

AN

ORATION,

PRONOUNCED AT WATERVILLE,

JULY 5, 1813.

BY JOTHAM FAIRFIELD.

Nulla magna RESPUBLICA diu quiescere potest; si foris hostem non habet, domi invenit: ut prævalida corpora ab externis causis tuta videntur, sed suis ipsa viribus onerantur.

LIVIUS LIB. 30. CAP. 44.

AUGUSTA :

PRINTED BY PETER EDES.

MR. JOTHAM FAIRFIELD,

BEING a Committee appointed for the purpose by the Federalists assembled at Mr. ESTY'S tavern on the 5th instant, we tender you their thanks for your firm and patriotic Oration that day pronounced, and request a copy for the press.

July 6, 1813.

MOSES APPLETON,
ASA REDINGTON,
JAMES L. CHILD.



7 JULY, 1813.

GENTLEMEN,

MY Oration is at your disposal. A steady confidence, that an expression of the ideas and sentiments it contains is not inconsistent with a sacred and inviolable regard for Truth ;— as well as an honest ambition to cooperate by every auxiliary, however feeble, in the laudable and patriotic exertions that are now making to excite in the public mind disgust of those principles, that have infected the streams of our policy, and inspire a just horror of the unrighteous and profligate war, in which we are engaged—excuses the assurance, that submits it to the public eye.

Gentlemen, respectfully,

your friend and humble servant,

JOTHAM FAIRFIELD.

MOSES APPLETON, Esq.
ASA REDINGTON, Esq.
JAMES L. CHILD, Esq.

ORATION.

IT has been customary, on days of public festivity for the celebration of great events, or the commemoration of important blessings, to indulge in profuse and often unmeaning panegyrics on the abundance of human virtue, and the stability of favorite institutions. Soothing, plausible, and copious as is this theme for declamation, rigid and deliberate truth must acknowledge, that it partakes more largely of fiction than of reality,—that it depends for its materials rather on the fancy than the understanding.

It is a melancholy consideration, that every thing, both in the natural and moral world, is subject to disorder and decay. The objects, that please and delight the senses, must be destroyed by accident or corroded by time ;—the eyes, that glistened in friendship, must grow dim and close ;—the hand, that “ wak’d to extasy the living lyre,” must become motionless and cold ;—and the tongue, that moved only in the cause of humanity and truth, must soon become dumb forever. The operation of physical causes often anticipate the effects produced by a decline of patriotism and national character. To-day a “ smiling land” riots in all the joys of exuberant fertility and abundant wealth. It is the delight of every eye. Anon its vineyards are uprooted by whirlwinds ;—its cities devoured by earthquakes ;—its fields depopulated by pestilence. It presents to the traveller’s eye a uniform and unvaried scene of waste and desolation.

We may *silently deplore* the ills inseparable from the human state, and the extraordinary calamities, that lie beyond the power of human agency to avert ; but the errors and follies of mankind, more operative in misery and in mischief than

famine, pestilence, or the troubled elements, should stimulate our vigilance to guard against the dangers, with which they are pregnant. We may be shocked and astounded by convulsions in the regions of nature ; but from the earthquakes and tornadoes, that rack and ravage the moral world, we should go forth prepared to allay and counteract them. In the confidence of success and the pride of glory, we should not forget, that the tenure is uncertain and frail ; and in the fervors of love for our political institutions, we should remember, that our best exertions can only give longevity to what their own nature forbids to be perpetual.

Impressed with a conviction of this truth, we should come up to the celebration of the day, which associated us with Empires and gave us a rank among the Nations. We should learn from the annals of other nations, that have had equal claims with our own to immortality and perennial glory, that, to fear for the safety of the Republic, and occasionally to distrust the endless durability of our National Independence, is no less consistent with exalted patriotism than with sober wisdom. The frequent apprehension of possible evil would be a salutary check and counterpoise to the intrepid confidence and overweening pride, that may be numbered among the secondary causes of the sad reverse of fortune, with which our country has been visited. We should strive “to emulate our fathers’ praise” by cordially cherishing their principles and copying their examples. We should remember, that we live and act not for ourselves alone, but for posterity and the whole human race, inasmuch as the world’s happiness is enhanced by the continuance of our Freedom and Independence. We should be mindful, that the rights, which our fathers achieved, have devolved on us as a heritage, which we are solemnly bound to keep and transmit unimpaired to the race of men that will come after us. If, on this festival for the commemoration of national blessings, we have any political prejudices, they should be discarded. If we have even suffered the venom of party spirit to rankle within us, it should be allayed. We should suppress every word, that will not harmonize with “a nation’s choral hymn for tyranny o’erthrown,” and discharge our breasts of every sentiment and every passion incompatible with

that active and fervent patriotism, which glows with the idea of recollected glory, and sighs at the prospect of impending danger.

But let it be distinctly expressed, and as distinctly remembered, that, while we disdain the carplings and criminations, which too often reduce the festival, that revives the memory of our nation's birth, to a level with the wranglings of the sty, we are not precluded from investigating and disclosing the causes of the decline of our national prosperity and glory, and bearing testimony against the measures, that have overwhelmed us with disgrace and surrounded us with dangers. Sober and rational patriotism is not more an ardent and exalted attachment to our native country, than a ready exposure of its perils, and a prompt resentment for violations of its rights, whether by external aggressions or internal abuses.

That our progress, heretofore, in the attainment of wealth, power, and national happiness, has been more rapid than that of any other nation, either in ancient or modern times, is beyond doubt or controversy. That this progress has, by a series of measures, proceeding from our own government, been arrested and turned back ;—that we have fallen from the enviable preeminence we once held among the nations by reason of the benignant influence of our government, the sober, harmonious, and patriotic sentiments, that pervaded all classes of our people, and our superior facility in the attainment of the comforts and conveniences of life ;—and that our situation is now critical, alarming, and perilous, beyond an example since our revolutionary struggle—is equally beyond question. It is said by some that a resort to the measures, that have engendered these deplorable consequences, may be justified by reference to the peculiar aspect of our foreign relations at the periods when they were severally adopted. We shall prove, that an upright and impartial deportment towards foreign nations would have superseded the necessity or policy of these destructive and suicidal measures, adopted by our Administration and sanctioned by our People. After which, it will be apparent, that, unless we are affected by new changes in our foreign relations, to be reinstated in our former pros-

perity and honor, we have only to remove the *internal* difficulties, with which we now struggle. The first step towards this should be the discovery and developement of their causes, which happily are neither distant, intricate or obscure.

From the baleful and blasting influence of French principles and French attachments, that for twenty years have kept the moral world in enervating and agonizing convulsions, we may safely date the origin of our disgraces, our sacrifices, and our woes. It is unpleasant and painful in the extreme to trace our adversity to causes, which would be inefficient but for the voluntary agency of those men, whom the *people* delight to esteem as their *friends*, and honor as their *benefactors*; and for this reason would be avoided, were it not susceptible of demonstration with almost mathematical exactitude.

To state all the proofs of the predominating influence of French principles in this country, that would be necessary to silence captious opponents and overthrow evasive arguments, would require a larger portion of time than this occasion will admit.

The French Revolution was fomented and effectuated by malecontents, ambitious demagogues, and sanguinary philosophers, whose brains were turning with visionary schemes for the enfranchisement of all nations from the bondage of order, law, and regular government, and for the complete and universal happiness of mankind in an exemption not only from their inborn and unavoidable infirmities, but from the sentimental virtues, which often spring out from them, and which are at once the ornament and the pride of human nature. When that tremendous and overwhelming volcano burst upon the world and desolated the fairest portions of that unhappy land, the people of this country were luxuriating in the exuberant fertility of a free republican government, purchased with the price of blood, and enriched by the harmonious and fraternal sentiments, which had been inspired by their common toils, sufferings, and dangers. It was natural that our sympathies should be engaged in the causes of those, who were about to claim fraternity with us by adopting the form of government, with

which we were enamoured, and whose grateful fruits we were beginning to taste. Had we only espoused the cause of liberal and suffering Republicans, it had been well. But it is to be feared, that there were many in this country, who shrunk not with becoming horror from those scenes of heart-appalling cruelty, carnage, and disorder*—that demoniac fury and unbridled lust of power, which ushered in that nominal Republic, on which has been generated a colossal Tyranny, that has well nigh bestridden the whole continent of Europe.

No sooner had the blaze of the revolutionary fires of France discovered these sequestered and happy fields, than we were marked out as her prey. By the lures of insidious flattery and hollow professions we were drawn into the same snares, in which all other nations, that have espoused her cause or partaken of her friendship, have been successively entangled.

The history of the Jacobin societies in France, instituted under the specious pretence of protecting the “rights of men,” and inculcating the mischievous and fatal doctrine of “liberty and equality,” is too well known to require repetition. (a) That Mr. Jefferson, while resident in Paris, was an active and efficient member of one of these disorganizing clubs, which occasionally held its meetings at his house, is a fact not often disputed. Who has forgotten, that affiliated clubs were established in this country under the auspices of the French minister Genet? Who has forgotten that the same Minister, who sent on a public mission to the United States, instead of entering immediately on the theatre of his official functions, landed in Charleston, remote from the seat of government, that he might travel through the country, sound the views and inclinations of the people, and sow discord and disunion by exciting distrust and jealousy of the wise, upright, and impartial

* “At a dinner at Philadelphia, at which Governor Mifflin and his friend Dallas were present, a roasted pig was introduced, as the representation of the unfortunate Louis the sixteenth. It was the joyful celebration of the anniversary of his murder. The head being severed from the body, was carried round to each of the savages at the table, who after putting on the Liberty-Cap, pronounced the word “Tyrant!” and gave the head a chop with his knife.”

(a) See Note at the end.

Administration, of which the Great Washington was the Head? Who has forgotten, how success followed his designs; how he was caressed, respected, and applauded? Who has forgotten, how he insulted our national dignity and honor in the person of the President, when he appeared from him to the people;—how he fitted out a vessel of war in one of our harbors in violation of our proclamation of neutrality, and in defiance of the express prohibition of the President;—how he boasted of a powerful *party in this country*, hostile to the policy of Washington, and ripe for an alliance with the French Republic;—how he was apparently to every eye the friend and confidant of Mr. Jefferson;—how he alleged a complaint against that Secretary for employing two languages, the one public and official, the other private and confidential? (b) Who has forgotten, how Fauchet, while acting in a ministerial capacity in this country, was employed in fomenting a foul and treasonable insurrection, in which the then Secretary* of State was a prominent character;—how he wrote to the Directory for supplies of money to enable him to mature his designs;—how he informed them of the existence of a powerful *party in this country* devoted heart and hand to their cause;—of its increasing strength and multiplying numbers; that it would shortly, by means of active emissaries from France, well supplied with money, acquire the ascendancy, and throw the country into the arms of the Directory? It requires a reach of credulity to believe these things, that would not be solicited, were they not susceptible of convincing and confounding proof by the very letters of the Minister, which were fortunately intercepted on their way to France.† Who has forgotten how Adet, when sustaining the character of a diplomatic Agent of the Directory to this Government, was employed in circulating letters and pamphlets among the people containing artful and inflammatory appeals to their passions, and holding out insidious lures to misguide their patriotism, and withdraw their affections and confidence from the Believer of his country and the Father of his people? (c)

(b) See note.

* Edmund Randolph.

† See Fauchet's intercepted despatches.

(c) See note.

Who does not remember, when our three Agents, Generals Pinckney and Marshall and Mr. Gerry, were sent to make some arrangements with the French Directory, how that body dismissed the two former, whose characters and pretensions were unexceptionable, and retained and caressed the latter, because, forsooth, as they expressly avowed, he was a member of *their party in this country*, and would enter into their views and councils and embrace their designs.*

From these and other facts, that might be stated, it is incontestibly demonstrated, that a *party* once did exist in this country devoted to the cause of France, and infected with the poison of her principles. Whether that party can be identified with the one that now holds dominion over our destinies, reference to subsequent transactions and relations must determine.†

But it may perhaps be said, that arguments drawn from the facts, that have been exhibited, are not sufficiently conclusive, definite, and precise, to justify a reference of our present disgraces and sufferings to the instrumental agency of foreign influence and partiality.—That from what has been proposed it does not appear, that the measures of our *Administration* have been deflected from the course of just, magnanimous, and impartial policy by the prevalence of French principles among the *people*.—And that the position, which we have taken, can be fortified only by arguments drawn from the public acts or omissions of our Administration relative to France. Fortunately, it is abundantly demonstrable, that the influence of French principles and attachments has extended beyond the private and irresponsible *people*, and that the official conduct of our *Rulers* in relation to France has been neither impartial, magnanimous, or just.

* See Marshall's Life of Washington, Vol. 5, p. 744, and the journals of the times.

† For a particular history of the rise and progress of the Democratic party, and the opposition of its leaders to the measures of Washington, see Marshall's Life of Washington, Vol. 5.

Was it impartial to succumb tamely and passively to the Berlin Decree, while the Orders of Great Britain, which dated their origin a full year posterior to that Decree, were made a prominent cause of war with that country? Had that decree been seasonably and manfully resisted, that whole tempest of demoralizing, impoverishing, and disastrous expedients, Embargo, Nonintercourse, and War, with which we have been scourged, afflicted and oppressed, might have been avoided, or at least procrastinated. That hateful and flagitious Edict was evidently intended to provoke a resort to the law of retaliation on the part of Great Britain; by which Bonaparte well knew our commercial rights would be incidentally affected, and we be eventually involved in a quarrel with that country. Was it magnanimous to permit our resentment against England to be stimulated by the Milan Decree, which *denationalized* all vessels, that submitted to her Orders? Was it magnanimous to suffer our property to be sequestered under a retrospective law, that created offences of acts innocent and lawful at the time of their commission? (d) Or to allow our seamen to be imprisoned,* and our vessels burnt† on the high seas without so much as demanding an indemnity? Was it magnanimous to cinge in silence under the cutting sarcasms of Bonaparte, when he said our government was inferior in wisdom and energy of counsels to an assembly in the Island of Jamaica;—or when he called us a nation “without just views of policy, without honor, and without energy?”‡ Did it look like magnanimity, when Bonaparte declared, that we were in a state of war with Great-Britain, for our government to instruct Mr. Armstrong to make the feeble, whining, and pusillanimous remonstrance against that audacious and almost inexpiable outrage; that the right to declare her own wars belonged only to the government of the United States, and that a repetition of

(d) See note.

* It will be recollected that our government expended 75,000 dollars for the support of our imprisoned seamen in France.

† Mr. Madison’s complaint of these outrages discovers a resignation somewhat ludicrous. “The burning of national vessels detained on the high seas is the most distressing of all modes by which the belligerents exert force contrary to right.”

Letter to Gen. Armstrong.

‡ See Champagny’s letter to General Armstrong.

the assumption of this power would require some explanations ? (e) What would have been on that occasion the language of the minister of a magnanimous and truly independent Administration ? He would have been instructed to say, and would have said ; “ My Government are indignant at this “ unwarrantable assumption of a power by you, which belongs “ exclusively to them. They cannot brook the insult you “ have offered. And I am authorized to state, that, unless “ you make a direct, immediate, explicit, and unequivocal “ retraction, my Country will appeal to the sword to avenge “ her violated majesty.” Language like this would have been that of the Agent of an independent Administration.— But such language was not ventured.

The end of the climax of our tame and spiritless acquiescence in the wrongs and indignities offered by Bonaparte is the conduct of Mr. Madison respecting the farcical revocation of the French Decrees. Conduct, that sets at defiance all attempts to reconcile it with magnanimity, impartiality, and the dictates of the most pliant and liberal justice,—that mars and confounds the goodly devices on our national escutcheon,—and will be forever a foul and indelible stain in the annals of our country. It will be recollected, that the President was authorized by an act of Congress, passed in May 1810, to suspend by proclamation the operation of our Nonintercourse on the belligerent, that first revoked its Edicts. By the words of the Act it is placed beyond possibility of doubt, that a revocation of the Edicts was intended to be a *condition precedent*, a *sine qua non* of the removal of our Nonintercourse. Whether this intention was complied with appears from the sequel. On the naked assurance of the Duke of Cadore, that the Decrees of Berlin and Milan should be rescinded at a future and specified time, subject however to an express *condition* to be *previously* performed on our part, the President declared by proclamation, that these Edicts were *absolutely* revoked ; and at the same time decreed a removal of the Nonintercourse with France. England was forthwith notified of this event, and invited to repeal her obnoxious Edicts ; which she unhes-

(e) See note.

itatingly refused, alleging as the reason of her refusal, that her Orders were subsequent in date to the Decrees, and enacted in conformity with the laws of retaliation, and a respect for her national honor ; and that they would cease to operate then and then only, when satisfactory evidence should be tendered of the repeal of those Decrees ;—none of which evidence had then been exhibited. It must be acknowledged, that little blame can attach to the British Cabinet for doubting in this instance the sincerity of the declarations and promises of the French Minister ; since it would seem, that these *public* Decrees should have been revoked by a Decree issued in the same *public* manner, and from the same authority ;—and since Bonaparte declared to the Deputies of Hamburgh and Bremen, after their pretended repeal, that “ the Berlin and Milan Decrees were the fundamental laws of his Empire ; (*f*)—and more especially since the repeated and almost daily captures and burnings of our vessels and confiscation of their cargoes on the express ground that they had violated these Decrees, after Mr. Madison had proclaimed their revocation, would seem to afford pretty striking evidence of their continued operation.*

In May, 1812, a Decree was ushered into light, bearing date in April, 1811, six months subsequent to the pretended repeal of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, by which Bonaparte declared, that in consequence of the removal of our Nonintercourse with France and the Act of Congress of March, 1811, enforcing it against Great Britain, he had thought fit to revoke these Edicts. Thus making their revocation an *effect* of the removal of our Nonintercourse ; when by the Act of Congress, before alluded to, giving a power to the President, it should have been the *preceding and procuring cause*. Not only the Act of Congress, but a respect for our national honor, and a regard for rigid and impartial justice towards the other belligerent required of the President a different conduct in the incipient stages of this trick of artifice and deception. It has however, been said by some, and evidence is not wanting to justify a suspicion, that the whole transaction was collusive between the two Cabinets to accelerate a rupture with Great Britain. If

(*f*) See note.

* See Mons. Ferretier's instructions.

This be true, no language can be too strong, no anathemas and execrations too ardent to brand with infamy the Authors of the ruinous, profligate, and flagitious war, into which we have been improvidently precipitated.

We have proved from historical records the former existence of a French party in this country. We have left the identity of that *faction* with the present ruling party to be conceded or disputed, as the chain of proof that is supposed to connect them may seem regular or broken. We have seen, through the medium of public and authentic documents, that a conduct has been exhibited in relation to France but illy comporting with the character of a just, magnanimous, and impartial Administration. We might have proved, that this unhappy war would have been *delayed*, but for the obliquity and tergiversation of our Rulers with respect to the repeal of the French Decrees. Nay that it might have been finally *prevented*, as, the Orders in Council having been removed, the other *pretexts*, that serve to make up the farrago of excitements to war, prepared in the Manifesto accompanying the Declaration, might have been removed by accident or negociation. It is well known, that in the Debates, that preceded the Declaration of War,—in the Report of the Committee on foreign relations,—and in the Manifesto of the President, the oppression and wrong of the Orders in Council of Great Britain were set forth as the prominent cause of complaint, and the immediate and strongest incitement to hostilities with that country. The practice of Impressment was never *very* loudly complained of, at least, it was rarely enumerated among the justifying causes of war by the war advocates, until they were driven from their strong hold by the revocation of the British orders. Since that event, it has been blazoned through the country as a great and crying grievance, that negociation and arrangement cannot redress, and that cries aloud for the prosecution of this war. Its enormities have been addressed to the prejudices, passions, and sympathies of the people in every form, that an angry and turbid imagination could devise, and, strange to tell, in the Western States, where not a Ship is owned nor a Seaman employed, and where a deep and deadly hostility to Commerce is known to be the prevailing policy, they have ex-

eited alternate compassion and resentment ;—while in the Atlantic States, the land of the Seamen and the havens for the Ships, where it should seem, that feelings of deeper interest would prevail in the protection of our Maritime rights, they provoked disgust, derision, and contempt.

A cursory survey has been taken of the measures of our Government in relation to France, and of their connection with the principles disseminated among us immediately after the Revolution in that country. Much has been left unexplored, and much left to be inferred from the facts, that have been exhibited. It is believed, however, that sufficient has been said to flash conviction into every mind prepared and disposed for the reception of Truth, that a resistance to the progress of French influence, and a just, magnanimous, and impartial deportment towards France and England would have effectually secured our neutral position, and averted the direful calamity, with which we are afflicted.

I should speak of the benign influence of Peace in a commercial country. I should speak of the ruinous and destructive consequences of offensive wars, as discordant with the genius of a republican government ;—as adverse and hostile to the best interests of a commercial people ;—as tending to beggar and demoralize a nation.—I should demonstrate, the policy, madness, and iniquity of waging wars in the spirit of ambition, conquest, or love of glory. I should lead up the whole train of horrors, miseries, and calamities incident to war, to provoke a just indignation against those, who have unleashed and driven it into the fields and villages of an unoffending province. I should speak of the folly and madness of that policy, which leads a Republic to covet territories beyond her ancient limits. I should demonstrate, that the annexation of a foreign province would either derange the relations between the original states, and shake the balance of power, or furnish a pretext for the maintenance of expensive and dangerous standing armies.* I should speak of the inexpediency of entering the lists with a mighty and warlike na-

* See Quincy's address to the Washington Benevolent Society.

tion with undisciplined, inefficient, and ill-appointed forces. But it is meet on the present occasion but just to glance at the *moral* injustice of the unhappy, wicked and profligate war, in which we are involved.

It has been remarked by a celebrated writer * on the laws of nations, that, “in a war perfectly just, the justifying reasons must not only be lawful, but also be blended with the motive.” And, that “a war is vicious and unjust, when we have some motives founded on justifying causes, but which still have only an apparent equity, and when well examined are found at the bottom to be unlawful: And when, though we have good justifying reasons, yet we undertake it from other motives, which have no relation to the injury received; as for instance through vain glory, or the desire of extending our dominions.” To this may be added, that a war is unjust, when the inconveniences and miseries, which it introduces, are disproportionate to the object intended to be attained. A particular application of these principles, (which must be on this occasion unavoidably omitted) will test the justice of the present War.

The practice of Impressment, since the revocation of the Orders in Council, furnishes the only question in dispute between Great Britain and the United States;—and that question it is, which is now referred to the arbitrament of the sword. It is conceded, that the right of Impressment, when limited by certain restrictions, is sanctioned by the laws and usages of nations. It is likewise conceded, that the exercise of this right by Great Britain, has been attended with some abuses, the number and extent of which, however, late investigations evince, have been greatly exaggerated.† But as she has ever been ready to restrict this practice within its just limits, whenever correspondent arrangements should be made on our part, this complaint, with all its frightful accompaniments, dwindles into insignificance. (g)

* Burlamaqui.

† See Report of the Committee in the Legislature of Massachusetts.

(g) See note.

But although it should be allowed, that this practice furnishes good justifying reasons for war, yet it is deeply to be feared, that they are not blended with the motives, that sway the Authors and the advocates of this War ;—that they are but hollow and wicked pretexts ;—panders to their prejudices, and purveyors for old and rankling hostilities against Great Britain. Weighty and irresistible evidence is not wanting to confirm this suspicion, and convert it into unshaken certainty. The eager support of the war measures by the Western States, —their affected sympathy for our suffering seamen,*—their late hollow professions of regard for the protection of our commercial rights,—the opposition of the commercial States, to whom commerce and seamen's rights ought to be and are most dear,—our repeated acts of tame and spiritless acquiescence in the insults and injuries of Bonaparte,—his reiterated commands on us to make our “rights respected,”—the critical and momentous situation of affairs in Europe at the time of our war declaration,—all concur in evidence resistless as a bolt from heaven, that this War was undertaken in wicked and inhuman compliance with the views and schemes of the Great Dragon of Europe to extend the sway of an iron tyranny, and prostrate the world in fetters at his feet.†

There is another view in which this War is profligate and unjust. The infinite disproportion of the means to the end. Great Britain can never be subdued by the sword of the American Republic. Should we vanquish her armies on this side the Atlantic ;—should we chase her navies from our shores ;—should we strip her of her Canadian provinces, she will never relinquish her pretensions by a sacrifice of her national honor. It has been said by some, who are aware of this, that we are fighting for honor ! This may be the honor of an infatuated soldier, who rushes improvidently on the spear of an opposing foe ;—but this is not the honor of a Christian people.

* See speech of Mr. Speaker Clay, and those of other Western members.

† It has been declared in this republican country, that Bonaparte was “sent into the world for the happiness and salvation of the human race.” So said Mr. Jefferson, and his followers re-echoed it in the prints.

It is that suicidal honor, which seeks for plumes in deep disgrace and remediless destruction. The experiment however has been made, how cheaply honor may be purchased by the sword;—and the result has been an almost uninterrupted series of defeats, disasters, and disgraces blasting to the fair fame of our country won in so many “hard fought fields,” and almost irresistibly demonstrating, that that Providence, whose smiles upon our cause had been most sacrilegiously invoked, has frowned with horror on this unrighteous War, and forbidden its prosecution. (*h*)

The authors of an unjust War are guilty of the blood of every man slain in its battles. If this War is unnecessary and unjust, as we confidently and sincerely believe, the blood of thousands slain and “sent unanointed to their long account,” the tears of widows, and the cries of children left fatherless will rise up in retributive judgment at the final day to confound its guilty Authors.

There is yet another view, in which this War is iniquitous, cruel, and inhuman. I mean that, which was exhibited by the whole civilized world at the time of its declaration. I am sorry to offend the scrupulous patriotism of some by saying that England, that nation, which they have been taught to look upon as savage, perfidious, and slavish, and for whose overthrow and annihilation they have been constantly offering up their most fervent invocations, has been for a long time the shield of a world's Independence. It is, however, clear and evident as the streams of lightning, and *could* not have been unobserved by the Authors of this War, that she has for ten years held the keys of that pit of slavish darkness, into which the arch Destroyer has been struggling to plunge the nations. It must have been known to them, that a War with her was but a virtual alliance with the Enemy of the human race and “Scourge of God;”—and that every diversion of her force or diminution of her strength but fed his voracious and insatiable ambition, and accelerated his march to universal dominion. Whatever difference of opinion may exist with re-

(*h*) See note.

spect to the agency of Bonaparte in procuring this War, there is one point in which all must be agreed ;—that its every blow but strengthened his arm to crush the nations, against which it had been lifted.

When this virtual Alliance was first made with France, Spain was bleeding in one of the most righteous and holy causes, that ever appealed for support to a benignant Providence.—Her Laws, her Liberties, her Princes, her Being. Napoleon had decreed her ruin. Subtle, unfeeling, dark, perfidious, cruel, he had inveigled her princes, cancelled her laws, and driven fire, sword, and desolation through her fair cities and fertile plains. The labors of the vintage were suspended ;—the shepherd forsook his charge ;—the artist fled from his unfinished labors ; the hapless peasant in agony cast an eye of despair over his desolated harvests ;—the widowed mother sighed for the last hope of her old age ;—the nation mourned in sackcloth ; the hum of industry and the song of mirth became silent in all the land. But although the sun, that shone on a once happy land was obscured, yet the star of hope still twinkled on her borders. A gallant people arose in all the courage inspired by despair, determined to avenge the wrongs of their suffering country, and defend her liberties and dearest rights, or perish in conflict. Against this gallant and bleeding nation,—against this glorious and hallowed cause was our War virtually waged.

There is yet another cause, against which the arms of the American Republic have been directed. A cause, that deserved the prayers and benedictions of the whole human race. The memory of the causes and of the events of the War between France and Russia is yet recent in every mind. At the commencement of our War with England, Napoleon, at the head of a countless and more formidable host than the world ever before saw, was hanging like the night on the borders of Russia. Good men were astonished and appalled at these boundless, terrible, and awful preparations, and anticipated with horror and heartfelt anguish a speedy extinction of the freedom of the World. But their fears were soon dispelled. The power of Russia rose in arms. The priest returned to defend his

violated shrine.—The courage of the peasant was kindled by the flames of his conflagrated cottage ;—and the vengeance of the soldier was enflamed by a proud attachment to his Prince, his Country, and his Laws. By the patriotism of the Russian nation ;—by the energy of her Government ;—by the prowess of her Armies ;—by the skill and valor of her Generals, aided by the Arm of that Power, before whom all Creation must bend, this tremendous and overwhelming host has been vanquished, humbled, annihilated !*

If there be on earth a spectacle, that heaven surveys with peculiar pleasure, it must surely be that of an oppressed nation struggling and bleeding in defence of her Independence against the encroachments of a rapacious, sanguinary, and aspiring Tyrant. Her cause is holy. It is the cause of Law, of Liberty, of Religion. It is the cause of Truth. It is the cause of Mankind.

After having viewed our present War through this medium, which surely cannot be fallacious ;—after having scanned the designs of Napoleon ;—after having surveyed the perilous condition of the world,—it is deeply and solemnly to be feared, that the American Republic, whose altars were yet smoking with her offerings to the Genius of Liberty, and whose voice was still ringing in shouts for deliverance from “tyranny and oppression,” has broken her natural compact with the nations of the earth, and violated the eternal principles of humanity and justice by aiding and abetting a cruel and merciless Tyrant in the execution of his unhallowed and wicked designs to extinguish the liberty and paralyze the energies of man.

Since the adoption of that system of policy by our Administration, that has impeded our commerce, a doctrine has gone forth, and received the support of their adherents, that commerce, for the protection and defence of which they have

* For a lucid and masterly view of the probable consequences of Bonaparte's success in his designs against Russia,—see Mr. Harper's excellent speech at the celebration of the Russian victories, at Georgetown, 5th June, ult.

said we were contending is unfavorable to a republic. (i) A prediction of the wonderful discovery, that commerce was adverse to the genius of a republican government, and hostile to the interest of maritime and agricultural states, would ten years since have been treated with derision and contempt.

There is not only an association of ideas and of knowledge in the human mind, but there is a mutual connexion and dependence between the sciences and pursuits of man. It might be demonstrated how political economy is affected,—how agriculture is promoted,—how science and refinement is extended,—how a spirit of freedom and independence is fostered,—how industry is supported,—and enterprize stimulated by the encouragement of commercial intercourse with foreign nations. All this might be enforced and illustrated by examples from history. Persia is an ancient kingdom, that dates its origin beyond history or tradition. Favored of nature with a fertile soil and salubrious climate, her religion is adverse to commerce; her cities are inland; she has remained uncivilized. While they traded Spain and Portugal were active, enterprising, and powerful. They suspended commerce, and sunk into indolence and imbecility. Holland was shorn of her strength when she was rivalled and surpassed by England in commercial enterprize and naval power. The Hanseatic League fed the lamp, that enlightened Europe. The Venetians composed a small Republic. But they were enriched and made powerful by commerce. Their industry and enterprize conveyed the productions of India from the banks of the Ganges to the shores of the Adriatic. The League of Cambray destroyed their commerce, and with it their power and political consequence. If another nation were added, that has been affected by commerce, it should be these United States, which have received from it accessions of wealth and power wholly unexampled.

Yet, notwithstanding the peculiar adaptation of this country to commerce,—notwithstanding our wealth, our power, our science, our refinement, our liberty, our all—is intimately con-

(i) See Note.

ected with it and dependent on it ; from a series of measures,—from the relations to foreign nations, which our Administration have assumed, it is but too apparent, that its final and total extinction is a part of that scheme of policy, which its suspension had begun !

But, if it has been determined and decreed, that our Enterprise must languish,—that our Commerce must be abandoned,—our Navies dismantled,—our Cities depopulated,—our Institutions of learning demolished,—our Energies paralyzed,—our Laws cancelled,—our Liberties buried in caves of Gallic darkness,—our Lives and Treasures devoted to the will of a cruel and grinding Despotism—it is a consolatory reflection, that Massachusetts will be guiltless. Her sons will never tamely submit to the chains of Tyranny. They will be mindful of their ancestry. They will respect themselves. They will regard their posterity. They were the *first* to inhale the air of Freedom, and will be the *last* to expire it.

Here let me close.....I am well aware, that what has been said may appear to some as the effusion of vindictive violence and party rage. Let such consider, whether it be *true* or *false*. If *false*, it deserves a stronger name than violence or party rage. If *true*, to conceal it, would be criminal. Suppression of truth, when occasion requires its disclosure, is falsehood. Whatever may be our views of expediency or policy Truth should never be violated. It is more honorable than expediency. It is the primal bond of society. It is the cement, that binds the “ elements of the moral world” together. However we may be tempted by hope or fear, love of popular favor or dread of popular resentment, we are reduced to the extremity of making choice between Truth and Falsehood,—it is our imperious and solemn duty to speak the Truth regardless of the consequences.

NOTES.

Note a, page 7. As the doctrine here alluded to has received considerable support, not only in Europe, but in this country ; and as its tendency is thought to be mischievous, and subversive of good order and regular government, it seems not improper nor unreasonable to subjoin the able and masterly refutation of it by Professor Christian in a Note to Blackstone's Commentaries. " To excite discontent, and stir up rebellion against all good order and peaceful government, a proposition has lately been industriously propagated, viz. that all men are by nature equal. If this subject is considered for a moment, the very reverse will appear to be the truth, and that all men are by nature unequal. For though children come into the world equally helpless, yet in a few years, as soon as their bodies acquire vigor, and their minds and passions are expanded and developed we perceive an infinite difference in their natural powers, capacities and propensities ; and this inequality is still further increased by the instruction which they happen to receive.

" Independent of any positive regulations, the unequal industry and virtues of men must necessarily create unequal rights. In the most perfect republic that can be conceived in theory, the proposition is false and mischievous ; the father and child, the master and servant, the judge and prisoner, the general and common soldier, the representative and the constituent, must be eternally unequal, and have unequal rights. And where every office is elective, the most virtuous and the best qualified to discharge the duties of any office, have rights and claims superior to others.

" Subordination in every society is the bond of its existence ; the highest and the lowest individuals derive their strength and security from their mutual assistance and dependence ; as in the natural body, *the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee ; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you.*

" True liberty results from making every higher degree accessible to those who are in a lower, if virtue and talents are there found to deserve advancement.

" The doctrine, that all men are, or ought to be, equal, is little less contrary to nature and contrary to their happiness, than the invention of Procrustes, who attempted to make men equal by stretching the limbs of some, and lopping off those of others.

" But the experiment has been tried, and the result has hitherto been (an awful warning to the world) a rapid succession of assassinations, judicial murders, proscriptions and usurpation."

Note b, page 8. As the foregoing sheets were not originally intended for publication, care was not taken to examine the authorities relative to the facts therein disclosed. It is believed, however, that a neglect to make the proper researches has led to no mistake as to the existence or character of the facts, that have been stated; but only to an omission of some concomitant incidents that might profitably and not improperly have been mentioned. When mention was made of the fitting out of a French vessel of war in one of our harbors, reference was had to the *La Petite Democrat*, fitted at Philadelphia. By recurrence to the history of the times, it appears, not only, that Mons. Genet prepared this vessel for a cruise in an American harbor, but that privateers were fitted out under his direction at Charleston, and expeditions planned against Louisiana, (then in possession of Spain) the Floridas, and Canada; to aid in the execution of which, the recruiting service was commenced and men actually enlisted in this country. Commissions were also granted to vessels by Genet to cruise and commit hostilities against nations, with whom the United States were at peace. It will be recollected that these transactions were subsequent to the promulgation of our proclamation of neutrality. An acquiescence in the designs of Genet would have been a departure from our neutrality, and would inevitably have involved us in a war with England and Spain. As this citizen minister was caressed, applauded, and supported by a large portion of the people during these transactions, and justified by some of the public prints in his attacks on the great man, who then filled the executive department, it is hoped, that this statement will not be thought irrelevant to the purpose announced—of demonstrating the existence of French influence and French principles in this country. A complete history of these transactions, as well as of the rise and progress of the Democratic societies may be found in Marshall's *Life of Washington*, Vol. 5, p. 410—also in the journals of the times.

Note c, page 8. Adet's artful and wicked appeal to the popular sympathies and prejudices, here particularly alluded to, is too long for insertion in a note. The disposition of the French to interfere in our concerns, with England, and embroil us in a war with that country, manifested likewise unequivocally on a subsequent occasion, as well as their confidence in the cooperation of the public sentiment in this country, may be illustrated by an extract from a diplomatic communication of this minister.

“ They (the British cruisers) have impressed seamen from on
 “ board American vessels, and have thus found the means of strength-
 “ ening their crews at the expense of the Americans, without the Gov-
 “ ernment of the United States having made known to the undersign-
 “ ed the steps they had taken to obtain satisfaction for the violation of
 “ neutrality so hurtful to the interests of France.” The great man*,

* *Timothy Pickering.*

“ who was the Secretary for foreign affairs, made the following indig-
 “ nant and manly reply. “ This, Sir, was a matter which only con-
 “ cerns the government of the United States. As an independent
 “ nation, we are not bound to render an account to any other, of the
 “ measures we deemed proper for the protection of our own citizens.”

Note d, page 10. The following is the chief article of the Ram-
 “ bouillet decree, bearing date 13th March, 1810. “ All vessels sail-
 “ ing under the flag of the United States, or owned entirely or in part
 “ by any American citizen, which *since the 20th of May, 1809*, have
 “ entered or shall hereafter enter any of the ports of our empire,
 “ of our colonies, or of the countries occupied by our armies, shall be
 “ seized, and the proceeds of them when sold deposited in the sinking
 “ fund.” The unparalleled iniquity of this decree need not be en-
 forced. Some of the remarks of the able Conductor of the American
 Review may not be thought inapplicable. “ If this decree were sub-
 “ mitted to a jurist of the old school, he would not, we think, hesitate
 “ to call it an absolute declaration of war. If a statesman of the
 “ same school were informed that a government stiling itself inde-
 “ pendent had tamely endured an act of such heinous injustice and
 “ treachery as this visitation upon the property of our merchants, he
 “ would suppose either that national honor was now wholly exploded,
 “ or that a strange revolution had occurred in the meaning of terms.
 “ What would be his surprise, moreover, if he were again told that
 “ the same government still advancing pretensions to dignity and in-
 “ dependence, had, within a few months after, consented to open a
 “ mangled, oppressed, harassed, precarious trade with the power from
 “ whom it had sustained this outrage, without previously obtaining
 “ reparation for the insult or full restitution for the property confis-
 “ cated.”

Note c, page 11. In Mr. Champagny's letter to General Arm-
 “ strong, dated January 15th, 1808, among other things is the follow-
 “ ing declaration. “ War exists then in fact, between England and
 “ the United States ; and his majesty considers it as declared from
 “ the day in which England published her decrees.” The documents
 were not at hand when the paragraph to which this note refers was
 written ; the letter of instructions to General Armstrong was of course
 dictated by memory. Although the *language* of Mr. Madison was
 misreclected, the following extract from his letter of instructions
 evinces that no injustice has been done to his *meaning*. “ The presi-
 “ dent makes it your duty to present to the French government the
 “ contents of Mr. Champagny's letter, taking care, as your discretion
 “ will doubtless suggest, that while you make that government sen-
 “ sible of the offensive tone employed, you leave the way open for
 “ friendly and respectful explanations, if there be a disposition to
 “ offer them ; and for a decision here on any reply which may be of
 “ a different character.”

Note f, page 12. “The decrees of Berlin and Milan are the fundamental laws of my empire ; they flow from the nature of things, and shall continue to form the public code of my empire, as long as England maintains her Orders in Council of 1806 and 1807, and violates the stipulations of the treaty of Utrecht upon this subject.” Bonaparte’s Answer to the Deputies, March 20th, 1811. It will be recollected that when these declarations were made Mr. Madison had already proclaimed the revocation of these very decrees ;—and that England still maintained her Orders.

Note g, page 15. Among other complaints, it is alleged against England, that she has provoked the hostilities of the Indians on our frontiers. This charge, so far from being supported by proof, has not even the appearance of probability. It is hoped, we shall not be thought as furnishing an apology for England by endeavoring to wipe away any “flattering unction” so often used to beplaster over the iniquity of this War. But even admitting this charge to be well founded,—which ought constantly to be denied,—it would surely be more effectual to bring England to a sense of humanity and justice, were it deferred till we had expiated the guilt of attempting to stir up rebellion in her Canadian provinces. If any proof is required that actual attempts have been made to foment rebellion in Canada, it may be furnished by reference to General Hull’s and Colonel Preston’s proclamations, wherein the inhabitants are invited and entreated to revolt from their allegiance to the British and put themselves under the protection of the American Government. In the debates in Congress on the probability of an easy and immediate conquest of Canada, it may be seen that calculations were made on a revolt of the inhabitants. It was said their burthens were grievous and intolerable, and that they would seize the first opportunity of renouncing their allegiance to the British government. Perhaps the benevolent, humane, and tender-hearted backwoodsmen have been induced to “let slip the dogs of war” into their territories only by the kind and truly philanthropic motives furnished by a desire of emancipating them from bondage. If we approve these benevolent and liberal designs, we must acknowledge, that to wage war against a people under the pretence of ameliorating their government, is not exactly conformable to the law of nations as stated by the most approved writers on the subject.

Note h, page 17. It has been remarked by an able and elegant writer,* that “the transactions on our frontiers argue a degree of improvidence, and of rashness, that looks like a sudden and wrathful visitation of Divine Providence, rather than the consequence of native imbecility of mind, united to the most blind and intemperate passion.” Our naval successes, it is true, have exceeded the most sanguine expectations even of the advocates of this war. In a just cause they would have been glorious and honorable to our country.

* *Walsh.*

In an unjust, unholy, and wicked cause they have exalted our national character for *nautical skill* and *bravery*, and shot rays of splendor around the names of the heroes, who achieved them. It will be recollected that all of our prominent naval commanders, with the exception of Rodgers, who has yet gathered no laurels, are of the party opposed to the present administration. The events of the war on the the frontiers fully justify what has been said above. The capture of York is acknowledged to be the only success on our part worth mentioning; and that, we suspect, will on enquiry be found not to redound greatly to our honor or advantage. The provisions and military stores there taken have since been burnt at Sacket's harbor; and although our loss on the occasion has been studiously concealed, it has been pretty well ascertained, that it was not less than 550. Opposed to this success is the loss of five generals and more than six thousand men, exclusive of the immense number that have been cut off by the distressing and mortal sickness, that has pervaded our camp ever since the commencement of the war. Added to this is a monthly expenditure of six millions of Dollars. That intrepid and patriotic statesman, the *honorable* Mr. Widgery, offered his services to the nation to levy an army in the District of Maine, and reduce Canada in one campaign. If the conquest of that province be a desirable object, it is to be regretted that this frank and generous proposal was not accepted.

Note i, page 20. Mr. Jefferson, in his answer to an address from the legislature of New-Hampshire, told them it would be "unwise evermore to resort to foreign countries for manufactured articles." Mr. Madison's reasoning in favor of a discouragement of commercial intercourse with Great Britain is rather more honorable to his political wisdom than to his humanity. "Here, says he, are three hundred thousand souls who live by our custom.—Only drive them to poverty and despair, and what will be the consequence? Most probably an acquisition of so many useful citizens to the United States." See his speech in support of Secretary Jefferson's report in 1793.

