

the benign face of Sir Matthew Hale as he completed his History of the Common Law which gave the highest legal sanction to the blood-bought rights of Englishmen.

We see a period of brief but violent reaction darkened by the cruel features of the bloody Jefferys, the unspeakable Scroggs and the pliant Wright, followed swiftly by the abdication of James II. and the settlement of the throne upon a free and lasting basis. We see the consummation of the independence of the judiciary, cleansing the purlicus of the law and invigorating the bench with a spirit which no King could.

We see a long and triumphant march of progress, the abolition of the slave trade, the reform and extension of the suffrage, the emancipation of Catholics and Jews, the rearrangement of the Courts, the improvement of administrative justice, the correction of Chancery abuses, the amelioration of the criminal law, the evolution of the Cabinet system, the responsibility of Ministries to the House of Commons, the shrinking of the power of the Lords, the protection of labour, of the poor and the aged. We see the expansion of the British Empire, following the charts of commerce, and encircling the globe with its morning drum-beat, the tocsin of equal rights before the law to dusky millions long enslaved. In this rapid perspective of fifteen centuries we see the noble and expressive features of the British Constitution towering like mountain peaks and ranging themselves so as to form the vertebrae and ribs of a political faith, the creed of a free race, the model of institutional freedom adopted by progressive peoples everywhere, from the Argentine to Japan.

And now, turning our eyes to this side of the Atlantic, we behold a spectacle both marvellous and inspiring. We see American civilization starting with the advantage of being a thousand years younger, inheriting the character and principles of a glorious past, building upon the rock of experience, but, freed from the fetters of restrictive habits and ancient prejudices, improving the boundless opportunities of a virgin continent to shape and solve the problems of self-government. We see the planting of thirteen colonies, each one of them a nursery of citizenship, preordained to grow into a mighty nation under a written Constitution made by the people in