

RELIGION

THE FOUNDATION OF NATIONAL
PROSPERITY:

A

SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
CHARLTON, ON THE 4TH OF JULY, 1810.



BY JOSEPH SWEETMAN.



I ALSO WILL SHEW MINE OPINION.....ELIHU.



SALEM:

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PREFACE.

THE author presents his opinion to the public, on the subject treated in the following pages, unsolicited. He hopes the intrusion will not be deemed an unpardonable offence — He offers no apology for what he has done ; but an assurance of his high regard for the cause he has advocated. If those to whom he now submits what he had no expectation of seeing in print, at the time it was composed, shall pronounce it deficient, he will abide the decision, and believe that his designs have not been censurable, and the truths which he has not been successful in stating with propriety and force, are notwithstanding important and worthy of public regard.

The particular motives which have induced this publication, arise from circumstantial considerations, which could be interesting to but few if explained. The author does not wish however to conceal his dissatisfaction with the manner in which the Anniversary of our Independence is generally celebrated. It is certainly becoming a day of extreme dissipation, and peculiarly detrimental to the morals of the rising generation. He views this effect with emotions of sorrow, and believes it to be an indispensable duty to guard against it. He does not desire that the observance of the day, while it may be subservient to useful purposes, should be discontinued ; but thinks that no real friend to his country can wish to see it celebrated in such a manner as would operate unfavorably upon the morals of his fellow citizens.

Perhaps the evil might be checked in some degree, if ministers of the gospel would preach on that day—use their influence against all excess, and inculcate the great duties of religion and morality. He cannot but express an earnest wish that the trial might be made, and is not without hope, that through the divine blessing it would not be unsuccessful.

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A SERMON, &c.

THE occasion on which we have assembled should remind us of the obligations we are under to God. To him we are indebted for all our national prosperities, and to him the tribute of our thanksgiving ought always to be paid.

A review of the circumstances under which this country was first settled, and the interpositions of providence by which its interests have been promoted, cannot fail to shew us that no other people have more cause for grateful acknowledgment to the over-ruler of all things than ourselves.

It is now nearly two centuries since a few families emigrated from Europe, and began a small settlement on our eastern borders.—Their condition was hazardous and extremely trying—surrounded by a vast, unknown wilderness—exposed to the dangers of famine and massacres of savage tribes: but God was their confidence and their friend; he preserved them in dangers, and supported them in trials, supplied them with the necessaries of life, and made bare his arm for their salvation. In the lapse of a short period under his good providence, their circumstances became less forbidding; their numbers increased, and their prospects brightened. Settlements which had been before attempted, and in several instances failed of success, were revived; those that remained were extended and new ones formed. The spirit of enterprise was directed to America, and the aspect of things seemed to indicate that these infant settlements might in future years become a great nation.

In the succeeding progress of our country we behold the footsteps of goodness and mercy, and the way preparing under the fostering care and protecting hand of God, for the independence which we this day celebrate.—Twice has a formal war been waged against us by the powerful nations of France and Britain—thousands of merciless Indians have been armed for hostilities, and encouraged by the cruelty of European policy to assist in subduing or destroying us. But hitherto the Lord hath helped us, and defeated the designs of our enemies. At present, though injured and insulted abroad, we live in peace at home, and enjoy the best blessings—we sit under our own vine and eat our own bread without molestation.

If we were sensible of our privileges, and perceived the obligations we are under to the governor of the world for all we enjoy, we would feel ourselves constrained to offer to him, in high devotion, the tribute of gratitude. “Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name: Bless the Lord O my soul and forget not all his benefits.”

We cannot but regret, that this day, which has been set apart to commemorate our deliverance from the government and impositions of a foreign power, should be converted into a day of dissipation, riot and impiety.—When we see whole crowds drunk—when we hear them belching forth their infernal dialect—when we see them glorying in their brutality, and perhaps at the same time huzzaing for liberty, we are compelled to ask, are these the friends of liberty, or the licensed slaves of a despot? Are these the honorable and privileged citizens of America, or are they

the dregs, of an infamous mob, or a rude gathering of western Indians in grand pow-wow ?

Such excess is a disgrace to the day which we pretend to consecrate to the memory of our national independence. Our independence would soon cease to be worth the sacrifice of a single day—it would soon terminate in the most odious dependance, if there were none to support it but drunkards, swearers and boasting demagogues.

It is also unhappy, that the FOURTH OF JULY, a day which ought to recall us to the common ground, occupied when our independence was achieved, should be seized upon for the purpose of cherishing the principles of dissention and adding fuel to the fire of party animosities. This day should be sacred to liberty and the cause of truth and virtue. Let that speaker never be applauded, nor that management approved, which would sow the seeds of discord, and sharpen the arrows and strengthen the bonds of party malevolence.—On this day, every citizen in our country, who acts worthy of the blessings he enjoys, must be willing to contribute his efforts to bury in oblivion minor distinctions, and revive the unions which governed our councils and pervaded our armies when WASHINGTON commanded, and the common determination of thousands, firm in their attachments and honest in their intentions, was, never to relinquish the cause for which the sword had been drawn.

We hope, not to be justly chargeable with advancing any thing, to encourage dissipation or foster party rancor. Disclaiming all sinister views, and political circumventions, we shall endeavor to direct

your attention to objects, which we deem not incompatible with the end, for which this day, if distinguished at all, ought to be commemorated.

It is believed that none will judge it unsuitable to the present occasion to consider in what manner our independence can be preserved, and our national blessings perpetuated.

We have chosen, as the basis of what we are about to deliver, a noted Aphorism of Solomon.

“ Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”—PROVERBS XIV. 34.

Righteousness, is not in this proverb, restricted to acts of justice simply, but is used in a more extensive sense and includes both moral and religious duties. This latitude of signification, is similar to the extent in which the apostle uses the word when he says, “*awake to righteousness, and sin not.*” This construction, may be supported by comparing the two parts of the text with each other, as sin is disobedience to God, so righteousness is obedience to his law, and in this extent embraces the whole compass of our duty. The law of God is the perfect standard of actions, and conformity to it is righteousness.

That people who support the character of righteousness, must render fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due, charity to whom charity is due, obedience to whom obedience is due, to Cesar the things that are Cesar's—to God the things that are God's—in a word, they must “do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.” This will dignify their character and elevate them in national greatness—It

will secure the happiness of individuals, and advance the public interest.

The opposite is expressed in the other part of this proverb "Sin is a reproach to any people." Sin, here, means every thing which is contrary to what God requires, and consequently includes both immorality and irreligion: If these prevail in a nation, they will be a reproach to that nation—there, the foundations of order will be destroyed, and misery and ruin follow.

The aphorism before us is founded upon facts, and many facts might be adduced, to confirm, and illustrate its truth.

We might open to you the page of history, and bid you read the record of nations and governments which have successively risen up and passed away—we might call your attention to the existing state of the world and from the whole deduce the strongest proof that Solomon uttered a truth which ought never to be questioned when he said that "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."

The history of the nation of Israel, in particular, deserves our attention, and may be considered as a specimen of the fate of all other nations.

Moses, their great lawgiver, under the sanction of divine authority, addressed them in the language of truth, "know therefore this day (said he) and consider in thine heart, that the Lord he is God, in heaven above and upon the earth beneath. There is none else. Thou shalt keep his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and thy children after thee, and

that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth which the Lord thy God giveth thee forever." *Deut.* iv. 39, 40. "It shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other Gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish, as the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face; so shall ye perish, because ye would not be obedient, unto the voice of the Lord your God." *Deut.* viii. 19, 20.

He assured them, the richest blessings should be the reward of their obedience, and the heaviest punishments the consequence of their transgressions (see *Deut.* 28) The succeeding history of this people, is a confirmation that their lawgiver did not promise them prosperity, which they never enjoyed, nor forewarn them of adversity, which they never felt. In reviewing the changes through which they passed, we sometimes see them obedient and happy: but oftener disobedient and miserable; and always find an intimate connection between their character and condition.

Their wickedness, though sometimes checked by promising reformatations, increased with the years of their residence in the land of promise. At length they separated into two distinct governments, and their national glory departed. Each division strengthened in vice and impiety. The ten tribes commonly exceeded in wickedness, and were first ripe for destruction. Judah and Jerusalem followed at no great distance the same fatal course.—

In the days of Isaiah, this was their character—
 "Ah! sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity,
 a seed of evil doers; children that are corrupters, they

have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy one of Israel to anger, they are gone away backward." And this was their doom, "Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire, your land strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers." At length the measure of their iniquity too was filled up, and they have long since been scattered amongst the nations, and their country overrun by their enemies and oppressors.

This is not a solitary instance in the history of the world. All the kingdoms and republics which have hitherto existed, confirm the truth that morality and religion dignify and elevate a nation, but vice and wickedness degrade and destroy any people.

If we trace the history of Asia and Europe we shall find some governments rising in murder, rapine and conquest, and again falling into ruin by the same instruments of destruction. We shall find others originating on juster principles, extending their territories, increasing their strength and accumulating wealth; but all this was insufficient to secure their permanency. Vice spread and matured with their growth, and at length effected their ruin.

Even in our own times, Europe affords an awful proof, that "Sin is a reproach to any people." Here we see the punishment of national sin, and aggravated guilt—the horrors of warfare and the miseries of unrighteous claims, enforced by the authority of military power—thousands fall in their unholy strifes—desolation, distress, cruelty and brutality mark the progress of their contending armies—gov-

ernments long established, are torn from their foundations by the rudest hands, and thousands, immoral and impious, buried in their ruins—revolution succeeds revolution, and each government which last exists, by gigantic strides in vice, is hastening to dissolution and ripening apace for the vengeance of Almighty God.

Can we believe that our own government is exempted from the laws by which all the movements of human affairs are controlled? Shall vice and irreligion cease to produce here their necessary effects, and our government outbrave the storms which in every other case have overturned the foundations of order, and prostrated the barriers of civil liberty? Shall we insult the majesty of God and not incur his displeasure? Shall we sow the seeds of dissolution, and yet cement our union? Shall we hew down the pillars upon which our independence rests and not endanger its fall? Or will the name which our government has assumed, repel every assailant and ensure its duration?

Much is expected from the name, by those who are governed by sounds and determined in their opinion by their own wishes:—But the charm of names has been tried in all the wide range, from the proud monarchies of the east down to the licentious combinations of modern jacobins, and has never yet saved a sinful nation from reproach and ruin.

On what grounds do those proceed, who predict the perpetuity of our civil institutions, without acknowledging the necessity of that which is essential to the support of a good government? The same virtue and nobleness of mind which establish a good govern-

ment, are necessary to preserve it. This is a truth which we ought to understand, and of which we cannot be too often reminded.

If there be not a preponderance of virtue in the rulers of a nation, their measures will not be directed to the public good. If the mass of the people become corrupt and immoral, sooner or later their privileges will be destroyed, if in no other way, by their own hands, and they must sink into the abjectness of slavery.

In a government like ours, if the people are virtuous, there is a remedy for the mischiefs of wicked rulers; they can be punished for their crimes or removed from their office, and better men fixed in their place; but if the people be as corrupt as their rulers, how shall the evil be remedied, and where shall we look for better men to govern; who will correct abuses and punish aggressions?—When a sense of moral obligation is destroyed in the public mind, and wickedness prevails in the higher and lower ranks of society, an awful crisis is approaching, and the result must be anarchy or despotism. Anarchy cannot long exist, it would soon produce universal devastation. And is there any other way to govern those who are always disposed to do wrong and never to do right, who are incapable of any thing noble, and brutalized by vice, but by absolute compulsion? It is humbling indeed that man, who might be virtuous, and free, and honorable, and happy, should reduce himself, to such an abject and wretched state: We all abhor it—think we do not deserve it, and say we wish to prevent it. What then will save us as a people

from this gulph of destruction? What will preserve our free and independent form of government? Is it not a blessing worth preserving? It is a blessing, which has been procured by numerous privations—by great exertions, and the sacrifice of many valuable lives—a blessing, for which heaven was earnestly intreated, and which was received as a signal favor from God. It is a question in which we ought to feel a deep interest—How can it be preserved? Not by the licentiousness of the press, nor the airy speculations of political enthusiasts—not by the dissemination of slander, nor the reciprocal anathemas, of intolerant partizans—not by quarrelling with our rulers, nor fighting amongst ourselves—not by idolizing that party nor execrating this—not by leaving the duties of our station and engaging in the war of ambitious chieftains—not by hostility with that foreign nation, nor alliance with this—not by empty professions of patriotism, these often flow most profusely from the mouths of enemies and traitors—not alone by the increase of our property, the multiplication of our numbers, the extent of our commerce, the power of our shipping, the strength of our fortifications, or the quantity of our military stores. The history of past ages—the monuments of national degradation planted in the world, show us that notwithstanding these auxiliaries we may effect our own destruction, or submit to the tyrannical exactions of a foreign master.

Not will the spread of knowledge alone secure our national safety and prosperity; every man of discernment must perceive, that an ignorant and vicious people cannot support a good government. The spread

of knowledge therefore, in a political view, amongst all ranks of people, in a mild and republican form of government, is greatly desirable and should be encouraged. But in the mean time let us not attribute too much to human science. If you increase the knowledge of men and leave them without a sense of duty and belief in their accountability to a tribunal, where truth is disclosed and justice reigns, you but accomplish them for progression in wickedness, and render them two fold more the children of the devil and the pests of their fellow-men.

We discard all the vain expedients of dishonesty and duplicity—all the measures of depraved or mistaken policy, and hesitate not to adopt the sentiment of Solomon “Righteousness exalteth a nation,” for our answer to the question “How shall our free and independent form of government be preserved?” Nothing but righteousness will exalt our nation and perpetuate our rights and privileges.

It cannot be doubted, but every honest and enlightened politician will admit that morality amongst the members of our union, is necessary to the peace and prosperity of our country, and permit us to add what is easily proved to be true, that morality cannot be supported without religion. The connection in this case is too intimate, to admit of separation without mutual destruction. Every man ought to know that that religion is false and should be regarded as such which does not produce good moral conduct. And on the other hand morality without religion is equally false. It is not sufficiently pure, does not proceed from an authority sufficiently high, and is not enfor-

ced by motives sufficiently commanding to effect the great end of national safety and prosperity.

The passions and mistakes of men will be transfused into the systems of moral instruction, which originate with themselves, and often in so large a measure as to render them poisonous to the public mind.

Besides, that which one man advances without any thing to support it, but human reason or human authority, another will feel himself at full liberty to dispute, and that which a man feels himself at full liberty to admit or reject, will never sanctify his heart nor govern his actions.

Moreover no man without the authority of religion, can assure us of a judgment to come—a state of endless happiness for the righteous and eternal punishment for the wicked; and if one who attempts to inculcate morality, is not able on the ground which he assumes, to establish the doctrine of future retribution, he ought not to expect much success; his weapons are powerless and his persuasives unavailing. Infinitely the greatest and most urgent reasons why we should abandon sin and perform our duty do not belong to his system, nor sanction his instruction. The truth is such morality is seldom useful, sometimes productive of evil, and generally ends in vain talk and empty speculation. Nor will a false religion, nor even the true religion, perverted by the policies of the world, or degraded by the eccentricities of visionaries support the cause of morality, especially at the present period, when a thousand sharpers are ready to seize every occasion against religion and fight for licentiousness.

Nothing but the religion which God has taught us in the scriptures, received in its purity, and accompanied by its power, will support and enforce that morality which is essential to the preservation of our government and the prosperity of our country.

The morality of the scriptures is pure, and if practised, would eradicate the evils which embitter the lives of individuals and destroy nations—It would correct abuses, redress grievances, and lead each one to cherish a benevolent heart, and maintain an upright and pious life.

We open the bible and learn from the instructions which it gives, true respect for ourselves. “Cease to do evil and learn to do well”—“Deny ungodliness and worldly lusts”—“Provide things honest in the sight of all men”—“Seek for that good part which shall never be taken from you”—“Seek for a crown of glory.”—In a word do nothing mean, nothing you are ashamed to avow.—Live above the world and do good—God will honor you, and you shall be happy forever. Here we learn to regard and treat our fellow men as we ought. “Be ye kindly affectioned one towards another”—“Avenge not yourselves”—“Forgive your enemies”—“Love your neighbor”—“As ye would that other men should do to you, do ye even so to them”—“Feed the hungry, clothe the naked”—“Visit the widow and the fatherless in their afflictions.” What heavenly---what godlike morality is this! “Husbands love your wives; Wives obey your husbands”—“Fathers provoke not your children to wrath”—“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right”—“Magistrates, bare not the

sword in vain. Be a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well"---"And you, O man, pray for your rulers, and submit to every ordinance of man, from respect to God, who hath ordained that you should be governed." But why should we detain you with selecting any more from the scriptures on this branch of our duty ; there is not a personal, relative, or social duty which they do not enjoin---"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue---if there be any praise think on these things."

Here too we learn, the respect which we owe to God, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart"---"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Such is the morality of the bible, and it is enforced by the most powerful motives.

1. It is plainly stated and all necessary assistance in performing it, is freely offered.

2. The authority which enjoins it, is paramount to all other authority.

3. God is constantly present with us, who will be our final judge and reward us with everlasting life if we are faithful, and punish us with eternal death if we are disobedient. Greater encouragements and higher sanctions cannot accompany moral and religious instruction.

What opinion can you form of the heart or un-

derstanding of a man who pronounces this religion useless in a political view and perhaps sets himself to oppose its influence ? Either his designs are bad, or his knowledge is extremely limited. Such a man must be an unfuitable person to guide your opinions, and direct your public measures.

It is readily admitted, that immoral and irreligious men have sometimes been instruments of good. God can defeat "the counsels of the wicked and make the wrath of man to praise him." But is it not a truth that the pernicious effects of their sentiments and examples, have almost universally far overbalanced their usefulness ? They have built up in one instance, but pulled down in ten. They have raised an ornament or repaired a wall in the temple of human happiness ; but in the mean time, they have sapped the foundation, and weakened the pillars upon which the whole fabric rests. I am aware, that what I say may not be acceptable to all to whom I speak, and yet I am not willing to indulge the thought that any one should be offended where there is no just cause, and certainly no offence is intended. But for any displeasure which may be felt, I cannot admit that I am answerable.

I am happy in being able to support what I advance, by the authority of Washington, the glory of our country. The memory of this great and good man should be dear to our hearts, and his opinion, on points which relate to the welfare of our union, held in high respect. We select one passage from his valedictory address to the people of the United States.

"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to

political prosperity (says he) religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness---These firmest props of men and citizens; the mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with public and private felicity. Let it be simply asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in the courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structures, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

Such was the opinion of Washington. We might select more to the same point from his public addresses, and add the names of all great and good men in confirmation of the same sentiment, but this would be needless—the quotation we have made is full upon the point in question, and contains irresistible truth. Washington was a soldier, a statesman and a christian. He was not ashamed to own his belief and support in his conduct his profession. His piety was the piety of a sound mind and sincere heart, and led him to those deeds which will transmit his fair fame to the end of time.--- Shall we ever be wise by his counsel and virtuous by his example?

Behold a noisy, bustling politician affecting to de-

spise the truths which Washington revered, and live above the duties in which *he* gloried. How contemptible does this quack in politics appear, when contrasted with the father of our republic, and measured by the standard of his patriotism?--- You may revile a friend of religion in common life ; but on the anniversary of our independence you dare not curse the man who was foremost in atchieving it. Occupying the ground, in vindicating the cause of religion which was held by Washington, we need no apology and fear no assault. Covered with the shield of truth, we proceed with our subject, and hope to be heard with candor.

When we consider the important place which morality and religion hold in the welfare of a nation, we see who ought to be deemed the friends of our country, and the supporters of our civil institutions. That man is the best patriot who is most faithful in the duties of his employment—who is most just in his dealings---most benevolent in his conduct---most obedient to the laws of his country, and most sincere in his devotions.

Truth constrains us to beware of the pretended patriotism of immoral and irreligious men ; who can entertain a high opinion of the professions of a man who is idle and vicious—who sows the seeds of sedition and spreads the tales of slander—who betrays the innocent and imposes upon the unwary. Behold a wretch infamous with every vice, and yet none more clamorous in the jargon of politics than he ; he is a drunkard and a liar, but he has chosen his party and assumed his political name. When his suffrage is needed his patriotism must not be questioned--- what wretch-

ed policy! He takes the name of God in vain, though the laws of his country pronounce it a crime, and God will not hold him guiltless. He equivocates and deceives under the solemnity of an oath, and thus contributes his influence to destroy the administration of justice, which must turn upon the validity of testimony—He cheats his neighbor and glories in his infernal cunning, though the laws of the government which protects him forbid his knavery, and the authority of heaven requires him “to provide things honest in the sight of all men.”

But I would not attempt to draw at full length this offensive picture. He is one who endeavors to break down order in church and state, and spread the desolations and miseries of licentiousness.---Such a man is a pest in society and a burden to his country. An immoral christian is a contradiction---an immoral patriot is an absurdity. No man ought to claim the name of a christian who does not lead a christian life; for a reason equally good, no one who does not support the character of a virtuous citizen ought to think himself entitled to the appellation of a patriot. Morality is essential to the prosperity of a country. He who claims the name of her friend and does not contribute to her interest, is but a pretender and a hypocrite.

If my voice could be heard amidst the din of party war, I would warn my country against such pretended patriots, from whatever quarter they come and whatever name they assume.

With the volume of revelation in my hand, and the history of the world open before me, I would

proclaim, if ever irreligious sentiments and immoral practices shall gain a full ascendancy in this country, our independence will be annihilated and the fair tree of liberty hewn down---the sun of our glory will set and the demons of darkness howl over our ruin.

Splendid professions, unsupported by an upright life are entitled to no credit. Immorality and impiety are the evils which you, my countrymen, ought most to fear; they are the engines of the prince of darkness, and menace your destruction.* He who abets them is not your friend and does not deserve your confidence. If you could see through his designs you would find his own consequence much nearer his heart than the good of his country and the promotion of your interests; he may flatter you, but it is only that he may deceive you; he like Absalom may attempt to steal your hearts with a kiss, but it is only that he may accomplish his own wicked purposes.

I would intreat "my fellow-citizens in the name of their independence," to rally round the standard of truth, and support by their example and countenance the cause of virtue and piety. These are the grand pillars upon which the independence of the United States must rest. Let no enemy attempt to

* *It is possible that in a few instances both the sentiment and language expressed in this and the following page, are borrowed. If such instances occur, the original notes have not the necessary references, and in the circumstances in which the copy is drawn off for the press, the proper acknowledgments cannot be made. This the author regrets—he would gladly strengthen his own opinion by the sentiments of others.*

weaken their strength, without incurring the public displeasure. Let those who have fought for liberty--- who have sacrificed their property---who have seen the devastations of war and the carnage of battle, never suffer an enemy to assail with impunity, the monument of their glory. Let those who are honored with the preservation, under providence, of their own liberties, and perhaps the liberties of succeeding generations, watch the sacred trust, and be upon their most vigilant guard, against the principles of irreligion, and the practices of licentiousness---Let them never betray the cause which they are called to support, by yielding to the solicitations of that delusive doctrine, which would flatter them with the idea of national or individual happiness, in warfare against God, and violation of his laws.

“ I would intreat them to hear me while I exhort them.”---“ Put away the strange Gods from among you.”---“ If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” “ Acknowledge no king” but the Lord God of heaven and earth. “ Reject not his authority,”---despise not his word---fear his displeasure---seek his favor---pay him the homage of your souls and follow his counsels---cultivate kind affections to your fellow-men and to one another---practise the virtues of justice, benevolence and patriotism. Without these your republican government cannot stand. But with these supports, it shall survive the convulsions of the world and witness the years of millennial felicity.

I would beseech my brethren of the United States to cherish the common bond of union and spurn the delusions, which would link them in the wicked policies of distant nations.—Let them be firm to the interest of their country, and God will not withhold from them, “his blessing which maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow.”

“I would remind them, that “righteousness exalteth a nation ; but sin is a reproach to any people.” That there is not a more unholy, a more destructive enemy to our national prosperity, than party envy, party jealousy, party hatred, and party strife. It cherishes unrighteousness, and produces a thousand sins. None but the most undeserving, can have an interest in fanning this unhallowed flame.

O my countrymen ; remember that you are brethren---that you have one common interest---that you must support your independence, by your virtue and patriotism, or loose it. The clamors of party-spirit, and the scrambles of office hunters, will not secure your rights nor brighten your glory. Abandon distrust and malice.---Live together in peace and friendship. “Establish habits of sobriety, industry, morality and religion,” and so shall your country be the care of heaven ; “the edifice of your freedom shall stand upon a rock,” you shall be the happiest people upon whom the sun of heaven sheds his light, and your children, and your children’s children shall rise up and call you blessed.”

Inhabitants of CHARLTON !—People of my ministerial Charge ! Why should we suffer ourselves to be unhappy by the stratagems and collisions of ambi-

tious politicians? We live in comparative obscurity ; remote from the scenes of public regard, and seldom noticed by the chieftains of party contention. They never will make our interests their care, nor remunerate us for the miseries of our oppositions and quarrels, in following their standards. Let us learn to respect ourselves ; let us live in peace with one another ; let us be just and generous, cultivate good will to men, and live in the fear of the Lord : In this way we shall not be unhappy in ourselves, nor useless in our generation ; without clamor and contention, we may contribute our full proportion to the public good.

Let us take the scriptures for our guide--the Saviour of the world for our example, and the promises of the gospel for our hope and whatever revolutions may take place in distant nations, or changes in our own country, every returning anniversary of our independence, shall find us in possession of a peace, which the world can neither give nor take away--liberties which can never be destroyed, and enjoyments which shall be consummated in heaven.

THE END.