



Our Flag: Origin and Progress of the Flag of the United States of America, With an Introductory Account of the Symbols, Standards, Banners and Flags of Ancient and Modern Nations (Classic Reprint)

George Henry Preble

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Excerpt from *Our Flag: Origin and Progress of the Flag of the United States of America, With an Introductory Account of the Symbols, Standards, Banners and Flags of Ancient and Modern Nations*

"This is a maxim which I have received by hereditary tradition, not only from my father, but also from my grandfather and his ancestors, that after what I owe to God, nothing should be more dear or sacred than the love and respect I owe to my country." - DeThou.

"Land of my birth! thy glorious stars
Float over shore and sea,
Made sacred by a thousand scars
They were not born to flee;
Oh may that flag forever wave
Where dwell the patriot and the brave
Till all the earth be free:
Yet still the shrine be here as now
Where freeman, pilgrim like, shall bow."

"There is the national flag! He must be cold, indeed, who can look upon its folds rippling in the breeze without pride of country. If he be in a foreign land the flag is companionship, and country itself with all its endearments. Who as he sees it can think of a state merely? Whose eye once fastened upon its radiant trophies can fail to recognize the image of the whole nation? It has been called 'a floating piece of poetry;' and yet I know not if it have any intrinsic beauty beyond other ensigns. Its highest beauty is in what it symbolizes. It is because it represents all that all gaze at it with delight and reverence. It is a piece of bunting lifted in the air; but it speaks sublimely and every part has a voice. Its stripes of alternate red and white proclaim the original union of thirteen states to maintain the declaration of independence. Its stars, white on a field of blue, proclaim that union of states constituting our national constellation which receives a new star with every new state. The two together signify union, past and present. The very colors have a language which was officially recognized by our fathers. White is for purity; red for valor; blue, for justice; and all together, bunting, stripes, stars and colors, blazing in the sky, make the flag of our country, to be cherished by all our hearts, to be upheld by all our hands." - Charles Sumner.

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