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AN

ORATION,

DELIVERED

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ON THE

FOURTH OF JULY, 1821.

BEFORE THE

CINCINNATI and REVOLUTION

SOCIETIES.



BY JAMES HAMILTON, JUN.

A MEMBER OF THE CINCINNATI.



AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR JOINT REQUEST.



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1821.

ORATION.



FELLOW CITIZENS!

IN an age when suffering humanity required it most, a new Land of Promise was revealed in this Western wilderness.

It seems to have entered into the scheme of God's benevolence, that the Pilgrims whom he was sending forth to build up the foundations of a new empire to adorn the face of his creation; should be disciplined by an instructive and salutary adversity—that their fortitude should be tried by discomfiture, their constancy by persecution, their religious resignation by calamity in its bitterest forms, their courage by all that is hazardous in enterprize and frightful in peril.

It is but a narrow philosophy, which refers our Revolution to a trifling impost on glass or tea; the causes of it were interwoven in the moral habits of our ancestors; they were cherished by the toleration of peculiar and various forms of religious worship, and by a fervid attachment to all those branches of the Constitution of the mother-country, which wore even the semblance of freedom.

The Colonies were the vigorous offset of an age essentially distinguished for its rapid progress

in civil and political philosophy. The springs of government had been measured, its relations discriminated, its legitimate powers and secret abuses defined with a force and intensity of speculation and research, supplying all that mere theory could afford, long before the Rock of Plymouth received the venerable Patriarchs. Although Lord BUTE had never lived to fling the weight of his prejudices in opposition to the substantial strength and real prosperity of his country—although GRENVILLE had never been blinded by the “phantom of American Taxation,” or the inconstancy of NORTH enfeebled the measures of his King, yet we must and would have been FREE!—The God of Nature had inscribed the charter of our Freedom in the sturdy sense, the pure and fearless devotion, the heroic spirit, and matchless vigour of our fathers. They brought with them the seminal principle of that Liberty which with us has ripened into a fructiferous maturity.

It would be a censurable apathy to leave this subject without offering to the memory of these generous and venerable Patriots the tribute of our reverence and gratitude. Within the period assigned for the ordinary duration of human life, they had carried the triumphs of civilization far into the recesses of the forest—They had subdued the obduracy of nature, and turned her blessings to the most magnificent account—In spots which for ages had witnessed the revels of licentious barbarism, were seen to rise those beautiful forms and modifications of civilized existence; which now confer such exquisite embellishment on the moral and physical landscape of our coun-

try—They had covered its surface with a population of two millions, well educated, pious, resolute and discreet, fearing God, loving liberty; and presenting in the blameless purity of their lives, and in the efforts of their successful industry, finer combinations of simplicity and heroism than pagan antiquity can afford.

When our Revolution, in the natural course of events arrived, the materials for its consummation were at hand. These were found in the virtue and intelligence of a brave and enlightened people.

In the history of what country shall we find a just parallel to the patriotic devotion, deep wisdom and masculine eloquence of the Representatives of our First Congress? Their moderation was alien to the usual spirit of revolt—their enthusiasm was exempt from fanaticism—their views of freedom from anarchy and licentiousness. No crude theories of indefinite perfection or unlimited happiness clouded the intense and unalterable gaze with which they contemplated the rising destinies of their country—No bloody proscriptions, no outrages on humanity, no excesses between the casuistry of an easy morality and the plausible necessities of a convenient policy, disgraced their measures. These were in unison with the mandates of a perfect justice, reclining on her throne in a period of profound and undisturbed tranquillity.

If the military events of the Revolution have comparatively less of an unvarying splendour, than the trophies of wisdom and eloquence which decorate its civil history, the causes are to be

found rather in the want of the materials of war, than in the defectiveness of those moral resources which determine a people to be great and render them invincible. The commencement of our struggle found our country without an army.—The assemblage of its forces was simultaneous with the conflicts into which they were precipitated by the daring atrocity of the enemy. Not a moment was allowed for organization and discipline. Our gallant yeomanry rushed to those vales which they had adorned and fertilized by their labour, carrying with them, little of the mere mechanism of the soldier, but sustaining, nevertheless, in their proud resistance, the firmness of spirits resolved to be free, and regardless of suffering. The records of heroic enterprize and valorous achievement are yet abundantly copious to vindicate their military reputation. But this canonized force which upheld our country in the darkest hour of its peril, has claims to our gratitude, which fling the pride of abstract science into comparative insignificance and contempt. What a poor picture is the art of war, with all its complicated geometry and atrocious energy, contrasted with the constancy and heroism of that band whom defeat could not conquer, or calamity subdue—who rallied in the face of adverse fortune, and found a noble compensation for her reverses in the sacredness of that cause to which they had offered up the libation of their blood and the tribute of their lives. A cause on which they had conferred an unfading splendour by the practise of more than the courtesies of civilized warfare, in the midst of provocations which would have justified a retaliation full, sanguinary and exterminating.

One of the brightest events in the history of this conflict is that it should have produced a being whose example burnt with the purest and most unsubdued lustre in periods of most profound gloom and embarrassment. The production of such a man, is alone an adequate fund of glory to sustain a nation's claims to immortality. There was nothing common place in the scale by which he was graduated, if he partook largely of the spirit of the times in which he lived, the essentials of his character were of solitary grandeur—for antiquity had revealed no mould of the same greatness, while he towered above the waste of modern times in peerless and immeasurable elevation.—This is the fiat of fate and the award of posterity. Time in his career is subverting many dazzling edifices built up in the pride and presumption of man,—He unveils the delusions of an age, corrects contemporary and posthumous injustice—punishes, long after the ashes of his victim have returned to their poor elements. He throws down the idols of a century and consigns to oblivion the pagods of human homage and devotion; but every effort of his power, every effect of his desolation, is to remove some feeble impediment to the majestic rise of the HERO OF THE NEW WORLD.

It is the distinctive and enviable characteristic of our Revolution, that it should have subverted nothing but the evils which occasioned it. It left our people in the undisturbed enjoyment of all that was valuable in their social customs and civil institutions. The tempest had purified the atmosphere without defacing the beauty of nature, or prostrating a single land-mark. These re-

mained to form not only the elements but the finished bodies of a polity which has stamped a new era in the history of man.

When the architects of our political edifice approached their undertaking they neither slighted the speculations of philosophy nor were governed by them. They had indeed little else to do than to give form and arrangement to the rudiments of a rational freedom that were existing around them. These were found in unimpaired vigour. Religious toleration had long freed conscience from its shackles, and emboldened the spirit of inquiry. The trial by jury had familiarized our people to the beautiful union, which liberty and justice exemplify in this admirable contrivance. The liberty of the press, that engine of vast and undefinable potency had, in the infancy of the Colonies, developed the powers of its expansibility and the play of its moral forces.

The Representative principle, the true essence of a free government so imperfectly understood by the ancients, had recommended itself by its practical blessings in most of the colonial assemblies; and when we add to this the copious resources, which the spirit and opinions of the people at large supplied, is it surprizing that the framers of our Constitution, should not have missed those master principles which they desired to obtain?

Still the imperishable renown of having first exhibited the example of a government, in which allegiance is no more than equivalent to protection, and power and responsibility are correlative

terms, belongs, by an unfortunate distinction for humanity, exclusively to ourselves.

A vast variety of concurring causes, too multifarious for our present discussion, tends to prove the durability of our institutions. Independently of those which are afforded by our inbred and religious attachment to these glorious forms, the unfettered alienation of property, recognized by our laws, is calculated, whilst it animates the spirit of enterprize, and rewards the efforts of industry, to maintain that equality which is the vital principle of stability in republics. A free state is led by an infallible instinct to throw the aggregate of its wealth into a common market of competition, open to the talents and energies of its people. Where property is thus unfettered by the artificial checks and contrivances of a jealous aristocracy it is alone sufficient in the equality of condition it insures, to work out ultimately, the political regeneration of a nation, amidst forms apparently hostile to liberty.

When there exists such a perfect congruity between the spirit and habits of our people and the principle which form the recorded letter of their Constitution, is there a vain arrogance in our presuming that the rights of man have been confided to our care, and that we have made them eternal?

As recent as the event may be, I cannot pass over, without, at least, a cursory notice, our second conflict with Great Britain. Indeed, without a special invocation, the images of this war rise in unfading splendour, to cast their golden visions on my feeble narrative. The matchless efforts of

heroism are identified with the sublimities of nature. The genius of our country has inscribed the story of its triumphs on those rocks which are washed by the waves of that cataract, whose spray ascends to heaven, and dims the lustre of the sun—Erie no longer conveys the mere associations of its vast waters, or the rude traditions of the warlike tribes which once peopled its shores in the pride of their power, and in the gory flush of their victories; but it awakens the breathing harmony of the boldest and noblest anthem of national triumph. The great Father of our Western Waters, in his march to the deep, carries, on his ambient tide, the recollection of that event of “surpassing greatness,” which gave lustre to our arms and glory to our Peace—The ocean, the long regarded arena of valour and enterprize, has borne our thunder and reflected our lightning from its wave. Our Eagle has a prescriptive right to rest on the summit of our lofty mountains, and to gaze undazzled at the sun. Who shall dispute her prerogative to sail over the azure deep and claim its trophies as her own?

At such a moment when the naval glory of our country stands revealed in the lights of its own splendour, it is impossible to repress the intrusion of the melancholy consciousness that of those who contributed to build up the pride of its magnificence, two heroes, united in friendship and in fame, have descended to the cold chambers of the grave—Yes, our proud banner will never again greet their eager and fond gaze, nor will their noble forms be seen in the van of glory and peril animating to victory and renown. O, thou fell and

odious disease, couldst thou not have revelled on some worthless carcase, to the wretched spirit of which thy gnawing annihilation would have been comfort, and have spared for future usefulness and honor the lamented and admirable PERRY?—O, thou Moloch! before whose false idols, society has often wept the bitterest and most precious of its tears, couldst thou not in the frantic folly of thy sway have found some other victim, to deck thy bloody triumphs, than the brave, romantic and generous DECATUR?

In offering to the spirits of these patriot warriors, this feeble testimony of our gratitude and homage, can we permit the memory of our gallant and amiable SHUBRICK, who was deemed worthy to have been their associate, to repose in the tranquil recollection of our admiration and esteem without the passing tribute of our affection and regrets?—What a beautiful career of heroism has been interrupted! What a race of honor has been stopped!—its commencement glittering with starry brightness—its end veiled in an inexplicable gloom. Who can forget the throbbing anxiety with which we watched the arrival on our shores of that bark which was to have borne him to his home, to the swiftness of whose wings had been confided the tidings of a peace which our valour had won. But, alas! from the most dizzy cliff that overhangs the deep, the white speck of her canvass could never be descried!

It is not alone the impress of glory which the late war stamped upon our national reputation, which renders it a subject of elation and pride. Other considerations, less selfish in their

character, and more cheering in their moral influence, confer on the consequences of this contest a deep and affecting interest. It has restored us in the best sense of the term—in those pacific dispositions which are essential to the spirit of peace, to the land of our fathers.

The Revolutionary struggle had left a feeling of mutual bitterness and distrust, which nothing but a conflict between powers altogether independent, could have dissipated. We were prone to remember with deep animosity the oppressions of a jealous and unkind parent, while she cherished a lively recollection of a revolt, the success of which had shaken the pillars of her empire, and stung to madness her keen sense of national pride. These dispositions were stimulated into an extraordinary acrimony by the collisions that grew out of that mighty drama which France exhibited to the alternate horror and admiration of the world. Thus the two countries were at war in spirit, long before its reality was revealed in the clangor of arms and the effusion of blood.

But it has been worth to both parties the price which it cost. It has taught a nation, of which arrogance is one of the infirmities of its nature, that we have not only a right to claim respect, but the power to enforce our claims; and it has taught us, except when urged by a necessity equivalent to that which called us to the field, that our true interests are promoted by cultivating relations of amity with a country menacing our prosperity in no pursuit of serious competition, and allied to us by the endearing associations of a

common origin—the sympathies of blood, and the treasures of religion, philosophy and letters.

May we not be permitted to hope that the “*delenda est Carthago*,” so long regarded as the wish and test of a rational patriotism, has been exploded forever, and that we have at length arrived at that point “at which good feeling and sound philosophy can meet and agree” in ascribing some of the finest of our moral energies to our descent from a country whose transit across the hemisphere of science, is marked by so broad a beam of light—whose muse in the collective affluence of her treasures, has snatched the palm even from the Parnassus of antiquity—and whose achievements “o’er flood and field” have added the drapery of modern chivalry to the stern heroism of the ancient states. Whether we refer to the unrivaled depth of the philosophy of NEWTON, or to the muse of MILTON, “with no middle flight soaring above the Aonian mount”—turning inward the undazzled gaze of a spirit fraught with the fountains of eternal light; or whether we trace on the chart of philanthropy the “eccentric and benevolent voyage” of the kind and generous HOWARD, we have equal reason to be proud of our lineage, and to indulge in a cheering gratitude, that it should have pleased a beneficent Providence that we should have sprung from the loins of a gallant nation, in the maturity of her power, and in the fullness of her triumphs in science and civilization, rather than that the cradle of our infancy should be hung with barbaric spoils, the emblems at once of ignorance, superstition and ferocity.

Let us remember that in spite of the forms of government which have subsisted in Europe, England is the only country there which enjoys a freedom that can be called practical--with whatever disgust and regret we may contemplate the corruptions which debase, and the errors which sophisticate her political system, yet the great body of her people, that vast commonwealth, which more in reference to the artificial arrangements of society than by an appropriate moral designation, we term 'the middle orders,' are in strict sympathy and social alliance with us, in all that is glorious in our institutions, and elevating in our character.--This mass of intelligence and physical power, in the direct control which it holds over its government, may be said to maintain whatever of the spirit of freedom yet exists in Europe, nor is it presumptuous to assert that the despotic police, the base Alliance, impiously calling itself "HOLY," is restrained from subverting every semblance of liberty from the face of the old world, or of projecting a crusade against that of the new, by the censorial efficacy of the opinions of this fearless and enlightened community.--To that despot who heads this conspiracy against human happiness, should he in the madness of his power ever dream of putting out the light that blazes on this Western Sinai, we may well address, in the fine and indignant burst of the Poet--

"Fond, impious man! think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,

"Raised by thy breath has quenched the orb of day?

"To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,

"And warms the nations with redoubled ray."

In this filial tribute which we have paid to the land of our fathers, rather than to the government which sometimes disgraces and often oppresses it; it is hoped the most scrupulous Republicanism will find nothing to censure. Will it not rather regard with fond and reverential attachment the country which holds the ashes of SIDNEY, and of HAMPDEN, of MILTON and of LOCKE? Or if it will not worship at these sacred urns, there is enough in the land of the Shamrock and Thistle to invoke and sanctify the spirit of Freedom. Where is the man amongst us who would dare to write the epitaph of EMMETT, or would presume to affirm that he is more of a Republican than the brave, generous and patriotic FLETCHER?

These are not the only reflections of an exhilarating character which the late war is calculated to excite. It has led to the extinction of those parties, the collisions of which once weakened our country, and disturbed the harmony of its society.

I come not here to burn the torch of Alecto—to me there is no lustre in its fires, nor cheering warmth in its blaze. Let us rather offer and mingle our congratulations, that those unhappy differences which alienated one portion of the community from the rest, are at an end, and that a vast fund of the genius and worth of our country has been restored to its service, to give new vigour to its career of power and prosperity.

To this blessed consummation the administration of our venerable MONROE, has been a powerful auxiliary. This veteran of the Revolution, on whose body the scars of her battles are yet im-

pressed, has exhibited in the long progress of a noble life a combination of public virtue and private worth. He resembles his first and illustrious predecessor, not alone in lineaments of exterior form, but in those qualities of higher use and of more essential value. He has conducted his administration by the lights of an enlarged and magnanimous policy, with feelings altogether American, which in illustrating the principles, have conferred a bright commentary on the immortal text, of our Constitution.

The delusions of past years have rolled away, and the mists which once hovered over forms of now unshaded brightness are dissipated forever. We can now all meet and exchange our admiration and love in a generous confraternity of feeling, whether we speak of our JEFFERSON or our ADAMS, our MADISON or our HAMILTON, our PINCKNEY or our MONROE; the associations of patriotism are awakened, and we forget the distance in the political zodiac which once separated these illustrious luminaries, in the full tide of glory they are pouring on the brightest page of our history.—This unanimity of sentiment is not a sickly calm, in which the high energies of the nation are sunk into a debilitating paralysis. It is the result of the blessed efficacy of our government, which, affording to our people no cause of complaint, carries the elastic spring of the human character into those exercises of individual enterprise which are perpetually adding some new resources to our wealth, some new energy to our power.

This union can only annoy the Demagogue, who lives by the proscription of one half of his fellow-citizens, and in the delusions of a distempered state of public opinion. But to him who loves his country as a beautiful whole, not scarred and cut into the selfish compartments of sects and of schisms such a picture is one of unmixed triumph and gratulation. The necessity for the existence of parties in a free state, in the sense in which we have unfortunately understood them, is one of those paradoxes which the world has rather received than examined, and seems allied to the sophistry which would lead us to believe that the pleasures of domestic life are promoted by its dissensions, or that the jarring of the elements is essential to the harmony of the universe. No! An united is a happy, as well as an invincible people,—let this conviction be co-incident with the hope, that from the ashes of Party-Spirit, there will arise the spirit of a noble rivalry, of who can do most for his country.

VENERABLE FATHERS OF THE CINCINNATI!

Although I appear as the humble organ of your will, I cannot permit this occasion to escape without tendering to you a co-temporary homage, which posterity will ratify. The history of your association, is the record of fraternal concord, generous sympathy, noble beneficence, and of a patriotism too lofty for the influence of party. The testimony of near forty years has falsified the calumnious predictions which were flung on your cradle. So far from aiming at political power, by a criminal ambition, by corrupt confederation, and the licentious spirit of intrigue, you, of all

the associations in our country, have mingled least in the strife of contending factions, and, amid the storms which have agitated the union, have preserved a career of moderation and equanimity, which has demonstrated that your order was really established for the heaven-consecrated purposes of Charity, and for a perpetuation of those principles which led to our Revolution, and have given it an ineffable glory and renown.

Those who found nothing in the canons of your constitution to revile, were willing to seize on the emblem of your order, and whilst badges of distinction were accorded to other associations, the captious and over-weening patriotism of the day discovered a reason why the Soldier of the Revolution should be prohibited from wearing next to his heart the effigy of that bird, which, encompassed by the stars of our banner, had in battle waved before his eyes, and fanned the fires of his generous enthusiasm.

History has done, and will continue to do, justice to your motives.

But alas! within even my narrow recollection, what a cruel sweep has death made in your venerable ranks!—We can well remember illustrious forms that are no longer to be seen.

Child as I was, it seems but yesterday, from the depth and vividness of the impression, that I saw at the head of your patriot band, the gallant and intrepid MOULTRIE, who revealed, in the confiding frankness of his disposition, in the overflowing benevolence of his heart, in the warmth of his affections, and his daring valour, one of those beautiful exemplars of military worth, which

by a unanimity of public sentiment, has long been regarded as one of the most interesting exhibitions of the human character. But, alas! thou "bravest of the brave," "thou art gone—thy genius fled up to the stars whence it came, and that warm heart of thine with all its generous and open vessels compressed into a clod of the valley."

Since that melancholy moment, when we witnessed "the velvet pall, decorated with the military ensigns" of this gallant veteran, we have often been called to pay the last honors to departed worth. Who can forget that you have enrolled among your former members, him who bore the name of the Father of his Country, or that this Soldier now slumbers in the grave? Alas! I have no pencil to catch and convey the strong lines and soft colouring of the character of the vanquisher of FARLETON; of that hero who wore his laurels with a modesty equal to the gallantry with which they were won, and who in the unaffected simplicity of his character, seemed of all others the most ignorant of the blaze of public admiration which rested on his fame. There was a period when he who bore the orders and enjoyed the confidence and esteem of the hero of Guildford and Eutaw, was to be seen in your phalanx, exhibiting to the gaze of universal admiration that fine bust, which time, without spoiling, had touched with venerable beauty, the appropriate depository of the daring and chivalrous spirit which once animated it—Shall we say that this veteran is dead, when his genius has lived and yet lives in the valour of his gallant sons?

*By Gen. G. M. Smith, Secretary of the
2^d Col. South Carolina*

Since one of your number has addressed you from this place, the amiable FINDLEY, who loved you with all the enthusiasm of his kind and feeling heart, has gone to his last account, to receive the reward of his virtues. And within a few months, your companions in arms, the humane and gallant TRENDS and D'OXLEY, have yielded up their generous spirits.

“Death has no terrors for the brave.” I know you contemplate his approach with less concern than those who are destined to mourn over your loss, and to cherish the legacy of your example. But it is impossible “to avert the dreaded page,” the time will arrive when not one of that sacred band who saved a country and found an empire, will be seen among us. Think not that an indifference to your fame and virtues will characterize such an era. When the aching eye shall look in vain for the scar-worn veteran of the Revolution, then it is that public gratitude, stung by the recollection of some unworthy neglect will feel it a balmy solace to consecrate each memorial of his past existence. To his urn patriotism will perform the most sacred of its pilgrimages—the records of former times will be searched with the most pious scrutiny, to discover some forgotten name, or to illustrate some trait of high service and generous devotion.

With those of you who yet remain, may the lamp of life still continue to burn with serene and soothing lustre, and when its flame shall glimmer, sink and be extinct forever, may the blessings of Almighty God await you in that world where patriotism must look at last for the best and the brightest of its rewards.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS!

Our destiny has been cast in a state, where a generous ambition has the materials for its instruction, and the objects of its reward. South-Carolina has never been a feeble star in the galaxy of the union—She has invariably sustained the character of bringing her full contingent of public virtue to the service of the public weal.—Her patriotism has been ardent and pure, her honor lofty and uncompromising—Her sons have bled wherever the blood of our country has flowed, and they have participated in the triumphs which adorn her civil and political history.*

To uphold a portion of this renown necessarily devolves on you. When I have before me a philosophy teaching so elequently by examples, I shall not fatigue you by the didactic dryness of abstract principles. The sources of your instruction are around you. What the cherished biography of your country does not afford is supplied by living and contemporary worth. Our Gallery of Portraits is full—it embraces all the conceivable varieties of intellectual beauty and moral grandeur.

If you wish to hang the trophies of eloquence

* South Carolina has furnished to the United States, two Presidents of the Revolutionary Congress, a Chief Justice and an Associate Judge of the Supreme Court, seven Ambassadors, three General Officers, of the Revolutionary Army, a Major General of the Army of '98, and two General Officers for the late war. She has afforded a Secretary for the Navy, has now one of her distinguished Sons in the War Department, and has given to Congress a President of the Senate and a Speaker of the House of Representatives. In 1800, she might have elevated one of her Citizens to the Chief Magistracy of the Nation, and has now the reputation of sending to the House of Representatives an individual worthy of this honor, whom public opinion has long regarded as one of the first Statesmen of the age.—See *Ramsay's History of S. Carolina, Vol II. Page 358, in reference to the first part of this Note.*

around the Doric columns of an exalted patriotism, you have the example of the elder RUTLEDGE, the mighty thunder of whose speech was the fit herald of the great emotions which arose in his capacious heart; or, if there be something too "severely great" in this model, you have for your imitation the more mild and attractive graces which adorn the genius of his brother. This beautiful mould gleams with the blended lights of literature and taste, presenting all that is admirable in the elevations of public service, all that is fascinating in the charms of private life.

If you wish to admire, and ever have occasion to emulate an elevated and indignant spirit of defiance, the patriotic GADSDEN has instructed you from his dungeon, in the cheerless confinement and hopeless captivity of which his great soul refused to capitulate with the oppressors of his country.

ADDISON, in the beauty of his fictions, has been supposed to have sketched the *chef d'œuvre* of a patriot merchant, but have we not in the elder LAURENS an original of higher authority and more admirable delineation? Will you regard the gallantry of BAYARD and CRILLON, as a doubtful romance, when the spirit of his daring and darling son seems to point to the proud summits where the garlands of chivalry are hung?

May the calamities of our country never produce a necessity for those services which have associated the name of MARION with our best recollections; if they should, you will find in the character of this untiring and unconquerable partizan an enterprize and humanity which it offers no violence to historic truth to parallel with the

spirit of adventure and military heroism which enobled the annals of his protestant ancestry.— Had he lived in those days he would have been worthy the confidence of COLIGNI, and to have fought by the side of MORNAI DU PLEBIS, a hero whose chivalrous and romantic gallantry conferred a beautiful garniture on his pure, his ardent and undissembled piety.

However consoling it may be to refer to the past for such testimonies of emphatic instruction, yet we have enough in the instances of contemporary success to cherish and direct a noble emulation.

Have we not seen rise up among us, an individual without the aid of solitary circumstance of hereditary fortune or powerful connexions—yet, by the sovereignty of genius and the nobility of nature, obtain more than the public honors of his country, by appropriating to himself its highest confidence and esteem?—We have seen him sustaining at the Bar, the learning of his profession with a lofty and courteous generosity which the unjust prejudice of the world has more usually allied to other avocations—We have seen him occupying the first place in the popular assembly of the nation, to which danger had summoned the highest talent, and where the chances of distinction had produced the most vehement competition; and lastly, we have witnessed the loud and unanimous call which has taken him from the judiciary of our State, where the lights of his genius had begun to blaze with increasing splendour, to preside over and subdue the chaos of an institution, whose interests are vital to those of

our country, whose character had been violated, and whose fund had been pillaged by a spirit of licentious and atrocious rapine.

What a living sarcasm is the life of such a man on the wretched and exploded theories of a base aristocracy! The brightness of his rise flings back on his cradle a halo of unfading glory.

In selecting this individual, of whom absence gives me the privilege of speaking, let me not be accused of injustice to those who ran with him the race of honor and distinction; a rivalry so full of generous emulation, yet so devoid of all jostling envy. Here we must pause. I cannot invade that modesty which genius wears as the most beautiful of its attractions. But of the dead I may be permitted to speak. Of one who in a Roman form revealed more than a Roman spirit—One, the play of whose noble heart beat to the strong pulsations of a lofty and spotless honor—One, who moved among us to inspire confidence and conciliate esteem; who seemed to have snatched the spirit of an heroic age to give it warmth and life in the fervor and enthusiasm of his own bosom. In making the lamented SIMONS our model we shall select a combination of virtues which this community will long cherish and revere. They who knew him best and loved him most, will pardon the poor flower I have flung on a grave which has been visited by the verdure of but one spring, and holds the ashes of him who will long live in the unimpaired fulness of our fondest esteem.

Yes, my young friends! with such lights the paths that lead to the elevations of life are irradi-

ated with a diffused and cheering splendour, and invite our footsteps by all those sanctions which make "ambition virtue," and consecrate its aspirations.

In estimating the tendency of a long series of distinguished examples to lead to usefulness and honor, let us not forget the influence which Woman holds over the destiny of Man.

It is not alone in tracing this influence to "fireside enjoyments" and "home-born happiness," (however entirely, in these associations, as it has been beautifully said, "we seem to recover a part of the forgotten value of existence") that its moral sublimity is unveiled—It is when Woman in the loveliness of her beauty—in the majesty of her virtue—appears as the arbitress of Man, that her influence stands confessed with an angel's power, and an angel's charms. It is when she rebukes by her frown, our vices and infirmities—It is when she reserves the blessedness of her smiles for all that is noble and praiseworthy in the capacities of our nature, that she seems the sweet vision which once reposed in the bowers of innocence, with heaven's purity in her heart, and heaven's harmony in her graces.

Those sainted matrons who filled the souls of our fathers with mingled love and heroism—who animated their bosoms with a spirit of unconquerable firmness—who went with them into cheerless dungeons and loathsome hospitals—who girded on their swords for the tented field, and prepared by finer precepts than heathen antiquity ever knew, the hero to meet his last scene of suffering on the scaffold, now live in those beautiful forms we see.

before us. They know what vices to despise—
what virtues to adore.

FELLOW CITIZENS!

Let us approach and contemplate for a moment
the proud elevation on which our country now
reposes. Its foundations are of granite, its “tur-
rets glitter in the skies.”

We have a government and a land worth our
most vigilant patriotism to preserve—a realm of
glorious extent and inestimable value. It is our
peculiar and eminent distinction to have confid-
ed to our custody the existence and progress of
an experiment in which the whole human race
has a deep and indefeasible interest—It involves
no other solution than this; whether the elements
of civil society can be held together without the
stern supervision of an undefined and illimitable
authority—whether there is something in the phy-
sical and moral destiny of man, which disqualifies
him for aught but “a hewer of wood and a drawer
of water”—whether he is irreversibly doomed to
surrender nearly all the fruits of his labour to a
legalized rapine which wrings without mercy and
measures without justice—whether his blood
is eternally to flow in an unresisting tide, influ-
enced by the dark phases of a guilty and infernal
ambition—In short, whether the prayer which
human suffering sends forth, can ascend to hea-
ven, except under the guidance of a hierarchy
impiously calling itself divine.

In this experiment the world are our spectators,
and posterity our judge.

The light which we have kindled on these shores
has travelled over the void of the deep; it has vis-

ited the summits of human society; and pierced the corners of its extreme loneliness and despair—It has refreshed the heart of the Peasant by the views of attainable happiness, and disturbed the slumbers of the Despot, by revealing in its glare “the hand writing on the wall,” which tells him tyranny is not of God but of man—

That it may continue to irradiate and ultimately to bless, depends on our unwinking vigilance and unwearied devotion to those elements which give brilliancy to its blaze, and vitality to its flame.

The union of this confederation is the key-stone to the whole fabric of our political and national greatness, our civil and social prosperity.

Let this sentiment enter with religious solemnity into all our public relations with our country; and form a theme of domestic instruction at our altars and fire-sides.

The situation of the United States, is one, almost of unmingled prosperity.

Of the existence of our government, we are more conscious by its protection than restraints. Our resources have been developed with an amplitude and rapidity of which the world has had no previous example. In a period, almost embraced by the progress of youth to manhood, we have extended the empire of our laws over regions which had long slumbered in savage or solitary gloom—We have perfected institutions political and social which the world had regarded as the dreams and speculations of a vain philosophy, whilst we have unfolded all the subsidiary principles which are necessary to give permanency to their existence and moral efficacy to their sway—

The earth has yielded in glorious abundance her treasures to the efforts of our resolute invincible industry. The ocean, agitated by our keen enterprise has borne on her bosom the trophies of our wealth and the triumphs of our prowess.

In the very outset of our race we have anticipated the growth of ages, and baffled the calculations of a philosophy, which has attempted to measure the velocity of our action and the strides of our power.

With so many causes for exultation we may bear without repining, the taunts of the critical dandyism of Europe, by which we are told that our society wants its 'Corinthian capital,' and that our taste is without delicacy, and our literature without elegance.

If this be a reproach, without acquiescing in its justice, we may admit it to be true, and yet have enough left to give an unrivalled supremacy to our character. When our proportions are Doric we may willingly forego, the useless and incongruous entwining of the Acanthus, however beautiful in its appropriate order.

In those departments of philosophy of the most difficult attainment and success, our progress will be admitted to have unfolded a career of unexampled brilliancy.

In the science of government we comparatively stand alone. In physics, the genius of FRANKLIN has stamped an era as luminous as the lightnings of heaven, whilst his writings in that beautiful philosophy, which teaches us how to live and how to live happily, will form the delight and instruction of future ages. In the science of

war, both naval and military, even our enemy will not question our attainments. Our first fleet-engagement resulted in a victory achieved by a hero of twenty-four, who pushed the tactics of RODNEY to an extreme of the most dazzling peril and renown. Our JACKSON has touched all the varieties of the art, with the power of his deep and pervading genius. In the wilderness of the savage he circumvented his wiles, wrested the tomahawk from his infernal and gory grasp, and has closed in an eternal silence the clangor of his war-hoop. He has vanquished the vanquishers of Europe by beating the élite of an army elated by the triumphs of Vimeira and Salamanca, and fresh from the lessons of him who fought and who conquered on the fields of Waterloo. In mechanical philosophy we have, with the contrivances of art spiritualized matter, by the variety of its modifications, the efficacy of its agents, and the miracles of its results. The genius of FULTON, has given ubiquity to enterprize, in the apparent subjugation of distance, by the untiring velocity of his magnificent machines.

In all the moral habitudes which sanctify, in all the ingenuous courtesies, which adorn without enfeebling society, we are superiour to those who reproach us. In that literature which has relation to the wants of society, and the purposes of a practical utility our efforts are respectable, and our success essentially progressive. In diplomacy, our ministers have displayed a vigor and boldness of reasoning and research, a felicity of illustration and a personal elevation and dignity, which have won for them a unanimity of admiration and

esteem. Although the history of our Revolution has never yet been told with the philosophic spirit of HUME, or the gorgeous magnificence of GIBBON, yet our venerable and patriotic RAMSAY has done no inadequate justice to his theme. If no bard has arisen to sing the story of our greatness, let us be content to go on and realize the materials for a future epic, whose "great argument" shall be the dignity and happiness of the human species.

When the departments of agricultural, commercial and professional enterprize are filled to repletion, and the overflowing of a redundant wealth lavishes its full tide on the various objects of social and intellectual embellishment,—our Muse will plume her wing for a bold and dazzling flight, and the visions of our past and future glory live in the splendid immortality of verse—At the powerful bidding of the Painter and Statuary, forms of heroic greatness will be bodied forth in the perfection of art and the sublimity of nature; and this great Republic be identified with all that is proud and consoling in the history of man.

In the indulgence of these themes, who shall dare to accuse us of presumption?

Let the incense of gratitude blaze on the altars of God, and the bold anthem of our freedom pierce the vault of heaven.

"Breathles there a man, with soul so dead,

"Who never to himself has said—

"This is my own,—my native land?"



Wm. S.