

FUNERAL ADDRESS,

DELIVERED

In the German Lutheran Church,
Lancaster;

AT THE

PUBLIC INTERMENT

OF

MAJOR-GENERAL MIFFLIN,

JANUARY 22, 1800.

BY WILLIAM SMITH, D. D.

PRINTED BY W. & R. DICKSON, QUEENSTREET.

In the House of Representatives,

Tuesday, January 23, 1800.

On Motion of Mr. Buckley, seconded by
Mr. M'Pherson,

Resolved,

That the Rev. Doctor Smith has the
Thanks of this House for the excellent Dis-
course delivered by him, yesterday, in the
German Lutheran Church, on the Death of
our Fellow-member, Major General Mifflin.

That a Committee be appointed to wait on
the Doctor, and request a Copy for Publica-
tion; and that the expense of Printing be in-
cluded among the incidental Charges. And

Ordered,

That the Committee of Arrangement and
the Committee of Ceremonies be a Commit-
tee for that purpose.

Extract from the Journal.

J. BULLOCK, C. H. R.

February 8, 1800.

IN obedience to the Request of the House of Representatives, the following FUNERAL ADDRESS (although otherwise having little to recommend it) is now committed to the Press, exactly as it was delivered.

The Author had but a few Hours, of the Evening preceding the Interment, to make any preparation; and then in such a state of Health, that, in order to form some proper *Conclusion* to what he had written, he was obliged to borrow [from a Sermon of his own, preached January 10, 1762, at the Funeral of Robert Jenney, L. L. D.] the four Paragraphs, marked with inverted Commas; preceding the last Paragraph of the Address.

Since the Day of its Delivery, till this Day, the Author has not been able to read over his Notes, or to have them handed to the Printer.

FUNERAL ADDRESS, &c.

Brethren, and Fellow-citizens,

ALTHOUGH I have been called, on the present Occasion, merely to perform the solemn funeral Service of the Church to which I belong over the Deceased, whose Education was committed to my Care, and with whom, through every Period of his active *Life*, I have been connected in Habits of cordial Intimacy, Confidence, and Friendship (notwithstanding some Shades of Difference of Sentiment) during a long and trying Period of more than 40 years; yet, as the *Occasion* is rendered more than commonly interesting, by the Legislative voice of his Country decreeing public Interment, and some grateful Monument or Memorial of his meritorious Services in the many important Stations, to which he was called, both *civil* and *military*; it has been suggested to me, that, on such an occasion, and before so great and respectable a Number of Citizens, as are now assembled to honour

his *Manes* and his *Dust*, the opportunity ought not to be lost, of making some short *Address*; since the Time for preparation will not permit a long *One*.

This *Address* must be *Words of Comfort* to the *Living*, and can be of no avail to the *Dead*; and, therefore, as the Text or Subject of it, you will give me Leave to read a few Verses from that sublime Apostle, St. Paul, taken from the 4th. Chap. of his first Epistle to the Thessalonians.

“ But I would not have you ignorant,
 “ Brethren, concerning them which are *asleep*,
 “ that ye sorrow not, even as others which
 “ have no Hope. For if we believe that
 “ Jesus died and rose again, even so them
 “ also, who sleep in Jesus, will God bring
 “ with him—For the Lord himself shall de-
 “ scend from Heaven with a Shout, with
 “ the Voice of the Archangel, and with the
 “ Trump of God: And we shall be caught
 “ up in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in
 “ the Air: And so we shall ever be with the
 “ Lord.

“ Wherefore, *Comfort* one another with
 “ these Words.”

YES, Brethren, *Comfort* one another with
 these Words.

For if there be *Consolation* or *Comfort* to be derived, amidst the *Trials* and *Sufferings* of this mortal *Scene*, here it is revealed to us, in more than the *Language* of the wise *Men* and *Philosophers* of this *World*. It is revealed to us from *Heaven*, in the *Language* of an inspired *Apostle*, who had been favored with a *Glimpse* of *Immortality*, and was illuminated by the *Spirit* of *God*. And his *Arguments* of *Comfort* are equally applicable, in all *Conditions* and *Cases* of our *Sorrow*; whether we join the *Voice* of our *Country*, for the *Loss* of *Public Men*; or mingle our *Tears* in *private*, with our *Families*, for the *Bereavement* of our nearest and dearest *Relatives*; a *Father* or *Mother*, a *Husband* or *Wife*, a *Brother*, a *Child*, or some beloved *Friend*.

The Apostle, indeed, indulgent to our Human Frailty, allows us to sorrow; yet it is not to be *Sorrow without Hope*, as if the GRAVE was to be an everlasting Place of Sleep; but it is to be Sorrow like that so tenderly ascribed, by the Poet, to our first Parents, on their Expulsion from Paradise.

“ Some natural Tears they dropt; but wip’d them soon.
 “ The World was all before them, where to choose
 “ Their Place of Rest; and Providence their Guide.”

The Apostle, therefore, in the next Verse of our Text, leads us to the Anchor of our Hope, the Antidote to our Sorrow.

“ For if we believe, says he, that the Lord
 “ Jesus *died* and *rose* again, even so them also,
 “ which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with
 “ Him.” If we are persuaded that Christ triumphed over Death and the Grave, by his own Resurrection; we have a sure Pledge, that, according to his Promise, he will *raise us* up also; and that our Hope should not terminate in the Grave, nor that we should be alarmed at the approach of our own Dissolution, or *sorrow without Hope*, for those who have passed

the irremeable Path before us, and are now *asleep* in Jesus. For, by such, the Grave will not be considered as the perpetual *Prison-house* of the Body, but rather as the Ante-chamber of Heaven, the Vestryroom, where we are to put off the old Rags of our Mortality, and to come forth refulgent, cloathed upon with the Dress of Immortality, and the rich Embroidery of our celestial Garb. In this View, Death is disarmed of his Terrors: We may enter his dark Mansions, without starting back, or casting a longing lingering look behind; but setting one foot on the Margin of the Grave, we may stretch the other forward to the very Porch of Heaven; anticipating, not with Tears or Lamentation, but with Soul-felt Joy, what the Apostle leads us to contemplate in the next Verse, “The Voice of the Archangel, the Trump of God, rending the Earth, the Air and Seas, and summoning the dry Bones of the Dead to come forth from their long abode, to be reunited with their former Dust, to meet the Lord in the Air, and so to be forever with the Lord.”

But these Arguments of our sublime Apostle can only have their full weight upon *spiritual Men*, such as through *Faith* have *Hope* to sleep in JESUS. Others will have their dark Moments of Terror—the natural Reluctance and Recoilings of Grief, which two such loving Partners, as the SOUL and BODY; must sustain, at the Prospect of their Divorcement from each other, by the fierce and unrelentless Mandate of Death; and this Reluctance will be encreased by the false Estimate we make of the things of this World, to which our unregenerate Nature cleaves closer and closer, perhaps, as we advance in years; loth to let go our hold of this Earth, but like unweaned Babes sucking Poison from its Bosom, groveling like unclean Beasts in its Mire and Filth; and not striving, with the Dignity of rational and immortal Beings, to pierce through its clouded Atmosphere, and raise our Eye to Heaven and Glory.

I shall take a short Notice of some of those called the *good Things* of this World, which too often entangle and retard us in our Journey towards another, and better, World.

Among the first of these may be reckoned, *Youth and Beauty, Health and Strength*. But, to use the Words of Solomon, these are but fleeting Enjoyments. “ Rejoice, says he, O young Man, in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy Heart; but for all these Things know this, that God will bring thee into Judgment;” and that there is no substantial Bliss, but in the Fear of God and keeping his Commandments. All the Joys thou canst draw from the Syren Cup of Pleasure are mixed with such Poison, as to accomplish more than half the work of Death, before the Time of his natural Approach to thy ruined Tabernacle.

RICHES and WEALTH are often other Impediments in our Journey Heavenwards; but here also the wise Solomon preaches for me: For, says he, on an Estimate of their Worth, “ I soon hated all my Labor I had taken to acquire Wealth under the Sun, because I must leave it to the Man that shall be after me; and who knows whether he shall be a wise Man or a Fool; notwithstanding

“ he shall rule over all my Labor wherein
 “ I have shewed myself wise under the Sun?”

Lastly, as to POWER and AUTHORITY, after which so many aspire, they place us on a dangerous Pre-eminence, and few Men can use, without abusing, them. For, says the same Solomon, “ I saw under the Sun the Place
 “ of Judgment, that Wickedness was there—
 “ the place of Righteousness, that Iniquity
 “ was there—the Poor groaning under the
 “ Rod of the Mighty; the Tears of the Op-
 “ pressed, and they had no Comforter, while
 “ Power was on the Side of the Oppressor;
 “ so that I was ready to praise the *Dead*,” as happier than the miserable Living.

These Arguments of Solomon, under the old Dispensation, one greater than he, our Apostle Paul, confirms, by declaring, in various Passages, that the good Things of this World are not even worthy to be compared with that eternal Weight of Glory and Happiness, which God hath prepared in another World for those that love him, and long for his Appearance. For let us suppose all the Happiness our pre-

sent Condition can bear were to be enjoyed, pure and without Alloy, for twice the Length of our present Span of Life; yet it is not the Happiness of immortal Beings, created in the Image of their Maker, capable, through the Atonement of a Redeemer, of aspiring to more than the *Primæval* Bliss of Paradise—even to the Happiness of Angels, and everlasting approaches towards the Joy of God Himself.

I shall detain you no longer than by a short Application of our Text, which leads us, in all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, to look forward to that Day, when the *Dead shall be raised to stand before God, small and great*; when the Books shall be opened, and Men shall be judged out of those things which are written in the Books, according to their Works.

Think, my Christian Brethren, how many thousand thousand Secrets shall then be laid open before an assembled UNIVERSE—*Men and Angels!*

Then, and not till *then*, shall the Sum and Scope of GOD's eternal Providence be unfolded, clear of those Intricacies, wherein, to human Sight, it is now involved. Then shall the Account between VIRTUE and VICE be finally stated and balanced. "Then shall HYPOCRISY be obliged to lay down his *Mask*, OPPRESSION his Rod, DOMINION his Sceptre; and all to appear naked and on a level, at the Bar of the Almighty!"

"Then shall it be seen how every one of us hath used the Gifts committed to us, in our several Spheres and Capacities. Then shall it be known, for what End WEALTH, or great TALENTS, or AUTHORITY and POWER, were variously bestowed. If the former, *viz.* WEALTH, was our Portion, it will be known; Whether we hoarded it up with a mere sordid View of Self-enjoyment? Whether we suffered it to draw off our Attention from Things celestial; to extinguish the social and public Affections; and to debase us into literal affinity with the Beasts that perish? Or whether, if we did bestow any thing out of our Abundance, i

“ was done, with a Spirit of Ostentation, to
 “ *be seen of Men* ; or done, in the true Gospel
 “ Spirit, to feed the *Hungry* and cloath the
 “ *Naked* ; after attending to all the domestic
 “ CHARITIES of Father, Son and Brother ;
 “ and the sacred Calls of our Country, which
 “ include the Whole ?

“ If WISDOM and great TALENTS of MIND
 “ were bestowed upon us, it will be known ;
 “ Whether, with a noble Disinterestedness of
 “ Soul, unawed by Power, and unbribed by
 “ Wealth, we have stedfastly exerted these
 “ divine Gifts for the Illumination of Man-
 “ kind, for the Advancement of *Religion* and
 “ *Virtue* ; for the Propagation of *Civil Liber-*
 “ *ty* ; and for the Support of whatever else is
 “ valuable in Society ?”

“ Then shall it be known, from what secret
 “ Motives the labors of the reputed PATRIOT
 “ took their Rise ? Whether the loud DE-
 “ CLAIMER, in Senates and public Assemblies,
 “ fought his own Glory, or the Glory of his
 “ Country ? Whether his many laboured and
 “ popular Harangues have flowed from par-

“ tiality to his Friends, opposition to his Ene-
 “ mies, or peradventure from both? Whether
 “ they were intended, in good earnest, to re-
 “ luminate and invigorate the dying Spirit of
 “ Virtue and Freedom; or to raise himself,
 “ on the Wings of a temporary Fame, to the
 “ Summit of Earthly POWER?” And lastly,

“ If POWER, and RULE over our Fellow-
 “ men, by these, or whatsoever other means,
 “ shall be obtained; then, at this great last
 “ Day of Settlement, it shall be fully known
 “ and determined—Whether we bartered our
 “ Favours away for vile Gain? Whether we
 “ were open to the Allurements of VICE, the
 “ Blandishments of FLATTERY, and the In-
 “ toxications of PARTY? Or, whether we
 “ made Use of our Influence and Authority,
 “ to support Justice, to protect Innocence, to
 “ encourage Virtue, and to raise and reward
 “ humble and depressed Merit?

To this Test of the Use and Abuse of Pow-
 ER and AUTHORITY, I leave the Character of
 the DECEASED; protected, as it is by the *una-*
nimous Suffrage of the LEGISLATURE decree-

ing to his Ashes this PUBLIC INTERMENT, and the Erection of some proper MONUMENT, expressive of his meritorious Services to his Country.

Haste we, then, to commit his *mortal* Part, with its mortal FRAILTIES, to the Covering of the GRAVE—There let them rest in Peace, secure from the shafts of *Malice*, and the exaggerating Obloquy of Party—His *Worth* belonged to his Country; his *Frailties* were his own, and injurious only to himself.

Here, then, we cease—

“ Nor further seek his *Merits* to disclose,
Or draw his *Frailties* from their dread Abode;
Where they alike, in trembling Hope, repose,
The Bosom of his FATHER and his GOD !”