

NATIONALITY IN THE UNITED STATES.

Senior Oration.

THE Liberty Bell has long since ceased to echo the defiant and joyful tones that rang out on the Fourth of July, 1776; the bell-ringer has sought another occupation; the hands that signed the Declaration of Independence are wasted away; the framers of the Constitution do now rest from their labors; but the tones of liberty and equality first heard on Independence Day, 1776, are still ringing in the ears and echoing in the hearts of the American people, and the great American Republic, after more than one hundred twenty-five years of national independence, exhibits to the world the model government described in the preamble to the Constitution.

The Stars and Stripes represent a unit—a nation whose people are permeated with the spirit of liberty, fraternity, and equality. Day by day the bonds of unity among the states are becoming stronger and more numerous. The American people are united at moments of national concern; though there may be many states, all vie with each other in devotion and service to one flag and to one government. The people are homogeneous,—a feeling which stirs them all alike,—rich and poor, farmer and mechanic, North, South, East and West.

But conditions were not always thus. The general view of our national development is that the United States became a government through the adoption and ratification of the Constitution, or even before, through the acts of the Revolutionary Congress and the Declaration of Independence. We often think of the nation being born in a day and not until we review the crises in the domestic life of our country do we realize that the true nation is the result of a process and plan worked out at a tremendous cost and sacrifice. A nation is a unity of people and none can think of claiming unity for the United States until the Civil War de-