



R A M S A Y : S

Oration,

ON THE DEATH OF

General Washington.

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Oration

ON THE DEATH OF

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

WHO DIED DEC. 14, 1799.

DELIVERED IN

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Oration, &c.

IF ever any country owed to one of its citizens an incalculable debt of gratitude—that country is the United States—that citizen was the late **GEORGE WASHINGTON**. To do justice to his exalted merit, far exceeds my abilities.—In making the attempt, I must surely fail, for none could succeed. I not only crave, but claim your indulgence. The task on which I am entering is of your appointment, and it is of such a delicate and arduous nature, that to its proper execution, not only my feeble powers, but the first abilities in the world, would be inadequate.

On the 11th of February, 1732, Virginia had the honor of giving birth to the illustrious man, whose death we this day deplore. His ancestors migrated from England, and were among the first settlers of this first of the British provinces in America. I cannot speak from positive anecdote, what was his situation and employment for the first twenty years of his life; but I have heard, that in his youth he was remarkably grave, silent, and thoughtful, active and methodical in business, highly dignified in his appearance and

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manners, and strictly honorable in all his deportment.

The first public notice of him, that I have seen, was in a note to a sermon, printed in London forty-five years ago, which had been preached a short time before, in Hanover-county, Virginia, on some public occasion, by the late president Davies. In this, the preacher observed, "*I may point out to the public that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope, Providence has hitherto preserved for some important service to his country.*" As no thought of American independence was entertained at that early day, this observation could only have been founded in a knowledge of his talents and character. Indeed his appearance would have justified such a presentiment, for majesty and dignity were remarkably conspicuous in his countenance, and the figure of his person.

Very soon after young Washington was twenty-one years of age, he was employed by the government of Virginia, on an embassy to negotiate the removal of some French settlers from the Ohio, who had fortified themselves in the vicinity of that river, on lands claimed by the King of Great-Britain. In the execution of this trust, he travelled upwards of four hundred miles, and his route, for one half of that distance, led through pathless woods, inhabited only by savage beasts and more savage men. He was attend-
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ed only by one companion, and proceeded on foot from Winchester: his negotiations failing, Virginia raised three hundred men, and put them under his command, and instructed him to proceed to the Ohio. An engagement took place, between the French and Virginians, in which the former were at first defeated; but being afterwards reinforced with nine hundred men, they reduced Colonel Washington, after making a brave defence, to the necessity of submitting to honorable terms of capitulation.

The contest, about these lands, becoming more serious, General Braddock was sent with a regular force from Great Britain, to support the claims of his Britannic Majesty. His impetuous valor pushed him forward into an ambuscade of French and Indians, in which he was killed, and his army routed. The remains of it were rallied, and brought off in safety, under the direction and by the address of Colonel Washington.

The next expedition was more successful, and restored tranquillity to the province of Virginia. When this event took place, the young citizen soldier, being no longer called to the discharge of military duty, resumed his habits of civil life, and continued therein, until a new and unexpected scene, about twenty years after, brought him forward on a much more conspicuous theatre.

In the year 1774, the British ministry completed their system for taxing their colonies.

America was roused ; and, by a simultaneous impulse, formed a congress of her most enlightened sons, to devise such measures as bid fairest to preserve her endangered liberties. To this illustrious assembly Washington was deputed, and he contributed his full proportion in forming the wise plans which were by them adopted. Great Britain turned a deaf ear to their petitions, and proceeded to coerce the colonies by a military force. Massachusetts being immediately attacked, had, in the first instance, embodied an army for its defence ; but as soon as it was determined to make a common cause with that much injured province, it became necessary that her local army should be made the army of the United colonies, and be officered by Congress.

New England had her Pomeroy, her Ward, and her Putnam, and many others who had seen as much, or perhaps more service than Washington, yet their wise delegates concurred in elevating the Virginian over their own favorite sons. The appointment of a commander in chief of all the armies raised, or to be raised, was effected by an unanimous vote, and without competition. Not only Congress, but the inhabitants in every part of the United Colonies, seemed, by one consent, to point to Washington, as the chosen instrument of heaven, to guide them through the storms of war, to the haven of peace and safety. His native modesty begat distrusts in his own breast, from which others were free.

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In his acceptance of the office, he desired, “*that it might be remembered by every gentleman present, that he declared, with the utmost sincerity, that he did not think himself equal to the command with which he was honored.*”

On the third of July, 1775, he arrived at Cambridge, and entered upon the duties of his high station. Great were the difficulties which pressed on the new commander in chief—To introduce discipline and subordination among the free husbandmen, who had lately assumed the military character, and who were accustomed to act from the impulse of their own minds, was an arduous labor. To procure effective service from men who carry with them the spirit of freedom into the field, requires virtues which are rarely found in military characters. The greater part of the Americans, officers as well as soldiers, had never seen any service, were ignorant of their duty, and but feebly impressed with the ideas of union, subordination, and discipline. To form an army of such materials, fit to take the field against British veteran troops, was the task assigned to General Washington. In effecting this, he conducted with so much prudence, as to make it doubtful whether we ought most to admire the patient, accommodating spirit of the man, or the consummate address of the general.

The American troops were only engaged for a few months service, and were in a great measure destitute of ammunition. On the

4th of August, 1775, and for fourteen days after, the whole stock of powder in the American camp, and in the public magazines of New-England, was not sufficient to make ten rounds a man. Under all these disadvantages, the commander in chief adopted such efficient arrangements, as protected the country, confined the British army to Boston, and finally obliged them to evacuate that city on the 17th of March, 1776. His conduct was so pleasing to Congress, that they ordered a medal to be struck, with suitable devices, to perpetuate the remembrance of the great event; and so much to the satisfaction of the people of Massachusetts, that he was presented with a most flattering address from their Council and House of Representatives.

Hitherto General Washington had embarked in the war with the fond idea of a reconciliation with the parent state. Independence was an after-thought, forced on the colonies by the refusal of Great-Britain to redress their grievances. Though he was not among the first to embrace the scheme of independence, yet as soon as he perceived the necessity of the measure, he heartily came into it. Far from wishing such a turn of affairs, as must necessarily lead to his personal aggrandizement, as long as one ray of hope remained, he ardently panted for such a return of moderation and wisdom to the rulers of Great-Britain, as would have united the two countries in their ancient habits of union and friendship.

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Soon after the evacuation of Boston, Gen. Washington, with the army under his command, took their position in New-York. Great were the difficulties he had to encounter at Boston, but much greater pressed upon him in New-York. In the former situation, he commanded a force far superior in number to the enemy; in the latter, his whole army was short of 18,000 men; and of these a great proportion was militia. To these were opposed upwards of 30,000 British veterans, supported by a powerful navy. In this situation, after much thought, General Washington resolved on a war of posts. He stood his ground, as long as it could be done, without risking too much, and then prevented the last extremity, by evacuating and retreating. He rightly judged that to him delay was victory; and not to be conquered was to conquer. By this policy he wore away the campaign of 1776. Though the British counted on the complete conquest of the colonies in that year, it was the middle of September before they got footing in the city of New-York, and beyond the middle of November before they obtained full possession of New-York island.

The evacuating and retreating system, adopted by General Washington, subjected him to the clamors of short-sighted politicians, who questioned his decision and spirit. He had it always in his power to have vindicated himself, by stating the inferiority of his

his numbers, and the total unfitness of his raw troops to contend with the veteran force opposed to them ; but with true magnanimity he bore those reproaches, and concealed his real situation.

In the latter end of November, the British commanders, instead of retiring into winter quarters, after driving the Americans from the state of New-York, pursued them into New-Jersey, with the fair prospect of annihilating their whole force. The moment was critical. Dangers and difficulties pressed on all sides. On the sixteenth of November, 2,700 of the American army were taken prisoners in fort Mifflin. In fourteen days after that event, the flying camp, amounting to 10,000 men, having served out their time, claimed their discharge. Other whole regiments, on similar grounds, did the same. The few that remained with General Washington scarcely exceeded 3,000, and they were in a most forlorn condition, without tents, or blankets, or any utensils to dress their provisions. Under all these disadvantages, they were obliged to consult their safety, by retreating towards Philadelphia, from a victorious army, pressing close on their rear. As they marched through the country, scarcely one of the inhabitants joined them, while numbers were daily flocking to the royal army for protection. Not only the common people changed sides in this gloomy state of affairs; but several of the leading men in
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New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania, adopted the same expedient.—Congress fled from Philadelphia to Baltimore. The hearts of many brave Americans began to fail, and to give up all hope of maintaining their independence.

In this period, when the American army was relinquishing their General—the people giving up the cause—some of their leaders going over to the enemy, and the British commanders succeeding in every enterprize, General Washington did not despair. He slowly retreated before the advancing foe, and determined to fall back to Pennsylvania—to Augusta county in Virginia—and, if necessary, to the westward of yonder Mountains, where he was resolved, in the last extremity, to renew the struggle for the independence of his country. While his unconquered mind was brooding on these ideas, 1500 of the Pennsylvania militia joined him. With this small increase of force he formed the bold resolution of recrossing the Delaware, and attacking that part of the enemy which was posted in Trenton. Heaven smiled on the enterprize. On the 26th of December, 900 Hessians were killed, wounded, or taken prisoners. This bold enterprize was, in eight days after, followed by another, which was planned with great address. General Washington with his army stole away under cover of the night, from the vicinity of a force far superior to his own, and attacked in their rear a detachment of the British posted in Princeton: 300 were taken prisoners,

ers, and about 100 killed and wounded. These two victories revived the drooping spirits of the Americans, and seemed under Providence to have been the means of their political salvation. They made the British so cautious of extending their posts, that General Washington with an army of 1,500 men, for several months, kept nearly 15,000 of the enemy closely pent up in Brunswick.

The same wise policy of avoiding decisive engagements was pursued by our Hero through the campaign of 1777, with so much effect, that it was as late as the 26th of Sept. before Sir William Howe possessed himself of Philadelphia. In the various marches and counter-marches which took place between the two armies, in the course of this campaign, repeated proofs were given, that though General Washington was forward to engage, when he thought it to his advantage, yet it was impossible for the Royal Commander to bring him to action against his consent.

I claim your indulgence for recapitulating so much of the history of our late revolution, which is already known to you. It is no digression. It is all to my purpose. When General Washington is the subject, history and eulogy are the same—the speaker praises him best, who gives the most faithful narrative of his actions.

If time permitted, I would run over every campaign, and point out to you, in each, the many instances in which our Hero displayed the talents

talents of an accomplished general, as well as the mild virtues of the Father of his country. I would particularize how eager he was to attack when it could be done to advantage; and with how much dexterity he avoided engagements, when his situation was unfavorable. With what address he kept together a half naked—half starved—and unpaid army, particularly in the last year of the war, when gold and silver were banished from circulation, and the continental currency had depreciated almost to nothing.—I would unfold how the magic of his name produced union and concert among the jarring states, and their discordant troops.—I would—but time fails me even to enumerate the topics, from which, by the simple relation of facts, I could heighten your admiration of this extraordinary man.—I shall, therefore conclude my observations on his military career, by observing, that in consequence of a most judicious plan, in concerting, and executing which, General Washington had a principal share, Lord Cornwallis, with 7,000 men, was, in October, 1781, compelled to surrender to the combined forces of France and the United States. This was the closing scene of the revolutionary war. At Trenton the first, and at York-Town the last decisive blow was given to the British forces in the United States, and both were conducted under the immediate command of General Washington.

Though the capture of Lord Cornwallis, in a great measure, terminated the war, yet great and important services were rendered to the United States, by our General, after that event. The army which had fought the battles of independence was about to be disbanded without being paid. At this period, when the minds of both officers and men were in a highly irritable state, attempts were made by plausible but seditious publications, to induce them to unite in redressing their grievances, while they had arms in their hands. The whole of General Washington's influence was exerted, and nothing less than his unbounded influence would have been availing to prevent the adoption of measures, that threatened to involve the country in an intestine war, between the army on the one side, and the citizens on the other. If Washington had been a Julius Cæsar, or an Oliver Cromwell, all we probably would have gained by the revolution would have been a change of our allegiance—from being the subjects of George the Third of Great Britain, to become the subjects of George the First of America.

The war being ended.—The peace, liberties, and independence of these states being acknowledged and secured, our beloved General presents himself before Congress, and returns into their hands his commission as commander in chief of their armies. The scene was grand and majestic. After having successfully

successfully served his country for eight years, and conducted its armies through a revolutionary war, which terminated in the establishment of the liberties and independence of these states—when he is about to retire to private life, does he demand honors or emoluments for himself, family, or friends? No such thing. In modest language, he recommended to the favorable notice, and patronage of Congress, the confidential officers who were attached to his person. For them he indirectly asks favors, but nothing for himself. The only privilege conferred by Congress on the retiring Washington, which distinguished him from any other private citizen, was, a right of sending and receiving letters free of postage. Think not, I mean to charge my country with ingratitude. Nothing would have been refused to him which he wished to have; but, to use his own language on another occasion, “*he shut his hand against all pecuniary compensation.*”

Do you ask me how this illustrious General, after being used for eight years to camps, bore the languid indifference of private life? Do you enquire whether he went to Europe in a public or private character? Had he been a vain man, fond of applause, or of glittering in the public eye, he would doubtless have put himself in the way of receiving those flattering attentions, which are so eagerly coveted by the vulgar great. Very different was the line of conduct he pursued. After resigning
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his commission, he hastened with ineffable delight to his long-neglected farm at Mount Vernon—heathed his sword—laid aside his uniform, and assumed the dress and habits of a country gentleman. With the same assiduity he had lately visited camps and forts, he began once more to visit his fields and his mills. In a short time, the first general of the world became the best farmer in Virginia.

Do you enquire on what subjects this great man, after retiring from an exalted public station, used to converse? Was it his practice to “fight his battles o’er again,” and entertain his company with a recital of the great scenes in which he had been a principal actor? Ask the many gentlemen who partook of his hospitality, and they will one and all tell you, that he rarely spoke of the war, and still more rarely of himself, unless his guests forced conversation upon these subjects. His favorite topics were agricultural, on these he dwelled with peculiar pleasure, and rejoiced in every opportunity of giving and receiving information on the first and best employment of man. In this beloved retreat, from the cares and business of public life, he wished to spend the remainder of his days; but, after having enjoyed himself on his farm for four years, his country again called for his services.

From the inefficacy of the articles of confederation, and from several other concurring causes, a tide of evils flowed in upon the
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United States, in the years that immediately followed the return of peace. A convention of the different states was called, to digest a form of government, equal to the exigencies of the union. To this illustrious assembly General Washington was deputed, and of it he was unanimously elected president. His wisdom had a great share in forming, and the influence of his name a still greater in procuring the acceptance of the constitution, which the convention recommended to the people for their adoption. By this, one legislative, executive, and judicial power was made to pervade all the states, and the executive in particular, was committed to an officer, by the name of President. Though great diversity of opinions had prevailed about the merits of the new constitution, there was but one opinion about the person who should be appointed its supreme executive officer—Three millions of people, by their representatives, unanimously gave their suffrages in favor of George Washington. Unambitious of further honors, he wished to be excused from all public service; but that ardent patriotism, by which he had always been governed, prevailed over his love of retirement, and induced him once more to engage in the great work of making a nation happy. The popularity of his name, and the confidence which the people of all the states reposed in his tried integrity, enabled him to give an energy to the new constitution, which
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it would not have had under the administration of any other person.

I need not remind you of the great improvements which have taken place in the wealth, resources, and commerce of the United States since Washington has been President. You know them—you feel them; and the daily increasing prosperity of our country attests them.

In the midst of this prosperity, a storm arose in a far distant land, which threatened to involve these states in its wide spreading devastation; but our political pilot once more saved us from impending danger. When the war broke out between France and England, an artful minister was sent from the former, with the avowed design of involving us in the contest. The kindred name of a republic—unbounded love and gratitude to France for beneficial aid, afforded us in our struggle for independence — rankling hatred of Great Britain for the many injuries she had done us in the same period, all concurred to make a strong party among us, favorable to the views of the French minister. This was increased by impolitic and illegal captures of our floating property, by the vessels of his Britannic Majesty. When we were apparently on the point of being drawn into the vortex of the the war, President Washington, by virtue of his constitutional powers, prevented it. He nominated an envoy extraordinary to negotiate with the court of London. This, like
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the veto of a Roman tribune, put a stop to all further proceedings, for the legislature could not proceed to hostile measures while the executive was negotiating. The man, who in his military capacity, had saved us from Great Britain, now, in his civil character, saved us from ourselves. The people, though divided in parties, were so fully convinced of the rectitude and purity of the conduct of Washington, that on a second election they elevated him to the same exalted station, with an unanimous voice. If my time, or your patience, permitted, I would go over the civil administration of our late President, and point out to you his judicious arrangements for making us happy at home, and respectable abroad— for protecting our commerce— for encouraging our agriculture— for giving vigor to our internal police, by calling into office upright and able men, in every department. I would dilate, with particular pleasure, on his unwearied endeavors to preserve the country in peace. While some of our citizens were for France, and others for England— Washington was for the United States, and with great address preserved us on both sides from the horrors of war. On these subjects I cannot dwell, and therefore hasten to observe, that after having served his country with great ability, and fidelity, for eight years, in the office of President, he once more retired to private life, covered with honours, and followed by the love and gratitude of all the people— previous to this event

he gave his last parting advice to the citizens of the United States, in the form of a valedictory address. This is in all your hands. Teach it to your children, in the house, and by the way, lying down and rising up, going out and coming in. It is an invaluable legacy—Perhaps there never was so much important instruction—so much good advice given by any mere man in the compass of so few words, as was done by Washington on this, and a similar occasion, when he retired from military command.

Our departed friend had not enjoyed his beloved retirement two years, when his country again called for his services. The rulers of France, having entirely departed from the principles on which they set out, plundered our commerce, insulted our ministers of peace; and some of their agents went so far as to threaten us with invasion. This imposed a necessity to organize an army, and prepare for the last extremity. All the world knew, and Washington, though the most modest of men, could not but know, that his name, at the head of our army, would either deter any European power from invading us; or if they should madly make the attempt, would unite all our citizens as a band of brothers for the common defence. He therefore accepted the appointment, and though on the verge of threescore years and ten, stood ready and pledged to take the field, whenever the necessities of the country required it. In this attitude,

attitude, and with a fixed resolution to serve his country in the last ebb of his life, and with the last drop of his blood, our father has been suddenly snatched from us. To lose such a man, at such a crisis, is no common calamity. Well may you mourn on such an occasion. Well may you shroud yourselves and your churches in black. Well may the citizens of these states, from New-Hampshire to Georgia, mingle their tears in one great flood of grief. It was wise and proper to set apart a day free from business and care, to give undisturbed vent to your sorrows. Who now will wield the sword of our country against our enemies? Many brave and good officers we yet have; but none, like Washington, can by their very names strike terror into the breasts of an invading enemy. None, like Washington, can unite all hearts and hands in the common defence.

Having finished an historical review of the life of our departed friend, bear with me a few minutes while I attempt to draw his character. For the sake of those who have never seen General Washington, it may be worth while to observe, that his person was graceful, well proportioned, and uncommonly tall.—When he was cheerful, he had a most engaging countenance—when grave, a most respectable one. There was at all times an air of majesty and dignity in his appearance.

His learning was of a singular kind; he

overstepped the tedious forms of the schools, and by the force of a correct taste and sound judgment, seized on the great ends of learning, without the assistance of those means which have been contrived to prepare less active minds for public business. By a careful study of the English language, by reading good models of fine writing, and, above all, by the aid of a vigorous mind, he made himself master of a pure, elegant, and classical style. His composition was all nerve; full of correct and manly ideas, which were expressed in precise and forcible language. His answers to the innumerable addresses, which on all public occasions poured in upon him, were promptly made, handsomely expressed, and always contained something appropriate.—His letters to congress—his addresses to that body on the acceptance and resignation of his commission—his general orders as commander in chief—his speeches and messages, as President—and above all, his two farewell addresses to the people of the United States, will remain lasting monuments of the goodness of his heart—of the wisdom of his head—and of the eloquence of his pen.

The powers of his mind were in some respects peculiar. He was a great practical self-taught genius—with a head to devise, and a hand to execute projects of the first magnitude and greatest utility. Happily for his country he was not under the dominion of a warm imagination; but he possessed, in an eminent

eminent degree, what was of infinitely more consequence—a correct, solid judgment. This was improved by close thinking, and strengthened by daily exercise. Possessing a large proportion of common sense, uninfluenced by prejudice, passion, or party spirit—deliberately weighing in the balance of a sound judgment, the possible and probable consequences of every step he took, and being always under the influence of an honest, good heart, he was imperceptibly led to decisions that were wise and judicious. It is not pretended that he was infallible; but it may, with truth, be asserted, that in the multiplicity of business, on which he had to decide, his errors were as few in number, as venial in their nature, and as unimportant in their consequences, as could reasonably be expected in the present imperfect state of the wisest and best of men.

Enemies he had, but they were few, and chiefly of the same family with the man, who could not bear to hear Aristides always called the just. Among them all, I have never heard of one who charged him with any habitual vice, or even foible. There are few men of any kind, and still fewer of those the world calls great, who have not some of their virtues eclipsed by corresponding vices.--- But this was not the case with General Washington---he had religion without austerity---dignity without pride---modesty without diffidence---courage without rashness---politeness without

without affectation--affability without familiarity. His private character, as well as his public one, will bear the strictest scrutiny. He was punctual in all his engagements--upright and honest in his dealings--temperate in his enjoyments--liberal and hospitable to an eminent degree--a lover of order--systematical and methodical in all his arrangements. He was the friend of morality and religion. steadily attended on public worship--encouraged and strengthened the hands of the clergy. In all his public acts he made the most respectful mention of Providence, and, in a word, carried the spirit of piety with him, both in his private life and public administration. He was far from being one of those minute philosophers, who believe that "death is an eternal sleep;" or of those, who trusting to the sufficiency of human reason, discard the light of Divine revelation.

To dwell on all the virtues of General Washington, would protract my oration beyond the going down of the sun. I must therefore confine myself to a few. Among the many that present themselves, his patience and spirit of accommodation deserve particular notice--He had to form soldiers of freemen; many of whom had extravagant ideas of their personal rights.--He had often to mediate between a starving army, and a high spirited yeomanry. So great were the necessities of the soldiers, under his immediate command, that he was obliged to send out detachments

detachments to seize on the property of the farmers at the point of the bayonet. The language of the soldier was, "give me cloathing---give me food, or I cannot fight---I cannot live:" The language of the farmer was, "protect my property." In this choice of difficulties, General Washington not only kept his army together, but conducted with so much prudence, as to command the approbation both of the army and of the citizens. He was also dependent for much of his support on the concurrence of thirteen distinct, unconnected legislatures. Animosities prevailed between his southern and northern troops; and there were strong jealousies between the states from which they respectively came. To harmonize these clashing interests---to make uniform arrangements from such discordant sources and materials, required no common share of address: Yet so great was the effect of the modest, unassuming manners of General Washington, that he retained the affection of all his troops, and of all the states.

Bravery is indispensable in a military man, though it stands lowest in the least of the virtues of a great officer. Our hero possessed a great share of it. In battle he was the bravest among the brave. When the service required it, he cheerfully risked his person. Of this I could enumerate many instances. I could particularly relate, that on New-York island, and at the battle at Princeton, he was
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so far in front of his troops, and exposed to so much danger, that the preservation of his life can only be accounted for by those who believe in a particular Providence. Having so many more important matters before me, I cannot dwell on this subject. How rich in reputation must that General be, whose courage must be thrown in the back ground, to give place for the display of his more important virtues?

General Washington also possessed equanimity in an eminent degree. One even tenor marked the greatness of his mind, in all the variety of scenes through which he passed. In the most trying situations he never despaired, nor was he ever depressed. Propositions, supported by plausible assignments, were made to him by honest, but despairing, timid Americans, to save himself and his country, by negotiating at the head of his army; but in the lowest ebb of affairs, he spurned at every such proposal. The honors and applause he received from his grateful countrymen, at more fortunate periods, would have made any other man giddy, but on him they had no mischievous effect. He exacted none of those attentions; but when forced upon him he received them as favors, with the politeness of a well bred man. He was great in deserving them, but much greater in not being elated with them.

The patriotism of our departed friend, was of the most ardent kind, and without alloy.

alloy. He was very different from those noisy patriots, who with love of country in their mouths, and with hell in their hearts, lay their schemes for aggrandizing themselves at every hazard; but he was one of those who love their country in sincerity, and who hold themselves bound to consecrate all their talents to its service. Numerous were the difficulties with which he had to contend. Great were the dangers he had to encounter. Various were the toils and services in which he had to share; but to all difficulties and dangers he rose superior--To all toils and services he cheerfully submitted for his country's good.

Possessing an ample, unincumbered fortune—happy at home, in the most pleasing domestic connexions, what but love of country could have induced him to accept the command of the American army in 1775? Could it be hatred of Great Britain? He then ardently loved her, and panted for a reconciliation with her. Could it be partiality for a military life? He was then in the forty-fourth year of his age, when a fondness for camps generally abates. Could it be love of fame; The whole tenor of his life forbids us to believe that he ever was under the undue influence of this passion. Fame followed him, but he never pursued it. Could it have been the love of power? They who best knew the undissembled wishes of his heart, will all tell you with what reluc-

tance he was dragged from a private station, and with what ineffable delight he returned to it. Had he not voluntarily declined it, he would have died your President. Others have resigned high stations from disgust, but he retired at rather an early period of old age, while his faculties were strong, and his health not much impaired, and when the great body of the people sincerely loved him, and ardently wished for his re-election. Could it have been the love of money that induced him to accept the command of the American army? No such thing---when he was appointed commander in chief, Congress made him a handsome allowance; but in his acceptance of the command, he declared "*that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted him to accept the arduous employment, at the expense of his domestic ease and happiness, he did not wish to make any profit from it.*" "I will keep" said he, "*an exact account of my expences---these I doubt not you will discharge, and that is all I desire.*" At the close of the war, he produced his accounts for the eight years it had lasted, all in his own hand-writing, and with the same exactness that was required of commissaries and contractors---the whole amounted to £.14,479 18s 9d $\frac{3}{4}$, sterling. Of this sum, about one seventh was for secret services. The amount paid, the time when, and the occasions on which monies were advanced for secret services, were all carefully noted

ted, but for obvious reasons no receipts were produced. For every other item of the account the most regular vouchers were exhibited. The whole at the request of General Washington was minutely examined by the proper accounting officers, and regularly passed. A tin box, containing these accounts, remains in one of the offices of the United States? It is a monument of the disinterestedness of General Washington. Bring your children and your children's children to examine its contents. Shew them the handwriting of the father of their country---teach them thereon lessons of economy, of order and method in expences---teach them to love their country, and to serve it on liberal terms.

I call upon antiquity---upon modern Europe, and especially on the recent republic of France, to produce one of their heroes or statesmen, that can surpass, or even equal our disinterested patriot.

Had I a voice that would reach across the Atlantic, I would address the nations at war, and propose to their Emperors, their Kings, their Directors, their Generals, and their Statesmen, the example of our Washington for their imitation; and call upon them, if not too much abashed by the splendor of his virtues, to learn from him to put far away avarice and ambition---and like him to pursue nought but their country's good. If they would thus copy after the great example of

our American hero, they would soon sheath their swords, and let the world have peace.

But chiefly do I call on my fellow citizens, to cherish the remembrance of the virtues of the dear deceased. To learn from him to be all eye—all ear—all heart and hand in the service of your country---to think no sacrifice too great—no labor too hard, which public good requires at your hands. Rehearse to your children, and instruct them to rehearse to theirs, the noble deeds of your common father, and inspire them with a holy resolution to go and do likewise. His great example, thus improved, will be a germ of virtuous actions through succeeding generations, till time shall be no more.

But to return—the same reasoning will apply with still greater force to General Washington's acceptance of the office of President of the United States. No motives, but those of the purest kind, could have induced him, loaded with honors, and possessed of a reputation that had carried his name to the remotest corners of the globe, to quit his beloved retirement for the second time, and embark on the perilous sea of civil life.

Where shall we find words sufficient to do justice to his self-denying acceptance of his recent appointment to the supreme command of the army that is now railing. View him in the possession of all that his heart could wish—in the sixty-seventh year of his age, when repose and retirement must have been
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not only desirable but even necessary.—View him in under all those circumstances, pledging himself to take the field whenever the situation of his country required it. How ardent must have been his patriotism! How great is the loss which we have sustained.

In losing him our people have lost their guide—our country has lost its father—its sword and shield—its greatest benefactor and ornament. Rome with all her heroes—Greece with all her patriots, could not produce his equal. Not one who trod the stage of life with equal dignity, and who departed from it in old age with a reputation so brilliant, and at the same time so spotless.

His virtues and example are an invaluable legacy to his country—to Europe—to the world. His councils are engraven on the table of our hearts—his deeds are written with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond. His fame is a sea without a shore—His counsels—his deeds, and his fame, will live forever. But alas! those eyes which have watched so many nights for the safety of the United States, are now closed in death—that tongue, and those hands, which have so often, so long, and so successfully been exerted for our benefit, are now mouldering in the dust.

No more will he enlighten our councils by his wisdom—No more will he lead our armies to victory—No longer will his name prove a bulwark of defence, by giving us

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one mind and one heart, and by striking terror into our enemies. For these things our hearts are faint—our eyes are dim and run down with water.

This day is a day of trouble and distress—a day of darkness and gloominess—a day of clouds and thick darkness——But I check myself—Washington's worth, and our sorrows, exceed all speech.—I am therefore silent, that we may muse on his merits and indulge our grief.

F I N I S.