

John Willson Junior
AN
ORATION,
DELIVERED IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH,
AUGUSTA,
ON THE
FOURTH OF JULY,
ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINE,
BEING THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

By WILLIAM J. HOBBY, Esq.

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T H E following Oration was delivered in St. Paul's Church on the 4th July, at the special request of the Volunteer Artillery and Infantry Companies of Augusta, by WILLIAM J. HOBBY, who at the particular request of a Joint Committee of those Companies, delivered them a copy for publication.

E D I T O R S.

Augusta, July 20, 1799.





AN ORATION, &c.



Friends and Fellow Citizens,

AMONG the great events which have attracted the attention of the world, and engaged the admiration of mankind, none in the exertions of human power ever perhaps occurred, more worthy of commemoration and general approbation than the Revolution we are this day assembled to celebrate—a revolution which in the justice of its commencement—the moderation of its progress—the magnitude of its object—in its successful termination and the happy consequences resulting from it, stands unequalled in the dignified transactions of men.

The various circumstances which led to the Independence of our country—the causes which called forth the energies of the American character, and hastened the growth of these States to political consequence, have been so often the subjects of conversation, and are so familiar to the minds of this respectable audience, that it would require more than common novelty and elegance of language to render a detail thereof entertaining.—Without descending to minuteness therefore at the present time, we will barely observe—That our ancestors who seeking an asylum here, from the rod of oppression, whose industry converted a desert into fruitful fields, and a howling wilderness into smiling gardens, were men of piety—of pure morals and independent spirits; who next to their religious duties impressed upon the minds of their children a just sense of the rights of human nature, and an aversion to tyranny, which prepared them as they grew up to take the station of freemen in society, and enabled them to discriminate with accuracy between the legal exercise of authority, and the unjust encroachments of arbitrary power. Taught by precept and by example to revere the *acknowledged laws* of the country, they risked their lives in their support as the chief pillar of private security: And believing a mutual and general good to result from a European connection,

they were at all times ready to aid with their utmost power the cause of that country from which they originated, and to whose decrees they had usually yielded *voluntary* obedience. But when that country jealous of the growing greatness, and the liberal sentiments of a people who owed them no obligation, assumed the haughty tone of the master, instead of the affectionate voice of the parent or the mild language of the friend, attempted to reduce to vassalage men born in the soil of freedom and nursed in the lap of independence, the genius of the western hemisphere raised his amiable form, looked with complaisant countenance on the inhabitants of this extensive continent, and with a voice sweet and engaging—but firm and determined proclaimed, that protection and allegiance were terms of reciprocity—and that when protection was denied allegiance ought to be withdrawn. This sentiment was not lost by the people to whom it was addressed—they saw that the government with which they *then* wished to continue on terms of friendship was making continual encroachments and endeavouring to deprive them of their most valuable privileges. The discerning mind readily saw that the imposition of taxes on us by a legislature in which we *were not* represented—our own legislative bodies restricted and frequently dissolved by foreign *individual* will—the officers of our governments appointed—the tenures and salaries of their offices established by foreign authority—an army of foreign mercenaries quartered upon us in times of peace—and finally a legislative declaration that the parliament of Great Britain had a right by law to bind the Americans in all cases whatsoever, were measures calculated to reduce to the slavery they merited those who would submit to such ignominious conditions: But among such were not to be found the inhabitants of this enlightened country.

The whole American family viewing with contempt the plans formed for their subjugation, and spurning the chains prepared for binding them in perpetual bondage; arose as if impelled by supernatural influence almost at the same instant, and with the commanding voice of the people declared their rights and unitedly resolved to maintain them to the last extremity. Sophistry could not persuade, nor threats intimidate them into a compliance with measures evidently calculated

to render them the servants of a foreign master, and to rob them of the unquestionable rights of men. Force was exerted with as little success. Those who had duly considered the blessings of Liberty, and deliberately resolved to enjoy them, were not to be diverted from their purpose, by singular dangers or uncommon occurrences; and from one end of the continent to the other the sentiment adopted was—that life and liberty were inseparably connected, that we would enjoy or be deprived of both together, but that in no event would we resign the one without sacrificing the other.

This resolution was not suddenly adopted—and the battle of Bunkers Hill afforded an early opportunity of proving its sincerity and influence. Those who were engaged in the seven years following war can recollect better than language can describe, not only the feelings by which they were personally influenced, but the sentiments which then appeared to actuate every American mind—the ardour evinced by almost every individual, to expose himself to hardship—to toil and to death, for the service of his beloved country and the defence of his dearest rights. Not only in the populous towns were found armed citizens feelingly alive to their country's wrongs—but every village poured forth its soldiers—every farm produced its warriors—almost every house could boast a hero, who held the preservation of life a secondary consideration compared with their country's good. All fortuitous differences of situation was forgotten—and the merchant—the mechanic, and the daily labourer, were *equally* ready to risque their lives in preserving those principles and rights in which *all* are *equally* interested, and the destruction of which would reduce *all* to equal wretchedness. The man of learning forsook his study, the venerable priest was ready to lay aside his sacerdotal habit and assume the sword of vengeance—the peaceful plowman to forsake his agricultural pursuit and shoulder his musket—to leave the possessions in which he delighted, and the friends nearest his heart, to secure and defend those rights without the enjoyment of which, all other possessions are of no avail. Neither the solicitude of the partner of his bosom dearer to him than life itself whose affectionate tears moistened his parting cheek—nor the helpless condition of his tender offspring who with innocent prattle

took a thoughtless farewell, could divert from his steady purpose and determined resolution, the brave American who entered the hostile field with a pure heart, and who could appeal to the god of nature for the justice of the cause in which he engaged. From one end of this continent to the other the same general and individual resolutions obtained of securing to ourselves and posterity that liberty without which life is but a cumbrous load—the same determination of not giving occasion to future generations to say, that the weakness pusillanimity or cowardice of their ancestors, entailed upon them lasting slavery and misery.

Our united exertions produced as might have been expected the most happy consequences—the nation by whom our liberty had been threatened acknowledged our Independence, and America assumed a conspicuous station in the political system of the universe, daily increasing in brilliancy till by the organization and establishment of the Federal Constitution, it shone with superior lustre and became a planet of primary magnitude. From that time to the present day have the United States progressed in consequence and increased in wealth, with a rapidity which baffles description, and has far outstripped the most sanguine calculations.

Were any one after reflecting on the many difficulties which presented themselves to the Americans in the commencement of their Revolution to enquire, how our liberties were preserved and that Independence secured which we annually celebrate with so much joy—the answer is obvious, and carries with it an important lesson.—The nation spoke with one voice—the confederated states had the same views—the people were united. The wisdom of American councils—the exertions of individuals—the bravery of the soldiery co-operated and were directed to the same object: Confidence was reposed in those selected for their wisdom to administer the public concerns, and few of those jealousies existed, of which designing men lay hold, to excite discontent and promote disorder. Had we been a *divided* instead of a united people, we should not have had an anniversary of Independence to celebrate—no privileges to enjoy—and no other liberty than that of obeying implicitly the commands of some imperious

despot. From union therefore (under the beneficent smiles of the great author of nature) has resulted the station we now occupy in the political world, and on the same principle must and will depend our continual prosperity or final degradation. This truth obvious and incontrovertible ought by us to be at all times seriously and religiously believed—but more particularly so at the present day when our very existence as a nation is threatened by an insidious foreign power who having admitted the maxim “divide and conquer” into their political creed, are endeavouring to introduce into this country all the evils this villainous principle is capable of producing.

In turning our attention to the situation of our country in its foreign relations, it becomes a subject of congratulation that those political connections with France from which the most serious evils were to be apprehended, are happily at an end. On this subject it becomes our duty to make a few observations, and to notice some of those circumstances which cannot too frequently be brought to the recollection of every American mind.

When the contest commenced which has of late years called forth the exertions of the belligerent powers of Europe, justice and policy required, that the United States should take a neutral situation, and from that situation the government of our country determined not to depart: But the efforts of the French nation were in continual exercise to counteract this determination and to induce us to make a common cause with them. Naturally open and unsuspecting, and enthusiastic admirers of rational liberty, the American citizens discovered an early prepossession in favour of the cause in which *they imagined* France to be engaged, and without reflecting on the tendency of their proceedings, or looking to the *real* object of their pursuit, they excused their errors, pardoned—nay justified their crimes, and weakly and inconsiderately celebrated their victories. Presuming on the sentiments which this conduct indicated, the French government resolved to turn them to her own benefit, and therefore dispatched to this country a minister whose diplomatic intrigue had been but too successfully exerted in one of the little republics

of Europe, to oppose his talents and influence to the American administration, and without regard to the will of the government to precipitate the people into a destructive contest. No sooner was this minister belched forth in the city of Charleston than with an audacity which nothing but the thoughtlessness of the day could have overlooked, he commissioned privateers to commit robberies on nations with whom we were at peace, and proceeded to raise and organize troops for French expeditions. The Executive of the United States whose mind comprehended the dark designs formed in the gloomy recesses of corrupt hearts for our ruin, interposed his paternal authority, and by requiring a strict adherence to the principles of neutrality, saved us from that destructive whirlpool into which we were rushing with impetuous rapidity.

Baffled in the outset we find this pontiff of disorder, soon after founding political clubs, and organizing Jacobinical societies at the seat of government, commissioning his disciples to preach sedition throughout the United States and attempting to stamp on their infamy the sanction of his government, by the magical terms of, *liberty, equality, fraternity*—words of facinating sound, but which in the French vocabulary remain without definite ideas annexed to them.—From him did we hear of our injustice and ingratitude towards France, and in his insolence he even proceeded to insinuate that to the *disinterested friendship* of his nation we owed our liberty. False as this idea was, by his *persuasive* influence it was assented to by some of our citizens, who in their reasonings on the subject deduced conclusions as false as the proposition on which they were founded. That we received assistance from France during our revolutionary war no one denies—but few we hope are so weak as to imagine this assistance was disinterested, or afforded merely with a view of serving us. Between Great Britain and France there has for ages subsisted a national jealousy, a deep rooted enmity which never failed to discover itself when opportunity offered.—To check the power and humble the pride of Great Britain was always a primary object with France, and the same disposition was amply reciprocated by the former nation.—When the American war commenced the eyes of all Europe were turned to the mighty event, and when it had been so

long continued as to convince the world we were not to be subdued; France threw her weight into our scale hoping thereby to assist in humbling the pride of her antient rival, and at the conclusion of the contest to attach us *exclusively* to themselves. Even this they were cautious of doing till the capture of Burgoyne and his army left the eventual success of our cause no longer problematical. But so far were they from having our good only in view, even at the treaty of peace the French minister would willingly have abandoned our independence, had he been able to procure a relinquishment thereof on our part, and when *that* could not be effected, the terms of accommodation proposed on the part of France, and actually acceded to by Doctor Franklin were calculated to deprive us of the principle advantages we expected to derive from the contest, and to render us dependent on that nation, and these terms would have been agreed to, had not the intrigue of the French minister and the pliable disposition of Dr. Franklin been opposed by the virtue and uprightnes of Mr. Jay—the integrity and unshaken firmness of Mr. Adams the now illustrious *President of the United States*.

But absurd as the idea is, admitting the principle of *disinterestedness* in its utmost latitude, from whom was the assistance received, and to whom the debt of gratitude due? No man will surely pretend that the present French nation or a single individual in it, had any voice or influence in this business. The *then* king of France had the power of making war and peace—the absolute controul of the whole force of the nation; and had *his* policy so directed, the French troops which came to this country would have opposed, instead of aiding our cause. Neither officers or soldiers had any more voluntary agency in this transaction than the ships that transported them or the drums they followed—the actors were mere machines, the impelling principle was the royal command, and the spring which produced this command was self interest; I mention not this case as singular, it is like all other contracts of nations—for we may rest assured that in the whole system of politics there never did exist such a principle, as national disinterested friendship—no nation under the sun ever yet undertook to assist another in any

political struggle without being influenced thereto by views of its own ; but I barely mention it to shew that the present French government in charging us with ingratitude are not founded in fact—they never *intended* us any good—and if they had, they were not in a situation to have afforded it. And to the monarch himself from whom the assistance *was* received, the gratitude due, is like the gratitude which the tender lamb owes to the man, who takes him from the fold, guards him from the wolf and supplies him with the necessaries of life, that his carcass may the sooner grace the butchers stall, or afford him a more delicious morsel. So much for this debt of gratitude which has so often been the text of political absurdities.

Mr. Genet having by his precipitancy discovered the *plot* of the piece he was acting, before all the performers were perfectly instructed in the parts they were to play, was followed by ministers more slow and cautious, but whose avowed object it was to bring the representation to the same fatal catastrophe, and to terminate the performance with a death wound to our independence. Unceasing were the efforts of the French ministers and agents to withdraw the confidence of our citizens from the constituted authorities of their country, to create between our people and our government a breach which time itself should not be able to close : Not content with attempting to supercede the Executive authority in commissioning privateers and raising troops contrary to law—they attempted to controul our elections—to secure an influence in our public councils, and finally proceeded with unparalleled effrontery to dictate to us the choice of the chief magistrate of the United States. Finding their efforts ineffectual, and that the American people were not to be deceived by hurried villainy, or the artful hypocrisy of designing knavery, they raise the curtain behind which they had attempted to conceal their dark designs, and proclaim to the world their determination to obtain by force what fraud could not effect ; or rather by uniting force with fraud, to secure if possible, what neither was alone able to accomplish. Regardless therefore of the eternal principles of justice, and in violation of their own engagements they transgress the laws of nations—rob us of our property on the high seas—

in sight of our own shores capture our vessels—abuse, enslave, and murder our valuable citizens. Having rejected with disdain a respectable envoy extraordinary—Three commissioners specially delegated, and furnished with full powers to hear and adjust all causes of difference between the United States and France, repair to Paris, where month after month they are treated with insolence and contempt, and are at length told, that the United States becoming tributary vassals, is a necessary preliminary to their admission to an audience—that further tribute will be required in the negotiation, that the depredations on our commerce *will still be* continued, and that the amount of the captures *they* make must be paid by *our* government. Or in other words, that we must pay largely, very largely, for being told how much more will *certainly* be demanded—and that thereto we must add a sum equal to the amount they are enabled to steal. When these propositions are rejected with becoming dignity, and a suggestion made that the corruption of the nation would be communicated to our government, our Envoys are told in a stile of menace, that the French party here is too strong for their representations to gain belief. But little did citizen Talleyrand understand the American character—the people of these states had confidence in the men who represented them, their statement has gained implicit belief, and the baseness and depravity of the French government stands incontrovertibly established.

The publication of the documents of the French negotiation produced the most beneficial effects—the eyes of the people were opened—all but those wilfully blind, or immediately under French influence were *convinced* that the cup of reconciliation was exhausted—that instead of the humiliating posture we had observed, our security depended on the energy of our government, on our assuming the manly attitude of independent men. The radiance of truth dispelled the mists with which fraud and falsehood had attempted to obscure the public mind—the proceedings of the American administration received general approbation, and the imposing voice of the people with national dignity pronounced aloud—“ millions for defence—not a cent for tribute.”

I am far however from insinuating that this sentiment though general is perfectly unanimous—unfortunately French influence has founded a party here who totally reverse the sentiment, and who by their conduct cry out millions for tribute but not a cent for defence—a party whose exertions have been continually directed to oppose the interest of our country and the will of our government. Had this party convinced us of their attachment to the general good by long and uniform exertions in the public service,—did they evince the honesty of their intentions by endeavouring to guard the people from error, or by setting an example of submission and obedience to the laws worthy of imitation, they would merit consideration and respect: But we find them in their declamatory speeches and inflammatory writings, continually making those distinctions between the government and the people—between the administration and the *friends of liberty*, from which the most destructive consequences may result. Not considering that by the very first principles of republican government the will of the majority must rule, these exclusive patriots are continually opposing their individual, or party views, to the general will of the nation expressed by the majority of those, whom the free suffrages of the people have delegated to the legislative body of the union. From them do we hear the most wise and constitutional laws censured as oppressive—taxes necessary for the support of government represented as burthensome, and a provisional army, and a navy establishment so necessary to our security condemned as dangerous and expensive.

But these paragons of republican virtue can hear of tribute demanded from our country—can see our commercial intercourse interrupted, our citizens robbed, imprisoned and abused,—our country insulted in the persons of our Envoys, and our states threatened with invasion, without an emotion of resentment or indignation.

Gladly we would have it in our power to say, that a party so abundantly prolific in inconsistencies was made up wholly of designing foreigners and the most ignorant of our own citizens. But unfortunately incontrovertible facts established beyond possibility of doubt, that amongst our citizens

men of talents and high in office belong to this disgraceful association; and the views as well as the head of the party is sufficiently designated by the famous letter to Mazzei. What American can read this letter with moderate feelings, what friend to his country can see a man conspicuously elevated in the legislature of the union, deliberately reducing to writing this shameful sentiment, that "we" (himself and the party he represents) "must break the lilliputian ties by which they" —(the government) "have bound us, and arrest—the progress of a system of injustice and ingratitude towards France"—that "we have against us, (or rather that we are against)" the Executive power, the judicial authority, all the officers of government" &c. The writer of this letter makes an evident and intentional difference between the government and the party of whom he speaks—in the latter of which by the term *we* he includes himself and the person he was addressing, and insinuates that they must and *will* arrest the progress of the measures of our government towards the French republic. At the time of writing this letter, Mr. Jefferson was under solemn oath to support the constitution of the United States:—But this oath his heterogenous philosophy, and new fangled morality could consider a lilliputian tie to his conscience, with which he could dispence with the same ease that an *ordinary* man can lay aside a garment that is irksome to him. At this time too the Executive power was in the hands of a man dear to every American—in the hands of the great, the good—the virtuous Washington, towards whom this letter writer behaved with unpardonable duplicity; for while he was thus slandering his character and deliberately declaring himself his opposer, he was personally solicitous with him to continue in office.

But what ~~are~~ the means by which he proposes to arrest the measures of government? not by any legal and constitutional application for a repeal of laws deemed unnecessary, but by endeavouring to render those laws unpopular—by misrepresentations deceiving the people, and by laying hold of the passions of the multitude and leading them to insurrection and civil war. The western counties of Pennsylvania can witness how effectually they have been the miserable dupes of this kind of policy. *There* under pretence of their being

oppressed by one of the most equal and equitable taxes ever required from a free people—a tax the payment of which would not have been felt, and no part of which many of those citizens would have had to pay, they were seduced into an insurrection, the suppression of which has cost the United States more money than the taxes of that whole district will probably amount to in one hundred years. This instance added to the whiskey business a year or two past, shows how effectual have been the exertions of men of talents to lead a deluded people to ruin; it exhibits too an incontestible proof, that in the western counties of Pennsylvania, may be found more ignorance and folly than in any other part of the United States. In such neighbourhoods the agents of France delight to work—not because themselves belong to this class, for they have usually more wickedness than ignorance, are more destitute of principle than knowledge, but because those who have not capacity to discern their views are more easily converted to their purposes.

The reasonings against a naval armament, are usually founded on the expence of the measure and the consequent increase of taxes, because these objections applying directly to the selfishness of individuals are apt to engage the attention of the weak and unreflecting—while the real objection to a navy is kept out of view, which is, the security it affords us, and the insuperable barrier it interposes to the views of France against this country. However well calculated the smooth sophistry of artful politicians may be to mislead the understanding, we may rest assured that among all the measures of defence adopted by our government the naval establishment is the most wise and important. We all well know that one of the natural boundaries of the United States is the Atlantic ocean, from that quarter, an extensive sea coast, and our most important commercial cities are subject to visitation.—However wise and just the measures of our government may be, we are not to expect that wisdom and justice will always protect us against the maritime nations of the world, especially if we are known always to be unprepared for resistance. The agricultural interests of our country is promoted as our commerce is extended—but our commerce cannot become, or continue extensive, unless it be protected,

and the only question that arises is whether we had better protect it ourselves, or apply to a foreign power to relieve us of this burthen. If the produce of our country cannot be exported *with safety* in American vessels, the merchants, must resort to those ships whose cannon affords security, and the exports from the United States must be principally made in foreign bottoms; while our ships unarmed and unprotected will become a kind of common property for the free booters of all nations. Without a navy our coasts cannot be secure our commerce cannot flourish—our country cannot become respectable. Did not the knowledge of our being destitute of naval force influence the directory of France to authorise the seizure of our vessels?—did not the same knowledge suggest to the infamous and abandoned Paine, the diabolical plan of sending privateers to the United States to plunder, burn and destroy our sea port towns, that by individual distress our government might be revolutionized? And when we have an extensive coast exposed to this kind of devastation—in a time of general danger shall we sit down, and with mercantile accuracy calculate the expence of defensive measures before we dare adopt them? Shall we doubt the *propriety* of contributing a small portion of our incomes to preserve intire our remaining possessions? Shall we be backward in affording our proportionate aid to an establishment necessary to our existence? Or when called on to determine whether we will resign or defend our rights, shall Americans hesitate in the choice of the alternative? God forbid. Happy would it have been for our country had the naval establishment been made at an earlier period—then our citizens would not have sustained those immense losses for which they now vainly seek redress. 'Tis an undeniable fact that the American ships of war, few as they are had not been three months at sea, before they were the immediate cause of saving to our citizens more than the whole expence of the armament: And it is equally undeniable that the previous depredations on our commerce—the sums violently taken from our citizens, had been in amount more than sufficient to have built, manned and equipt for sea, fifty ships of the line. But this immense tax imposed on our country by France we hear excused, nay submission to a continuance of it, recommended by those, who violently declaim against

the payment of the small sum which our own government requires to terminate the degrading evil. A reflection too arising from this subject not perhaps always made, is, that the actual benefits derived from a navy, is not to be estimated by calculating the proportion, between the losses prevented and the expence of the armament; for the loss and the expence however equal in amount are differently proportioned, and differently felt. The losses by depredations on our commerce often terminate in the ruin of whole families, in reducing many from affluence to poverty, and in checking the spirit of commercial enterprize—But were the amount of those losses drawn to the general treasury by public taxes, all parts of the political body furnishing its just proportion, no possible inconvenience could arise and the *relative* situations of men would be perfectly preserved. So that (for instance) at the first appearance of the political hydrophobia in France, had there been a general contribution according to ability by all the American citizens, of a sum adequate to the building the navy, I have mentioned, the inconvenience would have been nothing, compared with the inconvenience we have since sustained by French villainy; and in this case too, the property so contributed would have remained our own, and continued in our hands, whereas it is now in possession of our enemies, and to us lost forever: and it matters not to whom the loss in the first instance is particularly injurious; for such is the nice and admirable chain of connection between all the members of the social body, so intimately is the prosperity of the whole, connected with the prosperity of each individual, and the welfare of each individual so absolutely connected with the welfare of the whole, that no one family or citizen can be reduced to ruin without the whole community's being in a greater or less degree a sufferer.

But we are told of the danger of an army and a navy, as though these establishments were composed of infernal furies let loose to prey upon society—Let us enquire then who are the persons that man the navy and compose the army—they are our fathers—our brothers, our relations—or in one comprehensive word, they are *Americans*; the friends of peace, of order and good government—men attached to their country from principle, and bound to it by the most endearing ties.

And from such men are we to apprehend danger? To resolve this question I need go no further than your own hearts, I appeal to you in your military capacity whether you forget you are American citizens when you shoulder a musket? I ask of you whose military appearance on this day creates such pleasing sensations, whether you could be prevailed on to turn your arms against the country which gave you birth—against the country in which you gain your daily subsistence—and against that liberty for which many of you have fought and bled. Those who pretend to apprehend danger from this source, make not the distinction between an army of foreign mercenaries sent to enforce the will of a foreign power, and a body of citizens enrolled for their *own security* and the defence of their own government. In the one case every thing that is gained by the soldier is lost to the citizen, and acquired by the government employing the army—in the other, the interest of the citizen, the soldier and the government is so intimately connected, that no political chemistry can possibly separate them—Here every American citizen is a soldier, the government requires he should be so—and every soldier is a citizen, one common cause unites us, and one common country is our inheritance.

In addition to the open opposition to those defensive measures which common prudence rendered necessary, the past year has produced an event far transcending all former bounds of party insolence—I mean the unprecedented mission of Dr. Logan to France. This embassy which has been a subject of some speculation in the United States, merits no notice, only as an instance of the lengths a party in our country would go to accomplish their purposes. Dr. Logan in a publication, attempts to exonerate himself from the charge of being missionary, and to convince us that his going to France was for individual purposes. But his vindication like some other precious confessions, establishes the criminality of the person it was intended to acquit. He insinuates that by his exertions, the embargo on American vessels in France was taken off, and many of our seamen released from prison; whether this be true or not, the Doctor stands equally culpable. If the statement be not true, 'tis evident, that (added to the criminality of the falsehood,) by a pretence of rendering this kind

of service, the *real object* of the voyage was to be concealed: But if the statement be true it operates still more against him. For 'tis well known that no individual even of respectability and consequence, could have had influence enough in France, to have obtained from that nation an act of common justice. The minister of foreign relations and the directory, who had refused to listen to three dignified characters clothed with legal authority, were not to have their iniquities suspended for a single moment by the eloquence of a Dr. Logan, an individual of that nation whose ministers they had just rejected—but when in this famous Doctor, they beheld the representative of the French party in America, and when they read his friendly *letters of introduction* substituted for official credentials, they concluded that by listening to him, an idea might be impressed on the minds of the American people, that there were in the United States persons more agreeable to the *great nation*, than those the government had chosen—and they supposed, that such was our wish for peace, that our confidence would be transferred from our government to the party with whose conditions they pretended a willingness to comply. But happily their calculations were erroneous, and the spurious envoy has sunk into the contempt he merited. What! Shall the rights of the American people be usurped by an individual—the order they have established be inverted by a party? Shall the right of making treaties wisely and expressly delegated to the President and Senate of the United States, be wrested from them by a party to whom no legal responsibility is attached, and in whom no confidence is, or ought to be placed. Let it not be said in justification that peace was the object—that might or might not be—if it were, do we know the terms on which it was to be obtained, and have we any security that these terms did not contain a surrender of our rights? Besides if an individual has a right to interfere in diplomatic negotiations to procure peace, he has an equal right so to interfere to promote war; and in the case before us, the probability is that under the specious pretence of obtaining peace, means were to be devised of prosecuting war with effect. The station of this *illegitimate* negotiator, the time of his embassy—the persons who were his intimates previous to his departure, afford strong grounds of belief that his object was not of a

peaceful nature, nor for the good of his country. And 'tis a certain fact that about the time of this infamous business and while peaceful overtures were thrown out to lull us into security, arrangements were in actual preparation in the West Indies for an invasion of the southern states. It deserves notice too that this unprecedented proceeding originated with, and was supported by that party, who are continually disturbing the harmony of society by their discordant vociferations against unconstitutional usurpations.

Those who have observed with but moderate attention, the conduct of the French directory for a few years past cannot but be convinced that they have formed a systematic plan for revolutionizing or disorganizing all the governments of the world, and for reducing them to their own despotic sway—they have declared war against the religion of the gospel—the *principles* of social order—and the rights of man: and we have only to extend our views across the Atlantic to be presented with those scenes which our country would certainly exhibit, were we by listening to their agents to become the dupes of their intrigue. Turn then your attention and observe but the progress of a French army in the European world, see before them terror and confusion—view behind them misery and ruin—and on every side behold destruction and desolation. See the social, the political, the religious, and the moral systems of civilized nations dreadfully convulsed—the ancient boundaries of peaceful nations, and the territorial limits of independent states swept away; see commerce wholly fail—industry sicken and die—the old and the young—the rich and the poor involved in one common calamity, and despotism with haughty stride, and indiscriminate in difference trampling on the liberties of mankind.—The history of their progress is a history of a continued repetition of those crimes and enormities which degrade and disgrace human nature, and assimilate man to the diabolical inhabitants of the infernal world. The rich they plunder of their wealth—the poor they torture to obtain the discovery of imaginary treasures, and punish with slavery and death any inability to pay stipulated requisitions. Departing from the character of men, they discover no respect for that tender and amiable sex, without whose lovely society life would not be

desirable, and which few nations have heretofore been so barbarous as to treat with indifference—but the aged matron and the blooming daughter—the affectionate wife and the tender child, are compelled to submit to the most villainous insults, and to become the subjects of the most brutal outrages. They neither reverence the aged or pity the infirm—neither respect the virtuous or protect the young—but all ages, conditions and situations, are reduced to the miserable equality, of suffering equally the most abominable indignities, and of hearing a villainous soldiery exult in their distress and laugh at their calamity. And are these the blessings of which we are desirous to participate? Is this an entertainment to which we wish to introduce the fair daughters of Columbia? Among the admirers of these French delights there are doubtless some men of rationality and reflection, and of such permit me to ask whether their choice has been influenced by reasonings founded on experience or analogy. You have seen the progress of the French armies in the European world—you have seen the effect which their principles accompanied by their presence has produced—you have seen the consequence of listening to their professions and of giving heed to their agents, you have seen the faith due to their solemn engagements and the result of trusting to their friendly pretensions—you have seen social compacts inverted and governments overturned; and amongst all the nations where the disorganizing frenzy has received countenance, or gained admission, permit me to ask, what state—what city, what town, what village (nay I had almost said what habitation) has been benefited by the chaotic change? Let the man disposed to favour the evident views of France towards this country, point out to his fellow citizens the good that is to result from the accomplishment of his wishes; and to render the attainment of this good probable, let him shew its existence elsewhere. Or let him point out the nation, town or district that has not been injured by a connection with the French republic. Look at the people whose liberties they pretended to respect—whom they accost in soft and soothing language, and see what has followed from their friendly professions. Can a single instance be produced where confidence placed in them has not been abused?—a solitary case where a reliance on their engagements has not made work for bitter repentance? And bitter

would be our repentance were we to become the miserable dupes of their wicked machinations. To destroy our government has long been the favourite object of the French Republic, and the various forms which Proteus like they have exhibited, their persuasions and their menaces—their pretended friendship and declared enmity, their open violence and assumed moderation—their former villainy and recent affectation of justice, are but different modes of accomplishing the same end. Every effort for our ruin has been exerted except an actual invasion, and that would have been attempted, had not the energy of our government, and the union of our citizens evidenced in the manly addresses from all parts of the continent to the executive authority, induced an opinion which an experiment would *certainly* have confirmed, that an invasion of this country would terminate in the destruction of the invaders. But they still believed if they could lull us into security, and procure a relaxation of defensive operations, that in an unguarded hour, and at an unexpected quarter, they might rush upon us, like an overwhelming torrent, deluge our country in blood, and in one grave bury our liberty and independence. But the cobweb veil was too thin to hide the deformed features it was intended to conceal—without relaxing the measures of defence, the President met their pacific overtures, and thereby proclaimed to the world that we were ready for peace, but were resolved not to be unprepared for war. But we are not to imagine this circumlocutory proposition through Mr. Murray, for a renewal of negotiations is an evidence of the wish of the directory of France for peace—it was intended to check the measures of government and to deceive the people. What faith indeed ought to be placed, what faith can be placed, in the professions of a nation whose conduct is uniformly iniquitous, and who deny the very existence of those principles which ought to inspire confidence? In every nation may be found, the profligate wretch—the profane atheist and the bold blasphemer, whose wickedness is not circumscribed by any bounds of moderation—but to France alone belongs the vile singularity, the dreadful dishonour, of exhibiting an assemblage of infidels—a nation who openly declare themselves unincumbered by first principles or moral obligations, and who by legislative decree have foolishly attempted to annihilate God himself. May

our virtue preserve us from their abandoned hypocrisy—their licentious depravity, and their gross infidelity.

The celebration of the birth day of our nation ought to be considered as a voluntary assemblage of the sons of freedom, to renew their political vows, and to reciprocate their mutual engagements, to regard the rights, vindicate the honour, and defend the liberties of their country : And these engagements so necessary to our salvation, can no otherways be fulfilled, than by co-operating in our individual stations with our rulers, in preserving union and in promoting harmony and order. In vain do we celebrate the Independence of our country if we are indifferent to the means by which it is to be preserved—in vain do we call to mind the manly spirit of seventy-six, if instead of imitation, cold commendation be the only result of our recollection—in vain do we admire the virtuous exertions of the departed heroes of the revolution, unless following their great example, we are ever ready to devote our lives to the service of our country—in vain do we acknowledge and gratefully rejoice in the happy effects of the union of our citizens and the wisdom of our public councils, if we encourage internal division and withhold our support from the government of our choice.

Situated as we are, remote from the political concussions of the old world—possessing a country abundantly productive in the necessaries, the conveniencies, and the luxuries of life—blessed with a government wisely formed and uprightly administered—a government securing equally to every individual of an extensive community, an *equal* portion of the advantages of the social compact, we have no possible cause for discontent, but uncommon occasion to return our grateful acknowledgments to the parent of nature for the singular blessings we enjoy, and that our “lot is cast in this happy land.”

But as the innocence and happiness of our first parents in Paradise, induced the enemy of mankind to attempt by intrigue to draw them from their duty, and thereby to involve them, and their posterity in misery ; so an insidious foreign foe the common enemy of social order, by similar artifice is endeavouring to draw us from our duty, and to erect the monster anarchy on the ruins of our excellent constitution. And

shall we my friends so far disregard the blessings of heaven—be so ungrateful to the fathers of the revolution, and so unmindful of our own security, as to be seduced from the government of our country by the machinations of a nation, whose touch is poison, and whose embrace is death? Shall we who have overcome difficulties seemingly insurmountable, and waded through seas of blood to establish the Independence of our country, now see all our exertions rendered of no avail—the standard of freedom thrown down, and the temple of liberty destroyed by the desolating hand of French fraternity? While united we have nothing to fear, but divided we necessarily become subject to all those evils which the restless passions of ambitious and designing men are capable of producing, and an easy prey to the violence of foreign foes.—Individual liberty depends on the preservation of national independence—and national independence is only to be preserved by union—by a firm co-operation of all the states in the maintainance and support of *one government*. The visionary theorist—the self conceited disorganizer who expatiating on *local* advantages, resources and wisdom, pretends that any individual state is capacitated to preserve its liberty unconnected with the other states, advances a doctrine as false as it is dangerous. No nation can preserve its liberty, or its government unless it be able to *protect* itself; and however consequential state politicians may feel—no state in the union can singly protect itself or preserve its peace. Besides the inimity which would probably arise between neighbouring independent sovereignties without any common tie, no state could preserve peace with foreign nations—could oppose a sufficient barrier to foreign aggressions. No one state could possibly become sufficiently formidable, to destroy in the ambitious all hopes of conquest. The knowledge of this has occasioned the unwearied exertions of the French directory to divide us—to create differences between the state legislatures and the legislature of the union, that from the weakness which would necessarily attach to all parts from division, they might usurp the rights of the whole. In the consolidated force of the union directed by *one* will, and influenced by *one* government, we remain secure against all the world. The man then who attempts to disunite us, to create divisions between the state and federal governments, however plausible

his arguments, however sanctified his manners, or patriotic his pretensions, is an enemy to the country and merits no countenance ; and be him who he may, the probability is that the time will arrive, when he will be found to be in the employ of a foreign nation.

And now my friends in conclusion, permit me to ask, where ought our confidence to be placed, in those of whose wisdom and virtue we have had long experience, or in those whose conduct is at perpetual war with every thing rational and consistent ? To determine this shall we compare their different characters ? As well may those viscous exhalations which rise in an impure atmosphere and amidst surrounding darkness emit a glimmering ray to lead the bewildered traveller to ruin, be compared to the brilliancy of the sun in meridian splendor : While the leading characters of those opposed to our government, shrink from the test of investigation and suffer from scrutiny, on the other side see human nature attain its highest degree of excellence and perfection. See the dignified President of the United States in whose character is united the wisdom of the politician—the firmness of the hero, and the virtue of the saint. Having early engaged to secure the Independence of his country his persevering mind never forsook the object of his fond pursuit : at periods dark and gloomy—when “ clouds obscured Columbia’s day,” and the hopes of many were sinking in despair, in him was no “ variableness or shadow of turning ;” but with a resolution inspiring new confidence, he pressed forward, in the unalterable determination of securing the permanent liberty of his country.

See too the illustrious Washington on whose head rests the benedictions of a grateful people—he who has so often led our armies to battle and to conquest has again become our commander in chief—in his commendation panegyric is exhausted ; and fame with her hundred tongues, having proclaimed his numerous virtues to a listening universe, disparing of doing justice to his amiable character, bids us “ in expressive silence muse his praise” while upon his wonderful deeds Justice has placed the seal of immortality.

And does the man exist who can believe that these illustrious personages—these fathers of the land (whose heads the

silent lapse of time has silvered oer,) whose lives have been uniformly devoted to the service of their fellow men, and who are now approaching that period when temporal prospects and earthly honours must be to them forever closed, can now depart from that line of rectitude, from which the prying eye of suspicion has not been able to discover the minutest deviation, and that they will now countenance measures calculated to injure those they have heretofore endeavoured to serve, to enslave those whose freedom it has been their constant aim to secure?

No my friends in their upright lives, in their love of their country and belief in God, we have a sure pledge of their righteous intentions. Let us then lay aside all unreasonable jealousy—as we are members of one political family, let us unite as a band of brothers, and contribute according to our several abilities all in our power to the general good—let the government we have chosen be the government of our support, and those who administer it, the objects of our confidence, and the friends of our affection. Let not the atheistical philosophy of modern days, overturn our moral principles, or destroy our belief in that religion on which depends public and private happiness; and let us give no countenance to those disorganizing principles which strike at the root of civil society, and aim a deadly blow at individual peace and private security. And may the great author of nature, (the irresistible controller of human events) long continue to the United States his protecting care—under his guardianship may the blessings of liberty, and the principles of rational government be transmitted from generation to generation, and may the happiness and prosperity of our citizens, the freedom and Independence of our country continue, till time shall be merged in inconceivable Eternity.

T H E E N D.

