



MR. STRONG'S

ORATION

On the Fourth of July.....1810.



AN
ORATION,

PRONOUNCED

July 4, 1810.

AT THE REQUEST OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE

TOWN OF RANDOLPH,

In Commemoration of the Anniversary of

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

—*—
BY JONATHAN STRONG, *A. M.*
—*—



Dedham ;

PRINTED BY HERMAN MANN,

AUGUST.....1810.



Randolph, July 4, 1810.

REV. SIR,

AGREEABLY to a vote of the Committee of Arrangements, we express to you the high satisfaction with which they have this day heard your candid and sentimental ORATION, and request the favor of a copy for publication.—With sentiments of high respect and esteem,

JONATHAN WILD, Jun.	} <i>Sub-Committee.</i>
SETH TURNER,	
JOHN KING, JUN.	
JOHN BELCHER,	
SAMUEL CURTIS,	

REV. JONATHAN STRONG.



GENTLEMEN,

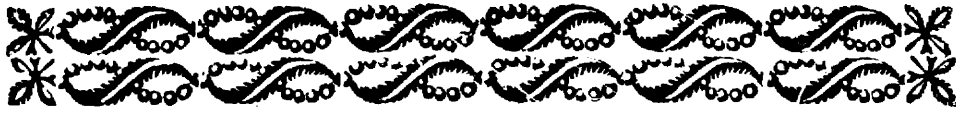
YOU must be sensible, from the short notice given me, that the Oration, a copy of which you request for publication, was written in great haste. It solicits your candour and the indulgence of my fellow-citizens, to gratify whom is my only apology for consenting to its further publicity.

With sentiments of high respect and esteem,
JONATHAN STRONG.

Dr. JONATHAN WILD, jun.	} <i>Sub-Committee</i>
SETH TURNER Esq.	
JOHN KING. jun. Esq.	
Lieut. JOHN BELCHER,	
Capt. SAMUEL CURTIS,	

of
Arrangements.





ORATION.



FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS,

WE have not convened to celebrate the birth day of a Nobleman, a Prince or a Monarch ; we have not convened either to applaud, or execrate the triumphs of the British navy, or the conquests of Bonaparte ; nor to decide which is the greatest tyrant and the most dangerous to the principles of civil liberty, or which has actually injured our country the most, during the last twenty years : Nor have we come together, either to eulogize, or censure the administration of Adams, Jefferson or Madison, Strong or Sullivan, Gore or Gerry ; nor have we convened to arraign before our tribunal either federalist or democrat, with a view to determine which is right and which is wrong, to condemn the one, or approve the other ; no, my fellow citizens ; neither of these is the object for which we come to this house to day ; for neither of these purposes did I consent to address you on this occasion ; but we come hither for a more important and joyful purpose ; we come to celebrate the birth-day of our nation ; that *memorable day*, which gave freedom and independence to three millions of people.

THE propriety of retaining in special remembrance and celebrating particular days and events may be argued, not only from the practice of civilized nations,

in all ages of the world, but from sacred history. The day, in which the chosen people of God were delivered from Egyptian bondage, was to be unto them for a memorial. They were to keep it a feast to the Lord, throughout their generations. And when enquiry should be made by their posterity, why they observed this day, they were directed to relate the occasion, or circumstances, from which the institution originated. And if it were proper for the Israelites to keep in perpetual remembrance the day in which they were emancipated from Egyptian bondage, and if it has been proper for other nations to commemorate great national events, which have been signal epochs in their history, surely AMERICANS ought not to be censured for commemorating with devout gratitude, decent festivity and joy, the day which broke in pieces the galling yoke of oppression prepared for them to wear, and gave them a name and place among the independent nations of the earth. "Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation."

THAT our present meeting may be rendered both pleasant and profitable, permit me to state in the first place, in a plain, simple manner, some of the causes or circumstances and principles, which combined to produce our national independence and its concomitant privileges ; and then to mention a few things, which I deem absolutely necessary to their preservation.

IN searching for the causes, or circumstances, which led to that great event we this day celebrate, we shall find that religious persecution was one of the first and most prominent. The memorable reformation effected by the instrumentality of Luther and Calvin, first made its appearance in England in the year 1534, under the

reign of Henry VIII. During its progress under the successive reigns of Mary, Elizabeth, and James I. the reformers, more especially those of them denominated Puritans or Non-Conformists, were subjected to the most rigorous persecution. Thousands suffered martyrdom at the burning stake. Some were banished. Others were doomed to perish in prisons and dungeons. The government of England seemed determined either totally to suppress the reformation, or at least to prevent its being carried to those lengths designed by the Puritans. A number of the latter, finding their religious liberty thus unreasonably and wantonly restrained, meditated a removal to a foreign land, where they might worship God in primitive christian purity, and agreeably to the dictates of their own consciences. Among this number was the celebrated Robinson, who, although he never saw it, may justly be styled the *father* of that important section of our country denominated New-England. He, with a part of his congregation, removed to Amsterdam in Holland, in the year 1608. And the succeeding year to Leyden. There they established a church; and under the mild republican government of the Hollanders, enjoyed religious liberty. There they lived in great peace and harmony about twelve years, until they removed to America. "Their motives for this were to preserve the morals of their youth; to prevent them through want of employment from leaving their parents and engaging in business unfriendly to religion; to avoid the inconveniences of incorporating with the Dutch; to lay a foundation for propagating the gospel in the remote parts of the world; and, by separating from all the existing establishments in Europe to form the model of a pure church, free from the admixture of human additions." These were the genuine

motives, which induced our ancestors to leave the fertile, pleasant fields and splendid cities of Europe, abounding with all the comforts and luxuries of life, and adventure across the boisterous Atlantic to the unpleasant shores of a howling wilderness. Had they been permitted to enjoy the rights of conscience, in their own country, they never would have emigrated to the new world, and here laid the foundation for those immense blessings, which we their descendants this day inherit. This is one of the numerous instances in which evil, under the guiding Providence of God, has been made the occasion of good.

Would time permit, it would be peculiarly interesting and pleasing to rehearse the wonderful scenes and adventures through which our forefathers passed in establishing their settlement in New-England. Nor would it be uninteresting to describe the perils, hardships, and difficulties which the Virginia and other companies had to encounter in settling different portions of our country. But on these things I must not enlarge. Let it suffice to observe, that the God of Providence smiled on their noble and arduous enterprises and crowned them with the most desirable success. He took them under his fostering care. In the midst of all their troubles and dangers, he was their shield and defence. Their population increased with an almost unprecedented rapidity. And their improvement in agriculture, arts and sciences, surpassed their most sanguine expectations. The wilderness was soon transformed into a fruitful field. The late abodes of savage beasts and savage men were covered with elegant towns and villages. Temples were erected in honour to the Triune God. The everlasting gospel was preached in its purity and simplicity, and the blessings of civil and religious liberty were enjoyed.

It is true, however, the Colonies in America, did not consider themselves, at the period of which we are now speaking, a separate and independent nation. They recognised Great Britain as their parent country. They were in the habit of contemplating her in the light of a fond mother. Nor did they wish to be separated from her. These feelings our forefathers brought with them across the Atlantic. Hence one of the first acts of the Plymouth company, after their arrival at America, even before they disembarked, was to form themselves into a body politic under the crown of England, for the purpose of establishing "just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices." This was done by a solemn covenant or contract, which they all subscribed. And for more than a century and a half they and their descendants continued to cherish the principles of warm attachment to England.

THOUGH she had never extended that fostering care over them to which they had a just claim, but had treated them with criminal neglect and indifference, yet, like dutiful children, they remembered her with ardent affection, and were willing to treat her with all, and more than all the respect to which she was entitled. But notwithstanding they were willing to be considered as children, and to treat her as a parent, yet they were children who had arrived to mature age. They were men. They had rights and privileges of their own. Rights unalienable, which they derived from the God of nature. Among these were the "rights of life, of liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Moreover they had come into the wilderness, where, unassisted by their parent, in the midst of innumerable dangers and hardships, they had, by their own industry, frugality and economy,

procured a settlement for themselves, and laid a noble foundation for the accommodation of their descendants. To these rights and privileges, they had a just and righteous claim. And on no principle of equity could they be deprived of them by their parent country.

HAD England reduced to practice the principles of a just policy, had she been wise for herself, she would have extended the hand of parental friendship and care to her American colonies. She would have done every thing in her power to cherish their growth, to promote their prosperity, and secure their permanent affection. Had she thus conducted, we should, in all probability, have remained to this day, her loyal, dutiful, and affectionate colonies. But influenced by that haughty, overbearing, avaricious spirit, which characterizes her as a nation, she pursued a very different course. Finding that her colonies were rapidly progressing in population and wealth, her infatuated ministry projected the unrighteous scheme of raising a permanent revenue by taxes and duties imposed on them without their consent. This unjust and arbitrary measure was proposed by Governour Sherley to Dr. Franklin as early as 1754. But our illustrious patriot resisted it with a noble dignity, firmness, and energy, which did him immortal honour. This humiliating and disgraceful proposition was no sooner generally known in this country, than it was as generally reprobated. It sounded an alarm from Georgia to Maine. It was a measure which the free-born sons of America could not contemplate but with the deepest abhorrence. It discovered the galling chains of slavery, which the British parliament were forging for them to wear. Their bosoms glowed with indignation. The sacred fire of liberty burst into

an unquenchable flame. Such an oppressive measure, they were prepared and determined to resist, even before it obtained the royal signature. But notwithstanding it was known in England that the measure under consideration was extremely unpopular and offensive in this country, and notwithstanding it was decidedly opposed by some of her own ministers, whom we remember with gratitude and affection, yet a majority of them were determined it should be adopted. It accordingly was adopted.

It first appeared in the form of the memorable *Stamp act*. By this it was enacted, "that the instruments of writing, which are in daily use among a commercial people, should be null and void, unless they were executed on stamped paper, or parchment, charged with a duty imposed by the British parliament!"

This infamous act thoroughly opened the eyes of Americans, and awakened them to a just sense of their injured rights. A continental congress was summoned, "who asserted in energetic terms their exemption from all taxes not imposed by their own representatives." In consequence of the spirited opposition, which appeared in all the colonies against the stamp act, it was at length repealed by the British parliament. But it was not repealed on American principles; for in the declaratory act preceding its repeal it was determined, "that the parliament had and of right ought to have power to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever." From this declaration, it was evident, that notwithstanding they had repealed the stamp act, they still retained the same arbitrary principle. This became further evident by the imposition of duties, which were laid on certain ar-

articles of commerce, which should be imported into this country, such as *glass, paper, painter's colours, and tea.*

IT is true, in consequence of the united and unremitting opposition of the colonies against these measures, all the duties above mentioned were taken off, except three pence per pound on tea. But as this was really a continuation of the same arbitrary principle, the free-born sons of America were determined not to submit to it, however trifling in itself. The continuation of this principle, in the form above mentioned, prepared the way for the destruction of three hundred forty two chests of tea in Boston harbour. This was an event, which will never be forgotten, so long as the American revolution retains a place in the memory of man. This event was succeeded by the Boston port bill, and other arbitrary acts of the British parliament, which, in connection with a long series of preceding events, some of which we have noticed, prepared the way for open hostilities, which actually commenced on the *ever memorable 19th of April, 1775.*

ON that day the heavens were covered with blackness, and the tremendous storm of war, which had been so long collecting, began to discharge its awful contents on the unfolding but oppressed British colonies in America. It will never be forgotten that they were not the aggressors. They did not commence this dreadful work of human carnage. Amidst all their insults and provocations, they patiently forbore to resist their haughty oppressor by force of arms, until he had stained the soil to which they had an independent claim, with the blood of its own inhabitants. But an invincible love of liberty, a consciousness of the rectitude of their cause, and the principles of self defence, then call-

ding

ed into action a spirit of manly resistance. They found it absolutely necessary to appeal to arms, and repel force by force. In remarking on this commencement of actual hostilities, Dr. Ramfay observes; "as arms were to decide the controversy, it was fortunate for the Americans that the first blood was drawn in New-England. The inhabitants of that country are so connected with each other, by descent, manners, religion, politics, and a general equality, that the killing of an individual interested the whole and made them consider it as a common cause. The blood of those who were killed at Lexington and Concord proved the firm cement of an extensive union."

HAVING thus stated the commencement of hostilities, would time permit, I would now invite you to follow me to Bunker's awful mount, and there learn the heroic, noble spirit of our fathers to which, under God, we are indebted for the freedom and independence of our country. From that moment British troops no longer doubted the existence of American fortitude. Did time permit, I would invite you to gather round the tomb of Warren and the seventy six American patriots, who fell with him in battle, on that mournful day, and drop the tear of grateful remembrance over their mouldering dust. I would next invite you to contemplate the smoking ruins of Charlestown and Falmouth, and then to follow me from scene to scene, until we had refreshed our memories with the most important events attending the revolution we this day celebrate. But I must forbear; I have already been too particular.

You will permit me, however, to observe that at the meeting of the second continental congress, which was holden at Philadelphia on the 10th of May 1775, a regular army was raised, at the head of which was placed the

illustrious WASHINGTON, a man preeminently qualified for that important station. But, during all this time the declaration of independence had not been formally made. Notwithstanding all the insults and abuses which had been offered by the British government, and notwithstanding all the innocent blood which had been shed by their troops, the Americans were still willing to accommodate with their parent country on any terms, which would secure to them their just and equal rights. Hence congress not only published to the world a declaration shewing the reason of their taking up arms, but preferred a second humble petition to the King. This was presented in September 1775, by Mr. Penn and Mr. Lee, who were informed by Lord Dartmouth "That no answer would be given to it." The contempt with which this petition was treated by the British government prevented any further application for redress and accommodation, and was greatly instrumental of promoting a spirit of union and perseverance among the colonies. This was followed by that noble declaration of independence, which separated America forever from the British empire. This was made July 4th, 1776. On that day our nation was born. On that great and illustrious day the empire of freedom was erected on the ruins of despotism.

"THIS great event took place 284 years after the discovery of America by Columbus—166 from the first settlement in Virginia—And 156 from the first settlement of Plymouth in Massachusetts, which were the earliest English settlements in America." This, my fellow citizens, is the important event we now commemorate. On this joyful anniversary let us remember the illustrious heroes who fell in the defence of our country. Let us remember the immortal WASH-

INOTON, who headed our patriotic armies and through fields of blood and slaughter, through perils, hardships, and difficulties innumerable, led them to victory and glory.

I have now stated some of the leading circumstances and principles, which combined to produce the independence of our country. In the view of which, it is obvious to remark, that if there be such a thing as a just defensive war, *that*, in which our fathers engaged in opposing Great Britain, was of this description. In this awful controversy, they were influenced neither by the principles of anarchy, despotism, ambition, nor avarice. They did not put on the panoply of war, merely for the sake of contention. They did not thirst for human blood. They did not wish to sport either with their own lives or the lives of their fellow men. They did not wish to extend their own territory, nor to abridge their enemy of a single right, to which he had a proper claim. But they fought to maintain their own unalienable rights, *of* on which no power on earth was authorized to deprive them. The God of Providence owned their cause, and enabled them to compel their enemies to abandon our shores, which they had drenched with human blood, and return in shame and disgrace to their own country. Though they had greatly impoverished, injured and distressed our country, yet they were constrained to leave us in the full possession, of our natural, civil and religious privileges. And these, by the blessings of Almighty God, we continue to enjoy to this day.

In point of privilege, we stand unrivaled among the nations of the earth. Placed between the extremes of heat and cold, our climate is temperate, our air sa-

lubrious, and our soil fertile and luxuriant, producing not only all the necessaries, but very many of the varieties and luxuries of life. Nor are our civil privileges inferior to our natural advantages. Our federal constitution, the legitimate noble offspring of the mature deliberation and wisdom of our nation pointing out the means of its own amendment, without endangering its existence or subjecting us to the perils of a revolution, enduing the great body of the people with the power of electing their own rulers, admirably guards, on the one hand, against anarchy and confusion, and on the other, against tyranny and oppression. Such is the form of our government that the means of political happiness are in our own hands. But we are not more highly distinguished with natural and civil, than with religious privileges. Our government protects the rights of conscience, and equally secures them to all denominations and descriptions of citizens. These privileges, my friends, constitute the fair inheritance purchased by our fathers' blood. These we are bound to receive with devout gratitude, and defend with the same patriotic, noble, independant spirit, with which they were purchased and transmitted to us.

IN this connection permit me to mention a few things, which I deem absolutely necessary to the preservation of our national rights and privileges.

ONE of these is a sacred, impartial regard to the rights of suffrage. Our state and national constitution definitely describe the manner in which our rulers are to be elected, and the qualifications requisite to constitute an elector. To chuse our own rulers, on the principles provided by our constitutions, is to exercise as

great a degree of liberty, in this respect, as can reasonably be desired. But this, though a privilege of primary importance, like all other privileges may be abused. And whenever those are permitted to exercise the right of electors, who are not recognized as such by the constitution, or whenever those, who, on constitutional principles, are entitled to this privilege, are restrained from exercising it, not only the constitution is violated, but the very principles of our national liberty are perverted and the principles of real aristocracy and despotism patronized and reduced to practice. It is as utterly inconsistent with our civil privileges to admit those to exercise the right of electors to whom the constitution does not give this right, as it is to withhold the privilege from those to whom it is constitutionally secured. Each is not only an express violation of constitutional authority, but a virtual violation and perversion of the vital principles of that liberty and independence whose illustrious birth-day we celebrate. Let us never be so inconsistent with ourselves as to celebrate this day again, if, directly or indirectly, we consent to the violation of its principles in either of the ways above mentioned, or in any other way whatever.

BUT though it be of primary importance, that the impartial rights of suffrage should be enjoyed, yet this is not the only thing necessary to the preservation of our national privileges. It is equally necessary that this right be deliberately and judiciously exercised. Every man, who is qualified to discharge the duties of a citizen, is not qualified to discharge the duties of a ruler. There are certain qualifications of which men, unquestionably, ought to be possessed, in order to make good rulers. That they ought to be men of talents, men of information, men who, if not furnished with

the powers of eloquence, are nevertheless capable of investigating the nature and merits of any subject which may come before them, I think will not be denied. And may I not, without exposing myself to the just censure of any one, and without advocating a principle injurious to my country, add, that men, in order to be good rulers, must be men of coolness, deliberation, candour and impartiality ; men who, in all cases, will be more ready to inquire whether the measures proposed for adoption will subserve the best interest of their country, than whether they will please and promote the interest of any party whatever. May I not suggest one thought more ? Is it not necessary that men in order to be *good rulers*, should be *good men* ? Ought they not to be men of *fair reputation*, whose *examples* at home and abroad, are in favor of *morality* and the *institutions* of our *holy religion* ? A voice from heaven has said "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." In the hands of such men, let them be known by what political name they may, I am willing, under God, to intrust the government of my country. I do not believe that such men will ever subvert our liberties, and break down the independence of our nation. Let such men then, and such only receive our suffrages for political office, if we would wish to perpetuate our national privileges.

ANOTHER thing necessary to the preservation of our national privileges is the cultivation of the principles of union. Some means have a natural tendency to destroy and some to perpetuate the rights and privileges of a people. Among the former, *disunion* is one of the most powerful. No sooner does this fatal poison pervade the various parts of the political body than the alarming symptoms of total dismemberment and

dissolution appear ; and the danger of the latter is always proportionate to the prevalence of the former. Hence the friends of anarchy and disorder, who have sought the destruction of the peace, liberty and happiness of their country, have, in every age of the world, made it their first object to sow the seeds of discord ; to excite a spirit of jealousy among the people against their rulers, and to raise the tide of complaint, party and faction so high as to drown the voice of reason, moderation, order, truth and justice. In every republic are to be found more or less, whose raging ambition and thirst for promotion have been disappointed. Disappointment creates uneasiness, and blows into a flame all the envious, revengeful passions of the heart. And no sooner do men suffer themselves to be guided by such passions, than they will sacrifice the public zeal on the altar of their own elevation. Having lost all hopes of gratifying their ambition by lawful means, they make use of the arts of intrigue, slander and disorganization as auxiliaries in their service, and by these means too often accomplish their selfish, unworthy purposes. *weal*

But though every appearance of internal disunion ought to be deprecated as hostile to the peace, rights and liberties of our country, yet it by no means follows that we ought not to watch our public rulers with a critical eye. The doctrine of passive obedience and non resistance may comport with papal tyranny and regal domination, but not with republican principles. To believe that our political rulers can do no wrong, would be to renounce every claim to liberty, and consent to wear the disgraceful chains of slavery. Such is human nature, that he would be a phenomenon, who could possess and not abuse unrestrained power. But

though it be necessary sedulously to watch the conduct of those whom we have made the guardians of our precious rights and privileges, yet it is of infinite importance to guard against intestine animosity, unreasonable jealousy and complaint, and to yield due subordination to all constitutional measures. Instead of patronizing we ought indignantly to frown upon all vehicles of falsehood, slander and disorganization. To break that golden chain, which connects the United States together, or to separate the people from the government would be to break down the strongest bulwarks, which secure our national privileges and expose us not only to all the horrors of anarchy and confusion, but render us an easy prey to a foreign enemy or subject us to the merciless power of some ambitious demagogue at home. The history of nations has long since exemplified the truth, that "A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand."

HENCE, since the ultimate tendency of disunion is the destruction of the rights and privileges of a people, its opposite, *union*, is one of the grand means on which their preservation depends. This is the palladium of our political peace, safety and prosperity. Or to use the words of the illustrious father of our nation, "It is a main pillar in the edifice of our real independence, the support of our tranquility at home, our peace abroad ; of our safety and our property, and of that very liberty which we so highly prize."

THE strength of a nation depends more on its unanimity than on its numbers. Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans, while indissolubly united in the same cause, were more terrible and destructive to the Persian

army, than an equal number of millions would have been, among whom mutiny, party spirit and insurrection prevailed. But to see the glorious effects of national union we need only recur to the American revolution, the rise and progress of which we have briefly traced. To that, our independence, under an overruling Providence, must in a great measure be attributed. And as union was one of the most important means of obtaining our national independence, so it is a mean indispensably necessary to its preservation. This motto should be engraved on the breast of every American.—“United we may stand ; divided we shall, we must eventually fall.”

I MUST beg your patience and attention a few moments longer while I observe, that not less essential to the preservation of our national rights and privileges, than the means already prescribed, is the prevalence of morality and virtue. The truth of this will appear by considering the nature and tendency of vice. Were mankind universally governed by the noble principles of moral virtue, civil government would be an unnecessary institution. As there would be no criminals to arrest, try, condemn and execute, human legislators, sheriffs, judges, prisons, gibbets and guillotines would be useless things. But the loss of primitive rectitude, the derangement of the social affections and the depravity of the heart have rendered the establishment of civil government necessary. Without it the social compact cannot be maintained. The great design of government is to restrain and prevent the open operation of those selfish passions which disturb and injure the virtuous, peaceable part of society. But it is the nature of vice to counteract this useful design ; to destroy the blessings

of a free government, and subject a people to all the miseries and meanness of slavery.

“Vice has the same effect upon the body politic, that sickness has upon the natural body. The natural body is composed of innumerable cords and ligaments which unite the parts and strengthen the members to perform their office. But sickness serves to relax these cords and bring on a total extinction of life and motion. So the body politic is composed of innumerable moral ties and connections, which like muscles, veins and nerves give strength and freedom to all its members. The ties of religion, the ties of virtue, the ties of friendship, the ties of commerce, the ties of office, the ties of customs and habits, so long as they retain their proper force, do more to promote the union and happiness of a people, than all their civil laws and institutions. But it is the nature of vice to affect such fine and tender cords of society, and by destroying these to throw the whole body politic into great and fatal convulsions. Intemperance, prodigality, luxury and debauchery not only violate the laws of virtue and religion and disturb the peace and harmony of families, but at the same time set the nearest and firmest friends at variance, dissolve the connections of trade, and fill the minds of rulers with more concern to supplant their rivals, than to promote the common interest and freedom of their constituents. Vice by destroying these moral and social ties effectually saps the foundation of freedom, and completely prepares a people for the shackles of slavery. For nothing but the rod of arbitrary power is sufficient to restrain and govern a people, who have lost their virtue, and sunk into vice and corruption. Such a people are neither fit to enjoy, nor able to assert and

maintain their liberties. They must be slaves.”

THE truth of these remarks is evinced by the history of both ancient and modern nations. As long as the ancient States of Greece maintained their morality and virtue, they enjoyed their Liberty and Independence, and bid defiance to all the despots of the earth. But no sooner did indolence, prodigality, luxury and licentiousness diffuse their baneful influence through the various ranks of society than they became an easy prey to their enemies, and their boasted liberty and independence fell prostrate before the foot of usurpation. The Romans were once a virtuous, wealthy and free people. For a considerable time they were masters of the world and stood unrivalled in arms and arts ; but as soon as vice obtained a general spread among them, it diminished their numbers, exhausted their wealth, and subverted their freedom. Their dissipation and their private and public prodigality and profusion reduced them to such poverty, meanness, and venality, that the whole empire was at length sold at public auction to a private citizen. Thus they who conquered the world finally conquered and enslaved themselves by their own vices.

NOR have the fatal effects of vice been confined to the destruction of civil liberty ; but it has invaded the independent empire of conscience. It has deprived the christian church of the invaluable rights and privileges, which she derived from her benevolent founder, and subjected many of her harmless friends to the most excruciating torture and death. And that vice and slavery are in the issue inseparably connected is evident not only from the history of ancient nations, but from the deplorable situation of millions at the present day. Did we need any

further evidence in support of this truth, we might appeal to the declaration of him who sways the sceptre of universal empire. He has told us that it is an invariable rule in his conduct to pluck up and destroy those nations, who renounce the practice of virtue and become incorrigibly vicious. He deals with nations according to their moral character.

It being the nature of vice thus to destroy the blessings of freedom and involve a people in all the meanness and misery of slavery, the conclusion is, the practice of morality and virtue is one mean absolutely necessary to the preservation of our national rights and privileges: This will exalt us as a nation and perpetuate not only the civil, but the natural and religious advantages with which we are so eminently distinguished. But if we renounce our industry, economy, temperance and public faith, and reduce to practice their opposite vices, we may expect to be involved in all the disgrace and misery, which have attended such conduct in other nations. Experience has long since taught, that it is not less difficult to preserve than obtain the rights and privileges of a free people. Indeed but a few republics have discovered the important secret of preserving their freedom and independence for more than a short period.

THE celebrated Dr. PRICE, speaking of the United States, says, "It is scarcely possible that they should think too highly of their consequence. Perhaps there never existed a people on whose wisdom and virtue more depended; or to whom a station of more importance in the plan of Providence has been assigned. They have begun nobly. They have fought with success for themselves and for the world; and in the

midst of invasion and carnage, established forms of government favorable in the highest degree to the rights of mankind. But they have much more to do ; more indeed than it is possible properly to represent."

IN the view of the preceding observations, must we not all be impressed with the idea, that disunion, party spirit and vice constitute the destroying angel of Republics ? When *these* prevail, they *palsy* the arm of government, and undermine the *very foundations* of liberty. Therefore, my friends and fellow citizens, let us, in our several stations, relations and employments in life, strictly adhere to our state and national constitutions, and do every thing in our power to support and advance the glorious cause of union, morality, virtue and religion. Should these pervade the various parts of our country, they would render it invulnerable by its enemies, and form an impregnable fortress, in which our national rights and privileges might remain secure to the latest posterity.

AND now, Brethren and Friends, my prayer to Almighty God is, that no unpropitious event may take place to mar the pleasures of this day. May we remember that an All-seeing Eye is fixed upon us. And may we so conduct from this moment forward, that when the last loud trumpet blown by a strong lunged Cherub shall wake the sleeping dead and call the universe to judgment, we may enter that world, where all party distinctions will be lost in that flame of holy love, which will burn in the hearts of seraphs and their associates through the endless rounds of future duration.