

AN
ORATION,

PRONOUNCED AT

BLOOMFIELD, (Me.)

JULY 4th, 1814.

BY DAVID KIDDER, Esq.

" Quis est enim, cui non possessio libertatis
sit cara, dulcis atque jucunda ?"

HALLOWELL :
PRINTED BY N. CHEEVER.

1814.

BLOOMFIELD, JULY 5, 1814.

SIR,

AGREEABLE to a vote of the republican citizens present at the Somerset County Celebration of the Anniversary of Independence, the undersigned have the honor of informing you that a copy of your Oration, pronounced yesterday, is respectfully solicited for publication; and that should you comply with their request you will contribute much to the gratification of your friends and fellow-citizens.

With sentiments of the greatest respect, &c. &c.

JONA. FARRAR,
ISAAC ADAMS,
N. G. HOWARD,
ISAAC FARRAR.

DAVID KIDDER, ESQ.

JULY 5, 1814.

GENTLEMEN,

YOUR polite note has been received and duly considered. I shall ever esteem as a duty a compliance with the wishes of my fellow-citizens. With respectful consideration, I am, Gentlemen,

Your friend and obedient servant,

D. KIDDER.

JONA. FARRAR, ESQ.

ISAAC ADAMS,

N. G. HOWARD,

ISAAC FARRAR.

ORATION.

LET America rejoice ! Revolving time has once more brought about the Anniversary of American Independence. Let the day ever be greeted with joyful enthusiasm by freemen ; let it hang heavy on the hearts of tyrants ! Thirty eight years have rolled away, since the American sages and statesmen, assembled in the city of New York, declared these States “ free and independent.” The gladsome sound of *Independence* burst from the hall of Congress, and the joyful pæan of millions reverberated to the skies. The minions of tyranny were abashed at the boldness of freemen ; and the mists of despotism were scattered before the orient sun of liberty.

THE American revolution was a work which called forth the most noble faculties of man. An infant people, disputing for sovereignty with one of the most powerful nations on the globe, was no ordinary contest ; but it was a contest on our part in which every thing most dear to us was in issue ; a contest whose ultimate decision would entail upon us either *freedom* or *slavery*. Our *great* men were *good* men, and the

people were loyal to themselves. Uninfluenced by avarice or unjustifiable ambition, and stimulated by the vivifying hope of emancipation from the thralldom of oppression, liberty was their only object, *and the object was attained.*

BUT few of those who performed a part on the great theatre of the revolution now remain on this side the grave. They have "sought that bourne from whence no travellers return;" they have descended into the "narrow house," and the tufted grass gently waves over the ashes of the illustrious dead. But they have earned for themselves a name as imperishable as marble, and commensurate with time. Some *few* of the heroes of the revolution yet remain—Though their heads are covered with the frost of time, and their hands are paralyzed with age; yet will they dwell with rapture on the feats of their youth, instruct us in the lessons of valor and prudence, and kindle in the breasts of their descendants an enthusiastic love of liberty and of glory.

FROM the immutability of the nature of man, his fierce propensities incite him to scenes of devastation and carnage, at which virtue recoils, sympathy sheds an unavailing tear, and the bosom of philanthropy in vain may sigh. Captivated by the ostentatious ornaments of royalty, and seduced by the base passions of avarice and revenge, man becomes the willing instrument of an ambitious tyrant, and imbrues his hands in the blood of his fellow man. Nation has fought with nation, desolated and become desolate, to

gratify the sordid avarice or capricious ambition of royalty. Mighty revolutions take place ; a nation is conquered ; its miserable subjects are reduced to wretchedness and despair, and exchange *one* tyrant for *another*.

NOT so in the war of our glorious revolution. Our ancestors were the hardy sons of Freedom. Contemning the shackles of political and religious oppression, they sought a settlement in the wilderness of the West. Cherished by the benign influence of freedom, their population and consequence rapidly increased. Tyranny assailed them, and oppression attempted to grasp them in its hateful fangs. The proud spirits of the freeborn sons of America could not brook their indignities, nor tamely submit to transatlantic usurpation. They resisted ; and WASHINGTON led them to victory, to glory, to Independence !

THE sword was exchanged for the garment of peace, and those who had often sought danger in the " tented field," were equally adequate to the more refined duties of the Senate. In establishing constitutions of government on the broad basis of equal justice, the American character shone forth in the most brilliant splendor, the radiance of whose beams darted across the Atlantic, and spread a lustre throughout the world.

BLEST with the possession and fruition of a government the most conducive to the happiness of man, our earnest solicitude should be directed to its perpe-

tuity and support. Search Europe from its confines to its centre—not a Republic is to be found ! They are all swallowed up in the vortex of despotism, and the genius of liberty sits weeping on her tomb ! We are the only nation where civil and religious liberty is enjoyed in its purity. But however perfect may be our constitution, and great as are these blessings, they cannot be secured to us without the aid and support of public opinion. To perpetuate our republican institutions, that patriotic flame which rendered invincible the heroes of the revolution ; that disinterested love of country which distinguished our warriors and statesmen ; that ardor in the cause of liberty which thrilled in the breasts of the American people in the “ days that tried men’s souls,” must be as unextinguishable as the vestal flame.

SINCE the period of our revolution, Europe has almost continually presented a “ bloody arena of vengeful war.” The French nation caught the fire of patriotism from the recent example of our successful struggle against the encroachments of arbitrary power. The potency of the proud house of *Bourbon*, which had often been the terror of Europe, was prostrated to the earth, and a Republic was formed on the ruins of Monarchy. But fate had decreed them unworthy the high behest of rational liberty. The fire of patriotism was but a *transient glare*, which has been extinguished forever. The *mighty Napoleon* wielded the sceptre of France with its accumulated power. At his command kings were hurled from

their thrones, and ancient princes became the menial vassals of his will. *Holland, Switzerland, Prussia, Germany*, fell beneath the power of his arms. *Spain* and *Portugal* experienced the dreadful ravages of conflicting armies; depopulated and exhausted, they were reduced to a state of wretchedness that scarcely presented allurements to the conqueror. Even the frozen regions of *Russia* trembled for their safety, and the kingdoms of *Sweden* and *Denmark* obeyed the mandates of the tyrant of the continent. Nothing less than universal dominion was commensurate with the all-grasping ambition of *Napoleon*! The haughty and imperious government of *Great Britain*, not to be outdone in acts of atrocious violence and outrage, retaliated on the ocean, the atrocities of the *French Emperor* on the land.

But continued success had engendered a rash confidence in the mind of *Bonaparte*. Relying on his name, mighty in arms, and the invincibility and courage of his veterans, and carrying beneath his banner the force and resources of *half Europe*, in an evil hour to himself, he invaded the *Empire of Russia*. This enormous army, which threatened subjection to the *North*, was almost annihilated by the inclemency of the frost and the swords of the *Russians*. The fortune of *Bonaparte* was reversed. He had known defeat! With an activity peculiar to his character, another hostile host was marshalled. *But he was no longer invincible*! Nations which had reluctantly bowed their necks to his aspiring genius, were encouraged to throw off

the yoke ; and even *potentates* whom his *fiat* had created, disregarding the ties of gratitude, and the conditions of his favor, arrayed themselves on the side of his enemies. *France*, the terror of *Europe*, was invaded, and a most *stupendous revolution* was achieved. The heir of the ancient monarchy has been restored, and *Bonaparte*, who a few months ago was the most powerful man in the world, is exiled to a small *Island* in the *Mediterranean*, and holds his life on the *precarious tenure* of the will of his conquerors. These great events, prolific in consequences, and to the human understanding almost incomprehensible, have taken place so rapidly in succession, that the mind is confused and bewildered at the recapitulation. A new order of things has been established. *Great Britain* and *Russia* have accumulated the degenerated power of *France*. *Holland* has a tyrant of her own, subject, however, to the will of *Great Britain*. *Ferdinand*, long a prisoner in *France*, has been restored to the throne of his ancestors, and a general peace is negotiating on the continent of Europe.

BUT, my fellow citizens, our *own affairs* demand our attention. At a distance from the contending tyrants and scourges of Europe, we had illusively hoped to have shunned the vortex of their contention. Connected with them in habits of commercial intercourse, we could not be indifferent to their piratical Orders and Decrees. *Great Britain*, ever haughty and unjust, and always the aggressor in her unceasing wars, jealous of our commercial prosperity, and claiming a

despotic sway on the ocean, had compelled us to drink the cup of humiliation to the very dregs. Our citizens were murdered, our vessels plundered and burnt, the property of our merchants confiscated, and thousands of our hardy seamen, to whose enterprise and industry we are indebted for the luxuries and many of the conveniences of life, and to whose unconquerable valor we are indebted for the palm of naval glory ; I say, *thousands* of our noble tars “ *whose march is o'er the mountain wave, whose home is on the deep,*” had been snatched by the ruthless hand of violence from the endearing embraces of the partners of their bosom, no more to hear the innocent and enlivening prattle of their offspring, the joyful greeting of their family connections, their friends and countrymen, and compelled to pass the miserable remnant of their days in the floating *Pandemoniums* of “ the world's last hope.” Here, lacerated with the rods of tyrants, and smarting under every indignity, which to a free born soul is worse than death, they might justly complain of their country whose protection they claimed in vain.

WE negotiated till negotiation was folly. They returned perfidy for truth, insult for friendship, and injury for obligation. Had the spirit of *seventy six* become extinct ? Had effeminacy and sloth corroded the principles of the revolution ? Could freemen longer hesitate between honor and submission ? No. A war, similar in its principles to that of the revolution was commenced, and under heaven, we must rely on our own courage for

its favorable termination. But let it not be concealed—*the time is portentous*. A tempest is gathering on our borders and threatens destruction in its course. The recent events in Europe, at which many among us so thoughtlessly rejoice, have added vastly to the power of our enemy. The balance of power, which has so often been the pretence of bloody wars, is destroyed. Should a continental peace take place, England will indeed be formidable. She may send her myriads across the Atlantic, and her “thousand ships of war” may spread devastation along our coast. As might well be expected in a nation elated with prosperity, her language towards us is haughty and threatening. Instead of displaying that magnanimity and disposition for peace which her partizans in this country have so uniformly and basely asserted that she possessed, we now find her declaring that no terms are to be made with the present rulers of the United States; that they must be transported! and that nothing less than unconditional, yes, *unconditional submission* will appease her. Where is the American whose breast will not heave with indignation at such language as this? And is this the boasted magnanimity of England which has appeared so captivating in the eyes of federalists? Destroy the tyrant Bonaparte, and the world was to be at rest. The *tiger* was to be converted into a *lamb*. Great Britain was to become the most *peaceable* nation in the world, and disposed to do justice to all nations merely for its sake! “O shame where is thy blush.” But our government have been invited to negotiate at Gotten-

burg, and ministers have been appointed on the part of Great Britain to meet ours.

—————“ *Equo ne credite, Teucrici.
Quicquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*”

BUT whether Great Britain will have it in her power to send a very great force to this country is extremely problematical. The seeds of discord and jealousy must have been abundantly sown among the *allied powers*. It must be the interest of *Russia* and *Austria*, and indeed all the *Northern Powers* to check the pride of England, and curtail her enormous pretensions on the ocean. It must also be their interest to cultivate a friendly intercourse with this country. Parties have already arisen in France which threaten to renew the horrors of the “French revolution,” and it is uncertain whether *Louis the eighteenth* will be able to retain his crown unless by the continual support of British troops.

BUT in any event, let us not be dismayed. Let us rely on the benignity of Divine Providence, on the justice of our cause, and on our own exertions. The greater the danger, the more pressing the necessity, the firmer will be the union of the people.

COULD the United States but present an undivided front to the attacks of the enemy, we should hear nothing of *exiling* our rulers to the *Island of Elba*, and of *unconditional submission*. Unfortunately an enemy exists in our own country, whose hate to the administration is paramount to their love of country, and to their own interests. The head quarters of this enemy

is in Massachusetts, emphatically styled the “ cradle of the revolution.” For years have these “ choice spirits” been endeavoring to excite the people of New England to rebellion and civil war. Massachusetts has been the rallying point of opposition to our own government, and of subserviency to Great Britain. A Hancock and an Adams no longer control her councils. “ How is the gold changed, and the fine gold become dim.” Where flourished the out-spreading leaves of the brilliant rose, the thistle rears its bristly head ; noxious weeds and briars have rooted out the hyacinth and the myrtle, and the temple of freedom is inhabited by unclean reptiles. Driven by the people from the councils of the nation, and having in vain resorted to all the base arts that falsehood, malice and calumny could invent to regain their confidence, they had rather “ ride on the whirlwind, and direct the storm,” than be subject to our present happy government.

ASSOCIATIONS have been formed in all parts of New-England, under the imposing name of “ Washington Benevolent Societies,” the members of which, instead of practising the virtues of *benevolence*, are spreading toils for the unwary, and disseminating the principles of hatred to our government, and opposition to its laws. Let us hear what our *Great WASHINGTON* says in his farewell address to the people of the United States. “ All *obstructions* to the *execution* of the laws, all COMBINATIONS and ASSOCIATIONS, under whatever *plausible* character, with the

real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are of fatal tendency. They serve to organize FACTION ; to give it an artificial and extraordinary force ; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the *will of a party*, often a *small but artful* and enterprising minority of the community.”

BUT we hope they have the will without the power of effecting their nefarious designs. The great body of the federal party are averse to a separation of the Union. When this project was openly avowed, the last winter, by the high-toned leaders of faction, and the self-styled disciples of Washington, the *frowns* of the people were *indignant*. The bug-bear of FRENCH *influence* by which many honest people have been beguiled, will no longer aid them ; and they must either take advantage of Admiral Cochrane's *proclamation*, or sink into merited reproach.

MY friends, we have some cause for rejoicing. It was with many problematical, whether our government could carry on a war with Great Britain and preserve its internal peace and tranquility. It has been fairly tested, and the result has been honorable to the administration and the people. Our brethren of the South and West have displayed a magnanimity worthy of the best days of Greece and Rome. And even in New England the war has gradually increased in popularity since its commencement. The resources of the country are unimpaired, and the people are

disposed to bear all necessary privations and burdens in the cause of patriotism and of justice.

OUR gallant little navy has displayed an enterprise and heroism unparalleled in history. Our valiant seamen have torn the laurels from the brows of British heroes, and taught them that the proud flag bearing the motto, "Free trade and sailors rights," will wave triumphant. The names of a Hull, a Bainbridge, a Decatur, a Jones, a Lawrence, a Burrows, a Perry and a Warrington, will never be forgotten while bravery in a righteous cause, is esteemed a virtue. Our army has *not* disgraced itself when it has met the enemy on equal ground. We have the most exalted confidence in our illustrious President. Shielded by his own virtues, and encircled by the love and veneration of millions, the malevolence of foreign and domestic foes will assail him in vain.

"Tho' storms and tempests thunder round his brow,
 " And ocean rolls its billows at his feet,
 " He stands unmov'd and glories in his height."

IF commercial enterprise has been checked, the surprising increase in domestic improvements and manufactures has added vastly to the wealth and importance of our country. Though our merchants are obstructed in their wonted pursuits the sources of internal enterprise are rapidly unfolding.

AN unpardonable apathy pervades the public mind with regard to the situation of our brethren of South America. Though they, as did our fathers,

are struggling against European despotism, and righteously endeavoring to burst the iron bonds of slavery ; yet in the enjoyment of liberty, which similar exertions have secured to us, we feel very little sympathy for them, and scarcely inform ourselves of the passing events. We can celebrate British and Russian victories ; we can celebrate the victories of the Spanish "*patriots*," but not an acclamation is heard for the successes of the republicans of South America !

THE mind is insensibly led to contemplate the future greatness of America ; when the "wilderness shall blossom as the rose," and the forest, almost impervious, shall be filled with inhabitants ; when the hum of industry shall be heard in the Western wilds, and the American continent shall exhibit one GREAT REPUBLIC that shall awe the tyrants of declining Europe. Here will sciences flourish, and the arts be invigorated. Here will be known and appreciated the blessings of genuine liberty. Here "every one may sit under his own vine and fig tree," enjoying the fruits of his honest industry. In the contemplation of these behests our hearts should overflow with gratitude to the GREAT SUPREME, whose ALMIGHTY agency has been so obviously displayed in favor of our beloved country.