ORATION,

Delivered in the Assembly Chamber of Massachusetts, on the occasion of the Anniversary of Washington's birth, by request of the Chamber, in the year of Our Lord 1832.

Fellow Citizens,

Convinced in my inability to do justice to your wishes, nothing but a conviction that the sacrifice of this spirit which dedicated your country, should induce me to attend me throughout the arduous task, could have induced or justified my acceptance of the honor you have conferred. Before me, it is an honor I shall always cherish with the most friendly recollections. Yet which I see before me, the collected beauty and wisdom of the metropolis, embellished, as it is, with the adornments of taste and erudition, I will gladly throw myself upon your liberality and benevolence.

It has been the custom of other nations to immortalize their achievements, by consecrating them to public observance. On recurring to history, you will find the two most splendid republics that ever adorned its page, preserved their character as long as they had virtue enough left to celebrate its decline. The enjoyment of the commemoration have, unfortunately, sunk together in one common grave. That sacred enthusiasm, which gives an air to independence, nobleness, necessarily, combine to supply vigor, life and permanency, or else it will degenerate into a worthless name. Nor is there any thing more inspiring to all principles, than a fixed and annual return to the remembrance of its era. In this way, the mind is more seriously thought with the traits of its grandeur. The imagination is lighted up by the sublime picture of a revolution. It wanders through its scenes to denote the passions by which it is distinguished. Virtue is seen struggling with vice, and from national heroism there is an easy transition to the more precisely delineated portraits of personal greatness. Facts are deduced from these combined images, to which in the jolly, merry cycles, and by which life may be regulated. In short, there is a peculiarity of effect, to which we are only appeal by experience. For we may learn to turn from our mackisudings, at an hour like this, when the conscience is awakened into a grateful sense of rationality, to the scenes of a holy war, and the wide distinctly shades of political variation that, since that epoch, have successively taken place of each other.

Nor, at this moment, will the mind pause entirely upon the retrospect. Forever on the wing of experiment and research, it will take its way into futurity, and among the concealed depths of causes and effects, endeavor to penetrate into the succeeding history of our country. The chapter in which is inscribed the glories of our ancestry, and to which we have recently added a supplement, is not sufficient for the "vast exploring eye" of the patriot to dwell on in content and admiration. To make it truly dear to his heart and lovely to his fancy, he must unceasingly imitate, for it is not possible to transcend, it excel once. He must, at once, strive to follow the good and great example of his predecessors, and to deserve, at some distant day, the approbation of an equal, by protecting their *noble heritage*.

To speak in the rigorous language of truth, ours is the earliest and the only distinct model of a perfectly rational equality in government. It has not been owing, however, to any fault of the human mind. The fears and necessities of men, on which, we are told, are built the stable foundations of regal connections, have unfortunately been converted into the potent means of their aggrandizement to the more powerful. In the primitive ages of creation, liberty was an early and an almost uninterrupted possession, in a portion of dominion. There were no [illegible] and contagious compressions of society. [illegible] authority grew up, rather, as a matter of paternal inheritance, than as a conquered condition, or, in the least, as an accident of power. And, although it has ever been domineering in its sway, even in all times have appeared some faint glimmerings of the spirit of liberty. Nevertheless, I esteem it a correct position, and one I shall attempt to vindicate in this address, that a *gradual social progression* was essential to the production of a just and liberal [illegible] of government. And I assume it as a [illegible] true, that the consequences *cannot be [illegible]*. The symptoms of this orderly improvement have been as variable as violent. Revolution has accumulated on revolution, but as often terminated in the rashness of anarchy, or the disappointments of what is inconsiderately termed, a rebellion. A few lucid intervals of aristocracy or democracy, like the fierce and evanescent lightning that flashes through a lowering atmosphere, have, now and then, broken in upon the despotisms of the world. But, it has been reserved for us to reason and to act upon the possibility of sustaining a republic. I acknowledge, it has been conceded, if it were difficult and dangerous to establish, it is even more doubtful and perilous to preserve. The uncontroverted obsolescence of this axiom, and the fact, that no such system has ever endured the ravages of years, and the abuses of corruption, are the chief circumstances that have gained plausibility to the doctrines of the enemies of mankind. But those of us who bottom a *different opinion* upon this theory, ought to go a little further. We would discern there are no conclusions against us, to be drawn from prior institutions. History has produced no parallel to our own. All that has existed, seems to have been removed, to make way for something better. We may search in vain for a counterpart—no where has the smouldering hand of time rested without decay, or the storms of faction played without effect. For where is the crown that has not been shattered? And, as if the conviction should not be resisted, while, too, the monuments of ancient liberty have tumbled into a heap of chaotic and undistinguished fragments, how much more exalted is the new creation that has risen upon their fall!—I mean morally and politically.

What then do you conjecture of the progress of society? Do you not suppose, that for ages to come, as it has for ages that are gone, owing to the same natural, self-existent and the extinguishable power, it will continue with a gorgeous [illegible] or, though variant, still more splendid, to shine [illegible] upon the track of civilization? [illegible] question this? Have you [illegible] the accelerated procession [illegible] that dimmed civilization, [illegible] is scorched by the noxious [illegible] which blooms and flowers beneath the [illegible] of [illegible] yality, [illegible] that which spreads its [illegible] for the wholesome tree of freedom [illegible] covers within the celestial wing of peace. Look to America! Here, a [illegible] apply state removated existence others, to my mind, the [illegible] great effects of the progress of [illegible] which has had its infancy, its [illegible] manhood and which must, finally, [illegible] at a point of perfection, [illegible] whose pinnacle will tower in the latter days, with the [illegible] of religion and [illegible] encircling and [illegible] its transit eternally.

But let us, casually, [illegible] of its origin and [illegible]. There was Abraham, who was [illegible] This was the hour of its infancy! [illegible] Solomon, who was [illegible] *[illegible] from the time*, the hu[illegible] was smitten with a rod, and in what[illegible] quarter they planted the standard of their dominion, they, also, raised the altar of *homage* to an ephemeral creature. At once, in Asia, in Africa, in Europe, and, for aught we know, at that very period, in America, the mitre and the sceptre glittered above the humbled head of the peasant! This perhaps was the state of society. Its effervescence had not subsided, its ambition was less restrained, its mind not benighted by the prejudices of ignorance, and, yet, lost amid the impervious and unexplored regions of knowledge. At length, another age, emerging from the dark and dreary wilderness of a [illegible] random, is beheld laying the subsidiary of a new order, in Athens, in Thebes, in Sparta, in Carthage, and in Rome. Here, we may mark the influence of a partial manhood. Unquestionably, this was a lovely its epoch. But it was now, that the most powerful change of all commenced a sort of supernatural operation. An event, upon which depended, in my opinion, not merely, what has forwarded, but on which depends what is still to come. It was at this peculiar crisis, that christianity was introduced, as the efficient handmaid to human improvement. The midnight of error, which so shortly succeeded, was like the gloomy moment, that is the omen, and precedes the dawning of day—it foreboded the inevitable, however protracted, graduation of the political universe. Upon this it is I build my political faith. History maintains it. Indeed, herein, our own experience is satisfactory. And although I differ on this subject from many, to whom I accord the superior claims of talent and of learning, to me there is ample reason to conclude, that, liberty, which is on the march, the inseparable companion of civilization, & civilization of christianity, never, no never—never can recede! It may sometimes halt in the paroxysms of a violent struggle; but it will, sooner or later, recover & pursue its course with a steadier and bolder step; and, from age to age, the cloven-footed altars of despotism must, one after the other, totter to the earth, till the grand spectacle of rational equality unfolds its banners, to the millions that are now unborn.

To a mind unaccustomed to survey the scenes of human history, all this may form a subject of curious and doubtful speculation! But no one, who considers the course of events, will arrange deductions founded upon the deepest principles of human nature: A nature capable of an unknown extension in its attainments; for, the more it is dilated, and acted upon, the more it will receive and perform.

Perchance, as to ourselves, the grudging bigot would start his futile objection. Perhaps, he would say, "*your daring republic is not a life, whatever may be the logical accuracy of your calculation as to others!*" How heartless the feeling! How brainless the suggestion! What, America! has she not before her the lights of all antiquity, and around her the guardian spirit of reformation? She may tread onward, fearless of aberration, guided and protected in the glory of her passage, by the Beacon of the past and the Genius of the present! What was it that agitated the investigation of right on this side of the water? Was it a mad devotion to the memory of Peloponnesus? Or to the fame of the triumphs of Roman valor, that extended, not only over all Italy, but reached to the banks of the Indus? No! Though they may have been necessary to the enlargement of the intellectual energies, and hung out as signals to mankind, by which to steer, they never could, of themselves, have excited, at so distant a recollection, the mighty passion of a revolution. *Modern Europe may look to them, we must look to Modern Europe!* We have borrowed *from her*, what she received there, and taken, besides, her own workmanship, without any of its clogs. We took it, not alone to venerate, but to improve. Such has been the gratification.

But do not mistake me as to our spirit. I would not, even, be suspected of bestowing upon a modern Pope of groaning tyrannies, the unqualified praise of moral elevation. I could not so much violate my own conscience. I would not so grossly insult your feelings. However the constitution of man may have elicited its finer qualities on this occasion, and the general condition of society exceeds the most prosperous state that [illegible] at any previous period, to Europe, at the present, we advert with the lamentable foreboding of some dreadful concussion. Alas! such appears to have been the destiny of man, that the amalgamated terrors of vice should gather about the remnants of virtue, preparatory to their awful dissolution! So it will be with the enslaved, stipendiary, pauperized Europe. Behold Ireland, at whose name the Patriot, the Saint, the Philosopher, the Orator, and the Poet, kindle with a melancholy admiration, holds out the deplorable testimony of this prophetic truth. For, of all the Isles that encircle, and all the countries that cover that vast tract, Ireland, clinging with an unrivaled martyrdom to the sanctity of her piety, and the purity of her patriotism, is the most durable monument of the effect, and not long hence will be, too, a monument of the fate of oppression and abuse, where reform is rejected by the hand of intolerance and of despotism. All record proves it to be the course of humanity—recur to our situation in seventy six, if not as aggravated, at any rate, an additional and irrevocable proof. But, it is true, there was a shorter step to our revolution; for, when the sovereign of Britain surrendered to the British, couple the charter of their rights, he resigned to the mercy of America the crown of his successors.

And, here, let us retire a moment from the decadence in Europe, where the hopes of youth & the comforts of age are weighed down by the physical preponderance of prostituted worth, to a contemplation of the ascendancy of that political moderation which has risen amongst us, the proudest mausoleum of the old world, and the dearest possession of the new. In this pleasant prospect, we have great and serious cause of congratulation. Once a colony, now an important empire, we must be sensible of the immediate difference between receiving a governor in a state of subjugation, and commissioning a minister to that very court from whose maternal bosom we were disunited. We must readily perceive the increased consequence derived, even then, at an uncertain conjuncture of our affairs, from alliances with nations "not afraid of doing right, for fear of doing wrong." In a provincial dependence, it was very humiliating, that a princely dignitary, or some honorable exile of the mother country, "stuck o'er with titles, and hung round with strings," should wield the supreme executive authority. *[illegible] too, [illegible] another [illegible]*. But it is a redoubled gratification to us all, that, no matter in what shape the iron clawed monster of tyranny made his appearance, our people knew how to detect, and where to resist him. A stamp tax; a certain tax of antiquity; a tea tax; and, as it happened to be, a writ, but impotent discrimination. From mercenary duties, did not gain the creditors admission of a final loyalty! Yet it was expected. The English ministry of the day seem to have acted on the illusion of the fantastic theory, that "the human species degenerated in America." Vain and foolish statesmen! to imagine that, with their professions of kindness staring them in the face, they might play off upon us patriotism the decents of an artful hypocrisy! Verily, they were too precipitate in their designs! Notwithstanding the energetic aid we had given to the mother country in her conflicts upon our continent, for which we received her thanks, the accents of peace were not hushed upon her lips, before she conceived the wicked project of an unnatural and sanguinary war. In vain had Franklin warned the ministry of attempting to subvert a brave and a free people. They had heard it from him in the language of admonition, that the Americans voluntarily preferred their own to foreign manufactures; that they had restricted themselves to the exclusive use of domestic products. This was the spirit of '76—the spirit of '7[illegible] the good old spirit through and the revolution! Every class revered it; every man, woman, and child, boasted of it! Happily for us, this spirit existed. Their resources were beside, and they required all the strength of unity, and all the effect of co-operation.

But mark, I beseech you, the predominance of their *social progression* over every difficulty and misfortune. I believe you will meet with a full illustration of the doctrine I have advanced. For liberty, they forsook the beaten track and avocations of peace. Nor did they pine or sicken at the change! The hut of the poor and the mansion of the richest, in turns, converted from the seat of the convivial banquet, & the shelter of gray hairs and of innocence, into the soldier's garrison and the scene of a tumultuous warfare. No longer can the peasant hang upon his plough, and pause in silent delight at the sweet and silvered modulations of the little feathered songster. He cannot more enjoy, in secure amazement, the clear and perennial stream, that reflects the perfect image of the verdure that embraces its banks. He must forget, too, the cease, and direct his pursuit to a more formidable object. All the allurement of the country, the deep, still, and meditative solitude that pervades its retreat, is broken in upon, by the peals of the drum, and the shrill and echoes of the war horn! Even the wild flowers of the wood deaden upon the eye, and then "delicious breathing odour" palls upon the sense! The home is a desert; the family in a temporary orphanage; and the wife, perhaps, clasping an infant to her breast, trembling and sighing for the next news the passing messenger may bear. Merciful Heaven! how awful is the predestination of this providence! But thus, it often happens, "evil is permitted that good may come of it." Yet, how arduous was the trial! The father and the child mingled in the holy cause, and behold the life pledges of this earth's endearment staked upon the issue. On one hand, they saw the chains which were forged to fetter them, if they tamely yielded; and, on the other, if they were baffled, their wives, daughters, sisters, and themselves, the protectless victims of a military rage, and of a civil despotism. Oh! how wonderfully did they bear this test of the martyr—and how glorious was their triumph. The sublime powers of their spirit had been roused into an incessant and tremendous agitation! Every faculty was awakened from the torpid lethargy in which it had slept, under the lulling intrigue of deceptive promises—But the pressure had been as long as violent; the reaction was, in proportion, as resistless as determinate! A rebellion had been wounded from quarter to quarter; but, in effect, it was the retributive vengeance of a revolution, terribly rolling in fires through the castles and sequestered haunts of affrighted royalty! An enraged, irreconcilable, and oppressed people, had risen in their strength! No menace could intimidate them; no offering could appease them, except its incense smoked from the hallowed altar of Liberty. Did they hear to-day the sign and the seal of pardon, tendered as the price of their service and their desertion? They unhesitatingly spurned it, with an indignant valor, that denied, even to the persecutor the pleasure of reproach, and took from the Spartan the proverb of his virtue! Nor was there any modification of misery, however horrid, they were unable or unwilling to endure. Did discomfiture embarrass them? They smiled at the incident, and organized themselves afresh. Did death present itself? They braced to its stroke, as the looked to Heaven with an obedient firmness. What did they care, if commerce stopped, and the doors of business closed? On the seas, they repaid the insults in the traffic of the toiler, and the merchants and the customers [illegible], mounted the cockade and shouldered the musket. As a [illegible] like this, big with the birth of freedom, what was it to them, if agriculture became a dismantled pace beneath the pitiless pelting of fortune, while yet, here and there, [illegible] bands of men might be seen, alternately, tilling the ground, and, led by some daring hero, lending an occasional aid to their courageous comrades? What was it to them, if vicissitude sported in the contest? Their purpose was fixed; their trust unbroken; bearing aloft the shield and the weapon of their rights, they pressed forward to conquest or death:—

"Fortune her *[illegible]* may variously dispose,
And these be happy called, unhappy those;
But Heaven's just cause equal will appear,
While those are plac'd in hope, and these in fear:
Not present good or ill, the joy or curse,
But future views of better or of worse."

Now, it is very easy for us all that the tempest is over, and there is no [illegible] wrath for us, to proclaim the curse, the only course, it was safe for our sires to take. But then, the path of security appeared to be the certain conductor to destruction. For, even then, the mind faltered at the report of every defeat, although, from its consequences, the resolute counted on an inevitable victory! And, it is not a little surprising, as *politicians of England who chose* to discriminate between right and wrong, between the difference of an insurrection and a revolution, between a child writhing in a mother's arms, and a full grown youth parrying the murderous blow of a parent, predicted, from the successful [illegible] of the English, the total loss of our power. Supposed Chatham, and Fox, and Burke! They disregarded the pomp and brag of the minions of a king! They permitted themselves to think like men! The example should not be lost upon you. Treasure it as a lesson, of now impossible it is for slaves to subdue freemen, if they are resolved to be free—and how natural it is to doubt, but *how miserable a thing is fear!* I am aware, it may be said, our fathers had the arm of France on one side, and the countenance of Holland on the other. But their confidence rested on a broader and a deeper base. If we are indebted to France, for whose lively and elastic constitution imbued the vigor and the texture of every people, we are far more indebted for the conservation of our privileges, to that "rock of our salvation," the old confederacy. I will agree, we *have name* of France was an acquisition to us. It might be asserted, in a figurative sense, that she had been bred in Europe, amid the schools of national law, and took from the precedent which surrounded her, the unshaken right of welcoming a new member into the family of nations. I will go further, and concede to the warrior she sent us, the well-earned laurel that enfibres and flourishes beneath his silver locks! Yet more—if upon our patriarch Washington, we bestow the glory of the founder of a magnificent republic, to his friend and coadjutor La Fayette we will give the, almost equally, glorious appellation of the philanthropist of the world.

I feel the very mention of these things to have incited a quicker pulse in my heart. Perhaps, the reflection of how rapid has been the lapse of time, that every year has carried with it a few of our trusty veterans; that, ere many suns shall set, they must all fade from our longing view, has imparted to me an emotion, which, I confess, is irrepressible. Yes, Fathers of the Revolution, we have mourned our Washington, and we have but few of you left from whom we can now catch the light of his lamp! May the God of Heaven long preserve you, and the remainder of your days be cheered by the consolation of the honors that now thicken round your declining heads, and the "solace of that anticipation" which dwells upon the gratitude and reverence of posterity.

Could I be sure that it was necessary to inform you of your fame, I would recount the battles of the late war, and the exploits of our youth. But even here we must hail the gracious interference of Providence, that permitted you to abide amongst us, that you might teach us the precepts you had acquired, by directing us how to receive experience. Still I may be said, without exultation, that, we have not been obstinate in persisting against your counsel, or backward in the duty your wisdom assigned us. Nor is it singly, in a third instance of bravery, we have shewn our respect for your law. Or indeed, that we could evince a settle determination to preserve the institutions we have toiled, so laboriously, to establish. Nor whatever the unthinking may believe of the every day notions of patriotism, it never can insist in professions of one sort and practices on other. That is not a love of country, or an adherence to your sentiments, which clings to the parchment and throws away the moral chacter of the constitution. Whenever we adopt your constitution to justify our authority, we must take care that the first object of its exercise is the utility of our fellow citizens, and that the *intention is to promote the great principle of their civil polity*. This should never be lost sight of. We flatter ourselves such has been our course. For it must be acceded, that the yet of litigation under which you have placed us compels us to be attentive to the right, as well as the policy of succoring the sorrows of affliction, who befriends the cause of freedom.

Our constant aim, fellow citizens, should be an equality among men, as well with others as with ourselves. Upon this fundamental maxim "hangs all the law and the prophets of our history. Nor is it in any other moderne can ever discharge, to our ancestors, a paderous debt of affection and obedience. In fact, it is a kind of indiminishable, irredeemable debt, that will be entailed upon the thousandth and the thousandth generation.

In all the circumstances, either immediately or abstractedly connected with this memorable period, I am persuaded that you must concur with me in opinion, that, at every stage, they bear an invariable testimony to the principles of *social progression*. Notwithstanding, it is a philosophy, I will allow, that is much questioned. The *objection*, I think, requires *no refutation*. It is the interest of the monopolist, it is the business of kings to condemn it! And all this is quite natural! It would shut out from the one the possibility of his monopoly, and take from the other the pleasures of his cost, and the enjoyment of his throne! Who is it cannot see, when it begins to mature, where the price and paraphernalia of the political bigot are swollen and decked with the patronage of sinecures, and the plunder of his subjects, how it will strip him of his borrowed greatness, and lay him level with the sons of men? Who is it cannot tell, every resistance will be furious, and every delusion unsuccessful? For where is the vice, that, of itself, is not overgrown? or the ambition, whose satiety does not pall upon the intellect, as well as the appetite, and even it decays for energy, or so far exhausted, its schemes partake of the weakness of its infancy, and the wildness of its vision? But you are ready to rejoin with the inquiry, sent by aside ourselves, where is this social progression? Where is its illustration? I am free to confess no people, in their descent, have been more fortunate than the American, I do not allude to the quibbling and senseless distinctions of blood, but to the science it brought us, the arts it conferred, the principles it transplanted. Yet, look to France! Is there no evidence there? Or do you suppose her present calm will be an after blessing? Look to the state of England, at this very moment; England, from whom the brightest beams of literature have sparkled, and its widest plane of elevations started at a touch. Look to her! and, sit enough I disapprove the idea that her *debt or her vice* will ever [illegible] destroy her relative respectability in the [illegible] of nations. Her existing temporalities have but two alternatives, *ruin or reform*. Is not England her own jealous and much injured rival? Has she not suspended, in a tremulous anxiety of suspicion, her *own habeas corpus*, and devoted to the mercenary informer the victim of his enmity? Yes—and liberty! liberty! liberty, the people must and will have! Does it signify whether it is Athenian, or Spartan or Roman? Perhaps, it will be cast in the medium between the licentiousness of the former French democracy, and the sturdy though high-minded aristocracy of Scotland. But, where is Spain? Has she not an ameliorated constitution, when the gallant Cortez surrendered her to the merciless cruelty of an infuriated monarch? *She came poor but faithful into its hands—she has sunk debased and wretched beneath its feet.* Can she long remain where she is? Her finances consumed, her Garay, like the Necker of Louis, if not already dismissed to exile, fleeth, as a mere propitiatory sacrifice to the dungeon of his master, when disaster yawns upon its throne! I say it without fear to contradiction, that revolutionized, she will revive to be terrible, and take her destined station on the scale of *social progression!*

But, should we not turn our eyes nearer home? That this revolution is not disagreeable. For, we must all accord in principle, however we may disagree in settling minor points of prudence. A judiciously regulated neutrality is, indisputable, the wisest policy on our part: and yet it would be extraordinary, if we did not sometimes differ, as to its extent, or its duration.

But, barely as a justification of the theory I have laid down, I might challenge any one to answer, what will be the probable result of the struggles in South America? At this instant, as we are rightly informed, the Patriots constitute a formidable power, while some provinces are wholly independent. Even while I speak, the shouts of victory are yet quivering upon their lips! In Cuba, the royal flag has fallen, and not a vestige of its domination is left! Another and another confederate is added to an invincible union! They may now triumphantly demand of the foreigner, "if such a people were formed for slaves?" What the administration of justice is we do not precisely know. But an American, in addressing his friend in this country, says, *it reminds him of the seat of his ancestors!* Glorious news! do they so early begin to gather the fruits of liberty? Ah! a republican simplicity, before even the color of the royal robe is forgotten! Oh! daughters of the south! your tears shall be dried, and your broken hearts will be healed! They may now touch the standard of liberty, and call their persons sacred! And shall not South America, too, have her Washington, her Franklin, her Adams, her Henry, and her Jefferson? Will no Conscript Fathers preside in her last and eventful council? I hope so! I trust in God there will! I believe she will be wise and cautious as to the form of her government. This much is certain, she has had her despotism, and witnessed the violence of its panic and the horror of its catastrophe. It would be a strange conclusion, if, too, with her own bitter experience and our example looking her in the face, after hurling through the straits of tyranny, and reclaiming the home of her parentage, she should relapse into a baser communion with profligacy, and lend her treasures to the prodigal profusions of ambition. But of this, can there exist the least suspicion? I argue, if the Patriots fail, it will be a fleeting calamity, and the oldest amongst us will live to see the effects of *social progression*, striding every obstacle to the attainment of that point, where independence would repose, and reason be satisfied.

Must not this be the ultimatum? How can it be asserted? In no way! If South America could commence a revolution, and defy for years the strained and now straitened resources of the mother country, she is more likely to give law to Spain than to receive her yoke. The Old One may exert every nerve, distend every vessel of her body, it will not all do—repulsed, disconcerted, and disgraced, she must fall back, puny and powerless, into the *convulsive* grasp of her own miseries! As to that worn and festered government, the stale and degraded memento of the Castilian name, it is requisite to adduce to you another fact? Need I recite what her Financier avows, that the very table of the king must be cleared of the rubbish which crowns his feasts, but impoverishes the treasury? When he entered the vacant and solitary vaults of the Exchequer, he had too solid a judgment not to discover, how blind and silly was the practice of clapping up a batch of inert and useless appendages, to hang like drawcancers upon its breast. Of course, he recommended economy. And how did it come? For once, a minister more desirous of honorable renown than a lean and paltry power, dared to breathe the truth into the royal ear. "*Sire*, said he, *your resources are scanty, and your expenses must be lessened, not only of the household, but of the army! yes, of the marine itself!*" The army! the marine! is it possible! why, the bigotted Ferdinand himself admitted the necessity, but dreaded the trial! And yet, Spain, with her army reduced, with her sea-port barriers stripped of the few little ragged sails that still flutter in the wind, would conquer America! I protest it is impossible! I repeat it, if South America wills to be free, her cruel mother cannot enchain her to the block! She will snap the fetters that encompass her limbs, and dismember the legions that are deputed her executioners!

Let me ask you, fellow-citizens, if, after all this, you have any scruple of the theory of *civil advancement?* I am induced to think you have not. To confirm this impression let us, in the sequel, return to a summary consideration of our own country. Here, the proof is final and irrefragable. It is all upon one side, there is none upon the other. Understand me I do not mean to disturb the predilections of any sect, or the politics of any creed. I have studiously avoided these subjects, and, for this purpose, many others, which are very interesting. I speak of the *social advancement* of our country in *the abstract!* I refer to *that*, as the base on which all her success rests! I refer to her condition as a colony, her league as a confederacy, and, lastly, her maturity as a republic. Some of you recollect the first; all of you are acquainted with the last transition.

It is hardly necessary to remind you, that our common and our statute laws were, at one time, entirely those of England, except as to some indifferent local regulations. The piles of unmeaning precedents and decisions of Westminster, over loaded our benches and perverted the policy of a self action in an enlightened judiciary. A few years, and they have been swept away. I will venture to pronounce the profession consent, the coarser trash has been removed, and the inner materials retained. So as to this particular, the fourth estate of our courts have been lightened, and the complexity of legal learning almost completely untangled. Indeed, it is a very important point to be gained, for the habits of our citizens demand the most simplified thesis of their civil and criminal codes.

Again—You may mark the coercive springs which operate in the hands of the people, upon the deliberations of congress at every succeeding session. Is it not very plain, that great and abundant changes are, alternately, bearing at the public heart? No sooner are the sources of justice confirmed, than they are [illegible] to purify its waters, and to conduct them to the [illegible] of universal want. If there were errors in the system, which was new modelled, that were at first overlooked, but have since become so enormous, they require correction, the remedy is carefully applied, in the conciliating temper of equity, and enforced by the coolest dictates of a more ripened and prevalent judgment. Here is to be seen the practical and consistent *will* of a *representative government*, working with the happiest aptitude to general and substantial benefit.

By the inclusion of every incipient advantage we could derive by observation, or comprehend by study, we are virtually prepared for an introduction of the similar principles, measures and improvements, a longer association may suggest. The soundness of this argument has been tested by the suffrage of the people. Whenever they have felt the necessity of complaint or reform, how suddenly have you heard it echoed within the walls of this house! Nor can they ever have a servant, who, in the temerity of a desperado, will dare to cast back into their teeth, a petition, or a proposition, or a message, if you please, to which, with one accord, they have given their sober sanction. Do they call for a remuneration? It must be granted. Do they cry aloud for retaliation on a foreign government, for the insult and injury of a citizen? It must be attempted. Is he imprisoned? He must be released. Do they require a constitutional change? It must be made. Are their fortunes driven at the unascertained and [illegible] *boats of private and public immorality? They must undergo the reexamination and revision of reform.* In every department of our institutions, civil and military, even from the construction of the most trivial law, to "the *[illegible]* mutilated, but vital character of a [illegible] *making power*, we will find them in our own hands touching the *defect* with an efficient remedy, and, beyond the natural extent of our lives, they will continue to alter and amend, when it is proper, to suit a wiser and a more prosperous order of things.

It would be trespassing too deeply on your patience, to enter at large into a subject of this sort, that is almost inexhaustable, from the variety of incidents attached to it, and growing out of its investigation. But, from the view I have presented, you see what is, and must ever be, the not less peculiar than enviable lot of our political state. In fine, you have nothing to fear—neither the turpitude of a demagogue, nor the ambition of a tyrant! Your Representation can never become rotten, nor your Executive infallible! The arts of election may be put in motion, but no man can ever resort to a management, by bribery and barter, that will at all produce any material change in the result. No! your soil, your arts, and your commerce, are teeming upon you every comfort, and you have scarcely a temptation left! Your constitution has opened to you, at large, the roads to distinction, and the means to success are invigorated by the apprehension and abhorrence of vice! Or if this fails, your laws are so well pointed, and your Press so ably directed, the ignominy of detection and punishment would frighten the oldest offender from the perpetration of his crimes!!

Go on in your course! Your fellow men will join you! They will assist you to intertwine the chaplet of the revolution patriot, with the kindred branch of its wreath!—And, if agriculture can endow—if commerce can enrich—if science can maintain a *social progression*, and I think it is demonstrated that it can, you will have your sister South America by one hand, and, at some remote era, the now morale palsied hand of Europe will be stretching forth to you the Olive of her friendship, as a proof of her redemption, and her admiration of our Republic.