civilized communities of the world, and insensible to its history, honor, and future — say, of England! Think of an intelligent inhabitant of England so wrapped in selfishness that he has no consciousness of the mighty roots of that kingdom, nor of the toughness of its trunk, nor of the spread of its gnarled boughs! Runnymede and Agincourt are behind him, but he is insensible to the civil triumph and the knightly valor. All the literature that is crowned by Bacon, Shakespeare, and Milton, the noblest this earth ever produced from one national stock, awakens in him no heart-beat of pride. He reads of the sturdy blows in the great rebellion, and of the gain to freedom by the later and more quiet revolution, and it is no more to him than if the record had been dropped from another planet. The triumphs of English science over nature, the hiss of her engines, the whirl of her wheels, the roar of her factory drums, the crackle of her furnaces, the beat of her hammers, the vast and chronic toil that mines her treasures, affect him with no wonder and arouse no exultant thrill of partnership. And he sees nothing and feels nothing that stirs his torpid blood in the strokes and sweep of that energy, before which the glory of Waterloo and Trafalgar is dim, which has knit to the English will colonies and empires within a century which number nearly one fourth of the inhabitants of the globe. The red flag of England hung out on all her masts, from all her housetops, and from every acre of her conquests and possessions, would almost give this planet the color of Mars, if seen through a telescope from a neighboring star. What a privilege to be a conscious fibre of this compacted force! If I were an Englishman, I should be proud every hour of every day over my heritage. . . . The man who is dead to such a pride ought not to be rated as a man.

And is it any less a privilege to be an American? Suppose that the continent could turn towards you tomorrow at sunrise, and show to you the whole American area in the short hours of the sun's advance from Eastport to the Pacific! You would see New England roll into light from the green plumes of Aroostook to the silver stripe of the Hudson; westward thence over the Empire State, and

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over the lakes, and over the sweet valleys of Pennsylvania, and over the prairies, the morning blush would run and would waken all the line of the Mississippi; from the frosts where it rises, to the fervid waters in which it pours; for three thousand miles it would be visible, fed by rivers that flow from every mile of the Alleghany slope, and edged by the green embroideries of the temperate and tropic zones; beyond this line another basin, too, the Missouri, catching the morning, leads your eye along its western slope, till the Rocky Mountains burst upon the vision, and yet do not bar it; across its passes we must follow, as the stubborn courage of American pioneers has forced its way, till again the Sierra and their silver veins are tinted along the mighty bulwark with the break of day; and then over to the gold fields of the western slope, and the fatness of the California soil, and the beautiful valleys of Oregon, and the stately forests of Washington, the eye is drawn, as the globe turns out of the night-shadow, and when the Pacific waves are crested with radiance, you have the one blending picture, nay, the reality, of the American domain! No such soil, so varied by climate, by products, by mineral riches, by forest and lake, by wild heights and buttresses, and by opulent plains — yet all bound into unity of configuration and bordered by both warm and icy seas — no such domain was ever given to one people.

#### *THE LESSON OF HISTORY*

And then suppose that you could see in a picture as vast and vivid the preparation for our inheritance of this land: Columbus haunted by his round idea and setting sail in a sloop to see Europe sink behind him, while he was serene in the faith of his dream; the later navigators of every prominent Christian race who explored the upper coasts; the *Mayflower* with her cargo of sifted acorns from the hardy stock of British puritanism, and the ship, whose name we know not, that bore to Virginia the ancestors of Washington; the clearing of the wilderness, and the dotting of its clearings with the proofs of manly wisdom and Christian trust; then the gradual interblending of effort and interest and sympathy into one life, the congress of the whole Atlantic slope to resist oppression upon one member, the rally of every State around Washington and his holy sword, and again the nobler rally around him when he signed the Constitution, and after that the organization of the farthest West with North and South into one polity and communion; when this was finished, the tremendous energy of free life, under the stimulus and with the aid of advancing science, in increasing wealth, subduing the wilds to the bonds of use, multiplying fertile fields, and busy schools, and noble workshops, and churches hallowed by free-will offerings of prayer, and happy homes, and domes dedicated to the laws of states that rise by magic from the haunts of the buffalo and deer, all in less than a long lifetime; and if we could see also how, in achieving this, the flag which represents all this history is dyed in traditions of exploits, by land and sea, that have given heroes to American annals whose names are potent to conjure with, while the world's list of thinkers in matter is crowded with the

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names of American inventors, and the higher rolls of literary merit are not empty of the title of our "representative men" — if all that the past has done for us and the present reveals could thus stand apparent in one picture, and then if the promise of the future to the children of our millions under our common law, and with continental peace, could be caught in one vast spectral exhibition, the wealth in store, the power, the privilege, the freedom, the learning, the expansive and varied and mighty unity in fellowship, almost fulfilling the poet's dream of

*"The Parliament of man,  
the federation of the world,"*

you would exclaim with exultation, "I, too, am an American!" You would feel that patriotism, next to your tie to the Divine Love, is the greatest privilege of your life; and you would devote yourselves, out of inspiration and joy, to the obligation of patriotism, that this land, so spread, so adorned, so colonized, so blessed, should be kept forever one in polity, in spirit, and in aims! . . .

True patriotism is pledged to the idea which one's native country represents. It does not accept and glory in its country merely for what it is at present and has been in the past, but for what it may be. Each nation has a representative value. Each race that has appropriated a certain latitude which harmonizes with its blood has the capacity to work out special good results, and to reveal great truths in some original forms. God designs that each country shall bear a peculiar ideal physiognomy, and he has set its geographical characteristics as a bony skeleton, and breathed into it a free life spirit, which, if loyal to the intention, will keep the blood in health, infuse vigor into every limb, give symmetry to the form, and carry the flush of a pure and distinct expression to the countenance. It is the patriot's office to study the laws of public growth and energy, and to strive with enthusiastic love to guard against every disease that would cripple the frame, that he may prevent the lineaments of vice and brutality from degrading the face which God would have radiant with truth, genius, and purity.

He was the best patriot of ancient Greece who had the widest and wisest conception of the capacities and genius of Greece, and labored to paint that ideal winningly before the national mind, and to direct the flame of national aspiration, fanned by heroic memories, up to the noblest possibilities of Grecian endeavor. The truest patriot of England would be the man whose mind should see in the English genius and geography what that nation could do naturally and best for humanity, and, seizing the traditional elements that are in harmony with that possibility, should use them to enliven his own sympathies, and to quicken the Nation's energy. We might say the same of Russia and Italy. The forward look is essential to patriotism.

And how much more emphatically and impressively true is this when we bring our own country into the foreground! We have been placed on our domain for the sake of a hope. What we have done, and what has been done for us, is only preparation, the out-

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line-sketching of a picture to be filled with color and life in the next three centuries. Shall the sketch be blurred and the canvas be torn in two? That is what we are to decide in these bitter and bloody days.

### *NATIONAL UNITY*

Our struggle now is to keep the country from falling away from the idea which every great patriot has recognized as the purpose towards which our history, from the first, has been moving. God devised the scheme for us of one republic. He planted the further slope of the Alleghanies at first with Saxon men; he has striped the Pacific Coast with the energy of their descendants, protecting thus both avenues of entrance to our domain against European intrusion; but the great wave of population he has rolled across the Alleghanies into the central basin. That is the seat of the American polity. And an imperial river runs through it to embarrass, and to shame, and to balk all plans of rupture. The Mississippi bed was laid by the Almighty as the keel of the American ship, and the channel of every stream that pours into it is one of its ribs. We have just covered the mighty frame with planking, and have divided the hull into State compartments. And the rebels say, "Break the ship in two." They scream, "We have a right to, on the ground of the sovereignty of the compartments, and the principles of the Declaration of Independence; we have a right to, and we will!" The loyal heart of the nation answers, "We will knock out all your Gulf compartments and shiver your sovereign bulkheads, built of ebony, to pieces, and leave you one empty territory again, before you shall break the keel." That is the right answer. We must do it, not only for our own safety, but to preserve the idea which the nation has been called to fulfill, and to which patriotism is called and bound to be loyal. Aye, even if there were one paragraph or line in the Declaration of Independence that breathed or hinted a sanction of the rebellion! Geology is older than the pen of Jefferson; the continent is broader than the Continental Congress; and they must go to the foundations to learn their statemanship.

The Procrustes bed of American patriotism is the bed of the Mississippi, and every theory of national life and every plan for the future must be stretched on that; and woe to its wretched bones and sockets if it naturally reaches but halfway!

Providence made the country, too, when the immense basin should be filled with its fitting millions, to show the world the beauty and economy of continental peace. It is a destiny radically different from that of Europe, with its four millions of armed men, that has been indicated for us. By the interplay of widely different products into one prosperity — cotton and cattle, tobacco and corn, metals and manufactures, shipyards and banking rooms, forests and fields — and all under one law, and all enjoying local liberty — sufficient centralization, but the mildest pressure on the subordinate districts and the personal will — Providence designed to bless us with immense prosperity, to develop an energy unseen before on

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this globe, and to teach the nations a lesson which would draw them into universal fraternity and peace.

The rebels have tried to frustrate this hope and scheme. Patriotism, which discerns the idea to which the nation is thus called, arms to prevent its defeat. They say that there shall not be such unified prosperity and all-embracing peace for the future hundreds of millions on our domain. We say that there shall. And we arm to enforce our vision.

But is not that a strange way to establish peace, by fighting on such a scale as the republic now witnesses? Is it not a novel method to labor for economy of administration and expense in government by a war which will fetter the nation with such a debt? We answer, the rebellion gave the challenge, and now victory at cost is the only economy. Carnage, if they will it, is the only path to peace.

*"For our own good  
All causes shall give way; we are in blood  
Stept in so far, that, should we wade no more,  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er."*

Yes, if we return, all our blood and treasures are wasted. The peace we gain by victory is for all the future, and for uncounted millions. The debt we incur by three years' fighting will be nothing compared with the new energy and security aroused, nothing to the next hundred years. And it will establish the idea to which the land was dedicated.<sup>51</sup>

Thus spoke Thomas Starr King — thus he earned his place as a representative of California in the *National Statuary Hall of Fame*.

### NOTES

1. *Acceptance and Unveiling of the Statutes of Junipero Serra and Thomas Starr King*, Washington, 1932, p. 21.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.
3. Hunt, *California, The State Everybody Loves*, San Francisco, 1935, p. 6.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
5. Hunt, *California in the Making*, Caldwell, Idaho, 1953, p. 306.
6. Newmark, *Sixty Years in Southern California 1853-1913*, Boston and New York, 1930, p. 321.
7. Cooney, "Southern California in Civil War Days," *Historical Society of Southern California*, Vol. XIII, 1924, p. 56.
8. Cleland, *A History of California: The American Period*, New York, 1927, p. 357.
9. Bancroft, *History of California, Vol. VII, 1860-1890*, San Francisco, 1890, p. 260.
10. Cleland, *A History of California: The American Period*, New York, 1927, p. 351.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 350.
12. Hunt and Sanchez, *A Short History of California*, New York, 1929, p. 471.
13. James, *Heroes of California*, Boston, 1910, p. 171.
14. Cleland, *A History of California: The American Period*, New York, 1927, p. 355.
15. Caughney, *California*, New York, 1953, p. 285.
16. Brewer, *Up and Down California in 1860-1864*, New Haven, 1930, p. 88.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 176.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 197.
20. Moore, *Destiny's Soldier*, San Francisco, 1958, p. 39.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

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22. Cooney, "Southern California in Civil War Days," *Historical Society of Southern California ANNUAL*, 1924, p. 55.
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24. Cooney, "Southern California in Civil War Days," *Historical Society of Southern California ANNUAL*, 1924, p. 55.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
26. Shutes, *Lincoln and California*, Stanford, 1943, p. 80.
27. Cooney, "Southern California in Civil War Days," *Historical Society of Southern California ANNUAL*, 1924, p. 58.
28. Shutes, *Lincoln and California*, Stanford, 1943, p. 80.
29. Cleland, *A History of California: The American Period*, New York, 1927, p. 357.
30. Caughey, *California*, New York, 1953, p. 286.
31. Brewer, *Up and Down California in 1860-1864*, New Haven, 1930, pp. 426, 427.
32. Simonds, *Starr King in California*, San Francisco, 1917, p. 59.
33. Crompton, *Apostle of Liberty, Starr King in California*, Boston, 1950, p. 22.
34. Wendte, *Thomas Starr King*, Boston, 1921, p. 5.
35. Simonds, *Starr King in California*, San Francisco, 1917, pp. 11, 12.
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 13.
37. Crompton, *Apostle of Liberty, Starr King in California*, Boston, 1950, p. 28.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 35.
40. Wendte, *Thomas Starr King*, Boston, 1921, pp. 156, 157.
41. Brewer, *Up and Down California in 1860-1864*, New Haven, 1930, p. 120.
42. Wendte, *Thomas Starr King*, Boston, 1921, pp. 157, 158.
43. King, *Peace, What It Would Cost Us*, published sermon.
44. Davis, "The Home Guard of 1861," *The Pacific Ocean in History*, New York, 1917, p. 368.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 369.
46. Crompton, *Apostle of Liberty, Starr King in California*, Boston, 1950, p. 50.
47. Hunt, *California in the Making*, Idaho, 1953, p. 141.
48. Young, *San Francisco*, San Francisco, 1912, p. 333.
49. James, *Heroes of California*, Boston, 1910, p. 174.
50. Brewer, *Up and Down California in 1860-1864*, New Haven, 1920, p. 258.
51. Wendte, *Thomas Starr King*, Boston, 1921, pp. 168-178.