THE

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OF THE

UNITED STATES.

Fund-Publication, No. 25.

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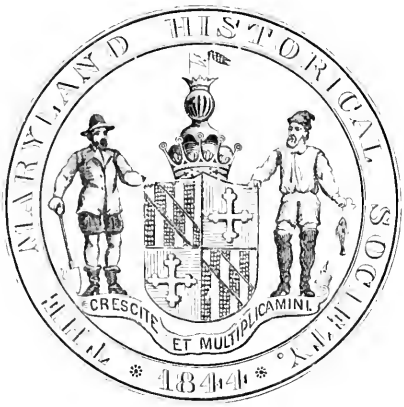

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BY

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SO far as authentic history goes, the great deeds of men have been commemorated in some conspicuous form, not only as a just recompense for well accomplished duty, but as an incentive to future generations to emulate the public virtue of the hero.

As the Prince Ozias said to Judith, "He has so magnified thy name this day that thy praise shall not depart out of the mouth of men."

And beyond authentic history in that semi-twilight now being pierced by the keen eye of science, Egyptian papyri, immemorial stones carved with Assyrian and Persian cuneiform, with Scandinavian and Teutonic Runes, or with Aztec hieroglyphs, all give us in picture or in prose the story of the public triumph.

But the natural fitness of things requires that public reward for public services should be expressed not only in a conspicuous, but also in an enduring form, and so all the resources of art and labor and treasure have in each succeeding age been utilized and exhausted, to produce gorgeous edifices, temples and monuments to signalize the victories of the great captains and the reigns of the great kings and princes of the earth.

Many of these great monuments of the past do survive, such as the Pyramids, and the later edifices of Greece and Rome, and to an extent we know their meaning and the name of the person in whose honor they were built. But who shall tell us of the number that have fallen into ruin and disappeared, as the men whose names they were built to perpetuate have disappeared and been forgotten.

And of those that exist which one tells us that which any coin dug from the old soil of the Troad will tell us; the name, the date, the very features of the man in whose honor it was struck.

The two largest and most imposing monuments on the Appian way, near Rome, are circular edifices, one of which is so large that there is a house and farm buildings and an olive grove upon its summit, and no man knows in whose honor it was built. The other, which is somewhat smaller, tradition calls the tomb of Cecilia Metella, but tradi-

tion cannot tell us who was Cecilia, nor why this sumptuous pile was erected to her memory and the tomb itself is silent.

But medals, as memorials, are not silent. In a year, or a hundred years, or a thousand years, or ten thousand years, after the man has played his part, this little metal disk is a witness who shall tell him who reads, the name of the man and the deed he did, and the time and the country, and show his very features "in his habit as he lived."

Much as we are indebted to ancient coins for exact and concise historical information, it would appear that what we call a medal was practically unknown to antiquity, which only struck pieces destined for circulation and exchange as money. The ancient engravers in the types of current money infinitely varied, endeavored to multiply and disseminate religious and historical ideas, but these were technically coins not medals.

The exact definition of a medal according to the science of numismatics is, "A piece of metal in the form of a coin not issued or circulated as money, but stamped with a figure or device to preserve the portrait of some eminent person or the memory of some illustrious action or event."

It may be fairly said that we owe the medal, according to this definition, to that period to which all arts are so much indebted. I mean the Italian Renaissance of the fifteenth century, which broke

the old mould that imprisoned art in conventional forms and brought her back to her mother nature.

Vittorio Pisano or Pisanello was indeed the creator of the medal proper. He was a portrait painter of Verona, and the first technical medal was designed by him in honor of John Paleologos, next to the last Greek emperor of Constantinople. This potentate, who wears in the medal a very remarkable headdress copied from life, was at the time, 1439, attending the great Oecumenical Council held at Ferrara and Florence, consulting about the union of the Greek and Latin churches, and had this medal struck in honor of his visit.

So accomplished an artist was Pisano, that a very late work on numismatics says that, "He marked the limits of the art to which he gave birth, and his successors have made variations on his style but not improvements."

From his time onward Italy has been distinguished in this beautiful art—the long list of its masters, either as designers, engravers or both, including such great names as Raffaele and Benevenuto Cellini.

France followed quickly in the footsteps of Italy, and a very beautiful medal was struck in 1451 to commemorate the taking of Bordeaux and the final expulsion of the English from France. Other nations followed in the wake and adopted the idea, so that every civilized country soon had issued

national medals of more or less importance and artistic merit.

"When in the course of human events it became necessary for this people to assume among the powers of the world the separate and equal station to which the laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitled them," the Continental Congress was met at the outset with the question as to how the new republic should honor its heroes. It could not give them titles and peerages, but it could give them, as General Scott once expressed it, "the highest reward a free man can receive—*the recorded approbation of his country.*" Nay, even before the tremendous declaration of the 4th July, 1776, the Congress had decided the point, for on the 26th March, 1776, it was

"Resolved, that the thanks of this Congress in their own name and in the name of the thirteen united colonies whom they represent be presented to His Excellency General Washington, and the officers and soldiers under his command for their wise and spirited conduct in the siege and acquisition of Boston; and that a medal of gold be struck in commemoration of this great event, and presented to His Excellency, and that a committee of three be appointed to prepare a letter of thanks and a proper device for the medal."

Messrs. Jno. Adams, Jno. Jay and Hopkins, were the committee so appointed, and here over three months before the Declaration of Independence begins the story of

The letter of John Hancock, President of Congress to General Washington, informing him of this resolution, may well be taken as the best expression of the meaning and extent of the honor conferred on an American citizen by an act of Congress presenting him with a medal.

"PHILADELPHIA, 2*d April*, 1776.

"*To General Washington.*

"*Sir:* It gives me the most sensible pleasure to convey to you by order of Congress the only tribute which a free people will ever consent to pay—the tribute of thanks and gratitude to their friends and benefactors. The disinterested and patriotic principles which led you to the field have also led you to glory; and it affords no little consolation to your countrymen to reflect that as a peculiar greatness of mind induced you to decline any compensation for serving them except the pleasure of promoting their happiness, they may without your permission bestow upon you the largest share of their affection and esteem.

"Those pages in the annals of America will record your title to a conspicuous place in the temple of fame, which shall inform posterity that under your direction an undisciplined band of husbandmen, in the course of a few months became soldiers; and that the desolation meditated against the country by a brave army of veterans, commanded by the most experienced generals, but employed by bad men in the worst of causes, was, by the fortitude of your troops and the address of their officers next to the kind interposition of Providence, con-

fined for near a year within such narrow limits as scarcely to admit more room than was necessary for the encampments and fortifications they lately abandoned. *Accept*, therefore, Sir, the thanks of the United colonies unanimously declared by their delegates to be due to you and the brave officers and troops under your command, and be pleased to communicate to them this distinguished mark of the approbation of their country. The Congress have ordered a golden medal adapted to the occasion to be struck and when finished to be presented to you.

"I have the honor to be with every sentiment of esteem, Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

"JOHN HANCOCK,
"*President.*"

No country in the world has been as chary of granting this sort of public recognition to its citizens as the United States. From the beginning of our national history to this, the 112th year of the republic, only eighty-three medals have been granted by Congress, so that of all governmental honors known to the world to-day, it is the rarest.

It is interesting to recall the various opinions and suggestions made by the great men of that time in treating of this subject.

The United States Mint was not established until 1792, and previous to that time the revolutionary medals were struck in France generally under the direction of the American minister near that court. And it happened that there was in Paris at that time a brilliant group of engravers

who have given us in all of these medals noble specimens of their beautiful art.

It appears that the first medal actually struck was that of Lieutenant-Colonel de Fleury, which was executed under the direction of Dr. Franklin about 1780.

The doctor shows his practical mind in a suggestion which he makes in a letter to Mr. Jay, the then Secretary of State, he says:

"The man who is honored only by a single medal is obliged to show it to enjoy the honor which can be done only to a few and often awkwardly. I, therefore, wish the medals of Congress were ordered to be money, and so continued as to be convenient money by being in value aliquot parts of a dollar."

Our government has never quite adopted that idea (which was exactly the practice of the coiners of antiquity), but it has come tolerably near it by placing upon every revenue and postage stamp and bank note the portrait of some of our public men.

In 1792 the Senate passed a bill for coining money with the head of the *President* upon it, but General Washington himself opposed it, and the House of Representatives amended the bill by substituting the head of *Liberty*, the mother or perhaps grandmother of the classic female who now figures on that coin which is by law worth 100 cents, and of which we all try to be collectors.

Colonel Humphreys, who was entrusted by Mr.

Morris with the commission of procuring the other medals which had been voted, immediately upon his arrival in Paris addressed himself to the French Royal Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, asking them to aid him "in having these medals executed in a manner grateful to the illustrious personages for whom they are designed, worthy the dignity of the sovereign power by whom they are presented, and calculated to perpetuate the remembrance of those great events which they are intended to consecrate to immortality."

The Academy took a most active interest in the work and immediately appointed a committee of four of its members to suggest the designs.

Colonel Humphreys returned to America, leaving the superintendence of the medals to Mr. Jefferson, who in writing about them to Mr. John Jay, the then Secretary of State, made some suggestions which are thus commented on by Mr. Jay in his report to Congress, dated 11th July, 1787. After reciting Mr. Jefferson's suggestions, he says:

"In the judgment of your Secretary it would be proper to instruct Mr. Jefferson to present in the name of the United States one silver medal of each denomination to every monarch (except the King of England for that would not be delicate); and to every sovereign and independent State without exception in Europe, and also to the Emperor of Morocco. That he also be instructed to send fifteen silver medals of each

set to Congress to be by them presented to the thirteen United States respectively, and also to the Emperor of China with an explanation and a letter, and one to General Washington. That he also be instructed to present a copper medal of each denomination to each of the most distinguished Universities (except the British) in Europe, and also to Cte de Rochambeau, Cte d'Estaing and Cte de Grasse, and lastly that he be instructed to send to Congress two hundred copper ones of each set together with the dies.

"Your Secretary thinks that of these it would be proper to present one to each of the American colleges, one to the Marquis de la Fayette, and one to each of the other Major-Generals who served in the late American army, and that the residue with the dies be deposited in the Secretary's office of the United States subject to such future order as Congress may think proper to make respecting them.

"It might be more magnificent to give gold medals to sovereigns, silver ones to distinguished persons and copper ones to the colleges, but in his opinion the nature of the American government as well as the state of their finance will apologize for their declining this expense. All of which is submitted to the wisdom of Congress.

"JNO. JAY."

Congress does not seem to have adopted Mr. Jay's report, at any rate the proposed action has never been taken. But it would appear that Mr. Jefferson fully expected that his suggestion would be carried out, as we find him under date of 23rd February, 1789, writing to Mr. Dupré, the engraver, asking him for a copy of Dr. Franklin's

medal, as he is going to have a description of all the medals printed in order to send them with copies of the medals to the sovereigns of Europe.

It is no doubt owing to the fact that the proposed copies of the medals were never struck, that the Bibliography of American National Medals did not begin with Mr. Jefferson's description of those given for the Revolutionary battles.

The first work on this especial subject known to the writer of this paper was published in 1848, by Carey & Hart, Philadelphia, and is called "Memoirs of the Generals, Commodores and other Commanders who were presented with medals by Congress, by Thomas Wyatt.

The writer's attention was called to this work by Mr. W. Elliot Woodward of Roxbury, Mass., a name well known to all American numismatists. The only accessible copy was found in the Boston public library, and up to its date it is a complete work giving an engraving of the medals issued up to that time with a memoir of each of the recipients.

Mr. Wyatt seems to have been the first person to collect a full set of our medals, and in a letter from him to Mr. Woodward in 1861, he speaks of the great difficulties he had in searching out and borrowing every medal of the series. For the medals of Major Lee and Major Stewart he was

obliged to go to France. He had a number of sets struck off for sale at the request, and partly at the expense, of Jared Sparks, Abbott Lawrence, Daniel Webster and other gentlemen interested in the project, and he says that the Legislatures of Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania ordered each a set for the public libraries, with a vote of thanks for his perseverance.

In 1861 Mr. James Ross Snowden, Director of the Mint, published a volume called the "Medallic Memorials of Washington." Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott & Co. — an interesting and valuable work.

In 1878 Mr. J. F. Loubat, of New York, published his "Medallic History of the United States of America." This magnificent and exhaustive work has become an absolute authority on the subject. All that learning and conscientious and intelligent research can do, has been done to make it perfect, and the writer of this paper cheerfully acknowledges his indebtedness to it for most of the facts herein given. The work being, however, only published as an "edition de luxe," in two large quarto volumes, printed on especially prepared paper and enriched with 170 etchings of the medals by M. Jules Jacquemart, it is necessarily too expensive a book for general circulation and is, therefore, perhaps not as well known as it ought to be.

Mr. Loubat gives descriptions of eighty-six medals which he classifies as national, although seven of them have not the sanction of a Congressional vote.

The first, or Revolutionary group, is composed of the following:

1. General Washington, for the occupation of Boston, by Duvivier.

2. Major-General Gates, for the surrender at Saratoga, by Gatteaux.

3. General Wayne, for Stony Point, by Gatteaux.

4. Major John Stewart, commanding the left wing storming party same action, by Gatteaux.

5. Lieutenant-Colonel de Fleury, commanding the right wing storming party same action, by Duvivier.

6. Major Henry Lee, for surprise of Paulus Hook, by J. Wright.

This was the famous "Light Horse Harry"—the worthy sire of his noble son, General R. E. Lee.

7. John Paulding, David Williams and Isaac Van Wart, for the capture of Major André.

This is not a medal proper, but a piece of repoussé work made by a silversmith.

8. General Morgan, for the victory of the Cowpens, by Dupré.

9. Lieutenant-Colonel William A. Washington, same action, by Duvivier.

10. Lieutenant-Colonel John Eager Howard, same action, by Duvivier.

11. Major-General Nathaniel Greene, for victory at Eutaw Springs, by Dupré.

This completes the list of medals given to the army during the Revolution. Two of the recipients were Marylanders. The first, Major John Stewart, was a son of Stephen Stewart, a merchant of Baltimore. He commanded the left storming party at Stony Point, which, in the words of General Wayne's official report, "with unloaded muskets and strict orders not to fire, in the face of a most incessant and tremendous fire of musketry and from cannon loaded with grapeshot, forced their way, at the point of the bayonet, through every obstacle."

In this same report Mr. Archer is commended for gallantry, and was in consequence brevetted captain by order of Congress, which looks as though Harford County had a representative in that action.

Colonel Stewart was a first lieutenant in 1776, captain in 1777, served through the war with great distinction, and commanded a regiment in the Southern campaign. He went to South Carolina directly after the war and died there in 1783, and so was comparatively little known in Maryland outside of his own kinsmen. Of the other Marylander — Colonel John Eager Howard — nothing

need be said here; his life is a part of the history of this city and known to us all.

The Maryland bayonet was as effective under Colonel Howard in South Carolina as it had been under Colonel Stewart on the Hudson, as will appear from these words taken from General Morgan's official report of the action at the Cowpens: "Lieutenant-Colonel Howard observing this, gave orders for the line to charge bayonets, which was done with such address that they fled with the utmost precipitation, leaving their field pieces in our possession. We pushed our advantage so effectually that they never had an opportunity of rallying, had their intentions been ever so good."

It is a matter of history that the gallant Colonel, during the battle of the Cowpens, held in his hands at one time the swords of seven British officers who had surrendered to him.

But one medal was given during the Revolution to the young American navy—that of

12. Captain John Paul Jones for his various naval exploits, particularly the capture of the British frigate Serápis off the coast of Scotland.

This great naval commander hoisted with his own hands the first American naval flag on board the Alfred on October 10, 1776, at Chestnut Street Wharf, Philadelphia. He was the only American officer decorated by the King of France, and has the unique distinction of being the only American

citizen whose title of knight (chevalier), conveyed by the decoration, has been officially recognized by the United States Congress.

This medal is by Dupré, and, with the exception of the medal of Major Henry Lee, which is by Joseph Wright, the first draughtsman and die sinker of the United States Mint, and of the medal to the captors of Major André, all of those mentioned were executed by the great French engravers, mostly after designs and with inscriptions furnished by a committee of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres in Paris.

Our forefathers evidently did not believe in protection to home art, perhaps being of the same mind as a great American general, who, in writing to the Secretary of War on this subject, said: "But I beg leave again to suggest that the honor of the country requires that medals voted by Congress should always exhibit the arts involved in their highest state of perfection *wherever* found; for letters, science and the fine arts constitute but *one republic embracing the world.*" General Washington seems to have been also imbued with that idea, for while at Valley Forge, on finding some valuable medical manuscripts—the property of a British medical officer—among some other captured property, he directed them to be returned to their owner, saying that the Americans did not war against the sciences.

There are six other well-known medals of the Revolutionary times, which are of very great historical importance, but are not national in the sense of being ordered by Congress. These are

13. The Libertas Americana, in honor of the surrender at Yorktown. This was ordered by Dr. Franklin to be executed by Dupré. It represents young America as the infant Hercules strangling two serpents.

14 and 15. Two medals to Dr. Benjamin Franklin, engraved and dedicated to him by his friend, Augustin Dupré, both of which bear Turgot's celebrated Latin verse, composed in his honor: "*Eripuit coelo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis*" (He wrenched the thunderbolt from heaven and the sceptre from tyrants).

16 and 17. Two medals struck in Amsterdam—one called "Libera Soror" in honor of the acknowledgment of the United States by the United Netherlands, the other in honor of the celebration of the first treaty of amity and commerce between those countries.

18. The so-called Diplomatic medal. It was then the custom, and, to a great extent is now, for a sovereign to give some token of his regard to a retiring ambassador who has been a "persona grata" at his Court, and General Washington and his Secretary of State—Mr. Jefferson—evidently thought that the United States Government should

not allow itself to be outdone in generosity and splendor by any king of them all, and so ordered these medals, each with a gold chain, to cost $1,000; but only two have ever been given—one to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, Minister of the King of France in the United States from 1779 to 1784, and the other to the Marquis de Moustiér, likewise French Minister at Washington from 1787 to 1790.

A medal called the Japanese Embassy Medal was struck at the Philadelphia Mint on May 17, 1860, by order of the State Departmant, in honor of the arrival of the first diplomatic representatives of the Empire of Japan in this country. Three gold medals were struck, one for each of the three envoys, and copies in silver or copper were given to the other members of the Embassy; but this must not be confounded with the Diplomatic medal, and, strictly speaking, is not a national medal. It was simply to commemorate the interesting fact that for the first time in history, the Empire of Japan abandoned its traditional policy of Oriental seclusion, and opened regular diplomatic communication with Western civilization. Many gentlemen here present will doubtless recall the visit of these ambassadors to Baltimore on the 8th June, 1860, where, as guests of the Government of the United States, they were formally received by the Mayor and City Council,

and their swords were stolen from the Gilmor House. A peculiar and much-criticized incident in that connection was that the police authorities advertised, offering a large reward — I believe $1,000—for the recovery of these swords, promising to the thieves immunity from all criminal prosecution on the return of the stolen property. This was done on the belief that the loss of the swords would subject the envoys to the penalty of death on their return to Japan.

19. The first medal given by Congress after the Revolution was to Captain Thomas Truxton, commander of the United States frigate Constellation, which was built at Harris Creek, Baltimore, for the capture of the French ship of war La Vengeance, near the island of Guadaloupe, on the 1st February, 1800. This was at the time of the unfortunate complication with France, which has left us, among other disagreeable reminiscences, the famous French spoliation claims.

President John Adams, in writing to Captain Truxton in regard to this medal, expressed some views about the navy which do not seem to have been in accord with the policy of our Government for the last twenty years. He says: "The counsels which Themistocles gave to Athens, Pompey to Rome, Cromwell to England, De Witt to Holland and Colbert to France, I have always given, and shall continue to give, to my countrymen—that as

the great questions of commerce and power between nations and empires must be decided by a military marine, and war and peace are decided at sea, all reasonable encouragement should be given to the navy. The trident of Neptune is the sceptre of the world."

20. The next medal was granted March 3, 1805, to Commodore Edward Preble, of the navy, for the gallant action before Tripoli in 1804. We find in the official report high commendation given to a lieutenant with the Maryland name of Trippe, who commanded one of the boats and was severely wounded in that action.

21–42. Some reference should now be made to the medals which are called by the United States Mint Presidential Medals. Of these there are twenty-two—two for General Washington and one for each of the succeeding Presidents except General William Henry Harrison, who died one month after his inauguration.

In 1786 Mr. Kean, member of Congress from South Carolina, moved that medals be struck for presentation to the Indian chiefs with whom the United States should conclude treaties.

The first medal so struck was given to Red Jacket, the great chief of the Six Nations, on his visit to Philadelphia in 1792. It bore on its face the figure of General Washington, with the legend, George Washington, President, 1792, and all sub-

sequent Indian medals have, following this precedent, borne the engraved portrait of the President who approved of the treaty, with the date of his administration, thus making a most valuable and interesting addition to our national historical medals.

More medals were granted during the war of 1812 than at any other period of our history.

The first three were voted January 29, 1813:

43. To Captain Isaac Hull, of the United States frigate Constitution, for the capture of the British frigate Guerriére.

44. To Captain Stephen Decatur, of the frigate United States, for the capture of the British frigate Macedonian, and

45. To Captain Jacob Jones, of the United States sloop of war Wasp, for the capture of the British sloop of war Frolic.

Silver medals, copies of the golden ones voted to these captains, were directed by Congress to be given to the nearest male relatives of Lieutenants Bush and Funk, killed in these actions.

The gallant Captain Decatur was born in Synepuxent, Worcester County, Maryland, and Captain Hull, in his report, highly recommends Lieutenant Contee, of the Marines, for coolness and gallantry.

Next come the medals of

46. Captain Bainbridge, for the capture of the Java, December 29, 1812.

47. Lieutenant McCall, for the capture of the Boxer, September 4, 1813, and

48. Lieutenant William Burrows, for the same action. He was in command of the United States brig of war Enterprise, was killed in the action and was succeeded in command by Lieutenant McCall. His medal was, therefore, voted by Congress to his nearest male relative.

49. The famous victory of Captain Oliver Hazard Perry on Lake Erie added two medals—one to Perry himself and the other to the second in command

50. Captain Jesse Duncan Elliott, of Maryland, who was thirty-one years old at the date of that action, but, young as he was, had already made his mark by cutting out two British ships from under Fort Erie, for which Congress had voted him a sword of honor. Commodore Perry's old battle flag, with the legend "Don't give up the ship," is still preserved at the Naval School at Annapolis.

The victory of Lake Champlain was rewarded by three medals—one to

51. Captain Thomas McDonogh, one to

52. Captain Robert Henley, and one to

53. Lieutenant Stephen Cassin.

Then followed the medals of

54. Captain Lewis Warrington, of the sloop of war Peacock, for the capture of the British brig Epervier, April 29, 1814, and of

55. Captain Johnson Blakeley, of the sloop of war Peacock, for the capture of the British sloop of war Reindeer, July 8, 1814.

56. The medals of Captain Charles Stewart, of the United States frigate Constitution, for the capture of the British frigate Cyane, and of

57. Captain James Biddle, of the United States sloop of war Hornet, for the capture of the British sloop of war Penguin, complete the list of naval medals granted during the war of 1812.

Captain Charles Stewart was the maternal grandfather of the present famous Irish patriot, Charles Stewart Parnell.

During the same war the actions of Chippewa, Niagara and Erie, in Upper Canada, were rewarded by medals to

58. Major-General Jacob Brown.

59. Major-General Peter Buel Porter.

60. Brigadier-General Eleazar Wheelock Ripley.

61. Brigadier-General James Miller.

62. Major-General Winfield Scott.

63. Major-General Edmund Pendleton Gaines, and the victory of Plattsburgh, by the medal of

64. Major-General Alexander Macomb.

In the official reports of these battles special mention is made of Captain Towson's artillery. I suppose that he is the same gallant officer whose fame has been immortalized by the naming of the capital of a neighboring county.

The next of the army medals of the war was granted for the battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815, to

65. Major-General Andrew Jackson, "Old Hickory"—"a great democratic victory."

And Congress in 1818 voted medals to

66. Major-General William Henry Jackson, and

67. Isaac Shelby, a Governor of Kentucky, for the battle of the Thames, in Upper Canada, October 5, 1813.

General Harrison was, as has been already stated, the only President of the United States for whom no Presidential Medal was struck.

Governor Shelby was born in Hagerstown, Maryland, September 14, 1750. He distinguished himself in the Southern battles in the Revolutionary war, and was voted a sword of honor with the thanks of the Legislature of North Carolina. He was Governor of Kentucky from 1812 to 1816, and joined General Harrison at the head of 4,000 Kentucky volunteers and rendered gallant service at the battle of the Thames. He declined to be Secretary of War in 1817 and died in Kentucky, July 18, 1826.

The last medal for this war was not voted until February 13, 1835. It was to

68. Colonel George Croghan, for the defense of Fort Stephenson, August 3, 1813.

Congress does not seem to have found it neces-

sary to commemorate the battle of Bladensburgh by the granting of a medal to any of the participants in that brilliant strategic movement.

69. From the end of the war of 1812-15 to the time of the Mexican war, no medals were voted by Congress, as the war with the Florida Indians did not apparently call for any such especial honor; but during this period a medal was struck in France in honor of the treaty of commerce concluded with that country, June 24, 1822. This is in no sense an official medal, but Mr. Loubat classifies it as national by reason of its great historic interest.

70, 71, 72. During the Mexican war Major-General Zachary Taylor received no less than three medals, with the corresponding vote of thanks of the Congress—one July 16, 1846, for the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma; one March 2, 1847, for Monterey; one May 9, 1848, for Buena Vista, and

73. General Scott, the hero of 1812, received his second medal for the actions of Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Contreras, Churubusco, Molino del Rey and Chapultepec.

All through the reports of these actions we find honorable mention of the Maryland names of Watson, Ringgold, May, Ramsey, Randolph Ridgely, and others of the gallant sons of this old State.

On the 10th December, 1846, the United States

brig Somers, one of the squadron blockading Vera Cruz under the command of Captain Raphael Semmes, was struck by a sudden squall, and sunk within ten minutes from the time the squall struck her. The British, French and Spanish men-of-war, who witnessed the disaster, immediately lowered boats manned by brave men, who, at the peril of their own lives, in a raging sea, rescued all but two officers and forty men.

74. Congress passed an act, March 3, 1847, directing that a suitable medal be struck and presented to the officers and men of these various foreign vessels, in recognition of their gallant and humane conduct.

75. The Martin Costa incident in the harbor of Smyrna, July 3, 1853, resulted in the voting of a medal to Commander Duncan N. Ingraham, of the United States ship St. Louis. This gallant officer, evidently a firm believer in "a vigorous foreign policy," was informed that Martin Costa, a citizen of the United States, had been claimed as an Austrian subject, was taken as a prisoner and confined on board the Austrian brig Hussar. After polite request for his surrender and a refusal from the Austrians, Capt. Ingraham shotted his guns, anchored within half a cable's length of the brig, which had been by this time reinforced by a ten-gun schooner and three Austrian mail steamers, and sent the following note:

"*To the Commander of the Austrian brig Hussar:*

"SIR,—I have been directed by the American chargé at Constantinople to demand the person of Martin Costa, a citizen of the United States taken by force from Turkish soil and now confined on board the brig Hussar, and if a refusal is given, to take him by force.

An answer to the demand must be returned by 4 p. m.

"Very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"D. N. INGRAHAM, *Commander*."

Costa was then surrendered and sent on shore to the custody of the French consul.

76. A medal was voted on May 11, 1858, to Surgeon Frederick Henry Rose, of the British navy, for volunteering to act as medical officer of the United States ship Susquehanna, nearly all of whose crew were disabled and dying from yellow fever, and on July 26, 1866, a medal was voted to

77. Captains Creighton, Low and Stouffer, for saving the ship's company of the wrecked steamer San Francisco, with the Third United States Artillery on board, in December, 1853.

78. With a magnanimity and true patriotic feeling which does honor to the American character, the Congress gave no medal commemorating the battles of the great civil war except the one given to Major-General U. S. Grant by the act of December, 1863, for the victories of Fort Donelson, Vicksburg and Chattanooga.

79. On the 28th January, 1864, a medal was also voted to "Commodore" Cornelius Vanderbilt, in recognition of his free gift to the Government of the steamer which bore his name and which was valued at $1,000,000. It was provided in the act that a copy of this medal should be placed in the Congressional Library. In his letter accepting the medal, he gives the following good advice to his descendants: "And it is my hope that those who come after me, as they read the inscription of the medal and are reminded of the event in their father's life which caused it to be struck, will inflexibly resolve that, should our Government be again imperilled, no pecuniary sacrifice is too large to make in its behalf, and no inducement sufficiently great to attempt to profit by its necessities."

80. On the 1st March, 1871, Congress voted to George Foster Robinson, late a private of Maine Volunteers, $5,000 in money and a gold medal in recognition of his heroic conduct in saving the life of Mr. Seward from the attack of Payne, the accomplice of John Wilkes Booth, on April 14, 1865; but it seems unfortunate that this gentleman could not have been suitably rewarded in some other way than by a perpetual record of an act which Americans of all political creeds can now only remember with shame and sorrow.

These three medals are the only ones in any wise connected with that unfortunate war period.

81. On March 2, 1867, Congress voted a medal to Mr. Cyrus West Field, of New York, "for his foresight, courage and determination in establishing telegraphic communication by means of the Atlantic cable traversing mid-ocean and connecting the Old World with the New."

Mr. Field founded the New York, Newfoundland and London Telegraph Company in 1854, organized the Atlantic Telegraph Company in 1856, and was the active mover in that great project until its final real success in 1867. "Peace has its victories as well as war," and this was assuredly one of the greatest.

82. On the 16th March, 1867, a medal was voted to George Peabody, "for his great and peculiar beneficence in giving a large sum of money, amounting to $2,000,000, for promotion of education in the more destitute portions of the Southern and Southwestern States."

Before a Baltimore audience it would be superfluous to make any eulogy upon the character and good deeds of that great philanthropist.

It may be of interest, however, to give an extract from his letter to Mr. W. H. Seward, Secretary of State, acknowledging the receipt of the medal:

"Cherishing, as I do, the warmest affection for my country, it is not possible for me to feel more grateful than I do for this precious memorial of its regard, coming, as it does, from thirty millions of American citizens through their representa-

tives in Congress, with the full accord and coöperation of the President.

"The medal, together with the rich illuminated transcript of the Congressional resolution, I shall shortly deposit at the Peabody Institution, at the place of my birth, in apartments specially constructed for their safe keeping, along with other public testimonials with which I have been honored. There, I trust, it will remain for generations, to attest the generous munificence of the American people in recognizing the efforts, however inadequate, of one of the humblest of their fellow-countrymen to promote the enlightenment and prosperity of his native land."

This feeling acknowledgment by this great and good man of the honor conferred upon him becomes all the more striking when we recall the fact that he respectfully declined a baronetcy and the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath, tendered him by Queen Victoria in recognition of his munificent charity to the London poor.

83. The loss of the steamer Metis, 31st August, 1872, was commemorated by a medal granted to the crews of a lifeboat and fishing-boat, who saved the lives of thirty-two persons from the wreck.

84. John Horn, Jr., of Detroit, by vote of June 20, 1874, received a medal in recognition of his extraordinary record of having, at different times, saved the lives of more than *100 persons* from drowning.

85, 86. Congress, by the act of June 16, 1874,

authorized the striking of medals in commemoration of the Centennial celebration at Philadelphia in 1876, and two were struck at the expense of the Centennial Board of Finance for sale and distribution.

We come now to a class of medals distinctly national in their character, but so multiplied in number that it is impossible here to do more than refer to them.

87, 88. On the same day, June 20, 1874, that the medal was voted to John Horn, Jr., Congress passed the following act:

"*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby directed to cause to be prepared medals of honor with suitable devices, to be distinguished as life-saving medals of the first and second class, which shall be bestowed upon any persons who shall hereafter endanger their own lives in saving lives from perils of the sea, within the United States or upon any American vessels.

"*Provided*, That the medal of the first class shall be confined to cases of extreme and heroic daring, and that the medal of the second class shall be given to cases not sufficiently distinguished to deserve the medals of the first class.

"*Provided*, That no award of either medal shall be made to any person until sufficient evidence of his deserving shall be filed with the Secretary of the Treasury and entered upon the records of the Department."

Many brave men have earned and received this medal since the passage of this act.

It is a fact scarcely known outside of the army and navy that our Government gives a medal or decoration exactly equivalent to the Iron Cross of Germany, the Victoria Cross of England or the Legion of Honor of France for distinguished military valor, and it is a singular and remarkable tribute to the modesty of the recipients that the country at large has heard so little on the subject.

The necessity and fitness of such rewards for valor has been recognized by all nations, and no reward is more highly esteemed by military men than a personal decoration for distinguished bravery.

General Washington by a general order at Newburg, August 7, 1782, provided, that for any singularly meritorious action reported by a board of officers, men should have their names enrolled in the book of merit, and should wear a heart in purple cloth or silk, edged with narrow lace or binding, and when so decorated should be permitted to pass all guards and sentinels which officers are permitted to do.

During the Mexican war officers were rewarded by brevets, and deserving privates by certificates of merit and $2 additional monthly pay.

89. But during the Civil war these makeshifts were abandoned, and the Acts of July 12, 1862, and March 3, 1863, provided that medals of honor should be given to such officers, non-commissioned

officers and privates who have most distinguished or may hereafter most distinguish themselves by gallantry in action. Up to the end of the war in 1865, 330 of these medals had been given and some 300 more have been given since that time.

90. The acts of December 21, 1861, and July 16, 1862, made similar provisions for the navy, but excluded commissioned officers.

The writer was informed by a distinguished naval officer that 338 of these medals were given during the war and 113 since.

This concludes the list of National Medals properly so-called; but there is another one that ought to be in existence, voted as far back as 1857 to the celebrated Arctic explorer, Dr. Elisha Kent Kane. This distinguished naval officer died at the early age of thirty-seven years, and it was only after his death that the medal was voted.

The Superintendent of the Mint in a letter under date March 5, 1887, says, "The Dr. E. K. Kane Medal was not struck at the Mint, but I am informed that it was manufactured in New York." The writer has not as yet, however, been able to obtain any reliable information about it.

A large number of other medals have been struck at the Mint. Some of them by order of State Legislatures, called sub-national medals; some of them for private individuals. Many of these are of great historical interest, but not being

national in the sense of being voted by Congress, they do not come within the scope of this paper.[1]

But there is a class of medals, badges or orders growing out of our various wars which should be briefly mentioned. The oldest of these is the Order of the Cincinnati.

This society was formed by the officers of the Revolutionary army at the cantonments in Newburg on the Hudson in May, 1773. The original institution adopted at that time thus describes the purpose of its formation:

"To perpetuate therefore as well the remembrance of this vast event (the Revolution) as the mutual friendships which have been formed under the pressure of common danger and in many instances cemented by the blood of the parties, the officers of the American army do hereby in the most solemn manner associate, constitute and combine themselves into one society of friends, to endure as long as they shall endure or any of their eldest male posterity; and in failure thereof the collateral branches who may be judged worthy of becoming its supporters and members."

[1] Congress has in various instances, in granting a gold medal to successful commanders, ordered that a silver medal should be given to each of the subordinate commissioned officers engaged in the action. But as these silver medals are simply copies of the ones in gold given to the commanding officers, they are not here separately enumerated, all being of the same design, and therefore to be considered as but one medal, exactly as the numerous life saving and Army and Navy Medals of honor are all reproductions of one original.

In the cases of Colonel John Stewart and Colonel de Fleury, subordinate officers at Stony Point, the resolution of Congress thanked them by name, and two distinct medals were struck, one by Duvivier and the other by Gatteaux, each having its separate and original design, and neither bearing any resemblance to the gold medal of Gen. Wayne.

The principles which are declared to be immutable are: to inculcate to the latest ages the duty of laying down in peace arms assumed for the public defence in war; to perpetuate the mutual friendships commenced under the pressure of common danger; and to effectuate the acts of benevolence dictated by the spirit of brotherly kindness towards those officers and their families who unfortunately may be under the necessity of receiving them.

The society declared to be eligible all commissioned officers of the army and navy of the United States who left the service with reputation, and foreign officers not lower in rank than colonels or captains in the navy ranking as colonels. The original membership was about 2,000, with General Washington as President as long as he lived; the present membership is however not over 500. The Hon. Hamilton Fish is the present President-General, and the Hon. Robert M. McLane President of the Maryland State branch.

The bald eagle carrying the emblems on his breast was chosen as the insignia of the order, and the medal was made in Paris by M. Duval, after designs prepared by Major L'Enfant. Dr. Franklin who was later elected an honorary member of the society for life did not approve of this selection for the following reasons, expressed in a letter to one of his family:

"For my own part I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad moral character, he does not get his living honestly. You may have seen him perched on some dead tree where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labor of the fishing-hawk, and when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is never in good case, but like those among men who live by sharping and robbing, he is generally poor and often very lousy. Besides he is a rank coward; the little king bird, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district. He is, therefore, by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati, who have driven all the *king birds* from our country, tho' exactly fit for that order of knights which the French call Chevaliers d'Industrie."

The medal is, however, a very handsome piece, and was the only foreign order allowed to be worn by French officers at the French Court. Many members settled on the land granted to them in the West for their services in the war, and General St. Clair and Colonel Sargent, two original members, named their three pioneer log-cabins, at the junction of the Licking and the Ohio, after their society, and so gave it a flourishing godchild in the city of Cincinnati.

The civil war produced the military order of the Loyal Legion, which is, I am informed, founded on exactly the principles of the Cincinnati, including

the hereditary feature which has been so much criticized. It is confined to commissioned officers and numbers over 5,000. General Sheridan is the present Commander, succeeding the late General Hancock. Their medal also represents the bald eagle on a six-pointed star.

The Grand Army of the Republic, also an outcome of the civil war, is intended to be a charitable organization for officers and men. They are very important in numbers and have a handsome bronze badge.

The Mexican war originated the Aztec Club and the Association of the Mexican Veterans, and I understand that a badge has been adopted called the *Order of the Cacti;* but this I have never seen, nor any description of it.

But none of these can be considered as national medals, inasmuch as none of them have ever received any direct Governmental recognition. Congress, however, by the act of July 25, 1868, authorized the wearing of army corps badges on occasions of ceremony.

The really national medals may, therefore, properly be limited to the eighty-three already enumerated[1] granted by order of Congress, and, extraordinary as it may seem, there does not exist in

[1] Unless the historical importance of numbers 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 69 gives them the national character which they lack by reason of not having the sanction of a Congressional resolution.

any public department of our Government—not even in the Mint itself—any complete collection of them.

In 1855 the Mint was authorized to strike copies for sale, and it was then discovered that nearly all those of the Revolutionary epoch were missing. Most of these were, however, obtained from Paris by the courtesy of the French Government, which, more zealous than our own authorities, had preserved them, and new dies were struck at our Mint.

There are, however, three not yet at the Mint—those of General Wayne, Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart and Major-General Nathaniel Greene; but, after a three years' search, authentic copies have been procured and are now the property of Mr. T. Harrison Garrett, of this city—a member of this society.

The city of Baltimore earned the name of the Monumental City because of her taking the initiative in honoring the memory of Washington by the beautiful marble shaft which is to-day one of her greatest ornaments, and the erection of other historic memorials, and it would seem to be especially fitting that from the city of Baltimore should begin the action which will cause these medals to be properly preserved and placed on record in all the public departments, and in every State and Territory in the Union.

The larger projects of Dr. Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and John Jay, already mentioned in this paper, did not, it is true, meet with the approval of Congress so far as we know; but the modified scheme embodied in the joint resolution prepared by your committee and already read to you, if it fails now, can be tried again in the next Congress.

For these are the heirlooms of the Republic. They were given by a grateful country "*in perpetuam rei memoriam*," and they record men and things which this people must not allow to pass into oblivion.

Here in these fourscore little pieces of metal is an epitome of the history of the United States. Her victories in war and in peace, the achievements of her sons in the arts and sciences, and the munificence and patriotism of her citizens in the hour of their country's need all are recorded here.

And although they may be but the dry bones of history, they are the visible material object lessons which every American child, learning his country's history should be familiar with.

And when some Dr. Schliemann of the future in taking an archæological tour in company with Macaulay's New Zealander, may commence his excavations on the site of the ruined capital of some State to-day the newest of western territories, he shall exhume, stamped on imperishable metal, in this collection of national medals, the history of

the United States. He will not know the fact, nor perhaps will we, but none the less its existence there will be due to the efforts of the Maryland Historical Society, if it succeeds in accomplishing even partially the work that was left unfinished by Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and John Jay.

APPENDIX.

At the regular meeting of the Maryland Historical Society in April, 1885, the attention of the Society was called to the fact that no complete collection of the National Medals voted by Congress was known to exist in any of the departments of the government, although a number of them were preserved in some form at the United States Mint in Philadelphia.

Considering that in the interest of education and for historical reference the preservation and publication of these medals is an important national matter, the Society then passed a resolution constituting a committee for the purpose of investigating the subject and taking such steps as they might deem proper to bring it to the notice of the general government.

This committee was composed of Messrs. T. Harrison Garrett, Lennox Birckhead, and Richard M. McSherry, the latter being the chairman.

After some correspondence with the officials at the Mint, the committee concluded that the first practical step was to obtain the originals or authentic copies of those medals which are not and never have been at the Mint.

These are but four in number, namely, those of General Wayne, Colonel Stewart, and General Greene, all originally struck in France, and that of Doctor Elisha Kent Kane, which has never been struck at all, so far as the committee can discover.

After a two years' search, involving much correspondence, one of the committee got intelligence of the existence of authentic copies of the Wayne, Stewart and Greene medals, and these copies are now in Baltimore, the property of another member of the committee, Mr. Garrett.

Immediately after procuring these copies the committee prepared the following resolution, which was offered in the House of Representatives January 30, 1887, by the Hon. Jno. V. L. Findlay.

JOINT RESOLUTION authorizing and requiring the Secretary of the Treasury to have struck copies of certain medals and to deliver the same to certain departments and to the various States and Territories.

Whereas, at various times by order of the Congress of the United States, National Medals have been issued in commemoration of great national events, deeds of valor of our naval and military heroes, important public services by citizens and the administration of our Presidents.

And whereas, it is believed that no complete set of these medals is in the possession of the United States Government in the Mint or elsewhere.

And whereas, in the interest of education and for historical reference their careful preservation in some form accessible to all citizens is most important as exact memorials of events and personages notable in our national history and to be remembered with patriotic pride.

Now therefore be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That the Secretary of the Treasury be and is hereby required to have struck off at the United States Mint complete sets of all the National Medals of the classes above named.

And in case a die or copy of any of such medals is not in the possession of the Mint, then the Secretary of the Treasury is

hereby required to procure the original medal or an authentic copy thereof, and to prepare a new die making an exact reproduction of the original.

And the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized and required to distribute these complete sets when made as follows:

One set in the original metal as first issued to all the executive departments of the United States Government at Washington.

One set in bronze to each of the States of the Union and the Territories, to be by them preserved accessible to the public in such form as the various Legislatures may prescribe.

And the cost of dies, material and distribution shall be defrayed by the United States Mint at Philadelphia out of its contingent fund.

This resolution was submitted to the Director of the Mint who approved of it, and was referred to the committee on coinage, weights and measures, and the only member of that committee who was referred to on the subject expressed himself as strongly in favor of it.

Time, however, did not allow the resolution to be reported by the committee on coinage, &c., and voted on by Congress, but there was no reason to apprehend any opposition to the measure, especially as the Director of the Mint estimated that the expense would be very small and could be defrayed by the Mint out of its contingent fund.

It is the intention of the committee to have the resolution again presented in the next Congress. And the object of the chairman of the committee in preparing this paper was to put clearly before the Society the purpose and scope of the resolution, and to set forth what seems to him its great historical and educational importance, in the hope that every person who reads the paper may lend his influence and assistance towards the accomplishment of so worthy a project.