

FURMAN'S
SERMON
ON THE
ANNIVERSARY
OF
AMERICAN
INDEPENDENCE,
JULY 4, 1802.

AMERICA'S DELIVERANCE AND DUTY.

A Sermon.

PREACHED AT THE BAPTIST CHURCH,

IN

CHARLESTON, SOUTH-CAROLINA,

ON THE

FOURTH DAY OF JULY, 1802,

BEFORE THE

STATE SOCIETY OF THE CINCINNATI,

THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION SOCIETY;

AND THE

CONGREGATION

WHICH USUALLY ATTENDS DIVINE SERVICE IN THE

SAID CHURCH.

BY RICHARD FURMAN, D. D. 1755-1825

PASTOR OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH, IN CHARLESTON, AND
A MEMBER OF THE REVOLUTION SOCIETY.


Published at the joint request of the two Societies.

Unto God, the Lord, belong the issues from death.
Thou art my God! I will exalt thee. *Psalms.*

CHARLESTON:

PRINTED BY W. P. YOUNG, FRANKLIN'S HEAD
NO. 41, BROAD-STREET.


1802.



THE AUTHOR of this Sermon, finds himself brought under peculiar obligations to the highly respectable Societies, at whose request it is published; by the repeated tokens of their approbation, bestowed in the most obliging manner, on his feeble endeavors to promote the cause of Liberty and Religion.

HE tenders them, in return, his warmest gratitude, and most sincere respect: And under their patronage submits this imperfect production of his pen, to the view of a candid public.

CHARLESTON, July 5, 1802,



A
S E R M O N.

Exodus. Chap. xiii. Verse 3.

“ Remember this Day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the House of Bondage; for by strength of Hand the Lord brought you out from this place.”

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THE rise and fall of empires must be ranked among the great events of that Divine Providence which superintends the state of our world. By common consent of mankind, these events have been generally recorded; and, either in the stile of triumph or lamentation, make a distinguished figure on the page of history. Involving, as they do, the general interests of society, and affecting the tenderest feelings of individuals, it is not strange that they should become objects of particular attention. But there is a nobler reason why the children of wisdom, and of God, should contemplate and regard them: which is the display they afford of God's power, wisdom and goodness; or of his righteous judgment and wrath. In this view they minister important instructions to men; and are eminently useful, to impress their hearts in general, with the fear of God; to produce in the oppressed an humble hope in his goodness; and to excite the gratitude of those who have experienced deliverance. Such contemplation, therefore, of the re-

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volutions of empire, is not only a rational and laudable employment; but an interesting and important duty; especially to those who are particularly concerned in such an event.

The children of Israel had groaned, for ages, under the cruel oppression of Egyptian tyrants; but at length, by the outstretched arm of Omnipotence, their deliverance had been effected. "God shewed his terrors in Egypt, and wonders in the field of Zoan." Judgment followed judgment, in close and awful succession. At last, a commissioned angel, charged with the work of vengeance, brandished his fatal sword; at the dark and silent hour of midnight, he passed through all the coasts of Egypt; and slew the first born in every Egyptian family. Dying groans, and heart-rending lamentations, were heard in all their habitations. Terror seized the heretofore infatuated monarch, and his people. The Israelites were now, not only permitted to depart, as God had required; but hurried and thrust out. Under the guidance and protection of heaven, they then began their journey to the Promised Land. By the hand of Moses, they were led through the Red Sea, which miraculously opened a passage for their escape; and when they had gained the opposite Arabian shore, they beheld the returning waves overwhelm Pharoah, and his pursuing army, in one mighty ruin.

At this memorable epoch, the Israelitish state and polity began.

To impress them with a due sense of their obligations to infinite goodness; and to commemorate their deliverance, this ransomed people were commanded by Jehovah, to consecrate the day on which it was effected, as a sacred festival; to be kept by them and their succeeding generations; until the design of heaven, for which they were separated from all other nations, should have its regular accomplishment. The paschal solemnity, which had been the mean of their preservation from the sword of the destroying angel, and which looked forward to an important event and meaning, which the gospel dispensation should unfold, was, by divine appointment, to be religiously observed on that day.

On this subject Moses addresses them, in the text to which our attention is now directed: in which there is a solemn charge

charge given to remember their happy emancipation from Egyptian bondage; and a cogent reason urged to enforce the duty. They had been delivered from grievous oppression. Their deliverance had been effected by the mighty hand of God; and it became their duty to keep the important event in devout and grateful remembrance.

Whatever specific difference may be noticed as existing, between the origin of the Jewish theocracy, and the rise, independence and establishment of these United States; yet it must be acknowledged there is a striking similarity: and if *we* have not received an *express command* from heaven to remember the day of our deliverance; yet, the *analogy of holy-writ* unites with reason and gratitude to declare it a duty. By their united voice, we are directed to recollect the merciful interpositions of the Deity in our favour; and devoutly to acknowledge the obligations we are brought under to his delivering and preserving goodness.

On this anniversary of our independence, therefore, and while addressing an auditory composed of so many enlightened citizens, statesmen, and patriot soldiers, who shared largely in the solitudes, toils, sufferings and triumphs which attend the contest for liberty, permit me to attempt shewing:

1st. That there is great reason to believe, the American revolution was effected by the special agency of God.

2dly. What duties and obligations are incumbent on our citizens, in consequence of his kind interposition.

A belief of God's infinite wisdom, and universal dominion, will exclude the idea, that any event can take place without his permission: and therefore, it must be admitted, that his counsel and providence are, in some sense, concerned in whatever exists, or transpires, throughout the creation. But there is an infinite difference between his permitting an event (for in this manner all evil comes into existence) and his producing it, as his proper work, and the object of his approbation. An important distinction, also, is to be made between his immediate act, and his effecting a purpose by the intervention of second causes. This use of second causes, and his approbation of the event, are principally intended in the proposition

sition before us ; yet, not so as to exclude the idea of his more immediate interposition, on special occasions,

Were this point controverted, it would be easy to prove it in the usual manner, by the relation between cause and effect ; either in the ascending, or descending series ; but as we are not engaged in controversy, and brevity is necessary, I shall not confine myself to system ; nor attempt to illustrate, or even enumerate, all the arguments which might be advanced. Let it suffice, to select a few of the most convincing, and useful, for the purposes of devotion.

First. The justice of our cause. The principle of right, taken both in a moral and political sense, forms a strong argument in our favour. God is the patron of those who are engaged in the cause of justice ; and on this principle America withstood the claims of the British government. Had no reference been made to general, abstract principles ; they might, as they did, contend for that important right of a free people, which the British constitution secured to them ; the right of rejecting every internal law,* or scheme of taxation, which had not obtained their own approbation and consent ; or of representatives whose interests and feelings were intimately connected with their own. Against this constitutional principle, the monarch, and the representatives of a part of the empire, set up the extraordinary claim, of " a right to bind the colonies, in all cases whatsoever." And so determined were they to maintain this *pretended* right ; that no manly reasoning, no humble petition, nor candid, affectionate remonstrance, could shake their purpose. To enforce it, formidable fleets and armies were levied, and sent into the colonies, to compel our citizens, by fire and sword, to an unconditional submission. Had they yielded to this unrighteous demand, every principle of liberty every valuable right, civil and religious, would have been placed in a state of the most abject prostration. But a due sense of their own interests, affection for their posterity, and a regard to the cause and honor of God, forbad compliance.

An appeal to heaven, by arms, was the last resort. And this was solemnly made, by a people fond of peace, unprepared for war, and grieved that they were reduced to the dire necessity

* By internal law, is meant, such law as was intended to operate directly on the internal state and interests of the colonies.

necessity of either surrendering their dearest rights; or of meeting on the hostile field, in bloody conflict, those for whom their hearts were accustomed to feel the most fond affection.

Another right established in the British constitution, founded on moral principle, on which the body of the nation had acted, and in which they gloried, was now called into operation: I mean that, which declares protection and subjection reciprocal; and which absolves the governed from the latter, when the former is not afforded by those who govern. On this principle, when all proper expedients for reconciliation and peace had been tried in vain; and when calamities, occasioned by the war, had risen to an enormous height, the united colonies threw off the British yoke, and took their station among *Independent Nations*.

Secondly. Much may be argued from the manner in which our citizens entered on, and supported the contest.

It was, in the first instance, with much scrupulosity, and extreme reluctance: their attachment to what was called, "the mother country," was most sincere; their loyalty, and affection for the monarch, rose even to enthusiasm. Perhaps, in no part of his dominions, were his subjects so generally devoted to his person, and the interests of his crown: in which, conscience had its influence, as well as affection. The Americans were not so numerous, and powerful, as to become confident in their strength; nor were the power and resources of Great Britain such as could be beheld by them with contempt. They had not become such sublime philosophers as to discern that matter, exclusively, composes the universe, and that it is governed by chance; or that if there be any Deity, there is also a plurality, and that these are goddesses; who may be represented by prostitutes; they did not consider death as an eternal sleep; nor christianity as an imposture; with the mysteries of the apotheosis of philosophers and heroes, except as an article of antient prophane history, they had no acquaintance. On the contrary, the body of our people were christians; believing in the eternal existence, transcendent perfection, and righteous, universal Providence of an infinite God. They believed (I speak of them generally) that the sacred scriptures contain a revelation from heaven; and that Jesus Christ

is the Son of God, and the only Saviour of men : that man is an accountable creature, destined for a future, immortal existence ; whose final state is to be fixed by the awful awards of a general judgment ; at which God himself will preside. They had felt the benign, ameliorating influence of the christian doctrines ; which rectify the heart, controul the passions, and inspire the soul with sentiments of justice, benevolence, generosity, and peace.

In these circumstances, and with these sentiments, nothing but strong and urgent necessity could induce them to attempt, or even think of attempting, to alter their situation by force : and however necessary, for their present happiness, this might appear, from the threatening aspect of the measures concerted against them ; yet, their sense of moral obligation, founded on the principles which have been stated, forbade their engaging in the undertaking ; unless they could clearly discern that it might be justified in the sight of God. This led them to candid, conscientious enquiries, the result of which was, a conviction, not only that it was justifiable, but their duty. Nor, were they alone in this sentiment : it was common to the rightly informed friends of liberty in every part of the globe ; even in Britain the enlightened, virtuous part of the community, approved and applauded the measure ; and considered it as a mean of preserving to themselves, as well as to us, freedom from the domination of arbitrary power.

The principle of opposition being now conscientiously settled, they boldly risked the event, in an humble dependence on the aid of heaven.

The congress, and other public bodies invested with authority ; the governors of the states ; general Washington, and other commanders of armies, acknowledged publicly, the necessity of our seeking Divine aid, and in their several spheres of authority, urged the performance of this duty. The sentiment pervaded all ranks and characters ; and prayers for success were daily offered up to God, by thousands of religious families and pious individuals, throughout the union, as well as by the churches ; both at the commencement, and through the progress of the war. Days of solemn fasting and prayer

prayer were frequently set apart and observed, by voluntary association, among different denominations of christians : and I hope, I may say, in modesty and truth, that while our patriot statesmen and soldiers, exerted and displayed their abilities, generosity, and heroism, in defence of our country and liberties, in a manner that has immortalized their names ; the clergy though acting in an humbler sphere, did not render a less essential service to the national interests ; by inculcating those sentiments, setting those examples, and taking that lead in religion, which inspired our citizens with zeal in the cause of liberty ; formed their minds into a suitable temper for receiving the Divine blessing, and rendered them, in the expectation of it, courageous to meet the dangers they had to encounter.

Need I here to mention the more than sumptuary regulations and resolves, which were entered into, and intended to discountenance extravagant modes of living, idle diversions and vice ; and the frequent calls to repentance and reformation from those who were invested with authority ?

With some this might have been the cant of machiavelian policy, used to work on the affections of the multitude : we know there are politicians of this stamp, than whom, I humbly conceive, there are in a moral view, few more despicable characters : but we have great reason to believe, that, in general, these directions and resolves proceeded from a very different motive. Let us,

Thirdly, consider the apparent interpositions of Providence, in favor of the revolution. Under this head we may notice, with propriety, the time when the contest began ; in respect of the numbers, strength, and opulence of the colonies ; their general union, notwithstanding a diversity in habits and interests ; and their possessing citizens, equal to the arduous services which were requisite for the council and the field. In these we may discover strong evidences of a kind superintending Providence. To which may be added, an apparent control over our enemies, manifested in the wrong measures adopted by them, in some instances ; and the frustration of their best concerted plans in others,

Some of the disasters which befel ourselves may be assigned to the same cause ; though as mercifully intended to convince us, when become too confident and secure, where our true strength lay : such were the disasters in Canada, and at the Lakes ; the repulse at Savannah ; the fall of Charleston ; and the defeat of Gates.

In our favor we joyfully recount the detection of Arnold's conspiracy ; the defence of Sullivan's Island ; the victory at Saratoga, at Trenton, at Guilford (as it was in effect,) and the grand triumph at York-Town. Nor should the defeat of Tarleton, and others of a similar nature, which were produced at critical moments, and followed with extraordinary effects, be forgotten.

The friendly aid of the French monarch, and that of the states general, though springing out of national rivalry, and a regard to their own interests ; were yet providentially directed in our favor.

The preservation of the life of general Washington, in the midst of dangers, and of other compatriots, and heroes of the revolution, merits a place, and our devout acknowledgment in this enumeration of Divine interpositions. I proceed to consider,

Fourthly. The happy termination of the war, and the consequences which followed.

The war was terminated in a manner truly glorious to America. She had been supported against the gigantic efforts of a powerful nation, was completely delivered from her oppressive designs, and from the calamities of the conflict with her, in a much shorter time than could have been reasonably expected ; and this by means, that, in many instances, appeared to be quite inadequate to the end proposed. At this period her citizens found themselves in possession of the important object for which they had contended and of more than they had in view when the contest began. liberty, peace, and national independence ; an independence acknowledged by Britain herself. In this happy event they recognized, not only the fruit of their toils ; but the answer of their prayers ; and perceived that

that the more than royal bounty of heaven, had bestowed on them in addition the choicest of other earthly blessings. By becoming more acquainted with its principles, and by suffering in its cause, liberty was proportionably endeared to them. Its interests among themselves were, in many instances, advanced, and better regarded : especially where religion and the rights of conscience were concerned. Better acquaintance, and mutual sympathies had diffused among them, far and wide, the principles and spirit of union and benevolence : and a due regard to each others rights, as well as a firm determination to support their own, had attached them to a republican form of government : as being most consistent with the rational character of man, and with the happiness of an enlightened, free, and virtuous people.

The formation of the federal constitution, and its adoption by the United States, must be ranked among the principal events which have manifested the kindness of Divine Providence, and its superintendance over our country since the war. Here a barrier against war and contention among ourselves, is laid ; which nothing but the extreme of folly and madness will ever remove. Here ample provision is made for our being free and happy at home, and respected among other nations.

We have been since highly favored with peace, while a great part of the old world has been convulsed with war : science, and the arts, agriculture and commerce have been, and still are, in a flourishing state.

God has also smiled on the United States, by granting the effusions of his spirit and grace to his churches among us ; and by extending the influence of vital religion. Perhaps there never was a period, when the belief of gospel-truth, a just attention to the most important, eternal interests of men, and to the honor of God, were more general on this continent, than at the present moment.

Fifthly. The last argument I shall at this time advance, is taken from what appears to have been the original destination of this country, in the scheme of Divine Providence. From what has transpired and exists, it seems reasonable to conclude, that it was originally designed as an asylum for religion and liberty ;

liberty; and a theatre, on which the power and excellency of both were to be exhibited to the greatest advantage.

Its first peopling from civilized nations, was generally by those who fled from tyranny and persecution. Its inhabitants have been distinguished for their adherence to religion and the rights of man. The first truly free government, in respect of religion, since christianity began its progress, was formed here.* The rapid increase of population, and advancement in civilization, its remote situation from the great powers of the old world, with all the advantages it possesses, of climate, soil, and extent of territory; and above all, the excellent constitution of its government, with the prevailing principles of religion among its inhabitants, are favourable to the sentiment. They encourage us to look forward, with pleasing hope, to a day when America will be the praise of the whole earth; and shall participate, largely, in the fulfilment of those sacred prophecies which have foretold the glory of Messiah's kingdom: when "there shall be abundance of peace;" "when God shall build the cities," and "cause them to be spread abroad;" when "righteousness shall dwell in the fruitful field, and the wilderness shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

If this was the counsel of heaven respecting our western world, it is not strange that so distinguished a link, in the important chain of events, as the American revolution, should come under the special care and direction of unerring wisdom and infinite goodness.

When this argument first occurred, I feared fondness for my country, without a just regard to the reality of things, had betrayed me into it; but on a serious review, its evidence appears almost irresistible; and I set it down, with confidence, among the important principles of truth.

Upon the whole, therefore, if God is the supporter of justice; if a conscientious people who fear, worship him, and seek his aid, are the proper objects of his paternal care; if a remarkable controul over the minds and actions of individuals and nations, directing, or over ruling them for good, manifests
his

* The state of Rhode Island.

his interposition; if events favourable to righteousness, to the honor of God, and the happiness of man, and these of extraordinary magnitude, are the proper effects of his interposing goodness; and, if his eternal counsels of loving kindness and mercy must have their completion, by means worthy of the author and the end. Then, surely, we may say: the American revolution was effected by the special agency of God. Let us therefore proceed to consider, under the

Second proposition, The duties incumbent on our citizens, in consequence of his gracious interposition. These are, gratitude to the great Author of our deliverance. A due attention to the means of securing, and improving the blessings he has conferred upon us: and future reliance on his providence and grace for preservation and happiness.

So signal has been our deliverance, so excellent are the blessings conferred on this nation, that at every remembrance of them, our hearts should glow with love and gratitude to their great Author; and our lips should joyfully praise him.

Let us for a moment consider, what must probably have been our situation, had America failed in her struggle for liberty; and had Britain triumphed. Our most distinguished, virtuous patriots, had then been loaded with infamy, confined in dungeons, banished their country, or led ignominiously to execution. Oppression, become insolent by victory, would have frowned in terror over the land. Armed hosts must have been employed to keep the conquered in subjection; and being quartered on them, and supported at their expense, our citizens must have groaned under the intolerable burden. Our property and lives, with the chastity of our wives and daughters, would have lain at the mercy of these petty, insulting tyrants. The seeds of liberty being thus smothered, and our spirit broken, we should have sunk into a temper correspondent to our situation.

But, adored be the name of our God, we have not only escaped these evils, the very contemplation of which occasions the mind to start back with horror; but were delivered, and have been since preserved from the calamities of war; are in-
vested

vested with the choicest privileges of freedom, and blessed with prospects of the rising glory of our country. Instead of the standard of war unfurled; we see the olive branch of peace extended over our land. We hear no more the clangor of arms: of the shrill trumpet and thundering cannon, mixed with the expiring groans of our fallen citizens; nor do we see their garments rolled in blood, and their once peaceful habitations reduced to smoking ruins by the fire of the enemy. These distressing sounds, dismal sights, and all their attendant horrors, are removed far from us: Let our gratitude and thanksgiving be in proportion to the benefits conferred.

Some have suggested, that in ascribing our success to the Providence of God, we run into enthusiasm; and detract from the merit of our statesmen and heroes. An objection fraught with so much absurdity, pride, and impiety, does not deserve to be answered; nor can it have any force, unless the doctrine of God's Providence should be disproved; but who is the madman that will attempt this? It can surely be no disgrace; but an high honour to our patriots, to say; "They acted in the cause of God," and that, "He smiled on their endeavours." He gave them a sphere of action, equal to all their virtue and abilities; but he reserved his proper work to himself. We may justly venerate the virtues, and honor the names of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Laurens, Rutledge, Green, and other eminent characters, who performed an important part in bringing the revolution to its termination; and of those brave men who lost their lives in the cause of liberty; but the supreme honour is due to God: to withhold this, would be gross impiety, and a daring affront to the Great Sovereign of heaven and earth.

The proper means for securing our liberties, and for improving the blessings conferred on us, come next under consideration. On this subject, I humbly conceive, the first article, in order and importance, which presents itself to an enlightened mind, is a strict attention to religion. This is, at once, the most suitable expression of our gratitude to God; and the best mean of securing happiness to ourselves. I do not mean the establishment of a national religion, by civil authority; this does not correspond either with our principles or feelings; but a personal attention and regard to the important

tant subject ; such as becomes a rational, immortal creature, accountable for his actions, and under infinite obligations to his Creator.

It is the chief concern of man as an individual ; and cannot be overlooked in a just estimation of the duties and interests of society : without virtue there can be no real happiness, either to individuals or the body politic ; and without religion there can be no genuine, stable virtue. Will that man be kind, generous and faithful to his neighbour, who neglects and abuses his own parents and family ? and can we suppose *he* will be faithful to his country, who is not faithful to his God ? but, besides, true religion so enlightens the understanding, so rectifies and improves the heart, and inspires the soul with such noble generous sentiments ; that the happy subjects of it are by its aid, eminently fitted for the most excellent actions and pursuits.

And here I do not hesitate to assert, that if the religion of Jesus Christ, is indeed, as it professes to be, a revelation from God ; delivered under the high sanction of his authority ; and supported by evidences worthy of its Author, sufficiently clear to satisfy the mind of every candid, humble enquirer ; we must certainly incur great guilt, and an awful condemnation by its rejection, or neglect. But surely we shall not incur that guilt, if we seriously contemplate the principles, nature and tendency of the gospel. How admirably is it adapted to the state and character of man—of man, whose conscience tells him, and whose actions prove, he has offended his righteous, dread Creator ! how clearly does it point out the way to reconciliation and bliss, through the meritorious obedience, complete atonement, and prevalent intercession of a Divine Mediator and Redeemer ; and by the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit ! How pure and comprehensive is its morality ; how powerful its motives ; how joyful the hopes it inspires ; and what a rich display does it afford of God's transcendent love and mercy !

We have seen what powerful, effective influence it had on the American revolution ; and that our fairest prospects of national happiness arise from the predicted accomplishment of its grand purposes. O ! let us then, bind the gospel to our hearts,

hearts, and honor the Redeemer: And while the great national deliverance, wrought out for us, by his kind *Providence*, employs our grateful recollection; let us advert with superior admiration, gratitude and joy, to that more stupendious act of his *Grace*: The redemption of a ruined, guilty world, from the power of sin, the tyranny of Satan, and the demerited wrath of God.

Another consideration of great importance claims our attention in this argument: national sins, which are the sins of individuals, become prevalent and general, bring down on their authors, the terrible judgments of God. Where are the mighty empires of the East? the Assyrian, the Babylonian! where the Roman, with all its power and magnificence? Long, long since have they been hurled from the summit of earthly glory, into the depths of debasement and ruin! The Jewish nation, though highly favored by heaven, yet, for their sins, suffered, repeatedly, the complicated distresses of war, famine, pestilence and captivity; and finally, have been dispersed over every quarter of the globe. The proper preventive of these evils is religion.

In addition to the comprehensive, general direction, on the subject of religion, there are some moral, and political rules of conduct, which merit particular attention.

Let the good of the whole be steadily kept in view; and that generous love cherished, which embraces the interests of every state, or part of the union.

Adhere strictly to the constitution; and let the important principles it contains, have their free and full operation.

Guard against the prejudices and partialities which affect foreign nations: or by which they may affect us: come not under foreign influence; but maintain good will for all mankind.

Have due respect for the persons who are constitutionally, or legally, invested with authority; and do not by unreasonable jealousies, and clamours, obstruct the measures they may pursue for the general interest, because you do not fully understand

stand them. Our public officers are all responsible; and the constitution, has made ample provision for detecting and punishing abuses of power.

Wrong judgment is often formed, and censure freely bestowed on measures, when not fully understood; which, if we had a complete view of the subject, would meet our cordial approbation.

President Jefferson has on this subject, put in his claim to our candor: and he has an undoubted right to demand it. At the same time, it must be acknowledged, that his predecessors in office had an equal right: and it is probable, had this rule been regularly observed, much of our late unhappiness, from the spirit of party, would have been avoided.

Let us not rest satisfied with the establishment of republicanism alone, virtue must be added to make us truly respectable and happy. The Republican form of government, though the best for an enlightened, virtuous people; has, like all other human institutions, its imperfections. The influence of demagogues, and the artifice, or fury of party, too often mislead and convulse governments of this form; and sometimes, as in the case of the Roman, and more antient republics of Greece, overwhelm them in final ruin. To guard against these very pernicious evils should be our care: and in the exercise of it, particular attention should be given to the principles and conduct of those who are invested with public trusts by the votes of the people. The virtuous and wise, alone, should be chosen.

The man of ambition, and bad principles, who in a monarchy would solicit royal favor with fawning adulation, will not fail, among us, to court the people with strongest professions of his regard to liberty; and by a conformity in his manners to popular sentiments and prejudices. In apparent, or rather pretended zeal for the people's rights, he will frequently take his stand in opposition to the measures of government; from which he sees the most ready way opening to preferment and power. But surely, a man's private conduct is the best comment on his principles, and proof of his disposition.

The spirit of party should be carefully avoided: when fostered in a community, it is productive of many evils, both natural and moral. It suppresses generous emotions of the soul, and stirs up the hateful passions; weakens the hands of the body politic; and tends strongly to its dissolution. It opens a door to foreign influence, or interference; lays the foundation for civil wars, and blood-shed; and frequently gives opportunity to an aspiring tyrant to seize the reins of government, and guide them with despotic sway. A few artful men, on either side of a question, may, when this spirit is in operation, by misrepresenting facts, by using sophisticated arguments, by magnifying every little error of human nature into a great and designed evil, by abusive epithets and sallies of wit; and by continually speaking and writing in the stile of controversy, and on one side of the question only, keep those at variance, who might otherwise be harmoniously and happily united in bands of love. The people who become the prey of these arts, and consider their liberties at stake, will be fired with resentment against these supposed tyrants so unfavorably represented; but before they are aware, will admit real tyrants, their prejudices and their passions, to the government of their breasts. Even enlightened, good men, too often suffer the imposition.

Let every just principle be supported; let a rational jealousy for liberty be maintained; let knowledge be disseminated, in the most extensive manner; let free enquiry be made—But let all be done in truth, candor, and the spirit of benevolence.

Let the American orator and politician, the patriotic printer, and, may I not add, the minister of the gospel when at any time *he* speaks on the subject of national interests, each consider himself as superior to the low arts, and abusive language of party. But above all, let the great legislature of the nation, its honorable executive and judiciary, consider themselves, as invested with a dignity, and intrusted with sacred interests which must suffer, when ever they even notice this subject, in any other manner than to prevent the evil, or heal the wounds it has occasioned.

“When I consider” said the great Patrick Henry “the business of an American legislature, the magnitude of the objects,

which present themselves to my mind, is almost too great for admission; and I am pained to the heart to think we should lose the opportunity of securing to ourselves the advantages which providence so kindly affords us: and, standing on so conspicuous a part of this earthly theatre, shall we meanly stoop to the business of party, and rob the hangman of his wages."*

Should a prophet, or apostle arise, inspired to declare to us the counsel of God; should an angel of light, from the third heavens, descend with a special message from the King Eternal, I am induced to believe he would address us in such language as this: "Ye people of America! God has wrought out for you a great deliverance, and conferred on you a profusion of super-excellent blessings. Be unfeignedly thankful. Fear, love, and honor him. Embrace his gospel, believe in his Son, obey his laws, and trust his grace. Let humiliation for sins committed against him be sincere, and reformation universal. Live in love, peace, and union with each other; and, as much as possible, with all mankind. Labour to attain, as individuals, all that is amiable, and excellent, in personal character; to advance the character of your country also, by making it the seat of science and wisdom, of true liberty, righteousness and peace: and improve all its privileges and blessings with a just regard to your immortal interests and final state: that you may rise from hence, to the bright regions of unclouded day, and never ending rest, beyond the skies!"

I only add, in the last place, that our experiences of Jehovah's delivering power, and heavenly bounty, furnish strong arguments to encourage our trusting in him for the time to come. This is an important reason why we should remember, and honor the day of our deliverance. And if we are disposed to fear, love and serve him, O! how joyful is the prospect before us: God reveals his gracious Name, and encourages us to trust in him. While kings experience that they cannot be saved by the multitude of an host; and the counsels of the wise, confident in their wisdom, become foolishness.—The everlasting arm of God shall be our defence; his counsels shall guide us; and we shall be safe under the shadow of his wings.

The

* In a letter to the author.

The hearts of men—the winds—the waves—the world, are at his direction and control. He has ten thousand thunders ready to dart on the heads of those enemies who molest his people; and legions of angels to employ for their defence.

Let our nation trust in him for preservation and happiness! let his saints trust in him for grace and salvation: and to his adored Name, be everlasting praise. *Amen.*

H Y M N S

*Composed for the Twenty-sixth Anniversary of American
Independence.*



H Y M N I. L. M.

SOVEREIGN of all the worlds above ;
Thy glory, with unclouded rays,
Shines through the realms of light and love,
Inspiring angels with thy praise.

Thy power we own, thy grace adore ;
Thou deign'st to visit man below !
And in affliction's darkest hour,
The humble shall thy mercy know.

These western states, at thy command,
Rose from dependence and distress ;
Prosperity now crowns the land,
And millions join thy name to bless.

Oppression shook his iron rod,
And slav'ry clank'd her galling chain ;
We sought protection from our God,
And he did freedom's cause maintain.

For statesmen wise, for gen'als brave,
For all the valiant, patriot host,
By whom thou did'st our country save,
Thy praise shall sound from coast to coast.

Praise is thy due, eternal king !
We'll speak the wonders of thy love ;
With grateful hearts our tribute bring,
And emulate the hosts above.

H Y M N S.

O! be thou still our guardian God;
Preserve these States from ev'ry foe:
From party-rage, from scenes of blood,
From sin, and ev'ry cause of woe.

Here may the great Redeemer reign,
Display his grace and saving pow'r!
Here liberty and truth maintain,
'Till empires fall, to rise no more!

H Y M N II. S. M.

YE ransom'd people join,
To sing Jehovah's praise!
While faithfulness and love divine,
Invite us near his face,

He sav'd us in the hour
When huge affliction rose;
For us display'd deliver'ing pow'r,
And triumph'd o'er our foes!

O! be his love your theme,
In high seraphic lays:
Render to him *your* love supreme,
And speak aloud his praise!

H Y M N III. P. M.

WE hail the glad day
When this empire rose!
God thunder'd from heav'n,
And frown'd on our foes:
Dismay seiz'd the armies
Which compass'd us round;
Our fears were all banish'd;
Our wishes were crown'd:

The storms of distress
Thou hast hush'd by thy word,
And blessings of peace,
From thee, mighty Lord!

O'er spreading

H Y M N S.

O'er spreading the nation
Which thou did'st redeem,
We shout thy salvation,
And bless thee supreme.

By God's high decree,
Here freedom resides ;
The *Conscience* is free,
And justice presides :
Religion is honor'd,
And Science prevails ;
The Arts spread their banners,
And Commerce her sails.

The Gospel here shines,
Diffusing abroad
The life-giving hope
Of mercy from God :
Here the Saviour is known,
His churches he cheers,
His smiles bless the land, and
His glory appears.

The Nation how blest
Thus favor'd by heav'n !
Be joy then express'd
And gratitude giv'n :
But most for redemption
Through Jesus's blood,
High praise we would render,
And love to our God.

GLORIA PATRI.

TO Father and Son
And Spirit of Grace,
The great Three-in-One,
Be glory and praise !
Unite all ye nations !
The notes to prolong ;
Ye choirs of blest angels !
Re-cho the song.