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ADDRESS,

BELIVERED AT AUGUSTA,

ON THE

THIRTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY

OF

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

JULY FOURTH, 1809.

—*—*—*—
BY AUGUSTUS ALDEN, ESQ.
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AUGUSTA :
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—*—*—*—
1809.

Augusta, July 4, 1809.

Sir,

THE Committee of Arrangements, in behalf of the Federal Republicans, this day assembled, thank you for the patriotic, firm and dignified Address, by you delivered, and request a copy for the press.

We are, Sir, with great esteem your humble servants,

JOHN DAVIS,
SOLOMON VOSE,
PETER T. VOSE,
SAMUEL HOWARD,
PITT DILLINGHAM,
NAHUM WOOD.

AUGUSTUS ALDEN, Esq.

Augusta, July 4, 1809.

GENTLEMEN,

YOU have been pleased to request a copy of my Address, delivered this day, for publication. I thank you for this additional mark of respect. I will submit to your disposal, what you have so politely requested.

You will recollect the shortness of the time allotted me for preparation; and will, therefore, have the candour to excuse, what you know was well intended; although it may not exactly comport with the strict rules of criticism.

*Gentlemen, I have the pleasure to be,
with much respect, your ob't. serv't.*

AUGUSTUS ALDEN.

To JOHN DAVIS,
SOLOMON VOSE,
PETER T. VOSE,
SAMUEL HOWARD, Esq'rs.
Mr. PITT DILLINGHAM,
Mr. NAHUM WOOD,

Committee of
Arrangements.

AN
ADDRESS.

FELLOW-CITIZENS,

WE are assembled, on this occasion, to celebrate the *Birth-day* of American Liberty. This is a day pleasing to your recollection. It furnishes the *brightest* page, in the *Annals* of our country. On *this* page are inscribed, WASHINGTON, Glory and Independence.

When we turn our eyes back to the eventful period of the Revolution, what *interesting* scenes rush, in thick assemblage, upon our minds. We behold a *brave*, and *virtuous* People, struggling for freedom, against the Gigantic power of a foreign nation. We behold our brethren, animated by a glorious love of liberty, erect the standard of Independence, and unitedly pledge their *lives* and *fortunes*, for its defence. We see them *rush* into the field of battle, engage and defeat the foe. But alas! many of them fell *victims* on the altar of their country. *They* died, that *we* might be free.

Often have you, on this occasion, heard the "tale of other times" faithfully related by your Orators, in strains of the most impressive eloquence; so that you need not again be told of scenes, which are so deeply engraven upon your minds,

and which will ever live in your remembrance. The faithful pen of the historian has recorded them. They will be handed down to posterity, that as they read them o'er, they may catch the *sacred fire*, and be admonished to preserve, inviolate, those rights, which were bought at so *vast* a price !

Thanks be to that God, who shields the virtuous, and rescues them from the grasp of oppression, the efforts of the American People were crowned with success. The ~~hostile~~ fleets and armies of the foe were compelled to retire from our shores, and to leave us to the enjoyment of our natural rights. But the field, which was thus won, must not be left ~~without~~ enclosure. It must be secured from foreign aggression, and internal violence. It became necessary that we should have laws to *protect* what we had so *dearly* purchased. Our wise men assembled in Council : They formed a Constitution of Government, which was adapted to the circumstances of the People ; and calculated to secure them from "foes without and foes within." It harmonized the jarring interests of the different States ; and by the faithful administration of it, during a period of twelve years, our Country rose from its funk, and almost *ruined* state, to a degree of opulence and respectability, which gave her a high rank among the nations of the earth. Oh *glorious* Liberty ! *thrice glorious*, when secured by such a Constitution ! And Oh, happy people, who have *virtue* to support a Constitution, which, when *faithfully* administered, secures to them *such* liberty. How should our *souls* glow with *rapture* and *grat-*

itude while we contemplate the *distinguishing* blessings, we enjoy under its *benign* influence.

We have cause to rejoice, that while many of the nations of Europe are groaning under the most *cruel* bondage; with no wills, but those of their masters, whose property they are; without the privilege of speaking, or even *thinking*,* like rational men; and who are obliged to shout the praises of the **Tyrant** they hate; we in America, enjoy the highest perfection of civil, and religious liberty:— And although in the days of darkness, and delusion, restraints were imposed upon us, foreign to our free Constitution; yet a brighter prospect is now unfolding to our view, and we indulge a hope, that those days, in which we have seen *much evil*, have passed away, *never more* to return. We sincerely hope that our present rulers will profit by the errors of their predecessors; and avoid those shoals and quicksands, upon which, our political ship had well nigh been stranded.

Under the guardianship of our excellent Constitution, our persons and properties are secure. We have the inestimable privilege of freely interchanging our sentiments and opinions; and enjoy, uncontrouled, that great *safeguard* of liberty, a free press; which, while it exposes, and holds up to public derision, the infamous and unworthy, is calculated to shield the innocent from detraction: And although it may be *abused*; yet without it, the whole fabric of civil liberty must fall to the

* In a Despotic Government, shackles are imposed upon the mind, which prevent a free exercise of its rational faculties.

ground. And to crown all, we have the exalted privilege of worshipping God, according to the dictates of our own consciences, without having any particular mode of belief, or worship imposed on us.—We are not compelled to bow down at the shrine of an idol, and worship the workmanship of men's hands ; but ours is the *uncontrouled* and *devout* worship of the *true God*.—This completes the grand scale of privileges, for which our fathers exposed their lives in battle ; which are bequeathed to us, their offspring ; and guaranteed to us by the Constitution, the **MAGNA CHARTA** of American liberty.

It is our duty, on this occasion, to call to remembrance those Great and Good Men, who were the instruments, in the hand of Providence, of effecting our Independence ; and, while we consider how much they have done for us, and for their Country, to pay them the just offering of heartfelt gratitude. Let us ever cherish their remembrance in our hearts ; and as we recount over their virtues, may we be emulous to copy their *bright* examples !

We have reason to felicitate ourselves on the happy circumstances, in which we are placed. We live in a land of plenty, far remote from those scenes of *devastation*, which have *marred* the face of Europe : And thanks to a kind Providence, which has placed us here, we are without the reach of that *cruel Tyrant*, who rules with an iron sceptre ; and who leads nations captive at his will : Who fights but to *conquer*, and *conquers* but to *enslave*. Humanity *revolts*, and *starts* back at his approach !

He has trampled under foot half Europe. There may you behold "*weeping and lamentation* ; Rachel mourning for her first-born, and will not be comforted, for they are not."

See the MIGHTY CONQUEROR stretch out his arm against SPAIN. He thinks her an easy conquest ; for long had she been *submissive* to his nod, and *subservient* to his will. But lo ! *awakened* from her slumbers, she rises and comes forth in her STRENGTH : She meets her Invaders on the *embattled* Plain, and sends them, by *Thousands*, to the shades of Death !

BRAVE INHABITANTS of SAN GIOSSA ! you have IMMORTALIZED your *names* ! you have *triumphed* in your overthrow ! The name of your CITY will shed a *lustre* upon the page of history. And if your COUNTRY is doomed to fall, at last, her blood shall not rest upon your heads !

NOBLE SPANIARDS ! our hearts are with you. May victory alight upon your standards. May the GOD of ARMIES fight on your side ; that the Legions of your Enemy, who have *profaned* your sanctuaries, *plundered* your property, and *murdered* your Citizens, may be *driven* from your shores ; or find their graves, in the bosom of that Country, they were sent to subdue.

As some lone traveller, seated on a rock, near the bosom of the deep, sees the ocean rage, and heave its *billows* to the skies ; and as he looks with anxious eye, hears the *piteous shrieks* of drowning mariners, shipwreck'd in the flood ; while a secret joy *thrills* through his soul, that he, himself, is safe ;

so we, secure on the rock of our freedom, behold the convulsions, which *agitate* Europe, and rejoice, that we are not involved in those scenes of *wretchedness*, with which its *miserable* Inhabitants are overwhelmed.—Well may we say, “Our lines have fallen to us in pleasant places; we have a goodly heritage.” Our Country, which but of late, was a howling wilderness, has been transformed, by the hand of industry, into fruitful fields. It has become almost a second Eden, in fertility: And in point of Commercial advantages, it is exceeded by no Country on the face of the Earth. And when we consider, that these advantages are secured to us by a wise Constitution of Government; and contrast our situation, with that of other nations, we cannot but rejoice in the superiority of our condition. But let us remember the *tenure*, by which we hold these important privileges. When once our free Government is destroyed, these blessings, with which we are now surrounded will vanish away, “like the morning cloud, and early dew.” And destroyed it certainly will be, when the people cease to be virtuous. VIRTUE is the *vital principle* of free Governments. In vain would the people possess the right of suffrage, unless they had *virtue* and *intelligence* to exercise it in the choice of the best men to fill the various offices of State:—If, through ignorance or *wickedness*, they raised to the highest stations, the *profligate* and *abandoned*, who would be likely to pervert the authority vested in them, to purposes of cruelty and oppression. Since, then, we profess a sacred veneration for freedom; and since virtue is so essential to our existence, as a free people, it becomes us, *diligently*, to implant its principles within our breasts, and cherish them

with care ; that they may bring forth the fruits of
" well ordered lives and conversations." And, first,
let us lay the foundation of virtue, by believing in
the *existence* and *attributes* of God ; by paying him
a *sincere* and *devout* worship, and yielding a cheer-
ful obedience to his will. This we shall do, if we
duly appreciate our liberty ; for without it, I am
persuaded, our free Government will, sooner or later,
fall to ruins.

When Religion, and its institutions are despised,
and neglected, every public, and private virtue
will *wanguish* ; and immorality and licentiousness
abound : And when men become immoral and li-
centious, they are then the fit subjects of a military
despotism. If Parents wish to transmit to their
Children the invaluable blessings, which they in-
herit by birthright, let them early instil the princi-
ples of religion and morality into their minds, and
bring them up to habits of industry and prudence.
Let them be taught a *reverence* for the Sabbath,
and to attend on the public worship on
that *sacred* day, instead of devoting it to
amusement, and mirth.

As a great means of securing and perpetuating
our liberty, let Schools, and public Seminaries of
learning be liberally patronized ; and let such men,
only, be entrusted with the education of youth, as
are men of science, and sound morality ; so that
the fountains of knowledge being kept pure, the
streams, issuing therefrom, may be pure also. Let
luxury and extravagance be banished ;—And let
those, who are in the higher walks of life, set ex-
amples of *industry*, *prudence*, and *chaste sobriety* .

those, in lower stations ; that the *plain, Republican* manners of our pious Ancestors may, *again*, be brought into repute : And let all orders of men use all possible means to ascertain the just measure of their rights ; and while they observe, with a *watchful* eye, the conduct of their rulers, and take care they do not exceed the limits assigned them by the Constitution ; let them yield a *cheerful* obedience to all *just* and *salutary* laws ; realizing that *liberty*, without *law*, is licentiousness.—Thus, with your freedom resting on the firm basis of *virtue, law* and *order*, you will be secure from those *inter-*nal commotions, which have *distracted* and *paral-**ized* the Republics of ancient times : And, living in a Country, abounding in all the necessary means of protection, and defence, if you will but wisely employ those means, you need not fear the menaces of a foreign foe.

THE AMERICANS are men of *stout hearts* ; like the Oak that grows on their mountains, which bids defiance to the storm. They will behold the Country, that gave them birth : They will look at their *Temples* consecrated to the worship of GOD : They will view the lands, their hands have subdued : They will cast an eye at their fire sides, whose scenes of *pure, domestic* joy : They will look with *earnest gaze*, upon their *Wives* and *Children*, and with these *dear* objects, in prospect before them, their hearts will wax *valiant* ; they will rather die a *thousand* deaths, rather than that *one* of these should be wrested from them by the hand of *viol-**ence*.

But, although we are strong in *resources*, strong in the native courage of our Citizens ; yet such is

the present mode of warfare, as to render discipline necessary to insure success in the field of battle. It is therefore with satisfaction we behold in our Country, military institutions, formed upon *such* principles, that, while they afford us protection, they do not endanger our liberty. In a *Republic*, every *Soldier* should be a *Citizen*, and feel a deep interest in the support of that Government, under which he lives. The People will ever look, with an eye of jealousy, upon Standing Armies, raised in times of peace. They know that mercenary troops, under the command of ambitious, and unprincipled leaders, may become the instruments of subverting their *liberties*: And they likewise know, from recent experience, that the militia, who are *Citizens*, as well as *Soldiers*, "will not turn their arms against their *Brethren*." They are Americans, who *feel* for the *privileges* of Americans. They believe themselves constituted soldiers, not for purposes of oppression, but for security and protection.

It is with pleasure, that I behold so many in this Assembly, clad in the habiliments of war, which announce them the defenders of *this Country's* rights. Much praise is due to *you* gentlemen of the LIGHT INFANTRY,* for *your* voluntary exertions in organizing *your* *Company*, and for the diligence and zeal, which *you* have manifested in perfecting *your* selves in discipline. You have done *to* *your* selves as *Soldiers*. We feel proud to recognize you as Fellow-Citizens, and Fellow-Townsmen. You will call to mind the *glorious achievements* of our Ancient Heroes! *Their* examples will *fire* your minds to emulation: And should your

* The Augusta Light-Infantry.

Country be invaded, your hearts will not be slow to *feel*, or your feet to *advance*, against the enemy ; But animated with the *glorious spirit* of '76, you will *grasp* your arms, *rush* into the field, and fight *valiantly* for your *Country*, for your *Liberty* and for your *Independence*.

HAIL. INDEPENDENCE! HAIL, thou *precious* gift of HEAVEN to man ! Welcome, thrice welcome thy Natal-Day. This day will we celebrate, with festive mirth, and social glee ; and while our hearts o'erflow with grateful joy, we will not forget our *Brethren*, whose unhappy lot it is, to be severed from the bosom of their Country, and confined in *dark*, and *loathsome* prisons, "wrap'd in chains."* Unhappy Men ! shut out from those joys, which now gladden our hearts, and raise them, in *grateful aspirations*, to the Parent of Good. But although they may be *immersed* in *dreary dungeons*, far from their native homes ; yet if they still retain the *glorious principles* of liberty, within their breasts, they will, this day, raise a *Song* to Independence, and *shout* that their Country is free. Oh, may the influence of Public Authority be *speedily* exerted for their relief ; and may they soon be restored to their Country, and friends ; that all the children of this *Great Family* may, *unitedly*, enjoy the blessings of liberty, and hand them down, unimpaired, to the latest posterity.

* Reference is here had to *those* unfortunate Americans who were imprisoned in France, by order of the Tyrant Napoleon ; and likewise to those, who, allured by the visionary schemes of Miranda, embarked in his expedition, and were finally captured and imprisoned by the Spaniards in South America.

FINIS.