



W. CLAGGETT'S

ORATION.

AN
ORATION,
PRONOUNCED AT
PORTSMOUTH, N. H.
ON THE
FOURTH DAY OF JULY, 1812,
IN
COMMEMORATION
OF THE
THIRTY-SIXTH ANNIVERSARY
OF
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

BY WILLIAM CLAGGETT, ESQ.

“ Base submission, inviting both indignity and plunder,
Like a worm, kills the oak that could have brav'd the thunder.”

“ For Freedom's rich blessings we'll fight like our Sires,
Or light with our Charter our funeral pyres.”

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ORATION.

THE return of this glorious anniversary of our Independence fills every heart with joy, moderates the discordant feelings of party, and kindles a flame of patriotism in every breast. America, in the sublime attitude of defensive war, turns her retrospective eye to that bright era in the annals of time, when more than two millions of people indignantly cast off the shackles of tributary vassalage, and assumed their right of sovereignty among the nations of the earth. Thirty-six years has this anniversary been celebrated as our grand national jubilee. The sons of freedom, their bosoms glowing with patriotic ardor, annually consecrate this festival; as did the children of Israel the day of their wonderful deliverance from vile bondage in the land of Ham.

May this day ever be sacred to liberty; may it be stricken from the calendar of time, ere we bend the knee before the tyrant's throne, or cease to commemorate the nativity of a brave people, who at the altar of liberty, made their solemn vows to *live free or die on freedom's soil.*

The dignity of our subject rises in view to colossal size, brings to recollection the valiant deeds and past achievements of American heroes and sages, affords to the war-worn veteran a repast of pleasure, inspires *your* minds with religious gratitude, but with diffidence the mind of him, who now has the honor of leading your reflections. The wide field before us has been often explored, and its richest productions have

been selected by the most celebrated orators of America ; literary taste has here culled its choicest flowers, and the powers of invention have long since been exhausted. Novelty from me, cannot therefore reasonably be expected.

To trace some of the causes, which led to the establishment of our national character, to point out some of the excellencies of our constitution and form of government, some of the evils which tend to their subversion, and principles, which may perpetuate them, will be my present attempt.

While the origin of other nations is enveloped in the labyrinths of fable and romance, or concealed by the veil of antiquity, it is the peculiar characteristic of the history of the American nation to be accompanied with the clearness of the solar light, and the certainty of demonstration.

At the commencement of the seventeenth century, bigotry, the persecutions of the English church and tyranny threatened proscription and extermination to all who believed that they owed a stronger allegiance to the government of that Being,

“ Who wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds,”

than to that of England, and who nobly refused to warp their consciences to the rules of a mitred Prelate. Behold our pious ancestors quitting the embraces of their dearest relatives, flying from the uplifted arm of tyranny and the persecutions of bigotry to the shores of the Atlantic ! Behold them, turning their eyes to Heaven for protection, embark their lives and their all upon the mighty deep, pursuing their course “ mid storms and tempests, while thunders rocked the ocean and the lightnings broad gleam painted hell on the skies.” The star of freedom, which shone with exceeding lustre in the western horizon, “ went before them,” was the guide to their bark, and pointed them to this asylum for oppressed humanity. The recital of their unparalleled sufferings would far exceed our present limits and deaden the sensibilities of

the soul. Uncultivated nature soon yielded to human art. The virgin earth unbosomed her treasures, and "*the wilderness began to blossom as the rose.*" In their progress towards national maturity they practised "that righteousness which exalteth a people," and established institutions for the general diffusion of virtue and knowledge. Religion and government walked together hand in hand and were the main pillars which supported the fair fabric of liberty. In less than two centuries, their population increased to more than two millions, and their commerce to more than a third part of that of the parent state. The arts and sciences began to rear their heads and flourish, and agriculture received universal patronage. But alas! these flattering prospects were soon to be changed into scenes of human havoc, the verdant fruitful field, into the ravaged tented plain.

England and France, since they shook off the Roman yoke, have ever been rival, jealous of each other's rising greatness. An almost continued state of warfare between them has created a national antipathy against each other. The laws of nations and the most solemn treaties have ever, in competition with interest, been regarded as nullities. In the war of 1755 between these belligerents, the American colonies espoused the cause of the mother country and rendered her the most signal services. The reduction of Louisbourg and Quebec too strongly evinced the force of American valor. Before these events the prosperity and energies of the colonies attracted but little notice in the European world.

Britain beheld with a jealous eye, her infant and submissive colonies rapidly increasing in strength and advancing to national manhood. She resolves upon paralyzing their energies, that she might long retain them in the most abject state of vassalage. The young lion may have his teeth extracted, his talons clipped, and be restrained of his liberty. But mature age will give him the muscular energies, which, upon the first

opportunity, will be turned against his oppressor and by physical force regain his rightful freedom. Ambition is a natural passion of the mind and interwoven with the ligaments of the human heart. Under similar circumstances and equal advantages for its gratification, it is the same on both sides of the Atlantic. Its spirit is black as Erebus, no deeds are too foul for its perpetration. The spirit of domination is its darling child; and in the spirit of domination originated the unjust and impolitic scheme of Britain to rivet more firmly on her colonies the chains of slavery.

England severely felt the oppressive weight of her immense national debt, from which to relieve her, a corrupt ministry resolve upon raising a revenue from America. The stamp act of '64, was such a violation of those immunities guaranteed to the colonies by charter, as called into action their united spirit. The right of parliament to impose taxes on them, unre-presented and without their consent, would have been but the definition of slavery. The right of the free disposition of their property in their own way, was considered the palladium of their liberty. The repeal of the stamp, and a few other acts, was succeeded by the imposition of a paltry duty on tea, which was the immediate cause of bringing about an event, of which there is no parallel in the history of man. But the patriot of *that* day, did not regard the loss of *property*; they were actuated by the noblest, the purest principles of patriotism, of love of country, of independence. Americans, preferring even death to slavery, prepare for the mighty conflict. A mercenary army in time of peace was stationed among them. The port of Boston shut up. The inestimable privilege of trial by a jury of their peers, virtually taken from them. Their country was ravaged. Populous towns in flames. The measure of their calamities was filled.

Our country was *then* destitute of all internal resources, military discipline, able generals versed in

tactics, and apparently statesmen to guide in her councils. Feeble would be my attempt, by the aid of historic light, to portray those dark and gloomy scenes. It was soon found that America possessed in her bosom her Fabii, her Fabricii, her Ciceros, and her Scipios. The Amphictyons of the western world, assemble in council and provide for the unequal contest. They prefer petitions to their sovereign, stating their grievances and praying for an honorable conciliation. The unfeeling monarch, who, according to the English constitution, "can do no wrong," adds insult to oppression.

The tocsin of war is sounded; the din of arms is heard; the plains of Lexington are first crimsoned with the blood of the martyrs of liberty. On the heights of Charleston, a little band of heroes, like that under Leonidas at the straits of Thermopylae, repelled for a time the rude shocks of the British army. Here the valiant WARREN fell, "covered with glory." The battles of Bunker-Hill, Montreal, Trenton, Princeton, Saratoga, Guilford, Monmouth, and Yorktown, while recorded on the pages of history, will remain splendid monuments of American valor, and a proof of the invincibility of a brave people, manfully contending for freedom, when Heaven approves the glorious cause.

The immortal WASHINGTON, the illustrious benefactor of mankind, the saviour of his country, when his nation were on the brink of the precipice, ready to fall into the dark vale of monarchy, majestically appeared, received the command of the American armies, and led them through an eight years conflict* on the field of battle to Independence. WASHINGTON was to the American Israel,

"A cloud to measure out their march by day,
By night a fire to cheer the gloomy way"

* The cruelty and savage warfare of England were manifested throughout our revolution. She instigated the savages to commit deliberate acts of cruelty, and murder the defenceless inhabitants of

Gratitude presses forward with a meed of praise for the heroes, countless almost as the stars of heaven, who sacrificed their lives on the altar of liberty. Their names are engraven on the tablets of the heart, more durable than the mouldering monuments of human grandeur.

In the acquisition of our Independence, France was an important instrument. We feel grateful to her for the means, whatever were her motives. The idea of disinterested benevolence at the court of St. Cloud or St. James, is chimerical. When France sent us auxiliaries, she weakened the power of her rival already elated by the number of her conquests in her wars preceding our revolution. England extended her empire over the waves. Her flag had triumphed over that of Spain. The Indies and a part of Africa were subjected to her boundless rapacity. Flushed with the wealth her commerce brought her, from every quarter of the globe, her ambition would have stimulated her to have conquered the world.

France had the means and the inclination to humble the power of her haughty rival. Had it not been for this, the "star of empire in the western world would never perhaps have shone in the constellation of liberty."

The powers of Europe as well as America were marshalled in hostile array against Britain, and she was at length obliged to acknowledge the United States as "free, sovereign, and independent." The laurels her victorious armies had gained her in her former wars now withered on her temples. The United States she considered the brightest gem appertaining to the royal diadem, to regain which her boundless ambition prompts her to use the basest means.

our frontiers. She gave a bounty to her ruthless allies for *scalps*, without regard to age or sex. The English historian, Charles Coote, *Mod. Eu.* 105 has justly remarked, that "as a Briton, he gloried in saying that British humanity!! has, on numerous occasions, appeared with signal lustre; but in this war, (our revolutionary war) it was frequently superseded by *deliberate and odious cruelty.*"

The revolutionary war concentrated the energies of the confederated States and united their jarring interests by one common ligament. But, independence obtained, a consciousness of security broke the belt of Union—a threatening storm of discordant opinions gathers and the nation were again afloat on the troubled sea of liberty, without helm or compass. The articles of confederation were found wholly inadequate for any useful purpose. Your Solons and your Lycurguses again assemble in grand council, and plan your present Constitution, the pride of republicans, the palladium of liberty, the ark of our political safety. It is founded on the eternal and immutable principles of natural justice and political philosophy, and has for its object the collective happiness of the people. It accurately defines the powers of, and draws the lines of separation between the three grand departments, the legislative, the executive and the judicial. It establishes a beautiful equilibrium of power between them, giving to each department a check upon the others. An undue ascendancy in any one of these would produce disorder in the great political machine, and end in tyranny. It is the only complete model of a representative republican government that has ever been planned. It secures to every citizen the invaluable right of suffrage, and the road to honor lies equally open to all. It declares that “no title of nobility shall be granted,” and the people are placed upon a civil equality. It commits to the general government, the direction of our foreign relations, and the relative concerns of the different States. It gives to it sufficient power to promote our general prosperity and enforce due obedience to its laws. It guarantees the right of choosing our religion and worshipping God according to the dictates of our consciences. It “makes liberty commensurate with, and inseparable from the” American “soil; it proclaims even to the stranger and sojourner the moment he sets his foot upon American earth, that the ground on

which he treads is holy and consecrated by the genius of universal emancipation. No matter in what language his doom may have been pronounced ; no matter what complexion incompatible with freedom, an Indian or an African sun may have burned upon him ; no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty may have been cloven down ; no matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted on the altars of slavery. The first moment he touches the sacred soil of America, the altar and the god sink together in the dust, his soul walks abroad in her own majesty, his body swells beyond the measure of his chains that burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation." May it eternally remain the splendid monument of the dignity of human nature.

It is the peculiar happiness of Americans that they live under a government of their own choice, and laws which are but the expression of their will through their delegated agents. A government which is an improvement upon all others, which affords equal protection to every citizen, and secures to them the privilege of a trial by jury of their peers. Laws, which are the safeguards of our persons and property ; which gladden the hearts of our yeomanry, knowing that while the halls of justice are open, there can be no species of injury for which they cannot obtain redress. On the one hand, it combines the firmness and energy of a monarchy, on the other, the wisdom and stability of an aristocracy. It guards against the despotism of one man, as much as that of a popular assembly ; and will, we trust, ever be an effectual barrier against the confusion and imbecility of a pure democracy.

With such a CONSTITUTION and GOVERNMENT, and the mildest, wisest and most enlightened ADMINISTRATION in the world, every lover of his country must feel the deepest regret that any party or class of

men should endeavor to paralyze the energies of their government, distract the public councils, weaken the confidence of the people in the ADMINISTRATION, and their measures, set the LAWS at defiance, or excite a civil commotion, which would probably end in the separation of the UNION. Whenever an effectual blow shall destroy the confidence of the people in the efficient administration of the government, the same blow will reach the vitals of the constitution.

To use the elegant language of WASHINGTON, whose principles republicans cherish, revere, and we trust, *practically* follow—"The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also dear to you. It is justly so; for it is the main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home; your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize.

"But as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortrefs against which the batteries of *internal* and external enemies will be most constantly and actively, (though often *covertly* and *insidiously*) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union, to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as the palladium of your political safety and prosperity, watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can, in any event, be abandoned; and *indignantly frowning* upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

“The very idea of power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the *duty* of every individual to *obey* that government. All obstructions to the execution of the laws, *all combinations and associations*, under whatever *plausible* character, with the real character to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle [the duty of every individual to *obey* the established government] and of fatal tendency. They serve to *organize faction*, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force, to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a *small*, but *artful* and *enterprizing* minority of the community; and according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans, digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests.”

WASHINGTON must have viewed with a prophetic eye the future destinies of his country; he foresaw that “much pains would be taken by a party, a *small* but *artful* and *enterprizing* minority of the community, to weaken in your minds the conviction of the immense value of your national union,” and that the same “internal enemies” would “often *covertly* and *insidiously*” form “combinations and associations” to obstruct “the execution of the LAWS” and “with the real character to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities.”

It cannot be denied that a party (the tendency of whose *course* is to sap the foundation of our political institutions) have, for the last twelve years, unceasingly opposed, without any exception, the measures of our general government, whether they related to our internal or foreign concerns. They at one time wholly condemn measures and principles which at another

time they strenuously advocated. Suppose then, this party could effect their designs, suppose they should work upon the public mind, excite the jealousies, feelings and passions of the people against their administration, and destroy all public confidence in the national councils; suppose they could humble the executive department, impede the course of justice and trample the laws under foot; and, in fine, suppose they should scatter the union in pieces, and set one section of it in battle-array against another; would they not involve themselves and *their* connexions, as well as those who might have some regard to conscience and the *oaths* they had taken, and some attachment to their republican institutions, in all the horrors, the calamities, the massacre, which would ensue? Would not *their* houses, *their* property and *their* fields be equally liable to be plundered, burned and ravaged? The United States would be the theatre of tragical scenes of revolutionary France; he who was yesterday a leader in rebellion, tomorrow would be led to the scaffold; "the Danton, who today directs the axe to sever the head of Louis, is tomorrow, stretched upon the guillotine;" vice and unbounded licentiousness would stalk abroad, confusion and anarchy prevail, till some modern Napoleon, to calm the mad passions, quiet the fears and humble the proud spirit of the people, should grasp the reins of government. Then the genius of Liberty would slumber in silence, and the still small voice of reason be drowned in the shouts and acclamations of long live the emperor of America.

The evils, which have the most powerful tendency to subvert our constitution and government, are faction, party-spirit and jacobinism. They tend to debase the morals of a nation, distract the public mind, and relax the sinews of the civil authority.

The former are unhappily the invariable concomitants of free governments, and the most potent engines in the destruction of the fair fabric of liberty.

The audaciousness and profligacy of faction are ever proportionate to the freedom of government. As under despotism, the people are nothing, so conscious of their nothingness, they remain in a lethargic state, the spirit of liberty is extinct, and "the hydra of faction, dares not rear its hundred heads." It broadens its base in proportion to its havoc of virtue and reputation, and, if eventually triumphant, its aspiring leader usurps the supreme dominion.

Party, like the grand adversary of human happiness, infuses its venom and accursed malignity into all our social pleasures. Its infection destroys private friendships. The warmest parental love and fraternal affection it changes into cold indifference and rancorous hate. It profanes the holy sanctuaries. With insidious art it finds an avenue which leads to the judgment seats, and mingles its poison in the fountains of justice. But what tends most to effect our political fall, it has arrayed itself in robes of innocence, entered the halls of public deliberation, and attempted to seduce the guardians of our liberties. Let us take monitory lessons from the effects it produced upon the ancient republics of Greece and Rome, where it prevailed with unrestrained force. The former had the three different and essential branches of government, but no balance of power between them: the consequence of which was, that the alternate triumph of one party over another, continual factions and *luxury*, the destroying angel of liberty, paved the way for her easy conquest by Philip of Macedon. In the latter government, the mighty party contentions between the Patricians and the Plebeians were sources of perpetual confusion, intestine commotions and revolutions. These conflicts of parties and the degeneracy and corruption of the public manners, made it easy for Cæsar to grasp the liberties of Rome.

Party often tears the laurels from the brow of merit and decorates the temples of the ignorant and the vicious. By its "magic power of metamorphosis"

it can transform the opposer into the friend of government, or the disdainful aristocrat into a true republican. At one time it makes obedience to government a virtue, at another, treason no crime. Buoyed up by the waves of party contention, the aspiring demagogue is often driven by an electioneering tempest into the commodious harbor of office, while the modest and the wise as often sink beneath the surges.

Jacobinism, before the fall of federalism, was defined to include *all the opposers of the laws, the constitution and the administration*. True definitions cannot change with the mutations of a party. For its origin we must refer you to the secret societies formed in France, which were "the offspring of a club instituted in the year 1789 by the Breton deputies."* The *secret* objects of these societies were "to inflame the minds of the people, not only against the court, but even against the national assembly."† Many "were seduced from their allegiance" to their government, and the "great work of reforming political institutions"‡ began. Jacobinism has erected its standard in our own country and many flock around it. Secret societies or "associations" are instituted and now forming in various parts of the New-England States. There is too much reason to suspect that the *secret* objects of these "associations" are "to inflame the minds of the people, not only against" the supreme executive, "but even against" our national "assembly," and ultimately work the downfall of the administration. The striking similarity between the characteristic features of these societies and the jacobin clubs of France, induces a belief that the purposes to be effected are nearly similar. Would to God that our conjectures were without foundation. May the revered name of WASHINGTON never be used for a cloak of deception, nor the virtue of benevolence to

* Coote's Mod. Europe, 229.

† Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

sanction corrupt designs. May the conduct of the disciples of WASHINGTON be regulated by his precepts. The illustrious founder of our republic gave it as his parting advice, that "however combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which *cunning, ambitious and unprincipled* men, will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for *themselves* the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion."

Jacobinism, in its destructive progress, undermines the bases of freedom, religion and government.

Cast your eyes, for a moment, on prostrate France and there trace its awful ravages. The American revolution tended to embody that spirit of reform which had been for some time floating on the political surface of France.* And the writings of her philosophers had prepared the people for disorder and misrule. This revolutionary monster begins its career by annihilating religion, next enters the halls of justice, and consigns to the flames the codes of jurisprudence, next effects the decapitation of an irresolute monarch, and then triumphs in the subversion of government. The most wonderful spectacle the world ever witnessed was then opened to view. Thirty millions of people, wild and frantic, with their countenances filled with horror and despair, suddenly let loose from all civil restraint, with the firebrands of rebellion in their hands, threatening to set the world on fire, presented a scene at which humanity recoils and shrinks with abhorrence. Confusion, havoc and anarchy prevail, until the bold Corsican, flying from Egypt, disperses the Council of five hundred, vaults into the chair of supreme dominion, and finally rivets on his minions the galling chains of despotism.

* Coote's Mod. Europe, 166.

Bonaparte is the most wonderful character the world has ever produced. Historians are undecided whether for his greatness he is most indebted to fortune, or his consummate abilities. The grand outlines of human nature have ever been the same; but he unites certain traits of character which distinguish him from all other tyrants. He is a *liberal patronizer* of the *fine arts*! a profound politician, and an unrivalled general. He has the vanity and desire to eclipse the splendor both of ancient and modern times. Every plan of his cabinet emanates from him. He creates the petty princes of Europe and they perish at his nod. He never reveals to his veteran armies his military schemes till ripe for execution; then with the rapidity and promptness of the first Cæsar, he falls upon his unprepared foe. His ambition, like that of Alexander, has no bounds. He has the boldness of spirit of Cromwell and like him usurped the sovereign power—and the bravery and daring presumption of Charles XII. He has overturned the republics of Switzerland and Holland, removed the landmark of nations; the mighty Alps proved no barrier against his invasion of Italy, and *he now wields the sceptre of empire over prostrate Europe.

Man, when trembling under the iron rod of despotism, appears fallen from his rank in the scale of existence; he has an external form but a humbled spirit; faculties, which like the precious metal in its

* An alliance with Bonaparte!!! It is daily sounded from the trump of scandal, that our administration and their supporters wish for an alliance with the imperial tyrant! Our indignation can scarcely be suppressed at so base, insulting, and groundless an allegation. A British, or a French alliance would be equally repugnant to the wishes of the lovers of their country, and equally endanger the safety of this republic. Republicans have too much confidence in the bravery, and the united energies of the American nation, to believe there can be any *necessity* for our becoming an ally to *any* foreign power, they wish for an *honorable* "peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none."

native ore, lie buried in rubbish. Nature affords her charms to the lower grades of beings, but none for him ; their freedom can only remind him of his own debased unhappy state.

Such is the deplorable condition of human nature in almost every clime in the eastern hemisphere. There, nations, which have been advanced to the meridian of their glory, are now degenerating, declining and passing away. There, governments are subverted ; splendid cities and wide domains burned and ravaged. There, perpetual wars crimson with human blood the extensive plain. When will "the God of armies say to the destroying angel, it is enough?"

Laying aside this repulsive picture of man in *other* countries, let us contemplate some of the great blessings we enjoy in this favored land.

The United States have approximated with the most astonishing rapidity toward the zenith of national greatness, and enjoyed a degree of prosperity unexampled in the annals of time. Truly we possess a land literally "flowing with milk and honey." Our hard earnings are not taken from us for unnecessary taxes. Here no national religious establishment profanes the sanctuary of conscience. A republic is the only proper nursery for the arts and sciences. And here the arts and manufactories flourish, and the sun of science illumines the public mind. Seminaries of learning, the fountains of literature, and the bases of virtue and freedom, are established throughout this growing empire. Here may the disciples of Galen and Hippocrates rejoice that the medical science has been advanced to so great a degree of perfection. Our orators and statesmen will bear a comparison with those of Europe.

Let those who are disaffected with their situation under this government, contrast their condition with that of the inhabitants of *other* countries. The ravages of war have cast the mantle of mourning upon the eastern world. There the human race are groan-

ing under the galling yoke of despotism, and shouting their reluctant acclamations for the preservation of their "Idol of purple and of diamonds." Here our natural and civil rights are violated only by foreign encroachment. There laws are but the tyrant's will. Here justice holds her equal balance; our verdant fields promise the golden harvest; the farmer's heart is filled with joy; his cattle sport upon the plains, and "his presses burst out with new wine." There the people are but senseless automata, moved by the finger of a master. Here enlightened man, walking forth in all the dignity of his nature, is the "noblest work of God."

How would the poor, humble peasantry of almost any other country, rejoice to exchange their situations for the blissful abodes of some of our pampered nobles, who ascribe all their *sufferings*, their *misfortunes* and their *calamities* to the *depravity* of government!

The United States, from their local situation, embracing a sea coast of two thousand miles in extent, possessing a rich profusion of surplus productions, are destined to be a great commercial country. Literature, wealth, and refinement of national manners are the fruits of commerce. But agriculture must be the *basis* of our national prosperity. Commerce and agriculture in their interests, are very closely allied. Like two fruitful vines, whose branches intermix and support each other, they grow entwined together. And there is such a reciprocal influence and connexion between them, that, separated, they will both languish and decline. Commerce incites to enterprise, gives a stimulus to improvement in the manufactures, and approximates the various regions of the earth. But it is to be lamented that while she introduces the arts, sciences and polished manners of other nations, she at the same time imports their vices, and luxury, the destroying angel of liberty. History bears evidence that those countries which have attained the acme of civilization and refinement, were commer-

cial states. To what is Britain indebted for her greatness* and power, but her military and mercantile marine ?

It is the whining cant of some of our disappointed speculators, that our administration are opposed to our commercial interests. This is one of the base artifices of party to delude the people. The energies of government are, and will continue to be exerted to free commerce from her fetters, to reinstate us in our right of peaceably traversing the common highway of nations. Our commerce will be fostered, and *protected if possible*. But may our national honor, liberties and independence *never* be sacrificed for mercantile speculations, nor bartered for English or French merchandize.

The embarrassment of our trade, has its origin in the convulsions of Europe, and the arbitrary principles which, during the last seven years, have been ingrafted into the system of French and British policy. Our administration are obliged to contend, not only with the belligerents of Europe, but a mad and furious opposition at home.

The orders in council and imperial decrees, have nearly annihilated neutral trade. Britain, not having an adequate naval force, by a dash of the pen of that sonnet-writer, Canning, blockades the coast of the continent from the Elbe to Brest. Napoleon enforces the rigorous execution of his continental system, and excludes English commerce from his wide spreading empire. Our government shut the gates of trade and thus save our floating property from plunder and confiscation, but at the same time proffering the emoluments of our traffic to the belligerent, which should first cease to violate our neutral rights. A wavering policy substituted the non-inter-

* Let our manufacturers take courage, when they reflect that the English were not capable of fabricating cloth for exportation, until the middle of the fifteenth century.

course act for the embargo, which, had it been persisted in and properly enforced, might have restored our commerce "free and unshackled as the wave of the ocean." Our administration, still guided by the strictest impartiality, offer to repeal the non-intercourse as it related to either of the contending powers, which should first rescind their edicts, and continue it as to the other. Britain, by her accredited minister, complies with our terms. After the arrangement of Mr. Erskine, war with France and peace with England were echoed through every section of the union. British perfidy manifested itself in the disavowal of this arrangement. Our government still pursue the same pacific, impartial policy, and make similar proffers to the mighty combatants. France at length manifests a spirit of a partial return to a sense of justice, and availing herself of the terms equally offered to her and her enemy, revokes her unjust decrees, so far as they relate to the United States. The President, by proclamation, revives the non-importation system against Great-Britain. Our administration, under the *late* restrictions, adhered to the same impartial policy, till an appeal to arms succeeded fruitless negotiation; and those who charge them with *partiality*, look through the deceptive medium of prejudice.

France has violated our rights of neutrality, insulted the American flag, confiscated our property to a large amount, captured and burned our vessels. I trust, that unless she gives ample redress, for her lawless aggressions on our commerce, unqualified war with her will be the dernier resort.

The story of our wrongs has indeed become *stale*; but argues only, on that account, that we were too long duped by protracted, abortive negotiation, that we too long submitted to foreign encroachments, while our national pride, honor and character were rapidly sinking towards an ignoble state of degradation.

Our government have now taken a dignified, an elevated stand, and will be supported by the holy patriotism of the people. The United States now are the mighty theatre, on which the general will display his courage and skill, the statesman his political science, and our yeomanry their deeds of valor. Who can feel a cold indifference to his country's glory and prosperity? Who can remain on the sacred soil, where he had his birth, unmoved at the degrading insults and aggravated injuries his country has received from the "*little isle of the ocean*?"

After the able, manly and lucid exposition of the perfidy and lawless encroachments of England, which are detailed in the President's message and the manifesto of the committee on foreign relations, we present to view only an abstract of her crimes.

Boastful of her civilization, her wealth, her maritime power, her progress in the arts and sciences, and the "integrity of intention" of her subjects in her "political dramas," regardless of the laws of nations and the immutable principles of justice, she has violated our imprescriptible rights of sovereignty and neutrality, captured and condemned our vessels, and confiscated, without the *color* of right, millions of our property; her war-ships have entered our dominion, blockaded our harbors, and tinged our own waters with the blood of our fellow-citizens; her insolent ministers have approached the sanctuary of the American government and insulted its majesty; in the midst "of amicable profession and negotiations," she sends a wily and insidious spy, lurking about in the garden of America, to seduce our citizens from their allegiance to their government, and effect a dismemberment of the union, thus to prostrate the grand fabric of our independence; as a prerequisite to her ceasing to plunder our commerce not only with her enemies, but nations with whom she is at peace, yet excluding the British flag, she demands that the interference of our government shall open the ports of

friendly nations as well as her enemies to her trade, and oblige Napoleon to abandon his continental system ; she beholds in the United States her commercial rival, and, like the arch fiend, fixes her baleful glances upon our growing prosperity ; resorting to a stratagem, which should shame the remorseless Hottentot, she by her bribes and her agents excites the ruthless savage of the wilderness to raise the tomahawk against us, who, regardless of age or sex, murder the defenceless settlers of our frontiers ; and to complete the climax of her cruelties, her press-gangs force our brave seamen from their dear native country, their parents, their wives and tender offspring, and incarcerate them for life ! in her floating castles, there to be scourged and lashed, and, “ O shame, where is thy blush,” even compels them to be the instruments of spilling the blood of their own countrymen. We need not longer swell the black catalogue of her crimes. Already the keenest sensibilities of the sons of freedom are excited ; their indignation rises to a pitch beyond restraint ; in imagination they hear the groans and lamentations of seven thousand of our impressed seamen heaving from the breast of woe their unregarded sighs for a speedy return to parental, conjugal, and filial embraces ; their bosoms burn with the holy fire of patriotism ; swearing to avenge these wrongs, they are ready to seize the weapons of death, and, undaunted, rush forward to the field of battle.

Citizen Soldiers,

This is the most momentous crisis of our national concerns we have ever witnessed. It involves the future destinies of this republic.

To England, our government have perhaps too long held out the olive-branch of peace. The unsheathed sword is now committed to your charge. Convince the world that you are not the degenerate sons of the heroes of the revolution. It is not for you to canvass the propriety, but execute the mea-

fures of the administration, and obtain redress for our multiplied wrongs. War is a great calamity ; but the loss of freedom, national honor and independence is a far greater. And to an American soldier the dread of slavery is greater than that of death. 'Tis the voice of freedom, which summons you to arms, and

“ When freedom calls none should from danger start,
But take a noble, a decisive part.”

A well organized and disciplined militia is essential to the preservation of our republic. And while nearly a million of active and alert, patriotic and brave citizens are ready to defend our liberties, rally round their country's standard, and form the invincible battalia of America, we need not fear the “ Leviathan of the ocean,”

“ Whose march is o'er the mountain wave,
Whose home is on the deep,”

nor the mammoth of the continent,

Whose strides are bounded by the main,
Whose home is on the land.

If our fathers, in the infancy of the nation, could drive the proud armies of Britain from these shores, how much more easily can we, in the vigor and energy of national manhood, expel them from this hemisphere ? The spirit of '76 has revived in the American soldiery, and inspires them with the desire of acquiring never-fading laurels in the field of martial glory ; they inherit the bravery of their bright exemplar, Warren, and have caught the mantle of their ascended revolutionary Elijah. Your occupation is honorable, for you form a part of that body, which is the depository of our rights, and the bulwark of our safety. Should you fall in the defence of your country, the cypress will overshadow your graves, they will be strewed with cassia, and watered with the tears of future generations.

The hostile depredations of Britain upon our lawful commerce, so long endured,* can be viewed in no other light, than as "direct and positive war against the United States." Our government had the only alternatives, base, inglorious submission, or open, vigorous war. They declared war for the protection of our commercial and agricultural interests, for the reclamation of our impressed seamen, war for the support of our sovereignty and independence.

Your country now calls for your services; she looks to you for protection; she views you as the rock of her defence. Sons of freedom, stain not the glory of your ancestors, but show yourselves their brave descendants. Obey, then, the mandates of your country, repair to the tented field, the God of battles will go with you in a "righteous cause," nerve your arms, and inspire you with more than mortal courage. And should the mercenary armies of England again rashly attempt to invade us, march to the seaboard, and immolate them on the beach, ere they contaminate freedom's sacred soil. Sheathe not the sword, till you either fall lifeless in the last intrenchment of liberty, or obtain for your country an honorable peace.

My respected Audience,

We have a "fond desire, a pleasing hope" that our liberties may be immortal. But the history of all former republics, the evils which are inseparable from them, must necessarily excite our fears with respect to the duration of this the only republic. Whether the same causes which produced the declension of former free governments, will eventually effectuate the subversion of this government, is an awful uncertainty, concealed within the impenetrable veil of futurity. As votaries of freedom, be ever watchful at the citadels of liberty to espy the first advances of these common enemies.

True it is that mortality and change seem to be inscribed on all terrestrial objects and human systems;

* Since the order in council of Nov. 11, 1807.

true it is, that republics seem to have deep sown in their vitals the seeds of their dissolution. But on this day, devoted to honest mirth and conviviality, we will no longer exhibit to you this gloomy picture, nor join in the modern cant of a party, who, through the medium of their perturbed imaginations, see the sun of American glory already about to sink in the western horizon. Let us rather cherish the belief that our freedom will be perpetuated to the remotest posterity.

Our government, from its origin, has been experimental. Virtue and knowledge are its bases. To maintain the superstructure in all its beautiful grandeur and magnificence, you must preserve unimpaired its supporting principles.

Let us banish party distinctions, they *must* cease, let American feelings absorb all other feelings, let us hail each other as brethren of the same community, and exercise charity towards each other, remembering, that, as in religion, so in politics, there will infallibly be a diversity of sentiment, and that *we differ as much from our political opponents as they do from us*. Cultivate union between the different States as the vital principle of the body politic.

Guard against foreign influence. The influence of Britain and France, has generally preceded their arms in those countries they have subdued. At the commencement of our revolution, and ever since, British influence has secretly attempted to effect what British arms could not accomplish. To effect its secret designs, through the medium of deception, it works upon the public mind, excites the jealousies, and destroys the confidence of the people in the national councils. As the unsuspected stream secretly undermines the lofty elm, which the tornado might have spared, so foreign influence secretly undermines the foundation of a government, which "an army with banners" could not have subverted. The right of canvassing public measures and the conduct of public officers, so far as guaranteed by the constitution, may

be productive of beneficial effects. But it were infinitely better to suffer the most splendid talents and abilities, when directed in the foul channels of detraction and abuse of the constituted authorities, to float unnoticed down the stream of time, than to crown them with the diadems of office and power. The tree of liberty has taken deep root in the soil of our republic. Its branches spread over a growing and extensive empire. Seven millions repose under its shadow, partaking its delicious fruits. May the chilling frost of despotism never blast its beautiful foliage. May the plenteous dews of science, water and preserve it in perpetual verdure, and "knowledge dig about its roots." Never rest under it in a lethargic security, but with the pruning-hook of virtue lop off the suckers of vice and the germs of faction, ere they receive their growth, lest they produce the decay of the goodly tree. Preserve the purity of the public manners. The illustrious JEFFERSON has told you that *a degeneracy in these is a canker, which soon eats to the hearts of the laws and constitution.* Patronize and encourage the manufactures, agriculture and the sciences as essential to free governments. It was principally by these means, that Greece and Rome, those luminaries of the heathen world, shone with such lustre and splendor.

May our elective franchises raise to office none but men of talents, virtue and patriotism.

Let us pay a just tribute of praise to the venerable ADAMS, to the immortal Patriot, who penned the declaration of our Independence, and to our eminent statesmen, MADISON, who infused the spirit of freedom into the body of our constitution. With the principles of WASHINGTON for their polar-star, they have pursued an enlightened plan of policy, which has received the acknowledgment of the American nation, and established for them solid reputations, equally as impervious to the malignant shafts of faction, as columns of adamant.

We will ever respect the character of the venerable patriot, whose past exertions and services as chief magistrate of this State have received the plaudits of a grateful people. A whig of '75, a firm advocate of independence in '76, and an undeviating republican for thirty-six successive years. We congratulate our fellow-citizens that our State administration harmonizes with that of the general government, and that the chair of state is filled by a character who unites eminent talents and practical patriotism.

Ye patriots, who have survived your compeers in glory, whose venerable heads add dignity to this assembly, what language can we find to express our heart-felt emotions of gratitude to you for your patriotic exertions in obtaining those liberties which animate the souls of the rising generation? How can we requite you for the innumerable blessings we have received from your hands? Alas! speech fails us, and we can only requite you with an oblation of gratitude. When your bodies shall sleep in the dust, your names will live fresh in the recollection of the remotest posterity. We will portray your characters to the lisping infant, and ever delight to recount your valiant deeds. At this eventful crisis, may we all catch from you the hallowed flame of patriotism, which, in those awful times "that tried men's souls," was sure destruction to your invading foe. Your old oppressor has again become mad; and the clarion of war again sounds in your ears. In a voice of thunder, speak to the rising generation and the middle aged, and tell them to scorn to be slaves of the slaves of Britain; tell them to defend their country, and those liberties which were purchased with the blood of patriots.

Let us reverence and respect those who minister in the holy sanctuaries, who preach that religion, without which man is the forlorn child of despair, and who illumine with the torch of eternal truth our paths to a better world. May they never, disregarding the precepts and examples of Him, who taught "peace

on earth and good will towards men," pollute these temples with party-bickerings and contentions, nor scatter the seeds of political discord among their flock. Let them render to civil authority, obedience, respect, and whatever of right pertains to it, but "to God the things that are God's."

My female auditors are inspired with the liveliest emotions of pleasure at the return of this grand national jubilee. For it proclaims to them that their happy condition is inseparable from liberty. While their sex, in the Asiatic climes and in most despotic governments, are degraded to menials, and enveloped in clouds of ignorance, they here hold their equal rank, and participate the delicious streams, which flow from the Pierian fount. Here, they cull the choicest flowers from the garden of literature, and arrange them in such order as evinces the most refined taste. Here, they have wrested the sceptre of knowledge from the hand of superstition; the pencil and the needle produce some of the finest specimens of human art, and some of the most excellent literary productions are the fruits of female genius. In imagery, fancy, taste, and quickness of perception, the fair sex may justly claim the superiority. And while, in the charms of manly eloquence, our sex claim the palm, yet to the eloquence of female charms they bow submissive.

The freedom of the press is a grand battery by which to defend the citadel of your liberties. It is essentially necessary to perpetuate our present form of government. It is the soul of the republic of letters, the lamp of knowledge to the people, and their most invaluable civil right. Be ever watchful, therefore, to guard it against corruption. May it never be the medium of decrying personal merit, debasing the public morals, raising to office false-hearted patriots, disseminating monarchical principles, nor weakening the confidence of the people in the constituted authorities of the nation.

The sun of republicanism now appears in its meridian glory, ripening in its rays the fruits of our individual and collective happiness, and dispelling the noxious exhalations of monarchical principles from the atmosphere of reason.

May the principles of the patriots of the revolution, of WASHINGTON, and the constitution, be indelibly written upon the tablets of our hearts ; and may they triumph, and finally effectuate the downfall of tyranny, and the emancipation of the enslaved world.

FINIS.