

THE
TOUR

OF

JAMES MONROE,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

THROUGH THE

NORTHERN AND EASTERN

STATES, IN 1817;

HIS TOUR IN THE YEAR 1818;

TOGETHER WITH

A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE;

WITH

DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL NOTICES

OF THE PRINCIPAL PLACES THROUGH

WHICH HE PASSED.

" You would have thought the very windows mov'd,
To see him as he pass'd, so many young and old,
Through casements dars'd their desiring eyes."

BY S. PUTNAM WALDO, ESQ.

Compiler of "Robbins' Journal," and Author of "Memoirs of Jackson."

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countrymen at the "*Victory of Trenton.*" A mercenary band of soldiers, fighting *here* in the unjust cause of a *foreign* potentate for their bread, were encountered, subdued, and captured, by a little phalanx of republican soldiers, led by the American *Fabius*, who were contending for "*the soil which their grandsires defended.*" In this contest, JAMES MONROE, now the first magistrate in twenty one sovereign and independent states, fought in a subordinate rank. The wounds he here received, furnish evidence of his early courage, and of his devotion to the cause of his injured and the suffering country. His fellow citizens, remembering his youthful valour, and respecting his matured wisdom, and elevated rank, received him with an unaffected cordiality, more expressive of real esteem, than all the gorgeous pageantry with which a sovereign prince is escorted through his capital by his enslaved subjects.

"On Saturday evening, the 7th June, a little after sunset, the President, accompanied by Gen. Swift, Chief of Engineers, Mr. Ingersoll, District Attorney for Pennsylvania, and Mr. Mason, his private Secretary, reached the Delaware bridge below this city, where the principal authorities, the volunteer companies of Trenton, commanded by captain Rossell, and a large concourse of citizens were awaiting him. His arrival was announced by a piece of artillery, under the direction of captain Yard, and by the ringing of bells. He was conducted by the military escort to Anderson's tavern; where a *feu-de joie* was fired. The Mayor, Mr. M'Neely, the Recorder, Mr. Charles Ewing, and Aldermen Broadhurst, Taylor and Smith, were imme-

diately presented to him, "when the Recorder made him the following extempore Address."

The Mayor and City Council, and, through us, the citizens of Trenton, present to you, Sir, their most unfeigned respects ; congratulate you on your arrival, and give you a most cordial welcome to this city—the scene, Sir, of some of the services you have rendered our country. We most sincerely wish you the enjoyment of health, a long life, and a prosperous administration.

TO WHICH THE PRESIDENT SPONTANEOUSLY REPLIED :

I feel very sensibly this kind attention on the part of the authorities of the city of Trenton ; the place where the hopes of the Country were revived in the war of the revolution, by a signal victory obtained by the troops under the command of Gen. Washington, after a severe and disastrous campaign. I am well acquainted with the patriotism of the citizens of Trenton, and, indeed, of Jersey ; for none suffered more, or displayed greater patriotism, in our revolutionary contest. I beg you to accept my best wishes for your continued prosperity and happiness.

The President spent the following sabbath in Trenton, and, with his suite, attended divine service at one of the churches in that place. It is a fact worthy of observation, and undoubtedly a source of high gratification to the admirers of the Christian Religion, that the President, during his Tour, embraced every opportunity to unite with his fellow citizens upon the Christian sabbath, in adoring the Creator of the world.—Although our inimitable constitution absolutely prohibits the passage of any religious *test act* ; although the bright constellation of American statesmen have always

resisted the *establishment* of any *privileged order*, or *religious sect*; and although the most unqualified toleration in religious worship is extended to every sect that has arisen in the world, from the days of Moses to this time; yet, as the Christian Religion is the prevailing system in our country, it must be a subject of real congratulation to its believers, that their Chief Magistrate is willing to manifest his belief of it, by publicly complying with its ordinances. In his answer to the Clergymen of *Portland*, he not only expresses “*reverence for our Maker*,” but recognizes “*our Lord and Saviour*.”

Trenton is situated upon the river Delaware, thirty miles N. E. of Philadelphia. It is a small, but handsome town, having a court house, a prison, an academy, five houses of public worship, and more than three thousand inhabitants.

The feelings of the President, while in this place, must have been of a nature which but few can justly appreciate, and with which a “*stranger intermeddleth not*.” He must have left it with a heart glowing with gratitude to that Being who sits upon the undisputed throne of the universe, that he had, in his merciful dispensations, made *Trenton* a place where all may now enjoy tranquillity and peace, “*having none to molest, or make them afraid* ;” and he must have contrasted its present enviable situation, with what it was, when he viewed it in the hands of a merciless foe, who held the lives of its unoffending citizens at their own disposal; and who, without compunction, had murdered a minister of the everlasting gospel, whose holy functions led him to dis-

pense the word of life, in an unoffending manner, to the people of his chosen flock.

He left this place upon the 9th, and passed through a country which furnished ocular demonstration of the industry and comfort of its inhabitants.

“ At New-Brunswick he was received a few miles from town. Chief Justice Kirkpatrick, in the name of the committee, respectfully congratulated the President on his arrival ; to which he made a polite and suitable reply.

As the President approached, he was met and escorted to the City Tavern. His arrival was announced by the ringing of bells and the discharge of cannon. At the entrance of the town, an elegant horse, was tendered the President, which he mounted and rode into town. The streets were literally filled with spectators, all anxious to testify their respect for the Chief Magistrate.

A number of citizens also attended, and were presented by the committee to the President, who received them with great affability and marked respect.

After remaining about an hour, he again mounted on horseback, and proceeded on his journey towards New-York. Captain Van Dyke's troop accompanied him about five miles.”

He arrived at New-York city, upon the 11th June, 1817.

Upon entering this city, unquestionably the first in the western world in a commercial point of view, the emporium of commerce, and the mart of trade in the American States ; a flood of ideas must have rushed into his comprehensive mind. It was in this city the

“*Old Congress*” once assembled. This convention of gigantic statesman, representing thirteen infant colonies, held together by no other ligament than that rope of sand, “The old Confederation,” here sat in solemn council to devise ways and means to protect them from the almost irresistible power of their mother country, determined to deprive them of the right of self government. This place in the early stages of the revolutionary struggle, was evacuated by the American forces, and surrendered to an enemy whom they could not *then* conquer.

He might have seen Washington, by a masterly retreat saving the remnant of an army, from the dying miseries of a prison ship, in which thousands of his countrymen perished in a manner ten times more terrible than that of the prisoners at *Jaffa*.

This city was, during almost the whole war, the strong hold of the King's army. It was here the power of Britain presented the most imposing aspect, and induced many Americans, in the adjoining country, to desert the republican standard ; join the enemies of their country, and become the most cruel and ferocious foes to their own brethren.

These reflections must have produced a sombre gloom. But how animating must have been the contrasted scene. When rebellion became a revolution, he might have seen a British army giving back this place to his conquering countrymen ; the *last* they surrendered ; and, by the act surrendering their last hopes in America ; giving up the most brilliant diamond in the British diadem. He might have here seen his first predecessor, the *then* conquering and *now* immortal