

ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

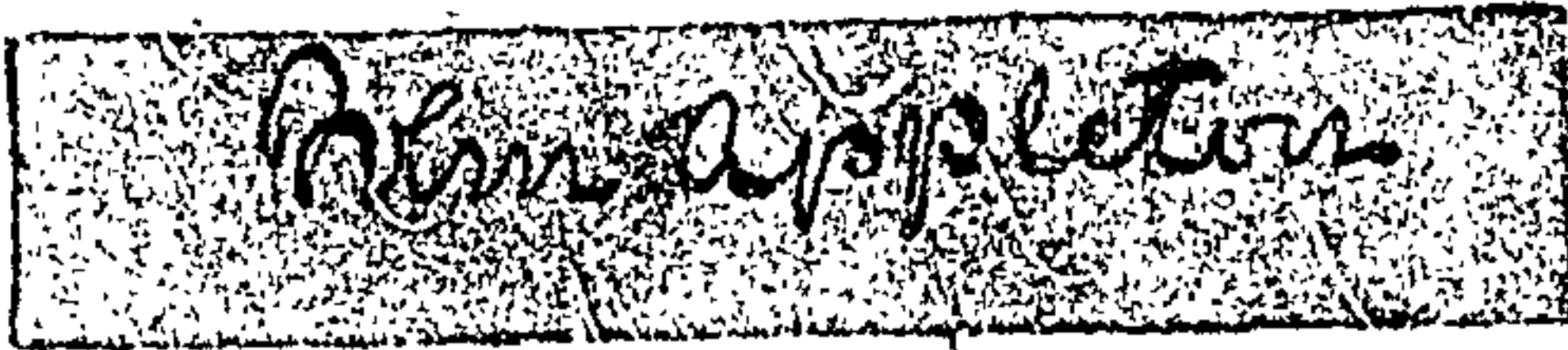
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLICANS

OF

PORTLAND AND VICINITY,

July 4th, 1838.

BY JOHN APPLETON.



PORTLAND:

PRINTED AT THE ARGUS OFFICE.

1838.

PORTLAND, July 5th, 1838.

DEAR SIR :—By unanimous vote of the Democratic Committee of Arrangements, for the 4th of July, I am requested to tender to you their thanks for the very excellent Oration, pronounced on the occasion of our late National Anniversary, and to request of you a copy thereof, for publication.

With great respect,

I have the honor to be,

Your Ob't Servant,

FREEMAN BRADFORD,

Ch. of said Committee.

JOHN APPLETON, Esq.

PORTLAND, July 6th, 1838.

DEAR SIR :—The Oration, hastily prepared, at the request of the Committee of Arrangements for the late Democratic Celebration, I herewith place at their disposal.

With many thanks for the obliging manner in which they have spoken, through you, of my services on that occasion—

I have the honor to be,

Your Obed't Servant,

JOHN APPLETON.

FREEMAN BRADFORD, Esq., *Ch. of the Committee.*

ORATION.

MY DEMOCRATIC FELLOW CITIZENS:—

At the close of sixty-two years, we are assembled to commemorate the day of our National Deliverance. Once more we have come together, with emotions of pride and gratitude, to trace back to its first glorious commencement, the history of the only free and democratic Government, which the world can boast. Again we would listen to the eloquent and kindling story of the Revolution. Again we would contemplate those bright revelations which it makes of all that is lofty in wisdom, sublime in patriotism, and great in action. And if there be a man here who is tired of the theme—who deems that the story has been too often told, and who does not feel his spirit stirring within him at the very mention of an enterprise which made him the descendant of an unthralled freeman, rather than of a privileged slave—if there be a man who does not exult in the idea of a handful of brave men forming the high purpose of a nation's freedom, and then going on through long, long years of suffering and of toil to fulfil that heroic purpose, and redeem the pledge which they had given to their country, and to each other, of "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honors;" that man has not an American soul within him. He is unworthy of the high destiny to which he has been called. "He does not deserve," in the language of another, "to breathe the pure air, to tread the green fields, to drink the cold springs, and hear the Sabbath bells, of a free country." But, I am wrong even to *imagine* such indifference—much more, to imagine it in an assembly of American Democrats. Here, at least, if no where else, the record of those early days may be safely unrolled. Here, at least, the incidents of the Revolution still preserve their power. Familiar to you as "household words" though they be, they have, nevertheless, lost none of that sublime energy, which has, in other times, thrilled your hearts with feelings of admiration and gratitude, that, while they did honor to the memory

of your fathers, proclaimed you worthy to have had such fathers. But, it is not for the gratification of an idle pride, that we rise to the associations of our early history. We do it, in obedience to the best impulses of our hearts, that we may render our honest tribute of respect to those great principles by which the Revolution was animated. And, in so doing, we think we exhibit most purely, our deep reverence for the men, who, with their lives, asserted and defended them. If we were called upon to celebrate mere martial prowess, and physical courage, we might find them in all the fulness of perfection, long before America had become the Sanctuary of the Puritans. The eagle standard of Rome, led on to fight and victory, spirits as brave as ever rallied beneath the inspiring folds of the "star-spangled banner"—And imagination cannot depict a more heroic devotion, than that which defended the pass of Thermopylae, and contested the field of Marathon. Athens, withstanding single-handed the banded power of Greece, is a spectacle which, so far as mere valor is concerned, may compare worthily with the struggle of the Colonies with England. But the bravery of ancient times was impelled by merely external circumstances, and aimed to accomplish no great and general end. Men were actuated from without rather than from within, by events rather than thoughts, and, as organized machines, were moved only by material objects. Their contests were, at best, between one Tyrant and another, and, whoever conquered, the number of slaves remained the same. They fought to exchange an old master for a new one—not to arrest their own inviolable supremacy—for certain actual privileges, never for abstract rights. In later times, the Crusades exhibited an agency of a more refined character, and in the struggle for religious liberty, at the period of the Reformation, we behold new and higher interests at stake, and see mankind incited by objects without the sphere of the senses, and by "passions which pressed forward to Eternity." But the Crusades were undertaken from enthusiasm, rather than principle, and were marked more by passion, than by deliberate conviction; and the Reformation was but the commencement of that series of causes whose glorious results were to be witnessed in another century, and on a different continent. It was reserved for the age of Washington to develop the complete triumph of the mental, over the material; and to exhibit the novel and sublime spectacle of a people struggling, not for conquest and power, but for equality and right—contending, not for a King, or a party, or a dynasty, but for the insulted majesty of our divine nature—warring,

not for the breach of a national treaty, but for the marred and broken treaty of universal humanity—pleading, not chartered rights, but the rights of man—striking not for liberty here, but for liberty every where—deciding not only their own destiny, but the destiny of their common race. It is the broad and general purpose, then, for which they labored, which sanctifies the efforts of our ancestors, and erects in every freeman's heart an altar to their memory. It is for the wide career of improvement which they opened to the world—for the mighty impulse which they gave to popular rights—for the vast discovery, more valuable than the finding of many continents, which they made of man's capacity—in a word, it is because, in the language of Lafayette, they gave “a lesson to oppressors and an example to the oppressed,” which shall endure through all time, that we, this day, render them our praise. The minds of the people, at the time of the Declaration, were thoroughly and deeply imbued with this grandeur of their design. The great principles of the contest had been long familiar to them. As early as 1754, we find John Adams predicting “the expulsion of the French from the Continent, and the establishment of an independent Government on the basis of the Union of the Colonies.” In 1761, James Otis asserted the inalienable rights of man as fully and decisively as they were afterwards asserted by Thomas Jefferson. It was in his celebrated argument against writs of assistance, which President Adams characterized as breathing the breath of life into the nation. “Otis,” says he, “was a flame of fire. Every man, of an immense, crowded audience, appeared to go away, as I did, ready to take arms against Writs of Assistance. Then, and there, was the first act of opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain. Then, and there, the child, Independence, was born. In fifteen years he grew up to manhood, and declared himself free.” The municipal records of the towns, at a period a little subsequent, are full of similar evidences of knowledge and patriotism. For the ten years previous to the outbreak at Lexington, the people were constantly discussing the great question of Colonial rights. As their grievances increased, their remonstrances assumed a higher tone. And the reason of their watchfulness is given in one of their town documents, that “thus, whether successful or not, succeeding generations may know that we understood our rights and liberties, and were neither ashamed nor afraid to assert or maintain them; and that we ourselves may have, at least, this consolation in our chains, that it was not through our neglect that this people was enslaved.” It seems strange, under

these circumstances, that events did not sooner attain their crisis—that the seeds of independence, so diligently sown, did not, at an earlier period, reach their harvest maturity. It is surprising that so much time was wasted in proposing half-way measures, and attempting compromises which, if they had been granted, could only have produced a temporary relief. The truth is, the leading men of the time were whigs—British whigs. They distrusted the virtue and stability of the people. They were wanting in that firm reliance upon their patriotism which they were afterwards so faithfully taught. They were contented, therefore, first, to demand British justice instead of natural justice. James Otis speaks of the independence of the Colonies as something which none but “rebels, fools, or madmen, would contend for”—And yet he had asserted, and defended more eloquently than any other man, the leading principles upon which that independence rests. But he feared the people. He dreaded the anarchy and confusion which history taught him to anticipate. “Were these Colonies left to themselves to-morrow,” he writes, “America would be a mere shambles of blood and confusion, before little petty States could be settled.” But this error was soon corrected, and corrected, too, by the people themselves. They were seen at a time when English authority was substantially abrogated, and they, in truth, had no government—were left to themselves—observing a spirit of law, and order, and forbearance, surpassing what they had ever exhibited in the most loyal times. “The consciousness of an exalted, and resolute common purpose, took the place at once, and with full efficacy, says Edward Everett, of all the machinery of constitutional government. An unseen spirit of order, resource, and power, walked, like an invisible angel through the land, and the people, thoughtful, calm and collected, awaited the coming storm.” It is worthy of remark, that during all the phrensied excitements which occurred in Boston between the years 1765 and 1776, not a single human life was taken by the inhabitants, either by assassination, popular tumult, or public execution. At Lexington, too, the people were seen taking their own cause into their own hands. From the nature of the case, there was at that fight little organization, or preparation, or discipline. But every thing was supplied by the spirit, and zeal, and intrepidity, of the men. They needed no commanders. They wanted no directions. They were led and governed by the souls within them. There was a similar display at Bunker Hill. To this day it is not known who was the commander of that glorious mound—and the people did not

stop to ask. They obeyed the deity which stirred within their bosoms. They did not wish the animation of music and dress, the glitter of burnished arms, and consecrated standards, "the pride, and pomp, and circumstance, of glorious war." They were contented to go—they *did* go—inexperienced, irregular, undisciplined, and half armed, and contending with the choicest of Europe's soldiery, they made that battle ground a classic soil—the Marathon of America. It was by such arguments as these that the people urged forward their cause, and carried home to every man the conviction that they could be trusted. Then it was that Whiggism was thrown aside—then it was, that no longer distrustful and afraid, our fathers embraced that doctrine of faith in man, which is the vital principle of pure Democracy.

"Then into life an infant empire springs !

"Then falls the iron from the soul ;

"Then Liberty's young accents roll

"Up to the King of Kings !"

"The people, the people," said John Adams, "if we are true to them, will carry us, and will carry themselves, gloriously through this struggle." Nobly was the prediction fulfilled ! Well did the people redeem the pledge ! Unblenchingly did they share the varying fortunes of the war ! In defeat, and in success, paid or unpaid, fearing neither the heat of Monmouth, nor the cold of Valley Forge, dreading no sacrifice of pleasure, or property, or life itself, under any and all circumstances they preserved their original fidelity. Gladly would I trace their changing history to its bright consummation. The field is an inviting one. Trenton and Princeton, Bennington and Camden, Saratoga and Yorktown—these, and a host of other eloquent names, press with all their glorious associations upon the memory, and claim the full tribute of our kindling hearts. And they have it. Sacred, ever sacred is their soil regarded as the Republic's Holy Land.

But we may not pause to read their inspiring records. We have other duties to perform, than that of gratitude—other claims than those of the honored dead. We may no longer, amid the bright memorials of our fathers' glory, forget the obligations which rest upon their descendants. And, at the present time, when the nation is fearfully convulsed by the struggle of contending principles, and parties are divided with more than ordinary zeal, upon great questions of permanent policy, we may profitably investigate the spirit of our institutions, and ascertain, if we can, how far we are progressing in that system of free government, which was at once the purpose and

the fruit of Revolutionary effort. The period of our separation from Great Britain, was by no means the termination of our national difficulties. On the contrary, they had not, until then, reached their unhappy maturity. We had pulled down a bad government, but we had not yet constructed a new and a better one. We had emerged successfully from a contest with Royal tyranny, but we had the far more doubtful task remaining to conquer ourselves. During the war we had been united by the very pressure of absolute necessity. This pressure being removed, the only ligament which had effectually bound us, was snapped in twain, and the inefficiency of the confederation was at once disclosed. Then, indeed, our day of trial came. We were wearied and exhausted by the labors and exertions of the late struggle. The ordinary business of life was at a stand, and its usual occupations suspended, or destroyed. We had no commerce either external or internal, and were oppressed by a worthless and deranged currency. Our credit abroad was annihilated, and we had no resources with which to repair it. It was the very state of things which, in other countries, had rent society to its deep foundations—the very gulf in which revolutionized France soon after plunged all the brilliant expectations she had excited. The friends of Liberty in the old world were looking on with intensest anxiety, and the most fearful forebodings, and patriots here, who, in the darkest times, had never yet despaired, were now seen to turn pale at the gloomy prospect before them. And yet the machine of authority, weak and deficient as it was, went on. The people, the feared, the abused, and mistrusted people, once more displayed their stability and virtue. They held, as it were, in suspense, all their mighty energies until they could be directed into safe, and proper channels. They guarded their rushing passions, and restrained their pent up feelings until, like the lightning of Heaven, they could be conducted harmlessly away. They exhibited, in short, the sublime spectacle of enlightened public opinion successfully taking the place of constituted law. It was a triumph mightier than that of arms—an achievement greater far than the conquest of many armies. When Cicero wished to eulogize the great general of antiquity, it was his highest encomium that he knew how to moderate success. “It is much, no doubt,” says he, “to succeed in a great and decisive battle; but to govern the passions, to quell the rage of combat, to moderate the insolence of victory—these are actions that elevate a man above the sphere of vulgar greatness; that raise him, as it were, to a sort of similitude with God himself.” It was this virtue, pervading the

common mind which preserved society from convulsion, until the distracted colonies were gathered, in union and harmony, under the broad ægis of the new Constitution. In the formation of this sacred instrument the popular principle had to encounter a formidable opposition. The admirers of the English Government were men of distinguished genius, and commanding influence, and the whole energy of their strength was exerted to make that government the model, and the mirror of our own. Nothing could exceed the reverence with which they regarded the institutions of our Father Land. "The immortal spirit of the wood nymph Liberty," Fisher Ames once said, "dwells only in the British oak." "The British," it was a favorite opinion of General Hamilton, "with all its corruptions, is the best constitution ever established by the wisdom of man." And these were, at this time, the opinions of a large and powerful party. In throwing off the yoke of England, they had not cast off their old English feelings and habits. Like the lion, described by Milton, they were but half animated, and were still struggling in their original clay. Though they had burst from political thralldom they still wore the degrading badges of their former masters. They were still British whigs. And in the low and unworthy spirit of their faith, they believed that man could only be governed by force, or by corruption. With Sir Robert Walpole, their great exemplar, they held the doctrine that "every man has his price," and that the potency of money could effect whatever was beyond the reach of power. The sovereignty of the people, in its full, broad, and exalted sense, as implying a capacity to discern the right, and a disposition to obey it—as preferring the teachings of the common mind to the results of individual thought—the combined intelligence of the many, to the imperfect knowledge of the few—as gathering its perfect wisdom from the collected opinions of the great multitude, and as reposing with unswerving fidelity upon the dictates of the universal conscience—this was a principle whose novelty they thought only equal to its absurdity. Their great object seemed to be, to save the people from the consequences of their own ignorance—to restrain them from self-destruction. And for this purpose, in the benevolence of their honest hearts, they wished to bind them in the splendid chains of a strong government. An Executive for life, with the power to appoint State Governors, and a Senate during good behaviour, were the conservative checks which they proposed to modify any popular impulses that might be felt under our national union. Happily the rallying Democracy defeated these dangerous provisions; and under the auspices of Washington, the people's suffrages ratified the existing Constitution. Failing, thus, at the

outset, in their opposition to republican principles, the federal party by no means relinquished their purpose. Still trembling in fear of anarchy, and dreading the disorders and convulsions of the ancient Republics, they aimed, by every possible expedient, to strengthen what they called, the feebleness of the general government. And by this leading object, from that time to this, has their whole policy been moulded and directed. To build up a great central power of almost despotic energy, at the expense of State rights, and individual freedom—a power, the poison of whose “wholesome restraints” should be felt in every department of business, and every walk of life, and the curse of whose “protective care” should control the daily concerns of its subject citizens, has been the great result for which they have unceasingly labored. The first accession of strength was obtained by transplanting here the involved financial policy of Great Britain. The political and monied powers united, it was thought, could wield an influence sufficient even to curb the licentiousness of the dreaded multitude. As if insubordination was not the true child of tyranny! As if faction, and tumult, and disorder, were not lashed into life by the rod of despotism! As if the people, like some ferocious monster, were only safe when confined in a deep dungeon, and surrounded by massive chains! It was thus that with a national debt for its basis, and a national bank for the binding keystone of its arch, the ponderous fabric of the Funding System arose, and federal authority rejoiced in an ally more potent even than itself. It was the first departure from the divine idea of our fathers—the first retrograde step in the path of popular freedom.—It marred at once and completely, all that beautiful simplicity which was the prevailing character of our political charter. Instead of a government of defined powers, and restricted to a few plain and simple purposes, we had one, the limits of whose control, and the number of whose objects, no man on earth could pretend to determine. For certainty we had substituted uncertainty. For the unchanging text, the varying exposition. The whole value of a written constitution was utterly lost. For its only advantage is that, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, it is fixed and unalterable. By the doctrine of construction and implication, we had made it as diffused and uncertain as the pretended charter of England.

The Alien and Sedition Laws, by which the constituted authorities were next supported, exhibit the worst of purposes accomplished by the worst of means. Their object was to intimidate and silence the enemies of the Administration, and this they proposed to effect by banishing obnoxious foreigners, and imprisoning those natives who were “Jacobins” enough to dread the accumulation of irresponsible

power. It is amazing that men should have been mad enough to attempt such an experiment upon the American People. It was a measure which not even a sceptred king could have safely ventured upon the subjects of his consecrated sway. A similar edict was the moving cause of the Belgian revolution, and it was in the effort to silence the complaints of his abused people, and muzzle the battery of an opposing press, that Charles the tenth was hurled from his throne to make way for a citizen king. It is not strange, then, that this community was agitated to its centre by an indignation which knew no bounds, and that, at the coming election, they swept away, as with the blast of a whirlwind, the dynasty which had thus oppressively exerted its authority. Many apologies were invented to abate the violence with which this ill-judged act was censured, and there were not wanting great minds, who, with a bad ingenuity, attempted to disguise its alarming tendencies. It indicates the intelligence of the people that, through all its disguises, they penetrated at once to its real character; and it demonstrates, most strikingly their virtue, that they waited patiently until they could apply the peaceful corrective of the ballot box. To administer the proper remedy, and "bring back the government to its republican tack," was the fortunate task of Thomas Jefferson. Upon no abler man could the great work have been devolved. Who, so fit as the author of the Declaration of Independence, to be the illustrious defender of its principles! It is mournful to reflect, that the lofty purity of his sentiments, and the sterling wisdom of his measures, did not save this great man from calumny while alive, and cannot now protect his memory from the unholy slanders of those who should shrink into insignificance at the very mention of his distinguished name. But it is the common law of our nature.

"He who ascends to mountain tops, shall find
 "The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;
 "He who surpasses, or subdues mankind
 "Must look down on the hate of those below.
 "Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
 "And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
 "Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
 "Contending tempests on his naked head,
 "And thus reward the tolls which to those summits led."

But a little while, however, and his slanderers will be forgotten, while his fame, ever new, and ever young, shall grow brighter and brighter, as successive generations complete their appointed course. The "life of Aaron Burr" will be forgotten almost in the brief space of a single life-time, but every future Republic, as it inscribes on its corner stone the glorious truths—"All men are created free and equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain in-

alienable rights"—will remember, with gratitude, him who first promulgated them. Like what the noble Marcius prophecied of his youthful son, he shall prove,

"To shame invulnerable, and stick i' the wars,

"Like a great sea mark, standing every flaw,

"And saving those who eye him."

Another, and perhaps the most favorite method of strengthening the hands of Government, is, by limiting the universal right of suffrage. For no one doctrine have the federal party more strenuously and consistently contended, than that which allows only property holders to exercise the elective franchise. He who has no "stake in the community," they perpetually declare, ought not to be allowed to influence its destinies. As if there was no stake but money! no interest in the whole universe but the interest of wealth! As if intelligence, and virtue, and wisdom, were nothing—and lands, and goods, and houses, were every thing! As if the patriot's heart did not beat as warmly beneath the coarse garments of the honest laborer, as beneath the rich vesture of fortune's favorites! They tell us, I know, that the poor are likely to be ignorant, and that the rich, on the other hand, possess all the means of abundant information, and they demand, they say, their exclusive privilege, not so much by the right of wealth, as by the right of superior mind. If this were true—if the extent of a man's possessions was a sure index to his mental character, the injustice of which we complain would still exist. For why should he, who, by the intellectual endowments which nature has given him can already exert a wide and overmastering influence, be clothed with additional power by the strong arm of legislative enactments! But it is not so. It is not true, that in a free community, poverty and ignorance go together, and knowledge is only to be obtained by him who can purchase it with gold. No! The means of improvement, here, are as widely extended as the disposition to improve. It is the glory of our Republic to have repealed the monopoly of learning, and to have thrown broadly open every avenue which leads to instruction. The spirit of our institutions contemplates no such thing as an ignorant man. The same free schools which sent forth Franklin to conquer the elements, and Washington to awe the world by his mingled wisdom and integrity, still exist in all their original efficacy to plead the cause of humanity, and strengthen the foundations of free government. And he, who, with the high responsibility of an independent voter resting upon him, does not prepare himself fitly to discharge his trust, can complain only of his own base and degenerate soul. Is it said that time is requisite as well as money, and that the period necessary for improvement must be devoted to that labor which earns the daily

bread. In the old world this would be fearfully true. And when I remember the fondness which pervades so many minds for the institutions of Europe—the desire, which is so prevalent, of building up splendid incorporations, and accumulating vast masses of power in the hands of a few, and the unbounded reverence for wealth which even now seems fast growing into a national passion, I tremble, I confess, lest it may one day be realized here. That time, thank Heaven! has not yet arrived. And if the people are but true to the cause of human enlightenment, it never will. Among us, if no where else, there are still such rights as the rights of labor. Whatever else is monopolized, we do not yet allow the monopoly of time, and not yet in America are the great purposes of moral existence sacrificed to an unceasing toil for gain. Our laborers are not compelled, like those of England, to work by night as well as by day, and to wear away their bodies and their minds, that they may not be starved, and that their employers may be rich. And when we are pointed to England, as an example of national greatness, we should remember the price of human suffering, at which that greatness has been purchased. When we are told of her riches, we should remember her army of paupers. And when her justice is lauded, and her magnanimity praised, we should point indignantly to India, which her avarice has desolated, and to Ireland, poor, mired out, and oppressed Ireland, whose scorched and blasted fields are fit emblems of the broken spirits of her sons, and ask, if these are the fruits of her evenhanded, and liberal justice! Great and prosperous is she called—the workshop of the world! Go into her manufactories, and there learn, from the sickly looks, and the lifeless eyes—from the enfeebled frames, and the dwarfed intellects of the human machines which you behold, that when wealth is thus obtained, it is criminal to be rich. We might rival her, perhaps, in this, her great pre-eminence. We have already accomplished wonders towards doing so. But is it desirable that we should? Will it increase the virtue, and the happiness, the honor, and the true glory, of the nation? “Will it strengthen,” says Pres. Humphreys, “our republican institutions, and give us Spartan hearts, and Spartan sinews, to defend them? Is it best, that upon the banks of every stream which can be made to yield a great water power, we should be able to marshal a mile of factory girls, to be reviewed by our Presidents in their tours of observation?” “I marvel,” he adds, and who does not share his wonder? “how so many sensible mothers can consent to part with their daughters, and how the daughters can be willing to come down from their green, fleece-clad hills, and exchange their bright skies, and healthy breezes, and wide spread

landscapes, for the confinement of heated rooms, the annoyance of chemical odors, and the deafening clatter of a thousand-handed machinery." Let me not be understood as waging war upon this large and valuable department of human industry. I only protest against its unreasonable extension. I only ask, that upon the question of its increase, something besides mere money-making may be taken into the account. The spirit of gain should not be the presiding genius of our community. The God we worship should be a nobler Deity than avarice.

In their opposition to a system of government thus consolidated, the Democracy has ever been consistent and unyielding. And after the triumphant success of Mr. Jefferson, in 1800, it is curious to see how quickly it was deserted by its very originators. The same men, who, but a little before, had exhausted the whole vocabulary of sorrow in lamenting the weakness and inefficiency of the constituted authorities, were now heard denouncing them in unmeasured terms as arbitrary and despotic. In building, with so much care, a strong government, they had not looked to see it administered by any other hands than their own. It was with deep and bitter disappointment, therefore, that they beheld the sceptre of their ill-acquired power wrenched, like that of Macbeth, from their grasp, "by an unlinical hand, no son of theirs succeeding." They did not, however, as we are told of the proud cardinal of history, retire in humility, and resignation, bidding "a long farewell to all their greatness." Because, perhaps, they could not, like him, boast "that peace above all earthly dignities, a still and quiet conscience." But rather like the Roman Coriolanus, they sought to destroy the country which had deprived them of power. To rule or to ruin, truth justifies us in saying, seems at this period to have been their full determination. And they literally moved the three worlds to accomplish it. Never did a hostile nation pursue a public enemy with more intensity of hate, than they followed, under all circumstances, the administrations of their successors. The annals of party warfare can exhibit no parallel to their malignant energy. Instead of coming up to the support of government, at a period of great danger and difficulty, and yielding their private animosities, and party rancor, to a prevailing regard for the general good, they endeavored to widen every division, and to paralyze and defeat every measure which was adopted for the national defence. They seemed to prefer universal shipwreck, rather than to be saved while their opponents grasped the helm—even though that shipwreck was of the richest freight of human happiness and liberty that was ever borne upon the waves of time. We were struggling in the fearful tempest of a foreign

war. Upon her own element we were contending for supremacy with "the mistress of the Ocean." Young as we were yet as a nation, and limited as were our naval resources, we relied with confidence upon the stout hearts, and strong arms, of a patriotic community. So long as the people were true, our country, we knew, for we had been taught it in other times, was absolutely invincible. "The storm sails," says another, "may fly in ribbons to the wind, mast and topmast may come down, and every billow of the ocean boil through the gaping seams; and the brave ship, by the blessing of Heaven, may yet ride out the storm. But if, when the winds, in all their fury, are beating upon her, and the black and horrid rocks of a lee shore are already hanging over the deck, and all other hope and dependence fail, if then the chain-cable gives way she must, with all on board, be dashed to pieces." That cable, in the phrensy of their infatuated madness, the Federalists sought to sever! And what was the result? The war rolled on—gloriously—triumphantly rolled on, covering our arms with fresh lustre, and adding to the bright catalogue of our nation's heroes, the names of another host,

As great as those
Who at Philippi for their country fell.

The people did not stop to inquire into the causes of the war. They did not ask, when the enemy was at our very door, whether it might not have been avoided. But burning with indignation against foreign aggression, and responding to the lofty sentiment of him whose patriot fame should live forever—"our country, right or wrong!" they bore up our national honor untarnished, and made the "star spangled banner" forever afterwards a sufficient protection to all who floated beneath its folds. The Government might be weak—its conduct injudicious, and its acts unwise, but the people would not look tamely on to see it degraded and overthrown by a public foe. So true it is,

"That how e'er crowns and coronets be rent,
"A virtuous populace shall rise the while,
"And stand a wall of fire, to guard their native soil."

It is to that uncorrupted populace that the government still looks for protection. Once more a disappointed and factious party have attempted to overthrow it.—Once more our own citizens have been heard rejoicing at national misfortunes, and again the privileges of the few have been sought at the price of the destruction of the many. We contend not now against the arms of Britain, but against the more potent, though silent, influence of her corrupt example. We contend against those foreign systems of financial policy by which it is attempted to assert here the supremacy of wealth. We would preserve, in all their original purity, those plain and republican institutions which were founded, not in luxury and splendor, but in simplicity and truth. We would make our republic strong, not in the dazzling glory of its golden shrines, not in the glittering pomp of its regal establishments, but in the stern virtues, and honest independence, of its intelligent sons. We would remember the lessons which come to us from the crumbling ruins of ancient freedom. Amid the fragments of once glorious but now fallen empires, we would

learn wisdom for the preservation of our own. That wisdom teaches us, that the Tyrant's yoke is only sustained upon the necks of slaves, and that a State is never destroyed while its children retain unbowed within them, the erect, and haughty spirit of nature's freemen.

"It is the moral of all human tales ;
 "First Freedom, and then glory—when that fails,
 "Wealth, vice, corruption—Barbarism at last.

"Bear witness, Greece, thy living page !
 "Attest it many a deathless age !
 "'T were long to tell, and sad to trace,
 "Each step from splendor to disgrace ;
 "Enough—no foreign foe could quell
 "Thy soul, till from itself it fell.
 "Yes, self abasement paved the way,
 "For villain bonds, and despot sway."

And Rome, too, the Empress of the world,

"She who was named eternal, and arrayed
 "Her warriors but to conquer"—

was crushed only beneath the weight of her own luxury and vice. The seeds of her destruction were sown long before Cæsar crossed the Rubicon, and the Goths and Vandals never polluted the sacred inclosure of her capitol, until her people had been degraded enough to pay the tribute money. Whether the same causes of national ruin developed here, shall overthrow America, and this "new Rome rising in the West" shall only equal the splendor of the seven-hilled city, to share also its melancholy fate, it is for her citizens, under Providence, to determine. Upon their virtue and intelligence her preservation depends. The world will not lament her fall, until she shall first mourn their degeneracy. Let us, then, do our part for the cause of popular improvement. With vestal watchfulness let us cherish those pure principles of morality which have been transmitted to us by a pious ancestry. Let us guard against the first approaches of that luxury and ostentation which are alike fatal to private happiness, and public stability. And let us keep our political institutions in all their original purity, unconnected with pecuniary interests, and untainted by that corruption which is the dangerous consequence of such a connection. Then may our country rejoice in the hope of new glory, and continued existence. For then, in the language of Virgil, where he speaks of the future glory of the Roman empire, she will be,

"Felix prole virum : qualls Berecynthia mater
 "Invehitur curru Phrygiæ turrita per urbes
 "Læta deum partu, centum complexa nepotes,
 "Omnes Coelicolas, omnes supra alta tenentes.

"Proud of her sons she lifts her head on high—
 "Proud, as the mighty mother of the sky,
 "When through the Phrygian towns, sublime in air
 "She rides triumphant in her golden car,
 "Crowned with a nodding diadem of towers,
 "And counts her offspring, the celestial powers,
 "A shining train who fill the blest abode ;
 "A hundred sons, and every son a God."

ERRATUM.—On page 1, twenty-fifth line, for "arrest" read *assert*.