

AN

ORATION,

John

DELIVERED IN

Wilkes

St. PAUL'S CHURCH,

AUGUSTA,

ON THE

FOURTH OF JULY,

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND ONE.

BY JOHN E. ANDERSON, ESQUIRE.

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At Eleven o'clock, the VOLUNTEER COMPANIES of Augusta, being assembled in St. PAUL'S CHURCH, together with a large Collection of the Citizens ; the Ceremonies of the Day were commenced by the Reverend Pastor, who offered up to ALMIGHTY GOD : the following appropriate PRAYER.

LET us enter into the Gates of the most High with thanksgiving, and into his Courts with Praise : Let us be thankful unto him, and bless his name !

HOLY, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, who art, who wast, and who art to come ! Who only hast immortality ; who dwellest in light inaccessible and full of glory ; whom no mortal eye can approach, whom no man hath seen, or can see ; to whom be honor and power everlasting !

Blessed art thou, O God of our fathers, and blessed be thy holy and glorious name forever ! Let the Heavens bless thee, and all thy creatures ! We would extol thee, O our God ; our souls shall praise the King of Heaven, and shall rejoice in his greatness. Thou art he, at whose reproof, the pillars of Heaven tremble and are astonished ; who spake, and it was done ; who commanded, and all things stood fast ! Would we comprehend thy greatness, O God, our conceptions are vain, for the Heavens and the Earth are full of it ! We would understand thine omnipotence, but the thunder of thy Power none can comprehend ! We would feel thine omnipresence, but all nature containeth thee not ! Yet would our inmost souls be stirred up to magnify and bless thee, the uncontrouled Sovereign of the Universe, though thy judgments are unsearchable, and thy ways past finding out, that there is a God in Heaven, who will direct our steps, to whom we may commit our ways ; a God, full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy ; a God, who will, when all things have run their stated course, judge the world in Righteousness ! Shall not the judge of all the earth do right ?

Approaching thy Alter of spotless purity and holiness, be thou pleased, O God, to overlook our unworthiness ! Be thou pleased to sanctify, by thy grace, our hearts, and renew right spirits within us ! Enable us to render unto thee the homage, due to thy Heavenly Majesty : to approach thy Throne with that reverence and Godly fear, with that delight and love, which matchless perfection, and never-failing mercy inspire ! In the name, and through the mediation of thy Son and our Saviour, we beg that we may be cleansed from all our Sins ; that thou wouldst receive the offered sacrifice of our hearts, unworthy as it is ; and that thy blessings and favours, which we have received without number, may be also without end !

On this auspicious day, O God, rendered sacred by the event which it commemorates, with hearts united by gratitude, with voices uplifted by joy, we, the conspicuous objects of thy bounty,

would render unto thee, the great Ruler of the world, our humble, yet hearty thanks! As a portion of this mighty nation, this exulting, yet adoring people, we desire to be heard in mercy!—Led back, by the faithful spirit of memory, to the æra of national Independence, our feelings rise, in spontaneous joy to the Throne of Heaven! We contemplate, O thou protecting God, that day as the period, when every thing, that was honorable, was asserted; when every thing, that was valuable, was secured: And we adore thee, as the gracious Author, as the great designing Cause! We would bless thy mighty name, O God, that, by the events of that day, whose return we celebrate, our rights, as men and as a nation, were claimed; that a spirit was diffused, which tended to maintain them; that a voice was sounded in the ears of an injured people, which awoke them from a blamable inactivity, and roused them to a virtuous resistance. We would express to thee, the Father of mercies, our grateful acknowledgments, in that, thereby, the blessings of civil and religious liberty have been secured; that man may here indulge the dignifying consciousness of his importance in the scale of creation; that, boasting himself of the rights of man, he will be cautious to sustain man's character! Under thy Providence we rejoice, that the benefits of our circumstances and situation are enjoyed equally by all! Under thy God, whom we worship, we claim the privilege of rejoicing, that, many as are the mansions in house, they are open and accessible to all, that none can claim the precedence in entering! We would bless the Lord of Earth and of Heaven, that, in civil affairs, we submit not to the will of caprice, we obey not the nod of a Despot, we bow only to the supremacy of the laws, to the dignity of constituted authority! In spiritual matters, in things which concern our eternal welfare, we call no man master on earth, save Jesus; we bow only to the majesty of Heaven; we are guided only by the authority of the Gospel!

Having put an end to the conflicts of party, and the evils of war, we would rejoice, O thou God of Love, that the spirit of animosity and revenge has subsided; that thou hast disposed the minds of thy People to Peace; that the destructive operations of war have been succeeded by those arts, which tend to harmonize the feelings, and civilize mankind; that that Peace, which hath visited our land, hath given rise to those improvements, which expedite the progress of Society, which render man happy and nations respected!

Conscious of the great and manifold blessings we enjoy, may we know how to appreciate them! Do we consider ourselves peculiarly favoured by thee, our God, may our gratitude and our praises be proportionate! Have we, by thy kindness, been blessed with a government, the most equitable, and the most likely to ensure permanence, may our conduct also be more correct, may our virtue be the more conspicuous, may our religion be, indeed, pure and undefiled! May we, by no improper practices, commit the character of our nation, or government! May our strength, as a people, not be weakened by faction! May we, in private life, be virtuous and sincere; in public, faithful and upright stewards of the trusts which we hold!

May we do justice to our Fathers, to ourselves, and to posterity, by guarding that constitution, by preserving pure that government, which *they* so dearly purchased, which we so warmly approve, and which our children will consider as their best inheritance!

As subservient to these happy ends, do thou, O Almighty God, order every irregular affection, do thou regulate every inordinate passion, and suppress the spirit of contention amongst us! Help us, we beseech thee, to put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking with all malice! Teach us to live in Peace, and to love in Truth. May all bitter resentments be banished from our minds! May the Law of kindness be upon our Tongues! May a spirit of conciliation exhibit itself in our conduct! May we cease to provoke one another to wrath, and may we love one another as Brethren, as Children of the same Parent and Benefactor!

Superintend, we pray thee, thou God and Father of all Nations, that Government, which has been established amongst us! Thou hast graciously vouchsafed to us our Independence, we would invoke thy blessing, that it may be continued. As the result of our wisdom, and as the object of our approbation, may our Government be lasting and secure! May it be guarded by vigilance, and may it be administered with discretion! May it operate in establishing right, in promoting order and in punishing transgression!

Be thou pleased, thou Supreme Ruler and Guardian of the world, to take under thy especial protection the presiding Magistrate of these States! As he hath been exalted to superiority in station, as he hath been made to differ from others in dignity, may he excel also in every quality, which supposes merit, or can secure respect! Fearing thee, the Lord, may he be careful to execute that which is righteous in thy sight! With all faithfulness may he discharge his trust, as one that is himself hereafter to be judged, and shall receive that measure, which he himself hath wiled out! Having received all the confidence and honour, which a powerful Nation can bestow, may he be zealous in performing all the good, which wisdom and integrity can suggest, which the obligations of duty and of gratitude can impose, or the extent of his power and authority can effect!

Let thy blessing, O God, accompany also all those in authority under him and over us! May they, that institute *our* Laws, be careful not to violate *them*! May they, that hold the Scales of Justice in our Land, consider, with solemn seriousness and awe, that thou art, one day, to hold them in Heaven! May the young of this Nation be trained up in thy Fear! May they, by their acquirements in knowledge and in virtue, dignify the character of man! For this purpose, prosper, we entreat thee, O God, all those institutions, where knowledge is imparted, where virtue is inculcated, where principles of conduct are established, and habits of social life are formed! May the ministers of thy Son's gospel, of every denomina-

nation be sincere, if they would be acceptable servants of him, who must be worshiped in Spirit and in Truth! May they act in a manner becoming their Sacred Office, and the religion they would recommend!—While on Earth, may the Profession of our Faith be Christianity! May our eternal residence be thy Kingdom above!

Hear us in Heaven, where thou sittest enthroned in Majesty inaccessible, and do thou, who art Perfection itself, forgive what thou seeest amiss in Beings imperfect and sinful as we are, and we shall ascribe unto thee, through the Son of thy Love, all Dominion, Power and Praise! AMEN!



AN ORATION, &c.



AMERICANS, FRIENDS, FELLOW-SOLDIERS,

SUMMONED again, to be the organ of your feelings on the auspicious anniversary of our nation; it is with accumulated embarrassment, and humility, I yield to the honorable mandate. The exquisite emotions, excited by a contemplation of the event we celebrate, are calculated to expand the mind beyond its ordinary sphere, and to embellish it with images, which must lose their lustre in the drapery of expression! While therefore your hearts are attuned to the rapturous vibrations of the mighty theme: let your benevolence harmonize, the discordant tones, of the feeble instrument you have chosen!

AMONGST the variety of human concerns which have employed the genius of the moralist and politician; in the infinite series of events, which have resulted from the conduct of the human race and swelled the historians page; we are not presented with a subject so extensive in contemplation, or an event so important in its consequences, as the *American Declaration of Independence*.

WHEN we view in retrospect the destinies of other nations, the moral and physical evils, which have marked their progress from the earliest periods of their social existence—When we behold so large a portion of the human family bowing their necks to the yoke of tyranny and languishing in chains;—When we see the dignified faculties of man subjugated by power and sullied by fear, deaf to the voice of liberty and dead to the energies of nature!

While we breathe the trembling sigh of honest commiseration, our hearts dilate with gratitude, to that munificent being, through whose providence WE ARE FREE.

IN the peaceful occupation of rational liberty, it becomes us to appreciate the blessing by enquiring for the moral causes which produced it, and to secure its continuance, by learning the modes of its operation.

THE great Architect of the universe in peopling this little world, hath evinced by the formation of its inhabitants that they are all equally entitled to the privileges of their habitation. Endued alike with reason, affections and appetites, the liberal banquet was spread for them all—the beauties of his workmanship were displayed before them, that the whole race, erect, might wonder, enjoy and adore!

COMING thus from the hand of his Creator, and placed in the unrestrained participation of the blessings that surrounded him; man rejoiced in existence! His arm nerved with strength—his heart susceptible of the finest sympathies and emotions—his soul glowed with virtue—he breathed the spirit of *Independence*.

*BUT it was the ordinance of heaven, that the constitution of humanity should not be perfect, that many natural evils should be mixed in the cup of life:—That man might be impressed with a sense of dependence on his maker, and feel the necessity of aid and protection from his fellows.

THE mode prescribed by the laws of nature for multiplying the species, impelled the sexes to a union of affections, the results of which superinduced the first notions of society and exemplified its advantages. The reciprocal comforts derived from this natural association, gave ardour to the innate desire for happiness, and condensed a plurality of families into one body politic, in which, as there was no essential dependence or connection, it became necessary to supply the defect by laws. Hence originated political society! Emanating from parental coercion, it

was first ushered into the world, in the form of despotism ! And although a sense of the inherent rights of nature, restrained for a time, the exercise of inordinate controul, and limited the effects of subordination : the mind of man soon lost its energy in the exertion, and yielded to the successful efforts of exacting authority : and the mild and benignant countenance of the *Father*, was changed into the awful and frowning aspect of the *Tyrant*.

Thus propelled by the instincts of nature in pursuit of good, did man stumble at the threshold of happiness, and hastening with eager steps into the sanctuary, fell prostrate in the vestibule. Thus while he sought with solicitude for reciprocal aid and protection in a social union : he subjugated the dearest rights of his nature ; and the fountains from whence he was destined to draw his felicity, were thus poisoned with the germins of misery and death.

As the human race multiplied and extended the limits of population, they became divided, into separate tribes, states and nations, which in the exercise of exclusive sovereignty exhibited to each other external relations of friendship or enmity. This state of the world was calculated, to awaken the most ferocious passions of the human heart, and to increase the turbulence of despotic sway. The pride and ambition of independent tyrants, generated new monsters for the destruction of man, and war with grim and redened visage, began to howl for his prey ! Scenes of destruction and piteous massacre—alternate vanquishings and victory, has marked the experience of nations, and written their history in blood !

WHETHER we trace the conduct of states, enlightened by the rays of science, or pervade the gloomy eras of uncivilized and barbarous nations : we discover the same deviations from the path of nature—the same scenes of jealousy, carnage and desolation ;—That despotism had grasped them all in his rude embrace and in struggling to get free, they have expired upon his bosom ;—That the fertile earth teeming with abundance, to supply the wants of man, has been converted into the theatre of his tragedies, and its green luxuriance crimsoned with his gore !

THE efforts of injured nature, against the incursion of these evils, only served to awaken the vigilance and quicken the acuteness of tyranny. In the recels of war, other powerful auxiliaries were enlisted into its service, thro' the aid of which, its authority has been extended from age to age; until that chain, which at first was forged to curb licentiousness, bound up the sublimest energies of the human intellect.

“MAN is by nature, a religious animal.” The wonderful organization of his own frame—the stupendous structure and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the various phenomena of the natural world: are irresistible evidences of an omnipotent and final cause.—The idea of a creator inevitably suggests the duty of observing his commands and the power of punishing disobedience. The effusions of the heart designate the relations and duties of man, and his deviations from the path they prescribe, are pursued with the vindictive stings of conscience; he therefore acquired early notions of the immortality of the soul—of a future state of reward and punishment, and discovered in every new appearance of nature, the complaisancy or the frowns of heaven!

THE acuteness of despotism soon discovered this strongest motive of the human mind, and converted the devotions of religious fear, to the purposes of tyranny and oppression.—A knowledge of physical causes and effects as connected with moral sanctions, was confined to the minions of authority, who dressed in ecclesiastical mystery—thundered anathemas against the breach of the tyrant's will, and alarmed the trembling culprit with equal curses, for disobeying the commands of his sovereign or offending his God.

THUS were the principles of religion and government conformed—thus did power and mystery support each other in enslaving the world. The dignified duties of devotion, every motive to the practice of virtue, which elevates and beautifies the human character, were thus poisoned in the malignant atmosphere of superstition, and

condensed into the narrow limits of servile fear and coward submission.—The world which was intended for the magnificent temple of sublime devotion—which was illuminated and adorned for the communion of God with his creatures was thus degraded by the *orgies* of corruption : and man, the image of his maker, degenerated into a reptile, to feed and sicken on the tainted fragments, which fell from the altar !

In the internal relation between the governing and the governed, all nations have furnished examples of violence, offered to nature : racks, dungeons, gibbets, whips and chains, were the refinements in policy, to maintain dominion and coerce obedience. And although the spirit of native liberty, has occasionally roused mankind from their degrading lethargy, and prompted a glorious struggle for emancipation, the impetuous torrent of their awakened passions, has again born them back into the gulph of despotism, and their new-born giddy freedom, has again been swallowed in its yawning vortex.

THE science of government, so far from expanding the faculties and ameliorating the condition of man, has maintained a warfare between liberty and despotism, in which, their alternate successes have produced nothing, but slavery or licentiousness. Each succeeding generation, instead of profiting by the fatal experience of their ancestors, made but a transit from one form of slavery to another ; or shook from their orbit, by the volcanic struggles of a revolution, were thrown in shattered fragments, into a political *chaos*.

THIS was the melancholy state of the world—this was the fate of degraded man, at the arrival of the glorious era we now commemorate. By an habitual acquiescence in the measures of tyranny, mankind had forgotten, that nature made them free ! All the revolutions of society, had made no change in their condition—all the blood poured upon the altar of freedom, had been consumed by the flame of discord—a fable cloud was drawn over the reason of man, and the whole horizon of human society was enveloped in undistinguished night ! Momentary

flashes of intellect were seen amidst the dark turbulence of nations, which added horror to the dismal prospect and discovered the human faculties, crushed between sacerdotal tyranny and military despotism : and the devoted race, awaiting in tears of blood, the moment, when the bursting forth of light, should discover the rights of afflicted humanity,

AT length, when the fullness of time was accomplished, the archieve of mysterious fate, was opened and disclosed the happy destiny of AMERICA ! The genius of Columbia, issuing forth from the west, in her glittering car ; cloathed with "*parental glory and creative might*" rode wide into the chaotic abyfs of despotism ; and with the compass of the rights of nature, described the limits of the continent—" *Silence ye troubled waves, and peace ye warring elements, your discord end !*" Thus far let freedom's empire come—these be thy bounds America ;—and hence oh ! tyranny, be thy proud billows stayed ! "*Let there be light ! and at the omnic word, the light sprang forth !*"—The sun of freedom emerging from the gloom, in bright refulgence, arose upon the new formed world, and blessed mankind, with this auspicious day ! ! Roused by the dawn, the sleeping nation awoke to renovated life, and in the commanding voice of nature, declared their INDEPENDENCE.*

FROM this splendid *era*, as from a new creation, the mind of man assumed its natal dignity—freed from the iron sceptor of imperial pride, a generous emulation fired his heart and led him on to virtue and to glory ! While human excellence in other climes, crept slyly on "with timid caution, through the gloomy vale of obscurity, dreading, the prison, the dagger, or the poisoned bowl ;" here it boldly walked upon the illumen'd stage : conscious of merited applause and dignified pre-eminence. The natural objects which surrounded them, the rugged mountains, the unlimited forests and expansive plains, inspired Americans with a sense of primæval liberty. Far from the clamours of the eastern world, the willing soil was culti-

* Here the Declaration of Independence was read by Colonel WATKINS.

