

The question that has agitated philosophers of the past has been *how to live*. The question most interesting to us is *when to live*. Gladstone, a past thinker among men, said that "of all ages of the world the last fifty years of his life he would select." It would take volumes to picture the changes that have taken place since our forefathers wrote 1800. Centuries have come and centuries have gone, but for unparalleled and matchless achievements to benefit mankind, all the former centuries put together are not equal to the nineteenth. We should be grateful that our lot has been cast in this part of an enlightened and progressive history-making age; this is a priceless privilege; we have a heritage kings never had, and the common people never dreamed of, in the centuries of the past.

They had days of tinder boxes and no stoves, when churches and schools were unheated. Days of human slavery, unscientific diet and short life; days of bad roads and slow travel; the log cabin and the town unlighted; days of superstition and religious intolerance. Those were the days spoken of by our grandfathers as the *good old days*. You and I may be ever so poor, yet we can have more comfort and conveniences in our humble homes than the monarch and the millionaire had a hundred years ago. Many living to-day were born before the postage stamp came into use; the popular pen was the goose-quill; one of America's greatest writers learned to write by tracing the letters on the sand; books were a luxury and found only in the homes of the rich. The public school did not exist, colleges were few, and universities none. When people began writing '18 instead of '17 it was a different world. Steam had not moved a boat or a car, electricity had not begun to talk, no oil wells were giving light to the world; the great achievements of Fulton, Watt, Stephenson, Howe, Morse, Edison and hundreds of others were never heard of. From 1800 to 1912 has been the longest step the human race has ever taken on this planet.

To the amazing progress which has rapidly created a new world, this continent has contributed more than its share. Fulton started steam boats on the Hudson, Morse made wires talk, Field abolished the difference of a week between the old world and the new. Some one has said that necessity is the mother of invention. I think natural genius and God-given talents play a part. In this new world man entered the wilderness as a rude settler and God had made him a child of progress. Man touched the bitter apple and it became the golden pippin; he touched the sour grape and it became the Catawba; he touched the forked stick and it became the steel plow; he touched the rude sickle and it became the reaper; he touched the old wagon, now an iron engine; the hollow log into a steam ship; the iron wire into a steel cable. He touched the raw cotton and it became calico; and the cocoon became silken garments; he touched the sea shell with strings across its mouth and it became a piano; he touched the rude type and it became the printing press. Soon the wilderness was a garden and the solitude became a city. Where once rose the smoke of the Indian wigwam and the sound of the medicine Man's drum, there rose instead the hum of industry, the halls of science and the temples of religion. Vices became virtues, slaves became citizens, for man is the child of progress because he is the child of God. Steam and electricity are the twin powers of the century. To Fulton belongs the fame of the first steam boat in 1807. The birthday of our late Queen Victoria, May 24th, 1819, the first steamer that ever crossed the Atlantic, or