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New York Day, September 4, 1893

at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago.

The New York celebration was not confined to this day alone, as it extended over to the several succeeding ones, during which the State building maintained its reputation as the social center of the Exposition. To the various functions there, the presence of Governor Roswell P. Flower and staff, of the Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, of Mayor Gilroy, and a large party of citizens of New York, gave the stamp of official dignity and distinction. The exercises began on the afternoon of this day with a program of speeches and music, followed by a public reception. The address of welcome was made by the Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, Governor Flower responding. Director-General Davis represented the Exposition, and the crowds that thronged the building represented the great American people, especially the New York constituency. In the addresses special mention was made of the fact that this day had been chosen because it was the anniversary of the discovery by Henry Hudson of the river that bears his name.

A poem, written for the occasion, was read by its author, Joseph O'Connor, at that time editor of the Rochester Post-Express (see below).

On the following evening a reception was given in the same place by the Chicago Society of the Sons of New York, and on the evening of the fourth day a similar affair occurred in honor of the Army and Navy officers on duty at the Exposition. Throughout these festivities the building was decorated beautifully and illuminated by night with fairy lamps and lanterns.

The following is the full text of the poem:

*It happens oftener than we deem
That we should do the good unsought, unknown.
Of which we did not dream;
That from the good we aimed at we should swerve,
And, in our dear delusion, so subserve
God's purposes, as we defeat our own.*

*The Genoese who sailed
A westward course in the wild hope to find
The distant Indies, failed;
But in the quest for the rich Orient
He touched the fringes, of a continent*



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*And gaped a nobler blessing for his kind.
Though dying unaware
Of the full fruitage of his enterprise
And all its glory rare,
And half believing Orinoco's tide,
Far shining through the tropic forests wide,
The stream around the earthly Paradise.*

*The Englishman who sought
A landlocked passage unto far Cathay
In vain, not vainly wrought;
Since the great city of the younger world
Has risen where his weary sails were furled.
And Hudson, sings his name in crooning spray.*

*The earnest multitudes
That hither came from many a distant strand
And braved the solitudes.
After the hope of brilliant conquest failed,
And the fierce fever of adventure paled.
Thought little of the future of the land.
These simply yearned for peace;
These for the right to conscience and to creed
And hate's surcease;
And all rejoiced to hold some share of soil.
Content to spend themselves in honest toil.
And wait the harvest from the planted seed.*

*With Nature face to face,
From old condition and convention free,
They grew in power and grace;
Alert, elate, resourceful, confident,
By wood and stream unawed they came and went
And drew the breath of ancient liberty.
They had for heritage*



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*Old Europe's maxims and experience
Of soldier, slave, and sage;
But Earth was round them in her virgin youth.
From her they caught at primal right and truth.
And touched the meanings of Omnipotence.*

*They never sought, in sooth,
The Eden visioned in Columbus' mind.
Nor Leon's fount of youth,
Nor cared if Raleigh's golden city gleam
Afar in maze of misty hill and stream.
Nor wished to voyage after Hudson's Ind.
They toiled, and blessed the spade;
They fought, and did not scorn to praise the sword;
They kept the laws they made;
They hated privilege and laughed at birth
That brought no heritage of grace and worth;
They suffered, and submitted to the Lord.*

*And when occasion rose.
Each frankly pledged his honor, fortune, life,
Against oppressive foes;
And fusing into loving brotherhood
In flame of sacrifice and smoke of blood.
There came a nation from the happy strife—
In all things brave and new.
With realms of mountain, lake, and sky-bound plain.
And to this teaching true—
Man's dignity, equality of men,
A sovereignty in every citizen,
The people's good the guaranty to reign.*

*O sailors, bold and brave.
Of olden time, that took the wandering spray
And climbed the unknown wave.*



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*Although we give to each due meed of fame
And wreathe with laurel every sea-sweet name.
Ye did not find nor make America!
The hope, the love, the thought
Of millions joined to nourish as it grew;
The toil of ages wrought
Through Nature's ample dower of mine and field,
And many a soldier fell across his shield
Ere we could pause to find your sea-dreams true;—
Lo, many a costly bale
Beyond the scope of Asian caravan;
A fountain in the vale
Whose mists resolve the time-worn race's ills;
A golden city in the distant hills;
Almost an Eden for regenerate man!*

*No wonder we rejoice!
Yet breaking through the jubilee of praise
There comes a warning voice.
The tale of those that won but could not hold.
Of those that rose with steel and fell with gold,
The great republics of the ancient days.*

*A touch of selfish greed,
The taint of luxury in social health.
The hates of class or creed,
The lure in politics to civic guilt,
Might sap the stately home the fathers built
And take the household spirit as by stealth;
And in some coming time,
A generation might arouse in fear
And sense of loss and crime.
To find the New World faith and feeling dead,
The Old World's standards ruling in their stead,
And nothing but another Europe here!*



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*Due honor to the lands
From which we sprung; all hail the ancient fame
Of kindred hearts and hands!
But we began with all that they had won;
A counsel of perfection calls us on;
To do no more than they have done were shame.*

*'Twere better far, I hold,
To see the Iroquois supreme once more
Among the forests old.
From hill-girt Hudson's current broad and slow
To where 'twixt Erie and Ontario
Leaps green Niagara with a giant's roar;
To see the paths pursued
By commerce with her flying charioteers
Tangled with solitude.
The Indian trail uncoil among the trees.
The council runner's torch against the breeze
Its signal fling—" the smoke that disappears";
To have the wigwams rise
By summer-haunted Horicon so fair;
Fruit blooms and grain-gold dyes
Fade from the shadows in Cayuga's tide.
The vineyards fail on Keuka's sun-beat side,
The mill-crowned cliffs of Genesee made bare.
'Twere more to my desire
To see Manhattan's self laid desolate.
Drear as another Tyre,
Her palaces in ruins overset.
Her shores begirt with weed and drying net.
And not a lettered stone to tell her fate!
Yea, and her rival here.
Arising like the dome of Kubla Khan
In poet's vision clear.*



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*Dissolved as swift again along the strand
To grassy swamps and dunes of sifted sand.
Spurned by the scornful spray of Michigan!*

*Such things must come again,
Wherever in their hope and virtue rise
A race of wise, free men;
But what were grain field, railway, street,
Or golden ornament, or gallant fleet,
If he who made, whose service glorifies.
Should suffer, shrink, and dwarf.
In plain, or mart, or by his factory wheels,
Or on the crowded wharf?—
Since not the mountain, in his cloudy stole,
Nor the great sea, outranks the conscious soul
That knows their glory and their beauty feels!*

*But out on dreams of dread!
In him I put my waking faith and trust,
A king in heart and head.
Who masters forces, shapes material things.
Who loves his kind, whose common sense has wings.
The true American, the kindly just.
Full prompt in word and deed.
And ready, to make good some human hope
In time of utter need.
To cross at Delaware the ice's gorge.
Or tread blood-boltered snow at Valley Forge,
Or keep at Gettysburg the gun-shook slope!*

*And greater faith I ask
For that mysterious power that watches o'er
The workman at his task;
That shapes his effort to the higher aim
And will not let his straying fingers frame*



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A graven thing—to worship and adore.