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T H E
O B L I G A T I O N S
O F T H E
Confederate States of North America
T O P R A I S E G O D.
T W O S E R M O N S.

Preached at P E Q U E A, December 13th, 1781, the day recommended by the honourable Congress to the several States, to be observed as a DAY OF THANKSGIVING TO GOD, for the various interpositions of his providence in their favour, during their contest with Great Britain, particularly those of the present year, crowned by the capture of Lord Cornwallis with his whole army.

By R O B E R T S M I T H, A. M.
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P U B L I S H E D B Y R E Q U E S T.

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To the Reader.

THE author shall say nothing of the dress in which these sermons appear, or of the method of handling the subject, only that they are such as he judgeth to be most conducive to the benefit of his readers in common. Gentlemen of observation and studies can select arguments from the public prints, from dissertations, or general harangues: But the bulk of mankind need to have these selected for them, ranged in some order, and particularly illustrated and enforced. He is sensible that several of his arguments are very common, having been frequently treated by the politicians of the day, and treated to great advantage; which, in some respects, is no very favourable circumstance for him as an author, especially as the taste of the times is chiefly for something new, and but little for piety. However, the religious cast he has attempted to give them, and the illustrations from scripture, by which they are enforced, are, in a great measure, new. For these reasons he expects they will be the more relishing to serious minds, that wish to see them more fully turned into a religious channel; and, by the blessing of God, may be the means of leading some others to think more seriously upon those interesting subjects. These are his hopes, and his principal motives for this publication. It is certainly high time for us to awake out of sleep, and pay a most pious attention to the very great and interesting events of our day. That this essay may be blessed to those ends, is the hearty desire of a well-wisher to his country, and a servant of the church for Christ's sake.

THE AUTHOR.

S E R M O N, &c.

Psalm lxxvii. 5. Let the people praise thee, O God! Let all the people praise thee.

“**P**RAISE Ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises to our God: for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.” It is comely: for of all the exercises upon earth it bears the nearest resemblance to the worship of heaven, and highly becometh us as reasonable creatures, but much more as christians. Our obligations to the duty are founded as well on our own indigence, as on the glory of Jehovah, and his goodness to us. Every one daily receiveth innumerable mercies from his unwaisted fullness, which daily lay him under fresh obligations to praise the bountiful author of them. Communities, as collective bodies, are bound to praise him no less than individuals. By the common laws of society, the good of the whole and of individuals mutually affect each other, which obligeth them to offer praise respectively, not only from self-interest, but from the purer springs of benevolence. This more evidently appears in some public scenes of providence, which are so obvious, that he who runneth may read the peculiar favours of heaven to the whole and to the individuals: then more especially let all the people praise God. And as all the people are bound to praise God on such occasions; so it is most harmonious, animating and many ways useful for the whole to unite in his praises at the same time.

This day, my brethren, we and all the inhabitants of the United States are called to give thanks to the LORD of lords and KING of kings, for the many peculiar favours he hath of late vouchsafed to us, as a people appearing in defence of our invaluable privileges. At this important
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call let every individual, let every family, let every congregation, let every town, let every state, let all our confederate states unite in praising our God, as with one heart and one voice.

To this noble exercise the royal psalmist most pathetically exciteth us in the psalm where my text lies, which is most happily adapted to, and composed for, a day of public thanksgiving. It was sung by the Jews, and with greater propriety may be sung by Christians, on such occasions; for to us it had an ultimate reference, and the moral reasons of the song shine with brighter evidence in the new testament dispensation than in the old.

The motives to praise expressed in the psalm, are, “God’s “saving health,” or salvation by Christ, to be made known to all nations; and his moral government of the world, who shall “judge the people righteously, and govern the “nations upon earth.” It is this last motive I shall chiefly insist upon.

The importance of the duty, and zeal with which it should be performed, we learn first from the rhetorical and affecting repetition in the text of the very words expressed in the third verse, in which the mind of the psalmist appears to have been wrapt in his subject, like one most intent upon, and earnest in the pursuit of his object. Secondly, from the beautiful and transporting climax by which the song ascends: “Let the people praise thee, “O God! let ALL the people praise thee.”

To comply with the design of my text and of this day, I shall point out and illustrate some of the leading obligations upon all the inhabitants of the confederate states of North America to unite in praise to God, for the signal interpositions of his providence in their favour, during our contest with Great Britain; especially those of the last campaign, crowned by the capture of lord Cornwallis with his whole army.

Those obligations arise from the nature and importance of the cause contested---the fatal consequences to us and to our posterity had we lost the cause---the strong and numerous obstacles that stood in our way---our apparent inability

ability for the mighty conflict---some noticeable steps of providence towards us in giving us a few, though they might seem to be inadequate, preparatives for the war. The various and remarkable successes God hath granted to our troops especially those of the last campaign---several incidents interspersed through the scene, which were overruled by a wise and good providence in our favour, though at first sundry of them might seem to stand much against us---and from the glorious prospects to us and to our posterity, opened by the several successes of our arms, and the manner in which they have been granted.

1. The nature and importance of the cause contested lay us under the strongest obligations to praise God for pleading our cause. The great object in contest is, whether our essential and unalienable rights and privileges, as well civil as sacred, shall be in our own power, or at the sovereign will of tyrants. Take these from the people, and commit them to any absolute lord, or lords, and no man has a security for the rights of conscience, for life, or for property and the means of procuring it.

It has long been the boast of the British constitution, that it secures those privileges to the subjects, because it is founded upon the two grand pillars of liberty, a right to dispose of our own property, and a right to have our claim to life and property tried by a jury of fellow citizens. But these rights the British court and parliament have by every artifice endeavoured to undermine, attempting to lead us to own either directly or indirectly, the justness of their claim of right to tax us at pleasure, to oblige some of our citizens to take their trial in Britain, and to alter and virtually destroy our forms of civil government. They long shrouded their real design by specious pretexts; but their artifice failing them, they own the extent of their claim, viz. an omnipotent power to make laws "to bind us in all cases whatsoever." And in order to confiscate all the states to the crown, they declare us to be in a state of rebellion, and arise to execute their horrid plot by open violence, not doubting that they would make an easy conquest of us.

To justify their violent measures, they employ their whole policy to confound law and constitution, and make the world believe, that our opposition to their iniquitous unconstitutional acts was an opposition to the constitution itself, and a rising against lawful authority. This is the idea of our conduct held up by them to their own nation, and to all Europe, to excite their detestation at us, as a rebellious and lawless mob. And with this lie they fill the mouths of their ignorant officers and soldiers, and inspire their breasts, as well with violence as with thirst for plunder and blood.

Nothing could be more cruel or more false! America betook herself to arms in opposition to the most unlawful exercise of power, and in defence of privileges which the unalienable rights of mankind absolutely forbid her to yield! And this she did not, till she had tried every other means in vain, and till Britain had wantonly shed the blood of her sons! In those circumstances it was not only our indispensable duty to oppose force to force; but it was the duty of all Britain to resent so violent an infraction upon their own constitution; for they might expect the next stroke to fall upon themselves.

But the glorious Sovereign of the earth and heavens hath lifted up a banner for you, O ye highly favoured Americans! and hath saved you by his right hand. He hath raised up many friends for you, sent you many aids, and made you to be pitied by many nations! He hath scattered your clouds, silenced your fears, encouraged your hopes, defended your persons and property, and he will defend them, if ye wisely improve the blessings of his merciful providence! Ye shall worship your God, and none shall make you afraid! Ye shall enjoy your possessions undisturbed, for which ye have laboured and sweat, and for which many of your bravest sons have risked their lives in the high places of the field, and many of them have spilt their dearest blood! Grim tyranny hangs his head! Fair liberty hath erected her banner! Therefore ye shall sit secure under the protection of laws founded upon this firm basis! Nor may the blessings of your vir-

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tuous struggles be confined to yourselves ; other nations beholding them may open their eyes upon their own duty and privilege. Your liberty secured, like the sun bursting through the cloud, may shed its healing beams over the nations long shut up in darkness and bondage ! For all these mercies let all our nation offer the acceptable sacrifice of praise ! And let the whole earth uniting in our song, praise him who judgeth the people righteously, and governeth the nations upon earth !

II. The fatal consequences to us and our posterity, had we lost the cause, furnish a most fruitful source of motives to praise our great deliverer. The greater the evils are from which a people are saved, the greater are their obligations to their saviour. But the evils which threatened us were many and most grievous. No people upon earth are in a condition more wretched than we should have been reduced to, had the British arms prevailed. A government would have been established over us, the form of which is no where existent, and none so destructive of the liberties of the people. Aristocracy and absolute monarchy are usually esteemed the two worst kinds of government. But the strongest efforts were made to unite both virtually in the government to be fixed upon us ; or rather it would have been an aristocracy sanctioned by monarchy, which is infinitely worse than pure absolute monarchy. If neither of these are its proper name, it is hard to say by what name it should be called.

So strong was the British sovereign's, thirst to establish despotism, that he created forty lords, from the beginning of his infamous reign to the commencement of the present war, who had not a claim to a foot of land in Britain ; that being pensioners upon the crown, they might throw their weight into the scale, to destroy the liberties of the people. How many more he has created since that time I know not. How are these numerous unlanded lords to be supported ? principally, no doubt, from the spoils of North America. To this instance of his folly he adds another, viz. favouring a scheme to render his parliament absolute. Folly I call it, as well as wickedness. For those

those petty tyrants might, by virtue of their authority, make the royal tyrant himself feel the weight of their power, should he at any time happen not to coincide with their views. But he had no other way to establish tyranny, and force from the people whatsoever his covetous heart lusted for, but by allowing to them the enormous power of making laws to bind the people in all cases whatsoever. And they, fond of so great an extent of power, favour the king's ambitious and tyrannical views, which otherwise they might perhaps have opposed.

Under such a government who could live? It would be hard to be subjected to the will of one tyrant---harder still to be subject to more than 500 tyrants, all plotting with their cruel master to fleece and distress the subjects---But hardest of all to be under the command of their viceroys, at the distance of 3000 miles from the seat of authority, all governing according to the arbitrary orders of so many unmerciful despots, and making such representations to them, as their ambitious, covetous, or revengeful passions might dictate. Such motives and such opportunities for the exercise of tyranny could nowhere be found. Of this America has already had a taste in their introductory steps to bring us under the yoke; and but a taste, compared with what she would feel, when their villainous scheme should have been completed.

Add to all this the tythes of your whole produce every year for the support of the church, and the rapacity and cruelty of the harpies, officers and others, to whom districts of the country would be parcelled out, for their services in reducing us to a state of bondage.* Who could bear the
insolence

* *It is no chimerical idea to suppose such appointments and such grants would be made to them. Whence is it that so many parts of Germany, Britain and Ireland groan under the yoke of oppression, but from the dukedoms, counties, &c. granted to the ancestors of their petty tyrants, for their aid either in money or in the field. And it is more than a conjecture, that lands were promised to the British soldiers, and districts of the country to their officers, as encouragements to them to engage in the service.*

insolence and rapacity of a Cornwallis, a Knyphausen, a Galloway, an Arnold, a Tarleton, or a Simcoe, either as a governor or a landlord?

Now, Americans, what would be your distresses, when, besides the support of governors and other necessary expences of government, you would be obliged to give the tenth of all your produce every year, for the support of the clergy, and those too not of your own choosing;---to pay the whole demands of a greedy landlord, and the whole claim of a tyrannical prince, to aggrandise his numerous family, to maintain his pensioned lords, and to discharge a debt of more than seventy millions, contracted to enslave you?

These things duly weighed, are sufficient to set springs to the gratitude of all, for the preservation of their liberties, and put a check to the murmurings of some, who account it hard to give a moderate competency for the maintenance of the few honest ministers amongst us, and discharge, for a time, the expences of a war so just and so necessary. Had Britain made a conquest of us, we and our posterity would have multiplied taxes, of a much greater amount, to pay every year perpetually, with every circumstance of aggravation and bitterness. Every species of cruelty has breathed from, and as far as was in their power, has been practised by the tyrants and their tools, as a specimen of what America had to expect. They have hired and prompted their barbarous allies to shed Christian blood;---armed slaves against their masters;---wantonly burned towns;---robbed, plundered and destroyed private property;---and treated with the greatest barbarity persons of every sex and age. They may plead, as they have done, that these are casualties incident to war. Some of them might be so; but many, perhaps most of them, were not so. Soldiers durst not act so barbarously in common, did they not know it to be agreeable to their officers; nor officers, did they not know it to be agreeable to their cruel masters. Every circumstance in the conduct of the court and army clearly manifests, that their orders and design were to proceed against us upon the plan of cruelty and terror.

ror. And they have carried on the war with a barbarity unknown in Europe or any civilised nation.

The malice of the tyrants would have put an aggravation into all the other sufferings of America, by robbing her of her most precious jewels. The leading members of Congress, and others who have appeared most eminent in the cause of their country, might have fallen the first sacrifice to their wrath. Ministers of the gospel of a patriotic stamp would have shared no mercy. Many indubitable testimonies induce us to believe this.

But I do not think it is in the power of description fully to paint all the shocking consequences to our country, had she been subjugated to British tyranny. O! how great is our salvation, and how great the praises due for it! Praise ye the Lord, all ye brave statesmen, who dared to step forth in your country's cause. Praise him, every brave officer and soldier, who dared to face the greatest dangers in defence of your country. Praise him, every honest minister of the sanctuary, whose blood the enemy thirsted for. And ye honest hearted friends to your country, throughout all the states, praise ye the Lord; for he hath delivered you from your heavy chains. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."

III. The strong and numerous obstacles which stood in our way, demand our warmest praises to HIM who enabled us to surmount them all. We had the most powerful nation upon earth to oppose, all things considered, and the most dangerous. A nation whose sovereign is despotic, obstinate and cruel; their statesmen subtile, treacherous, insidious, swollen with a sense of their own importance, and long practised in the arts of government and deceit; their officers and troops generally esteemed equal, if not superior, to any in Europe; their fleet the most formidable of any in the world. With their ships of war they shut up our ports, covered their troops, and easily transported them from state to state. A nation whose treasury was respectable, their credit great, and their resources from their

their numerous manufactures, their extensive trade, the fertility of their lands, and the riches of their settlements in the East and West Indies, were great and numerous ! We had the flower of their army to oppose, with twenty thousand foreign mercenaries, and a coast of many hundred miles to defend !

Our ancient forms of government, the prejudices of custom, and our doating affection for Britain, were strong bars in our way. The governors of the colonies were creatures of the crown, their connexions together with the British merchants upon the continent generally in the interest of the crown. To these I might add Tories and Refugees, a set of the most infamous sycophants, murderers, plunderers, robbers and lyars, that ever polluted any land ; sundry of whom were persons of fortune, and sundry of them crafty, plausible, and intrigueing, having been long employed in state business. These all united their efforts and policy to distress, to intimidate, to sow discord, to spread false reports, and to blind the eyes of the people. Sometimes they represented the power of Britain to be so great, that nothing could stand before it ; and therefore we would fall an easy prey to their arms, and none would have security for their persons or property, but those who would take an active part against their country, or remain in a state of neutrality. At other times they tried to deceive the vulgar by asserting that the powers of Europe, accounting it their own interest to keep the colonies in subjection to Britain, would join with her in order to subdue us. With these and several other fabulous stories they deceived some, whose simplicity, timidity, or religious principles favour their design. When the appearance of the French fleet and army detects the fallacy, they change their notes, insinuating that the Congress are about to introduce popery amongst us by their alliance with France, who has it only in view to seize the states for themselves, when Britain shall have been subdued. §

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§ *Nothing can more fully discover the deceit of those filthy hypocrites than this ; for their temper and practice plainly show*

All these difficulties notwithstanding, we have not only maintained our ground, but prevailed against the enemy; our battles have been fought with repeated success, our land cultivated, our produce exported, our necessities imported, our private ships of war have brought much riches into the states, the councils of the enemy rendered abortive, their power baffled, their troops often defeated, their whole armies sometimes captured, their bravest officers put to shame, and the British tyrant left to pine away with

show, that of all the religious principles professed upon earth, pure protestantism would be their last choice. Were it worth while to reason with them, I would say, there is nothing in the treaty itself, nothing in the interest of the nation, and nothing in their apparent disposition to favour the opinion. That it is wholly against the concern of all Europe to maintain the balance of power, and that the imputation of favouring popery can no more justly be fixed upon us from our alliance with France, than it could upon any other protestant nation from their alliance with them, or with any other popish power. Every one who will open his eyes upon the truth must see, that a civil league by no means implies a religious one. If Luther in promoting the reformation accepted the protection of popish princes, why may not we in defence of our liberties civil and religious? We should bless God for the help he sends us, and trust him for futurity. For my own part, I freely confess, that there is scarcely a popish prince in Europe, with whom I would not more freely entrust my religious liberties than with the debauched court and parliament of Britain. Especially I would much sooner entrust them with our generous ally, who has rescinded all the laws in his kingdom that stood against protestants, chose a protestant financier, and allowed him a chapel to accommodate himself and his friends, and hath sent to our aid a protestant regiment with a protestant chaplain to preach to them. But our enemies have been sily slipping round to the other side. Who formed the Quebec bill? Gracious George and his generous parliament, with which lord Pitt severely upbraided them, especially the spiritual lords! Did the people ask it? no! Was any religious profession in America,

with malice and disappointment ! Surely “ ‘The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance, he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.’ ” * Let us praise and give thanks, for the Lord has taught us, that “ ‘The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.’ ” || That “ ‘There is no king saved by the multitude of an host ; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.’ ” But “ ‘The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.’ ” § We made our appeal to heaven, when we lifted up arms in our own defence, and the lord hath not made us ashamed of our hope. This argument will appear with still greater force, when

IV. In the fourth place we take into view our apparent inability for the mighty conflict. So weak were we, that our enemies did not entertain the least doubt of reducing us to their terms, by a few troops and ships of war ; so weak, that all Europe were apprehensive for the consequences, and waited the event in deep suspense. Our internal resources, indeed, were large ; a fruitful land to furnish all kinds of provisions ; our men active, intelligent and brave : but our strength was to be collected, and our powers improved. Cultivating only the common honest arts of peace, we were generally unskilled in the depths of state policy and of war ; without an army ; without arms and ammunition ; without money and cloathing for our troops ; nor had we a single ship of war, nor one ally. In this defenceless state, trusting heaven to provide for us, we declared our resolution to vindicate our liberties by arms, when the royal ear was closed against our righteous and humble supplications. We had at the same time to train and equip ourselves for the field---to fight and cultivate our farms to procure food and cloathing for ourselves and our army---to throw down ancient forms of government and

America, except popery, ever established by an act of parliament ? no ! It is plain that that bill was devised as an engine of future slavery to the colonies in its fullest extent.

* Psalm lviii. 10. || Ecl. ix. 11. § Psa. xxxiii. 16, 18.

and erect new ones in their stead. Never did a people do as much, endure as much, and conquer so many difficulties in the same space of time. It is hard to say which is most astonishing, the bravery or success of the enterprise. It is, indeed, next to a miracle that people so weak and unprepared should have overcome so great a force as stood against us---confounded the councils, and baffled the power of all Britain---done so great things by sea and land, in council, in the field, and upon our farms. Posterity will be surprised to read it, and we ourselves, upon a serious review of the whole scene, will scarcely be able to believe what our eyes have seen and our ears heard. It is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes. "Had not the Lord been on our side, when men rose up to slay us: then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. § May the remembrance of our salvation be laid up in our hearts as in the rock, forever! When the children of Israel vanquished the strong army of the Amalekites, who attacked them in the wilderness, unprepared, Moses reared a monumental altar to the Lord, and called it "JEHOVAH NISI," THE LORD MY BANNER.† No less reason have we to raise a perpetual monument of praise to him, who hath lifted up a glorious banner for us in our low estate.

V. The goodness of providence in granting us a few, tho' they might seem to be inadequate, preparatives for the war, merit our attention and hearty praise. Had Britain attacked us before the last war, we must have fallen an easy prey. But in that war some of our heroes, particularly our brave commander in chief, caught the military spark, which has been kindled and improved to that degree, during the course of this war, in training and leading on the troops, that they are not only become equal to the British

§ *Psalms* 124. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8.

† *Exod.* 17. 14, 15.

British forces, but sometimes gain the day with lesser numbers.

By the stamp act, and other artful devices to invade our liberties, the minds of our inexperienced statesmen were roused to attend as well to the intrigues of the British court, as to study the rights of freemen, and vindicate them against any encroachments. Their rapid and solid improvements in this kind of knowledge, for which the noblest foundation was laid in a dignity of genius early cultivated by various useful and well applied studies, soon drew the attention of all Europe, procured the confidence of its leading powers, and obtained for them, from no less a judge than lord Pitt, the character of "able statesmen."

On the solid foundation they laid, we have, by the smiles of providence, proceeded with encreasing success till this day. For these favours let our praises ascend as grateful incense to HIM, who is "for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and of strength to them that turn the battle to the gate." *

No less noticeable is the appointment of general Washington to the supreme command of our army; a gentleman who, by common consent, is of all others allowed to be the fittest for the service. As Elihu said to Job, "I know not to give flattering titles, in so doing my God would soon take me away. †" Yet I know that we ought to give honour to those whom God honoureth; and that, in order to praise him for this as well as other instances of his goodness, it is necessary to attend to the motives of our praise. Without any particular notice of his various personal excellencies, or the various incidents in providence uniting to prepare him gradually for so high a trust, it will justify the observation we have made, barely to mention the growing estimation of him in the army, for so many years, and in the midst of so many complicated and trying occurrences---the reverence for his character our enemies themselves are obliged to express---the hearty approbation of his conduct by all ranks in America, and the testimony of the wisest sages in Europe, who allow him to

* *Is.* 28. 6, 11.

† *Job* 32. 22.

to be one of the brightest military ornaments of the age. The improvement of the favour that we and our whole land should make, is humbly to notice and adore the goodness and wisdom of God, who is at no loss for an instrument to do it, when he hath a great work to perform. He drew Moses from the ark of bulrushes, to confound Pharaoh's ancient court, and deliver his brethren from their hard bondage. He called Cyrus his servant, from the rough mountains of Persia, to overthrow the strongest empire in the world, and restore the captivity of his people. And he hath raised up his servant Washington, one of our brethren, who never saw any country but his own, to humble a powerful and most haughty nation, and save his country from the chains of slavery. Blessed be his holy and gracious name, who bestows various gifts to men, according to the various employments he designs them for. He who fitted Moses for legislation, and Aaron to serve at the altar, inspired Joshua with military courage and skill to command the armies of his people Israel.



S E R M O N II.

VI. **T**HE many and remarkable successes of our forces, particularly those of the last campaign, exceedingly encrease our obligations to praise him “who teacheth their hands to war, and their fingers to fight.*” His excellency general Washington, being happily chosen to the chief command of our army, takes the field with his little band of undisciplined troops; and though they were generally much inferior in number to those of the enemy, badly accoutred at first, and frequently ill supplied with provisions, cloathing and money; yet they

* *Psalms* 144. 1.

they baffle the enemy, vanquish them often, sometimes take captive whole large armaments, and persevere in defending their country amidst many discouragements: a virtue this, that will shine in the annals of America throughout all ages. Had we time, and skill, and materials sufficient to follow them through their several severe and almost incredible marches, their particular skirmishes and general engagements, the draught would correspond to the great original. But this will be the business of faithful historians and skilful panegyrists. Suffice it for us to touch at some of the more interesting parts of the great scene, to assist in the devotions of the day.

Lexington and Bunker's Hill, Long Island and White Plains, the banks of Brandywine and streets of Germantown, Monmouth with Stoney Point, all proclaim to our enemies, with a voice of thunder, the watchful care of heaven over America, and their own folly in expecting to make an easy conquest of her.

But above all other parts of the whole scene, the operations of providence for us in New Jersey, the latter part of the year 1776 and beginning of 1777, deserve the most peculiar attention. In this time our illustrious general is a shining example of "true greatness never appearing so conspicuous as in adversity." Above two thousand of his brave troops fell and were taken at fort Washington, and the time of the militia and flying camp being expired together with the short enlistment of several of his regular troops, most of them return home, and leave the general to retreat through the Jerseys with the remains of his weak and shattered army, before a strong corps of the pursuing enemy. Yet he conducteth his few fatigued and naked troops safe, even in sight of the enemy, crosseth the Delaware, and there makes a stand, till the militia are once more collected.

Our affairs wear a most gloomy aspect at this time, so gloomy, that the hearts of many begin to tremble for the fate of our little army and of North America! But after a dark and stormy night the morning star appears leading on the approaching clear day! Our intrepid hero, at a
junction

junction the fittest for his purpose, recroffeth the Delaware, though floating with ice and snow, captivates and brings off more than nine hundred Hessians. Shortly afterwards he keepeth the enemy in play at Trenton, until evening, and whilst they imagined his troops were scattered through the country, he marches them to Princeton, under cover of night, and defeateth the wing of their army there, the next morning, before the other wing could arrive from Trenton to their relief. Without loss of time he marcheth for and takes possession of the heights of Morris, whilst the vanquished and disappointed Britons haste, in great consternation, for head quarters at Brunswick, fired upon and galled by our militia in the way. Here they are closed in till the following spring. Upon all this part of the scene are marked the brightest signatures of great generalship, and the operations of providence in our favour. And here we may fix the date of our relief; a date gloriously presaging the future successes of our arms. “O that
 “men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his
 “wonderful works to the children of men.” *

The enemy greatly augment their forces by sea and land for the ensuing campaign; but by some strange kind of policy, they divide their troops to the north and to the south which obligeth us to divide our little army. This critical moment invites us once more to behold, with wonder and praise, the power and care of divine providence for our relief. Whilst our enemies make no doubt of scattering or swallowing up our small band by a division of their vast armament, and opening a passage for the junction of their armies, many of themselves are slain, many captivated, and the rest shut up in Philadelphia, their prison for several months. Saratoga and Bennington are lasting witnesses of the bravery of our troops, both regulars and militia, into whose hands God delivered a boastful general with his whole strong army.

Providence opens to us a bright prospect, the following winter, by raising up for us a powerful and generous ally upon which the states drop into a political slumber for many

* *Psalms* cvii. 14.

ny months, until a storm arising in the south awakens them out of sleep. The capture of Charlestown and defeat of Camden alarm our fears afresh, and raise the hopes of our enemies. When the prudent and brave general Greene arrived to take the command of the southern army, his regular troops were few, the army of the enemy strong, and flushed with victory, the disaffected to the American cause numerous and violent, and the friends to it grievously oppressed by many calamities. No place or time, since the commencement of the war, opened so great a scene of affliction as this, or more fully manifested the true spirit of valour, of patriotism, and of piety. The intrepidity and resolution of our troops to encounter dangers and bear their fatigues, the courage and perseverance of patriots under their distresses, and the hopes of good people, can scarcely be equalled. A gracious God rewarded their virtue! When their night is at the darkest, some morning rays beam upon them with comfort and hope. The capture of a large detachment of the enemy at King's Mountain, and the complete defeat of another large party at Cowpens, each much superior in number to our troops who engaged them, open a wide door of relief to the distressed inhabitants, and pave the way to all the following successes of our arms in the south. The gallantry of those actions cannot be fully described, and their salutary effects were as great as the actions themselves were glorious. The stroke was followed up at Guilford, where the loss of the enemy was very considerable. Not to mention the gallantry and success of smaller parties during this long campaign, I shall only observe, that the death and captivity of more than eleven hundred of the British forces at Eutaw Springs, added the greatest laurels to the worthy general Greene, and the corps he commanded.

This successful campaign was gloriously crowned by the capture of lord Cornwallis, with his whole army, consisting of above six thousand regular forces, and several thousand of his black aids and Refugees, on the memorable 19th of last October. The wisdom with which the expedition to York was planned by his excellency general
 Washington,

Washington, in concert with count de Rochambeau, and the dispatch with which the plan was executed, as well manifest the generals to be possessed of the finest military talents, as the special care of providence for our salvation. It must appear obvious to all who will open their eyes to see, that all the circumstances concurring to bring to pass the great event, clearly display the peculiar concern of heaven in it. A series of the most delightful weather blessed our troops, from the beginning of their march until the conclusion of the important scene. The fleet and army appear before York in the same hour. And HE who commands the winds, and the sea, and they obey him, commands, and they bring both the French fleets into the bay at the same time. Again he commands, and they fight against lord Cornwallis, throwing his troops back into their old prison, when they vainly attempted to effect an escape. No avenue of escape remains for him. The fleet of count de Grasse renders it impossible by sea---the position of the allied army wholly prevents it by land. The only alternative left for him is, to fight or surrender. Fight his way he could not---surrender he must.

Nor may it pass unnoticed, how the furious general is suffered to drive on to his own ruin, and the ruin of the king's troops. Separating his army after the action of Guilford, he leaves part of them a prey to our brave southern troops, and, by forced marches, penetrates far into the state of Virginia, with the rest, plundering and destroying private property as he went; until a check being put to his mad career by the brave marquis la Fayette and general Wayne, he pusheth for, and closeth himself in the spot, the fittest he could choose for his own trap. And what has this courser obtained by all his violent deeds?---captivity, with the character of plunderer, robber, and murderer of mankind. That righteous judgment long since denounced against men of his character, hath overtaken him; “ Evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him. § ”

O! how great the praises due to God for our deliverance

§ Psalm 140. II.

ance from the hands of those monsters of iniquity, so estranged from humanity and justice! We were as men in a sleep when God restored our captivity. “The joy was so great, it appeared a painted dream.” Surely friends and foes abroad shall say, “The Lord hath done great things for them.” America shall say, “The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. §” Rejoice, O Virginia, and be glad; for the Lord hath delivered you from the Cornwallises, the Tarletons, the Simcoes, and all the ravagers and destroyers of your country! Rejoice, North and South Carolina, with little Georgia! and all ye states in the union, rejoice! Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee!

VII. Several incidents interspersed through the scene, which were overruled, by a wise providence, in our favour, though at first many of them might seem to stand much against us, equally stain the pride of man, and merit the most sensible returns of praise. Our own mistakes and the mistakes of the enemy were the causes of many present afflictions; yet were greatly subservient to our general interests. The wisdom of God brought good out of evil to us, and turned our judgments into mercies. The pride and self interest of their generals, united with the folly of the British councils, operated much in favour of the American cause. By separating their army they obliged us to separate ours; by which means our militia are, on many accounts, much more serviceable to us than they could have been, had they been called to assist against the whole united force of the enemy. By bribes, and employing their spies, they parted with their money without obtaining their object, and with some of their best men for some of the most infamous wretches upon earth. The salvation of our beloved general and his army from Arnold’s hellish plot, and all the coincident providences relating thereto, deserve to be wrote with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond. I might mention their folly and our advantage, several ways, in the capture of Statia, and attacking us on the strongest side at first, and afterwards on the weakest, when the states were alarmed and prepared for war. But

§ Psalm 126.

passing

passing over those and sundry other incidents, I shall only observe,

That the plan of terror, upon which they proceeded against us, was a mistake the most fatal to themselves, and most subservient to our cause. Their cruelties, insolence and breach of promise were the springs of many present sufferings to individuals; but nothing could have a greater tendency to overthrow their own design. They rouse the resentment of the states, consolidate their confederation, and arm them with resolution to defend themselves to the last extremity. They fix an indelible stain upon the British court and officers---They draw forth the pity of other nations towards us, and excite their abhorrence of those hypocrites, who with the mouth of the lamb talk of mercy, but tear the prey with the teeth of the lion.

In this they have discovered the true spirit of tyranny, which is cruelty and blood when artifice fails. * And in this they have openly exposed their ignorance as well of the word and providence of God, as of the causes of the rise and fall of nations, and of the operations of human nature itself. Had these infidels attended duly to those means of instruction, as the rulers of a nation ought to do they would have known, that there is a cup of red wine in the hand of God for nations that persist in luxury, insolence, pride, tyranny and brutal lusts; especially for those who persist in acts of cruelty against their brethren, or any in their power :

* *In cruelty their conduct is uniform, whenever they blindly suppose it makes for their purpose. Lord Clive received the thanks of parliament for shooting down thousands of the unhappy East Indians, whom he had placed before the mouths of cannon for that very end, that they might be an example of terror to others. One of their own celebrated writers upbraids them for giving countenance to such an act of barbarity, telling them, it has driven away more from their interest in the east, than the whole inhabitants of North America. For this and many other instances of their cruelty and injustice, the Lord may now be taking vengeance of them by the destruction of their trade in India, and lopping off America from their empire.*

power: † the very evils for which they themselves are famous. They would have read in the struggles and successes of several states for their liberty; that insolence and oppression, instead of conquering, rouse the spirit of a free people. §

But tyrants, often dastardly as well as cruel and ignorant, measure others by themselves, and persist in their vain hopes of conquest, till ruin without remedy overtake them, and those they oppress rise victorious. Wo to Britain for the incorrigibleness of her rulers! Joy to America, “for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, as the avenger of wrongs!”

The lengthening out the war, as well as the cruelty of the enemy was grievous on many accounts; yet, on many accounts necessary for us. It was necessary to suppress the luxuriance of all the states, and give them more thorough and humbling instructions. It was necessary to make more full discoveries of false hearted men, and purge our land of many traitors. And it was necessary to humble our enemies more effectually, and make the British court

† The ruins of ancient states and nations, who fell and rose no more, are lasting monuments of divine wrath for those very crimes, particularly Tyre and old Babylon, Isaiah the 13 and 14 chapters. And in the 1st and 2d chapters of Amos you may read an irreversible doom pronounced against Damascus, Gaza, Moab, Ammon and Edom, for such national evils; more especially for their cruelty towards those in their power. Edom is marked out above all the rest, because “He pursued his brother Jacob with the sword, did cast off all pity, and kept his anger forever,” for which God threatens to cast him off forever from being a nation. Amos i. 11. compared with Obadiah verse 10. The British court might read those judgements with trembling equal to that which seised Belshazzar, when he read the hand writing upon the wall.

§ Of this the united states of Holland and cantons of Switzerland have been eminent instances, as America is at this day. Why do not men of letters, men at the head of a nation, read, and learn, and fear?

court plunge themselves into still deeper ruins. Our troops, weak as they were, compared with the enemy, had frequently a fair prospect of striking them a fatal blow, and bringing the war to a speedy crisis; but were as frequently prevented by some unforeseen incidents. God said at each of those occasions, this is not the time! This has often suggested to me the import of David's pathetic prayer, "Slay them not, lest my people forget, scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield." † We are apt to forget the mercies which cost us little: but we praise the more, and hold the faster, those which cost us dear. God did not subdue our enemies sooner lest we should neglect our deliverer, and forget his mercies; but he scattered them through the states, and gradually brought them down, till the fittest time came to deliver a general of the first rank with his whole army into our hands---A time when the faith and patience of this people were thoroughly tried---A time the most humiliating to the British court and their boastful general---A time when they were so sure of victory as to have appointed governors to the southern states, and general Cornwallis waited his commission to take the place of general Clinton! "Who so is wise and will observe those things even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." * for they shall see "The hand of the Lord made known towards his friends, and his indignation towards his enemies." §

Our own mistakes, as well as those of the enemy, added much to our affliction; yet were they overruled by a gracious providence for our good. the non importation agreement, and not raising a sufficient army to serve during the war, instead of producing the salutary effects expected from them, subjected our army to many difficulties, and increased the burdens of the people. Yet by the former a spirit of industry was promoted, and military skill by the latter, each of which are exceedingly useful for a young nation. These united, are a strong proof of our simple honesty, and serve to convince the world that independ-

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† *Psalms* lix. 11. * *Psalms* cvii. 43. § *Isaiah* lxvi. 14.

ence was not our aim, till we were forced into the measure.

By far the most hurtful of all our mistakes respected our bills of credit, the management of which, from first to last, together with the consequences thereof, afford many instructions, as well political as moral, and lay a ground for much humiliation. It is certain that it fell as a heavy stroke upon multitudes of the honest, and many of them the most helpless part of the community, such as widows, orphans, annuitants, weakly and aged persons, with others who lived on the interest of their money &c

It gave the deepest stab to public credit, which ought ever to be preserved inviolate for the peace and prosperity of a nation. It greatly affected our public funds and seminaries, to the no small injury of the nation; and would have dissolved our army, had it not been for their own inimitable virtue. It was the greatest incitement to gaming and vanity, and opened the widest door to fraud and injustice, which had a most pernicious influence on the morals of the people.

For these, with other reasons, I cannot but look upon our conduct, with regard to the currency, as involving much national guilt, which undoubtedly requireth much national humiliation.

The facts are so notorious, that they cannot be hid, how willing so ever we might be to draw an external veil over them, if we could, and could do it consistently with duty. Sorry am I to say any thing which might damp the joys of this day; but in our guilty world we must often mingle tears with our joys. This day, my brethren, we are called to rejoice; but let us "rejoice with trembling;"† for we have to deal with a holy and jealous God, who, though he pardon the offences of his people, yet may he, by one means or other, take "vengeance of their inventions."§ I cannot rejoice that the public debt is paid at the expence of so many innocent sufferers. I rather lament their calamity.

But I do rejoice, and we all ought to rejoice, that however various outward dispensations may be, the divine
promise,

† *Psalms* 2. 12

§ *Psalms* 99. 8.

promise, that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God,"* is invariable: therefore he will make up the losses of pious sufferers: or if he withhold temporal blessings he will give that which is much better, spiritual mercies in the room of them. We ought to rejoice that friends to our common cause, even those of them who suffered most by the depredation, instead of stumbling at the cause on that account, they always rejoiced when they heard any thing in favour of it. And it is matter of joy that, when the money must sink, how different soever the opinions and practices of the multitude had been about it, it receives its funeral, as it were, by common consent.

We ought to rejoice, that the idol to which many paid their devotion, is thrown down; for, in its operation upon their minds and practices, it afforded the fullest demonstration of the truth of that inspired sentence, "The love of money is the root of all evil." || Like the dropsy, it was a continual growing evil; the more the quantity encreased, the more the thirst for it encreased. And had it been possible to give them, and had they received, according to their wish, a silver dollar for every paper one, it would have been a wide inlet to the highest degrees of luxury, pride, vanity, dissipation, and all the abominations that ever debauched and destroyed any state; consequently it would have entirely banished liberty from our land, the great object for which we have spent much blood and treasure.

We have reason to rejoice, that the hopes of our enemies, from the depreciation of the money, are wholly frustrated. It was a scheme at first invented and executed by the friends of British government, to sink us. But he who bringeth the counsels of the wicked to nought, holdeth up to them the destruction of our money as paying our national debt; while Britain, in addition to all their former immense debt, is immersed in a sum of more than seventy millions, in order to support the

the war against us; an object this, too painful for their vitiated eyes to look at..

Above all, we have reason to rejoice in the display of his absolute power and glory, who “doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?”* After he had enabled us, by means of our paper currency, to support the war against Britain for six years, he called it *Nebushtan*, as Hezekiah called the brazen serpent, *i.e.* NOTHING; nothing but mere brass! Our money was nothing but depreciated stamped paper, worse than brass. With nothing, or a thing of little or no value, the Lord confounded the councils, and baffled all the power of Britain! “O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory.” §

Finally, it deserves a peculiar note, that when the paper currency must sink, a kind providence hath, far beyond our expectations, furnished a lasting medium in lieu of it. The money of the French troops and English prisoners circulate through the states. Our merchants, especially since the capture of 'Statia, have imported considerable sums. Our foreign loans have come safe into port. And the lap of plenty hath poured forth her riches to us. Never did our fields produce in such abundance as in the present year. “O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the people.”† His unmerited and needed bounties have greatly encreased our obligations. But, alas! we are more sensible of our temporal wants than of God's mercies, and more prone to murmur than to praise.

Let us beware, my brethren, lest our ingratitude and impenitence provoke him to change our prosperous state into misery. He can easily shut up our ports. Scorching heats and withering frosts, blasting and mildew, or his armies raised from the earth, may soon darken our fairest prospects. The canker worm, the caterpillar and

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* *Dan.* 3. 35. § *Psalms* 98. 1. † *Psalms* 105. 1.

the locust, weak as they are, are the terrible ministers of God's vengeance. Let gratitude and repentance mark our conduct; then "shall the Lord give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase." § "And ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wonderfully with you, and shall never be ashamed." *

VIII. The glorious prospects opened to us and to our posterity, by our successes and the manner in which they have been obtained, lay us under the sweetest and most powerful obligations to praise the Lord. These are no less than as full, and pure, and uninterrupted an enjoyment of the blessings of the gospel and of this life, as any nation upon earth has ever been favoured with, perhaps much more so.

I have never entertained the least doubt of the justness of our cause, or of our success in pleading it. † Yet I never

§ Psalm 85. 12.

* Joel 2. 26.

† *My hopes of success and of future glorious days to America were founded upon the following arguments:*

1st. Britain appeared to me to have all the marks of a nation to be sunk low, and America of one to be raised high. They, like all nations that have passed their zenith, appear to be sinking fast downwards again---they are old and incorrigible in national vices of the worst kind; vices of so high aggravation as indicate the speedy approach of divine judgments. There is every reason to conclude, from the testimony of their own ablest writers, and many undeniable facts, that their sovereign, their court, and their nobility, are more infatuated and debauched than any in Europe, notwithstanding their superior advantages for knowledge and virtue. But God, as is his usual way with young nations, has treated, and he will treat us, as we do our children. We correct them, yet nurse and raise them up to maturity. He has taught us by many favours, and by the rod. Never did a nation make such rapid progress in the same space of time, in numbers, strength, glory, and valuable improvements of every kind, as America has done since its first settlement.

ver expected our deliverance, either so soon or so easily, as many hoped for. You know I have frequently told you it was my opinion, that Britain would proceed to the utmost stretch of her power, and that I should not at all be disappointed to hear of the enemy's possessing themselves of all our chief towns, and making the principal ports in all the states feel, for a time, the effects of their barbarity. I saw a great revolution was about to take place; I therefore expected a great conflict: for no great things were ever done, or great events brought to pass, without a great struggle for them. It is uniformly the conduct of divine providence, as well to nations as to individuals,

2d. *The remarkable manner in which America was at first planted by the brave New England adventurers, who, flying from tyranny civil and ecclesiastic, chose to risque the dangers of the beasts and savages of the wilderness, rather than continue under their hated chains. In them seemed to be eminently and even literally fulfilled that prophecy Rev. 12. 6, 14. "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place." And perhaps America may yet be a refuge to many European saints from the dreadful storm, when God shall cast down thrones, and deluge Europe with blood, to prepare the way for the promised glory of the latter days.*

3d. *The operations of providence united with predictions of the gospel shining as lightning from the east to the west. From Asia it flew to Europe, from Europe over to the wilds of America. And several of their able and pious divines have given it as their opinion, that the gospel was about to take its departure from them, and settle down in America.*

4th. *The strongest of all my reasons was the everlasting promise of God the Father to his co-equal Son, Ps. 2. 8. "Ask of me, and I shall give the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." O America, a land of promise! glory shall have her habitation in you. Happy shall it be to have a place among your sons and your daughters!*

individuals, to lay them low in order to raise them high, God chooses his people's extremity as his opportunity to grant them relief, to teach them that his own arm works their salvation, and cut off all ground of boasting from the creature. A notable instance of this we have at the entrance of Israel into the promised land. Jericho fell without the stroke of a sword; yet were they chased and smitten down by the men of the next city they approached. A most discouraging circumstance to those who had many strong nations to encounter. When they had purged out the accursed thing from among them, they easily obtain a complete victory in their next attack; and God gives them the troubled, but rich valley of Achor, as a sure pledge of all their future victories, and quiet possession of the promised rest. In allusion to this is that encouraging promise to his distressed people, when afflicted and scattered among the nations: "I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope. And she shall sing there as in the days of her youth, as in the days when she came up out of the land Egypt." § *i. e.* They should be reduced to a distressful and helpless condition, similar to that in which they were when they came from the house of bondage to Canaan; but in their desolate and afflicted state, he would appear to their joy, and begin to effect their relief, as an earnest of their future complete salvation.

Thus did God deal with us: After we had been brought exceeding low, he granted success to our arms, first in New Jersey, and afterwards in the Carolinas, in a manner so remarkable, as to be a pledge of our succeeding victories, and of the glorious prospects of years and ages to come! The rankest deist can scarcely deny the hand of Providence in our successes, and the wide door of hope they open to America.

Look forward, Americans! and behold your families quietly enjoying the fruits of their own labours. "They shall

§ *Hos.* 2. 14, 15.

“ shall not build and others inhabit ; they shall not plant,
 “ and another eat : ” Every one shall sit safe “ under his
 “ vine and fig tree ! ” Behold your towns mart of nati-
 ons, and your streams floating with merchandise uninter-
 rupted !—Behold the wilderness cultivated, and the banks
 of your numerous lakes and rivers adorned with thriving
 cities and trading towns !—Look forward and behold the
 haunts of savages and beasts of prey become seats of the
 churches and worship of Christ ! “ The wilderness and
 “ solitary place shall be glad for them ; and the desert shall
 “ rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abun-
 “ dantly, and rejoice with joy and singing ; the glory of
 “ Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Car-
 “ mel and Sharon : They shall see the glory of the Lord,
 “ and the excellency of our God---and the parched ground
 “ shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of wa-
 “ ter---Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of
 “ the Lord is risen upon thee---and the gentiles shall come
 “ to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.
 “ They shall fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows.
 “ For thy god will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of
 “ many generations.” * For the forementioned and simi-
 lar reasons which I cannot take time to enlarge upon, I
 firmly believe America shall be a glorious empire, abound-
 ing in all the blessings of the gospel, and of this life, and
 that our present struggles shall prepare the way for that
 glory. Nor is it at all improbable, that many shall come
 from the east to the brightness of her rising, or that the
 enlightning and quickning gospel of Christ shall proceed
 from us as life from the dead to the nations that “ sit in
 “ darkness and in the shadow of death.” “ O give thanks
 “ unto the Lord, make known his deeds among the nati-
 “ ons ; sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all
 “ his marvellous works. Glory in his holy name : Let
 “ the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.” † Sing
 and give thanks O Trenton and Princeton ; for ye are our
 valley of Achor, in which God first opened to us a door
 of

* *Is.* 35. 1, 2, ---7. And 60, 1, ---3, ---8, ---15.

† *Psalms* 105. 1, 2 3.

of hope, and caused us to sing as in the days of youth! God bless you and cause your springs to send forth their salutary streams, to refresh his weary heritage! Give thanks to the Lord, and rejoice, O Saratoga with Bennington, King's Mountain with Cowpens and Eutaw Springs; for in you hath he opened to us a wide door of hope! God make your fields as Sharon, and your deserts blossom as the rose! Sing unto the Lord, York with Gloucester, and talk ye of all his marvellous works; for you hath he given to all the states as the largest door of hope! May he that sitteth between the cherubims fix his temple in you, and make you a flourishing mart of nations! Let the heart of every one rejoice that seeks the Lord; for he is taking his usual steps to prepare the way for the coming of the kingdom of Christ, "whose kingdom is everlasting, and of whose dominion there shall be no end." And let all our confederate states, as with one heart and one voice, unite in the transporting song!

IX. From the preceding arguments, I hope, it will easily appear to every one who is willing to see, how strong and numerous are the obligations upon all the states to unite in praise to our God. His favours to the whole are great and marvellous; and our returns of gratitude should be hearty and unanimous. It has been the practice of good people, in all ages, to assemble together for humiliation, or praise, as the providence of God might require. § When

§ It ought to be one of our notes of praise this day, that God has put it into the hearts of our worthy Congress to take notice of the propriety of this, and recommend to the states to obey the voice of providence by humiliation, or thanksgiving, as it might speak to us in judgment, or mercy. Thus did the pious rulers of the Jews as well as the prophets; and we ought to follow the footsteps of the flock. They had sundry public days of thanksgiving for public mercies, and of humiliation for public judgments. They observed four public fasts in the year, during their seventy years captivity, as appears from the seventh and eighth chapters of Zechariah. The spirit of the duty was indeed neglected by the body of that nation, who

God opened a path for his people Israel through the sea, and, causing the waters to return, overwhelmed their enemies; “then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my fathers God, and I will exalt him.---Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.---Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” § May the spirit of this song be written in our hearts by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. And when the children of Israel obtained a complete victory over the army of the Philistines, a perpetual memorial of it was erected in honour to their great deliverer. “Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.” * May we be enabled this day to set up our Ebenezer, and call upon the name of the Lord, in confidence that he who hath hitherto helped us, will yet help us.

Nature's light, as well as divine testimony, teacheth the propriety of public praises for public mercies, as appear-eth from the practice of all nations, in all ages. What name

by persisting in their sins, made their hearts as an adamant stone, as I fear is the case with a great majority amongst us. Yet were the duties of special use to them, as I hope they have been to us, as they assisted good people, and done public honour to their God, unto whom their prayers and praises ascended as precious odours, being perfumed with the intercession of Jesus Christ. The humiliation and faithful prayers of a select few, rather than a general reformation, was the first means of the deliverance of the Jews, as I believe they have been and will be means of ours.

§ Exodus xv. 1. 2. 6. 11.

* 1 Samuel vii, 12. Ebenezer, a stone of help.

name then do they deserve, who, through a carelessness about, a disrelish for, or contempt of the duty, refuse to cast their mite into the public rejoicings of God's people? Or those who pay no attention to the spirit of the duty, though they may mix with the public assemblies? They deserve not a name among christians of any name, be their profession what it may, nor even among rational creatures. The psalmist describes them by their true character. "O Lord how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not; fools understand not this." * Brutes and fools are their names, and with these are they fittest to associate.

Our reasons for praise are great and many, and sorry I am, that there should be any dissonant chords to marr the harmony. But this must be expected, while sin is sin, and prevails in our guilty world. Those will not unite in the exalted duties of this day, whose tempers are assimilated to the tyrants themselves, and secretly wish for the success of their arms. Nor those who pour out imprecations on Congress, governors, assemblies, and councils, because the hopes of their gains in seeking the vitals of their country are over. And their notes are most unsuitable to the sweet exercises of praise, who like the unbelieving israelites in the wilderness, continually murmur at the state of our affairs, and distrust the salvation of God; instead of repenting for their sins, and impressing their hearts with the glory of the divine government, and the many undeserved favours of heaven to us. As unsuitable to unite with the pure choir of singers are they, who only express their joys in Bacchanalian routs, mingling their notes with the songs of drunkards. "Wo unto them---the harp and the viol, the tabret and the pipe, and wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands." § And lastly they will not offer the tribute due to their great benefactor, who, though they may call themselves whigs, and assume any religious name whatsoever; yet, are so sullen and ungodly in their temper, that they will not meet for worship with

* *Psalms* 92. 5, 6,

§ *Isaiah* 4. 11, 12,

with their brethren on days of humiliation and thanksgiving, and seldom at any other time. I should not scruple to assert, that they usurp the name of whig, as well as that of christian. They are “spots” in the societies of christians, “clouds without rain, and wells without water.” I cannot esteem them a whit better than the vilest mortal deist, whose language is, “let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die.” Let their temper and the temper of their brethren, above described, prevail in our land, then, farewell liberty ! farewell all ye sweets of our painful struggles with Britain ! our own chain will bind us fast.

But although the base tribe now mentioned, and those of similar characters, will not praise the Lord ; yet a goodly number in all the states will, and I rejoice that they have so glorious a call to the duty. Pious persons will try to enter into the spirit of praise ; for grace has implanted in their hearts the purest principles of patriotism and of gratitude. The virtuous, who have engaged in the cause of their country from principle, though they be not pious, will attempt the duty from the common sentiments of gratitude ; which, as well as common humiliations, are very necessary and useful, as means to remove outward judgments from a nation, and obtain for them the common favours of providence.

My brethren, let me beseech your most pious attention to the things you have heard, and to frame your conduct accordingly. You have long been addressed by the politicians of the day, as citizens ; I now address you upon the same topics, as Christians and professors of the religion of Jesus Christ. The cause of America is the cause of Christ ; and as such I wish to interest you more deeply in it, by drawing you to a more full and religious improvement of his providences towards us as a nation. In this view repentance and gratitude are among the chief improvements required of us. These are precious sister graces, which harmoniously unite with each other ; and so inseparable is their connection, that the more you increase in the one, the more you will increase in the other also.

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also. We have many great national mercies to praise him for, and many atrocious national sins to be humbled for. Our sinning with an high hand under abounding judgments, and our ingratitude under abounding mercies, are very humbling considerations. But although we have many present and marvellous mercies to praise God for, and have the strongest grounds of hope for a large addition to them; yet let us not be high minded, but fear. If we shall drop into a political sleep, or political distractions, and not duly improve the advantages granted to us; or if we shall persist in our sins, notwithstanding all our calls to repentance, our calamities may be renewed and prolonged. Israel spent forty tedious years in the wilderness for their provocations, before they attained to the promised rest, which was a journey but of a few days. And many of their carcases fell in the desert for their distrust of God's salvation, for their murmuring, and their hardening their hearts against the voice of his providence and grace. Let us beware lest any of us "fall after the same example of unbelief." If we want our tranquility soon, let us soon break off from our iniquities by repentance! If we want our God to come for our complete salvation, and "make no tarrying," let us "make haste, and not delay to keep his commandments." Let our murmurings be speedily turned into thanksgivings, and our complaints into praises; then shall the Lord come quickly to bless us with all the smiles of his providence and grace. "O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat, and with the honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee." || But though many should fall for their sins, they who trust the salvation of God, have seen the dawning of it, they shall see it more fully, and their posterity shall enjoy it in all its fullness. For all these favours let us harmoniously unite in the praises of our God! And may all the people, every where, unite in the same blessed notes!

Praise

Praise him, all ye worthy patriots, who have borne the burden and heat of the day ; for ye begin to see the fruits of your long and painful labours for your country's sake ! Praise him, all ye champions of the field, who have exposed yourselves to nakedness, hunger, and poverty, to winters colds and summers heats, to every fatigue and every danger, in defence of your country ; for ye shall wear the laurels and reap the fruit of all your toils ! Praise him, all ye faithful ministers of the altar, who despising court ambition and court luxury, have faithfully prayed, preached, and warned the people ; for ye shall serve your God and your generation, agreeable to his word and your consciences, without fear of the halter or the faggot ! Praise him, all ye steady followers of the Lamb, who love and stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free ; for the blessed prospect of your liberty in its fullest extent begins to dawn upon you ! Praise him all ye laborious husbandmen, who have toiled upon your farms and in the field of war ; for “ ye shall build houses, and inhabit them ; ye shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.” Praise him, all ye careful merchants, for the blooming prospects of free ports and uninterrupted trade. Praise him ; all ye honesthearted friends to America of every class who have ventured your ALL in defence of your liberty ; for your feared and hated chains begin to drop off ! Praise him, ye people of every rank and condition in life, both old and young, high and low, rich and poor ; for the heavens plead your common cause ! Praise him, all ye faithful confederate states, from Massachusetts to Georgia ; for “ ye shall beat your swords into plough shares, and “ your spears into pruning hooks !” From north to south, from the Atlantic to the Western ocean let all North America praise the Lord ; for he is about to make you a large and glorious empire, founded upon the basis of liberty, and flourishing in all the blessings of this life, and the richer blessings of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ! Ye shall import the merchandise of every

every nation, and export your produce to every market. And with your produce the enlarging privileges of the gospel may be transmitted to many nations that sit in darkness, to proclaim liberty to those captives, and the opening of the prison doors to those who have been long bound in chains of ignorance and error. "LET THE
"PEOPLE PRAISE THEE, O GOD, LET ALL THE
"PEOPLE PRAISE THEE!" Then shall the earth yield
"her increase, and God, even our God, shall bless us.
"God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall
"fear him."

T H E E N D.