

If you ask the inhabitants of America what are the foundations of the liberty they enjoy, a great majority will name the American Revolution only. For this situation I blame the schools, and particularly the grades below the high schools, because more than three-fourths of American youth never reach the high school. For more than a century we have brought up American children to hate England, and this has led us to slur over the history of those foundations of our liberty which rest upon English soil.

We send the children out to form public opinion founded upon ignorance and prejudice, and this in a crisis is an opinion dangerous to the welfare of the country. For more than a century we have in effect taught each generation of children that Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill were the beginning of all liberty; and, after hearing us talk, our immigrant citizens have come to the same conclusion.

Let me say at once that, whatever we have taught, the importance of the Revolution itself will never diminish. Our fathers fought for the rights of Englishmen and won. They not only secured to us imperishable blessings but they freed every English colony from a selfish colonial policy; and their action inspired the people of the civilized world to examine into their own rights. This examination caused a realization of wrongs which set the world ablaze, first in the French Revolution, and again in the continental uprisings in 1848—the one leading by painful steps to the self-governed France of to-day, the others done to death by the bayonets of autocracy.

Our Revolution and our abolition of slavery were indeed major foundations of American liberty, and they are America's noble contribution to the list. But other battles had been fought and won, in the centuries past, which educated and inspired our fathers and made them master builders to build these two American foundations. The results of those other victories lie in the midst of us and yet unseen; generations come and go in happiness because of

Ancient right unnoticed as the breath we draw.

Let me refer briefly to some of those ancient rights, and how they were won and how they have been forgotten and why.