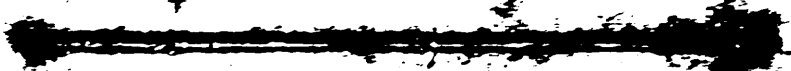


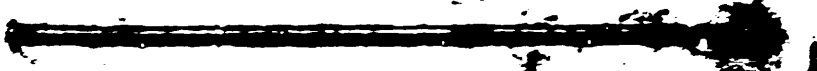
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Dr. Bailey's

ORATION

American Independence



AN  
ORATION,

PRONOUNCED

AT

WISCASSET,

ON THE

FOURTH OF JULY,

1805.

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BY JERE. BAILEY.

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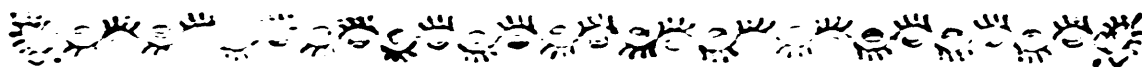
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WISCASSET  
PRINTED BY BABSON AND RUST.

1805.

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1805



JEREMIAH BAILEY, Esq.

Sir,

THE Committee of Arrangements for celebrating the Anniversary of our National Independence, by the unanimous desire of their assembled fellow-citizens, present you their thanks for the spirited and elegant Oration delivered by you this day, and request a copy for the press.

PER ORDER.

NYMPHAS STACY, *Chairman.*

Wicasset, July 4, 1805.



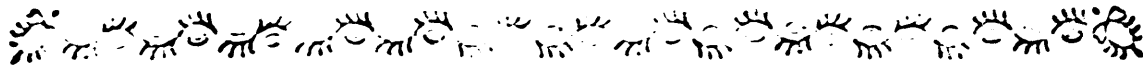
Sir,

THE Address which you have politely requested for publication, was designed merely as an effusion of the day. If a single principle has been advanced which tends to the preservation of our national constitution—genuine republicanism—and the glory and happiness of our common country: my wishes are gratified, and I submit the copy to your disposal.

YOUR'S RESPECTFULLY,

JERE. BAILEY.

MR. NYMPHAS STACY, *Chairman* }  
of the *Committee of Arrangements.* }





## Oration.

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**T**HE Day which ushered in a great national blessing, ought always to be remembered with joy and gratitude. Our nature teaches us to stamp it deep on the memory, and never suffer the impression to be effaced. Its remembrance ought to excite emotions, grateful, sweet and joyous to the soul.

UNDER the impulse of this principle, permit me to felicitate you on an era, the most brilliant and splendid in the annals of fame;—the return of another anniversary of our country's freedom. With pleasure I view this assembly presenting themselves in this temple, and bowing the knee at the altar of liberty. Let the imagination take an excursive flight, and survey five millions of our brethren, this day, and perhaps at this hour, surrounding the altars of their God and their Country, and breathing the most lively effusions of joy and gratitude. This is a proud day for America. On this day, she indignantly forsook the humble station of a dependant colony, and ascended her proper elevation of rank among the empires of the world. On this day, the revered fathers of our land, in solemn council, bold-

ly declared us independent and free.\* On this day, the all protecting Genius of Columbia triumphantly enrolled her on the brightest page in the register of fame. A struggle so noble ; a contest so unequal ; an event so glorious, will alwas excite the most lively, and lasting impressions. You who have seen the curtain rise, the great drama unfolded, and the last scene closed, need not the aid of description to recall it to remembrance. But posterity will demand it. Let the story be engraven with the pen of truth on tables of brass, and transmitted down through a long range of posterity. Let it appear in indelible characters to unborn millions. This will be done. The faithful page of history will contain the record. It will there appear, that the revolution in this country was "righteous in principle, humane in progress, and successful in event."

It has often been told us, that our Fathers sought these shores as an asylum from the fangs of persecution,—that they braved the dangers of the ocean, and the severities of an inclement season,—that they struggled with famine and pestilence,—that perseverance, industry, and bravery at length safely established them in this new world,—that the unwarrantable, and vexatious pretensions of our parent country, tore us asunder, and a mighty empire was founded. This interesting chain of events forms a prominent feature in the political history of America. A series of events, with which every American ought to be minutely acquainted.

\* See Note A.

We have abundant cause for joy and gratitude to the great disposer of the destinies of nations. Our lines have truly fallen in pleasant places. Our country stretching immensely through all the genial climes profusely affords the necessaries, and even elegancies of life. Our industrious and virtuous yeomanry find ample space for cultivation in our widely extended forests. The rich and exuberant soil of millions of acres court their hand.\* Active and enterprising commerce displays our flag in every section of the globe. Her thousand streams of wealth, pour copiously into every part of our country. Cherish her, for she constitutes the sinews of our nation. Lay not the heavy hand of vexatious exaction upon her; let her be free, and she will flourish, and bounteously reward you. America can justly boast of many sons of literature. The day-star of science has far advanced in its resplendent progress, and its benign rays are shed upon every department of polite literature. Our Ancestors have done much for us. We like dutiful sons ought to seize the golden moment of improvement, and accomplish and carry to perfection those plans of glory, which they only unfolded. With such friendly aids; with such prospects before you; with such a weight of responsibility upon you; guard with vigilance the treasure committed to your care. Let not the bright gem tarnish in your hands. Cherish and preserve it, for it is a bright legacy of glory and renown, bequeathed you by your Ancestors.

\* See Note E.

BUT the prosperity of empires is seldom long unclouded, and their very existence is often in danger. The page of history presents to our view the rise, progress, and final dissolution of the ancient republicks. Their declension, fall, and ruins, pass in melancholy review before us. The political associations of Greece stood first and highest on the list of republicks.\* They were the great nurseries of science and literature. Every study which depends on the force and faculties of the understanding, was there carried to the summit of perfection. While they retained their native innocence—while they sacredly adhered to the principles of their several constitutions; they shone a bright constellation in the ancient political hemisphere. They shed beams of light on the darkness which surrounded them. The melancholy date of their fall, may be traced to a relaxation in the original simplicity of their manners. Prosperity rendered them haughty and imperious—they fatally indulged a thirst for conquest and plunder—Asiatick riches and luxury presented alluring objects of spoil—they attacked and conquered, for they were then in the vigour of manhood—they were brave, free, and invincible; their nerves were not yet unstrung by luxury, and their minds were scarcely contaminated with a sordid passion. But mark the result! Plunged in luxury and effeminacy, their bold national character forsook them—they became weak, enervated, and vicious—they suffered their martial ardour to abate and evaporate—unprincipled and ambitious men started up among them—demagogues and hallow

\*See Note C.

hearted politicians were known in those days—their social compact; their constitutions were rudely assailed and violated—turbulent and vindictive parties arose, fomented by artful and aspiring men—each furiously struggled for power, and often for existence—the times became dangerous—the vociferous patriot who was loudest in his pretended love for the people, too often triumphed over real worth and unobtrusive merit. In this violent collision among the very elements of their government; in this conflict for power; their constitutions received their fatal down. In this turmoil of party, that deluded people fondly supposed they had gained their liberty. But it was of a dangerous species. It was liberty without order, or safety—it was licentiousness herself maddening through the land. In these dreadful spasms and convulsions of the political body, these republics were prostrated, ruined, and even annihilated. No trace or vestige remains, except the melancholy relation of the historian.

BETWEEN the dissolution of those governments, and the declaration of independence, by the United States, a long series of ages have rolled away. The republics of Italy and Switzerland have since been formed. These may be denominated an establishment of the middle age. They also have been destined to a cruel reverse of fortune. Those political scourges of nations; ambition, tyranny, usurpation and anarchy have in turn reigned uncontrouled. Yet some of them resisted these rude shocks, and survived to the present age. Within a short period—within our own recollection, they were flourishing and happy.—But where are they! Swept off



in the whirlwind of revolution, and their wretched inhabitants bending under the iron rod of French despotism.\*

It has often been asserted that the late revolution in France originated in consequence of our own; and that its principles were first imbibed in this country.—But between that destructive and sanguinary revolution, and the glorious cause which gave birth to this joyful day, an elegant modern writer indignantly draws this parallel. “Of our glorious revolution suffice it to say, heaven and earth will acquit it of being the example, or just occasion of the horrors, which have involved the course of political change in Europe. This country has been ambitious to be esteemed the cradle and nurse of liberty; and to its immortal honour so let it be esteemed. In 1792, and even in 1800, some in this country with conscious pride have claimed the new order of things in France, as the legitimate offspring of American liberty. But that Monster born on the fatal tenth of August, dandied on the atrocious knee of successive parties, nursed with the blood of the scaffold, and fattened on the carnage of millions, God forbid should be thought the relative of American liberty. Fair as the spirit of flight was our liberty from her very birth. In all the terms of defensive war her heart was gentle. She never triumphed over a prostrate foe; she never stained her lance with a drop of civil blood. But having freed oppression from our shores by the music of her voice and the power of persuasion alone, she charmed the people to the equal res-

\* See Note D

traints of constituted authority and law. Religion smiled and embraced her." The French in their first effusions of liberty vainly attempted to sacrifice the whole world to the Goddess.\* But instead of the mild beneficent angel of liberty, they offered their frantick adorations to the haggard demon of carnage and destruction. While the leaders of that revolution appeared merely to seek reformation in their government—while they professed a zeal for its amendment, not its dissolution, they received the prayers of Americans for success. But when their zeal was wrought up to frenzy ; when their ardour kindled to fury ; when they entirely lost sight of the principles of reform, and substituted those of destruction ; when pillage, murder, and proscription became the order of the day, well may we disavow any kindred, or even similarity in the two revolutions. The hero of our independence, never directed us in any paths, except those which led to glory.

We live in an age peculiarly fortunate. We have the experience of more than twenty-five centuries ; and the examples of all republicks before us. We ought to raise those political beacons high in view, and profit by their fate. If we do not, let our lips be forever sealed ; and let us wear the chains of slavery in silence. We must stand convicted of an inglorious lethargy, and criminal inattention.

We possess a national constitution, the boast of our country and the admiration of the world. It was formed after laborious investigation, and patient research. The lines and shades of this sacred

\* See Note E.

charter of our rights, were drawn with a masterly pencil. In order to dispense equal justice to the several states; compromise and reciprocity, appeared as prominent features. Our persons and property were protected; our rights clearly defined; our best interests firmly established.\* Its adoption was effected in the calmness of peace. Reason and judgment deliberately decided. Around this constitution, every American ought to rally as the palladium of our safety. We ought cheerfully to enlist ourselves under its sacred banners. We ought to encircle it with a legion—not with Bonaparte's legion of honour; but with a legion of free, brave, united American citizens, who will perish in its defence, rather than surrender it to its invaders.

In order to preserve this constitution, and retain your rights; never suffer yourselves to be flattered and deceived. While you enjoy as great a degree of rational liberty as your relative situations will admit—while you are protected by the laws—while your persons and property are secur—while you are prosperous and happy, realize the blessing—realize that you have rights and privileges, and that you freely enjoy them. Whoever, under the specious mask of friendship for the people, attempts to flatter and seduce you with the soft blandishments of patriotism; distrust him; he smiles only to deceive you. It is the specious and flagitious you ought to dread.† To guard against these hypocrites in politics; these state empiricks; endeavour by every exertion to diffuse information and virtue among the citizens. The former will teach them the

\* See Note F.

† See Note G.

true road to happiness and glory; and the latter, stimulate them in its pursuit.

It is also of the last importance that we preserve our national character. We possess certain characteristic traits and features peculiar to ourselves. An American ought to glory in his name. In the infancy of our country, perhaps policy dictated an encouragement to emigration. But in this stage of our progress, the reason ceases to operate. Our population increases in a ratio, astonishing and rapid. A great influx of foreigners among us, tends to break up and destroy our national manners and habits. This is an important and interesting consideration; the subject deserves the serious attention of every friend to his country. It is not contended, that we ought to exclude *all* foreigners.\* To the sons of science & literature—to the children of industry and sober habits—to all in social & friendly intercourse with us, we cordially bid a friendly welcome. But when the restless—the turbulent—the insurgent—the vagabond—the factious—the infidel—and every “scoundrel convict” are cast upon our shores, we ought to tremble for our safety. An easy naturalization, is an easy mode of subverting and destroying the American character, and American liberties. The policy is fraught with incalculable danger; it opens wide our gates and indiscriminately admits both friends and foes. Its pernicious effects are instantly obvious. The administration which facilitates this eruption upon us, will always rely upon it for support. The barriers which secure our innocence and spotless fame, will be thrown

\*See Note H.

down, and a flood of European vices let loose upon us. When we undertake to bestow the freedom of our country—our rights and immunities, upon a stranger; we ought to use the most scrupulous circumspection. We then bestow the best—the most illustrious gift in our possession. We receive the wanderer to the bosom and embraces of our country. Common prudence—common sense—and even philanthropy herself, dictates care and caution.

In a government like ours, a perfect coincidence in political opinions can never be expected. The bold and the timid—the virtuous and the wicked—the learned and the ignorant—are entitled to their own opinions—they are all wedded to their own favourite theories. Hence the different shades of political sentiment among us. To the honest, sincere, independent, enlightened, and virtuous of *all parties*, we bow respectfully. If they err, their errors are of the head, not of the heart. We fondly presume this class of men are numerous, and will be active. They ought to rise in the majesty of their strength. They ought to embody in a firm phalanx, and make a noble stand for the salvation of their country. They ought to assimilate, coincide, and unite. Until this “union of honest men” takes place, the enemies of our constitution will labour with success.\* While stupor and lethargy pervade the mass of the people—while they are deficient in knowledge and correct information, the most fatal evils spring up. Under such a lax system, the dishonest—the base—the vicious—the worthless and profligate, rear their head. Then

\*See Note L.

ambition, cunning, intrigue, vice, immorality, and infidelity appear. They openly assume a bold and imposing attitude. They spread the snare for the simple and unwary, and zealously strive for proselytes. On those who are determined on the destruction of every federative trait in the national government; nothing soothing, mild, or lenient will operate. They disdainfully reject all compromise. They possess an infuriate ardour which never cools, and a feverish zeal which never abates. They “urge, resume, rally, and press the attack” with a malignant perseverance. They enlist and press into their service the auxiliary aids of chicanery, hypocrisy, falshood, and duplicity. They boldly ascend to the palace, and meanly stoop to the cottage.

At a political crisis like this, let us all cordially unite to repress the evil. Cherish and practice true republican virtues—let the streams of knowledge and information flow pure and uncontaminated.—Convince the people, that to be happy, they must be virtuous. To preserve their rights, they must discern them. Convince them, that if our sacred constitution is to be violated, altered, and defaced, in order to subserve the views of any dominant party; whether that party be federal, or democrat-ick; then we must pronounce a melancholy farewell to all our happy prospects. Then farewell genuine federal republicanism, and all thy blessings. Then farewell! a mournful farewell! to integrity, virtue, honour, and glory. They will vanish, to reappear in other climes, and at other periods, when their intrinsic worth shall be duly appreciated, and better understood.

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## NOTES.

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[A.] ON this memorable day, the following motion was made by RICHARD HENRY LEE, and seconded by JOHN ADAMS, "Resolved, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be totally dissolved." *Marshall.*

[B.] Americans by their patient, sober habits, are remarkably fitted for clearing and settling the vast regions within their boundaries. The interior of our country is rapidly changing its forests for fruitful cultivated fields.--C. F. VOZNEY, in his *Tableau du Climat et du Sol des Etats Unis de l'Amérique*, thus ingeniously characterises an American and French settler. "The American settler, slow and silent, does not rise very early in the morning; but, when he has once risen, he spends the whole day in an uninterrupted series of useful labours. At breakfast he coldly gives directions to his wife, who receives them with timidity, and executes them without contradiction. If the weather be fair, he goes out to work, cuts down trees, makes fences, ploughs, &c. If the day be rainy, he makes an inventory of the contents of his house, barn, and stables; repairs the doors, windows, or locks; drives a nail where it is wanting, makes tables or chairs, and employs himself diligently in making his habitation secure, convenient, and neat. After all these arrangements, to please himself, he is yet willing, if a good opportunity offer, to sell his farm, and retire into the woods, ten or twenty leagues from the frontier, to form a new establishment. He will pass several years in clearing away the trees, in constructing a hut, then a shed, and then a barn; in cultivating the ground, &c. If he be patient and serious as himself, will record his labours, and they will contentedly remain, sometimes for half a year, without seeing the face of a stranger. But at the expiration of four or five years he will have subdued, and brought to, a place which ensures the subsistence of his family.

"The French settler, on the other hand, rises early in the morning, and has so much to boast of. He consults with his wife on what to set himself about. Though he asks her advice, it would be strange if they should always happen to agree. The wife comments, insists, contests. The husband is positive or yielding, vexed or encouraged. Sometimes his hobby is inkstone to him; he takes his gun to go a hunting, or sets out on a visit to his neighbours. Sometimes these visits are repaid. Indeed to visit and to chat are of so much importance to Frenchmen, that all the settlers through the whole frontier from Louisiana to Canada, are emulous of being near each other. \* \* \* \* his ideas evaporate in ceaseless chat. He exposes himself to domes-

tick contradiction and bickering, and excites the slanders and quarrels of all his neighbours. At length he finds, that he has squandered away his time, without having brought any thing to pass, truly useful to himself, or beneficial to his family."

[C.] The early ages of Greece are involved in much obscurity. But it appears, that when they first emerged from barbarism, they were governed by regal power. As civilization progressed, they expelled their kings, who were generally the worst of tyrants, and assumed a republican form of government. Their laws were so constructed, that the lowest member of society might rise to the first honours in the state, if he possessed merit. The education of their youth was viewed of such importance, that it constituted one branch of their government. They were early taught a love for their country. This stood first in their creed. Habits of sobriety and simplicity were carefully cherished. They were taught to admire justice, valour, generosity, and magnanimity. By the practice of these virtues, the Grecians rose to the highest pitch of fame, and for a long time retained their elevated station. The causes of their ruin, are interesting to Americans. The different branches of their government—legislative—judiciary—and executive, were not clearly and distinctly separated. The balances were not accurately adjusted. Originally all questions of importance, both legislative and judiciary, were discussed in their popular assemblies. The absurdity of this mode is instantly obvious. One great cause of their ruin, was their mutual dissentions, and perpetual animosities. The Spartan, and Athenian governments were powerful and jealous rivals of each other, and kept the rest in continual broils and confusion. Here let Americans pause and reflect. Here let them apply the case to themselves. Let no aspiring Sparta or Athens rise in these states.

[D.] Before the late conquest of these republics; or as some contend, before the French took them under their *paternal* and *fostering* hand, the Swiss Cantons enjoyed as much unadulterated happiness as any nation on the globe. They were distinguished for their honesty, and simplicity of manners. They were contented with their vallies and mountains. "Rural felicity" reigned among them. Their country was filled with difficult passes. The tremendous front of Mont Plane seemed to defy an enemy.—Their courage was never questioned.—By what means were they conquered?—The question is easily answered. They were artfully divided, and subdued. In the hour of danger, they paused, deliberated, and hesitated, while their chains were closed upon them. They were shorn of their strength, while sleeping in the lap of Delilah. They were deficient in energy and union.





[G.] Much mischief has been done “by insinuations, that a certain celestial virtue, more than human, has been necessary to preserve liberty.” This is not true. That virtue which the God of nature has placed within our reach, is amply sufficient. The *perfectibility* of human nature—the *perfectibility* of governments—and the *perfectibility* of constitution making, have been ridiculousty, backneyed by demagogues. Genuine liberty, the birthright of every American, instead of being *perfected* by such hands; like the tender sensitive plant, would shrink and recoil at the unhallowed touch.

[H.] Mr. JEFFERSON’S admirers contend, that his “Notes on Virginia were written with the pen of a philosopher—that the political principles there advanced, are sound and true. Let us for a moment admit it. Consider these Virginian Notes as a political oracle, and then hearken for a response on naturalization. Here it is. “It is better to carry our provisions and materials to workmen there, (Europe) then bring them to the provisions and materials, *and with them their manners and principles.* The loss by the transportation of commodities across the Atlantick will be *made up in happiness and proficience of government.* The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body. It is the *manners and spirit* of a people which preserves a republick in vigour. A degeneracy in these is a canker which soon eats to the heart of its laws and constitution.” This book was written in 1781, and in charity we ought to believe that the author felt a conviction of the truth of what he wrote. The foregoing extract contains an unequivocal disapprobation of an easy admission of foreigners among us. We must send our workmen their dinners over the Atlantick, rather than have them here. How do these ideas of the *philosopher* of 1781, accord with those of the *President* of 1805?—*they are antipathetic.*

[I.] The enemies of our constitution, when charged with designs hostile to that instrument, usually deny the fact. But the past year has unfolded a most interesting matter in the politics of our country. In the late schism among the democrats, many *prelus confessions* have been made. They are split into two parties. As was the case in France, we have our *terrorists* and *moderates*. Mr. Elliot of Vermont and Mr. Butler of South-Carolina, both democrats, have with boldness and independence come forward and accused *themselves* with designs directly hostile to our constitution. The letters of the former gentleman to his constituents, and the written declaration of the latter, deserve the attention of every New-England man. The violent measures now pursuing in Pennsylvania cause the most serious alarm in the minds of moderate men in that quarter. It is even stated, that at no time during our Revolution were we in so great danger, as at the present. Many of the democrats now see the frightful portent, and are endeavoring to correct its indications.