

AN
ORATION,
PRONOUNCED AT POULTNEY,
JULY 4, 1808.

BEING THE THIRTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY

OF

American Independence.

BY CHAUNCY LANGDON.

“ One self-approving hour whole years outwights,
“ Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas :
“ And more true joy, Marcellus exiled feels,
“ Than Caesar with a Senate at his heels.
“ This world, tis true,
“ Was made for Caesar ; but for Titus too,
“ And which more blest ? who chain'd his country, say,
“ Or he, whose virtue sigh'd to loose a day ?”

POPUL.

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To the Public.

THE Publication of the following sheets, were necessarily delayed until this time, by the Printer. At the repeated solicitations of my friends, they are now offered to the candid perusal of the public. If the reader is charitable and honest, ~~he~~ will not impute to me ~~bad~~ motives: If he has knowledge of facts, he must own, that I have represented truth without embellishment.

Its errors, detached sentiments and incorrectness, I leave with those who carp at words and garble at sentences, and thereby shew their own nakedness and deformity: But the collective opinions and sentiments I have advanced, I cheerfully submit to a liberal and generous public.

CHAUNCY LANGDON.

Castleton, October 1808.

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AN
ORATION.

MINGLED emotions of fear and patriotism crowd upon the minds of this respectable audience, while they convene to celebrate the day of our national birth. What new sensations do we feel, when we behold the sun of Liberty, and the glory and splendor of our Sovereignty and Independence, through the cloud which hangs over our heads, and threatens the Temple of Freedom !

Since the achievement of our independence, we have experienced many important changes in our body politic, unknown to former ages, without convulsing the vital principles of a Republican Government. Different parties have arisen under different names ; and some have remained, in principle and practice, radically the same. Amused by the alluring temptations of office, and its concomitant emoluments, they are fast bustling down the tide of time into the gulph of oblivion, perhaps, to make room for others to arise, destroying one another, and by themselves destroyed ! Success has crowned the exertions of almost all : And the head of the last is about to give up the helm of government to unknown hands, tossed on the agitated ocean of uncertainty.

We are threatened within and without. Foreign, and powerful nations have assumed a bold and imperious tone. They would advise, and may I not say, even direct our government, what part to act in the great political drama, and conflict of nations. But the passing events of time are with the omniscient Jehovah.

Insurrections have taken place ; and treasons have been plotted in our land ! Violent political parties have been formed in our government ; and have endangered our internal peace and union. These have threatened to enter the *Temple of Freedom*, and destroy the *Ark of our Safety*.

Corruption, division, the unrelenting spirit of party, and the tyrants of the earth have seized upon and destroyed every Republic in Europe, Asia, and Africa ; and the semblance of Liberty scarcely remains ! We are left the only Republic on earth ! And, I fear, we have reason, like afflicted Job, “ to take a pot-herd and scrape ourselves withal : to sit down among the ashes ” of consumed virtue and patriotism, and “ seriously consider our ways.” Is there not too much reason, for the virtuous and patriotic to say, with Addison in his *Cato*,

“ The morning lowers,
 “ And heavily brings on the day
 “ Big with the fate of these ” United States ?

At this important crisis of public affairs, let me intreat you to hear me with candor, “ and judge not, before the time,” one, who has appeared before you with reluctance and diffidence.

Let us all be watchful, active, and prudent. Conciliate, and candidly instruct one another. Let us patiently suffer reproach for the good of our common country ! Let no one be induced, like Job, to say, “ Let the day perish wherein ” our na-

tion "was born:"....." And as for that night, let darkness seize upon it. Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; and let it not be joined unto the days of the year!" But let us forever remember *that night* through which, we walked, with much tribulation, to maintain our independence. Let monarchy never overshadow the day of our birth; nor *Imperial Despotism* make us afraid. Let not oppression, or the direful effects of party ever stain our liberty: And let not corruption or foreign influence ever enter upon the threshold of the councils of our nation, or weaken and destroy the vital principles of our Government!—May God regard it from above;—And "may the sun of righteousness arise, and shine upon us with healing in his wings," that we may rejoice together, "and joy in the God of our salvation."

The Declaration of Independence, this day read, calls to our recollection the miseries and cruelties we have suffered. It paints before our eyes the horrors of our revolutionary contest! Yes, my friends, many of us still remember the 19th of April, 75, when the plains of Lexington were first stained with the blood of our countrymen! That precious blood, which was freely shed in *Freedom's Cause*, perfected our union, and forever sealed the heroic resolution of our ancestors, *to die Freemen, rather than to live Slaves*. Freedom was their birth-right—and they inviolably maintained it, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes.

We still remember Bunker Hill, where the heroic Warren fell, with four hundred and fifty men, "who deemed it glorious to die for their country." We still remember the gallant Montgomery, McPherson, Cheesman, Hendricks and others, who nobly fell before the lofty walls of Quebec.

To shew you the price of our *Freedom* and *Independence*, shall I traverse all the bloody fields of death; and there shew you numberless others,

who equally merit your praise and admiration? Shall I there uncover the bleeding wounds of the valiant Mercer, and lay by his side the mangled corpse of the young and matchless Laurens, and Campbell, whose blood last streamed in the cause of liberty? Alas! these heroes did not live to enjoy the Freedom and blessings their valor had won! Yet they nobly fell, and their names are enrolled on the records of fame, and left to posterity a fair and rich inheritance; and their mouldering graves admonish us of its worth. As often as we commemorate this day, we will bedew the never-fading laurels on their graves with our tears. Let their virtues ever live in our breasts, and inspire us with that love of country, that when called to defend our rights, we may gloriously die like them.

Shall I call to your recollection conflagrated towns and villages; and shew you the companions of your bosoms, bearing in their arms the smiles of innocence; and your helpless children fleeing from immediate destruction, or perishing in the flames, to fire your minds with the love of Liberty? No; it lives in every breast and is enterwoven in the ligaments of every heart.

Shall I ask you to visit the revolutionary prisons of Great Britain?—those vaults of contagion, cruelty and torture—the eternal reproach of humanity, and there take a retrospective view of our brethren in captivity, and listen to their sighs, and hear their dying groans!—The cruelties they suffered, and the manner of their deaths affect us more than their loss. But I forbear: I would not excite prejudice; stir up malignant passions, or wound the feelings of humanity; but only rehearse these things as past, and use them as powerful monitors, to remind you of the inestimable worth of peace, and the uninterrupted enjoyment of all our rights and privileges; and as incitements in you to guard them, as the apple of your eyes, against foreign encroach-

ments, and not to blindly barter them away with *demagogues*, for a mess of pottage, seasoned with flattery and party spirit.

Valor hath achieved our Liberty and Independence ; but union, wisdom, and virtue must preserve them. These will guard you within and without. The arm of liberty, nerved with these, will bid defiance to any power on earth ; without them, Liberty and independence are a tale which is often told, a syren song, which is often sung, to amuse and deceive the giddy multitude into slavery and ruin.

Under the protection of a happy form of government, organized and administered by the plastic hand of virtue, we have enjoyed, with few exceptions, peace and prosperity.

Aggressions on our commerce have been many and unjust ; and the Indian wars cruel, ferocious ; and expensive : But they all have been prudently adjusted, and amicably settled by treaties, and the merciless wars ended by the wisdom, prudence and energy of former administrations.

The wise and manly policy adopted by the Immortal WASHINGTON, in ninety three, preserved our neutrality against the insidious attempts of foreign nations, and the vile intrigues of many of our own citizens, to draw us into the *vortex of European politics* ; and involve us in a war with the most powerful nations of Europe.* The same policy

* See the President's proclamation of neutrality, issued April 22d 1793, forbidding our citizens taking any part in the hostilities commenced by France against England, from carrying contraband articles to either power at war ; and enjoining all acts, inconsistent with the duties of a friendly nation. This proclamation gave rise to the first attack of the character of the President, and to criminating his conduct, which had, hitherto, been shielded by the affections of the people. Occasional hints were thrown out that the Executive was hostile to the liberties of the people, and unfriendly to France. From this period we may truly date the commencement, of that vile attempt to brand all the defenders of the Constitution, and the administration of Washington and Adams with the opprobrious epithets of *torics*, and *monarchists* ; merely because they would not become subservient to France, and thus violate our neutrality.

has hitherto preserved us. By reason of this, our country arose almost from a state of beggary, to affluence. National faith and credit revived, and we became respectable among the nations of the earth. By reason of this, our commerce has been extended from river to river, and from sea to sea, even to the ends of the earth.—Commerce is the handmaid of industry, and will ever return to the husbandman and mechanic a sure and just reward of all their labors. The basis of all commerce is the mutual accommodation and supply of the wants of the parties concerned. Their interests are therefore mutual. Any interruption in a commercial intercourse, will, more or less, affect the interests of both parties. Their interests are inseparably connected, and their benefits reciprocal. In short, it is the exchange of the surplus part of those articles, which we do not want, for those articles which are more valuable and convenient to us. Without it, a nation will be poor in the midst of plenty. She may support life, but can never enjoy it. This alone converts the surplus product of our soil and labours, into durable riches ; and procures the necessaries and conveniences of life. Commerce diffuses useful knowledge among men ; and harmonizes different governments and nations. It liberalizes sentiments ; expands the mind with enlarged views ; and inculcates a spirit of universal love, and philanthropy.

When, from a view of the present situation of our government, I reflect on the difficulties, which awaited the formation, and adoption of our constitution, I am lost, with astonishment, that it was ever effected ; and so easily and successfully organized. So many different interests, opinions and objections presented themselves to the illustrious framers of it, that they were ready to abandon the important work in despair :—Then, suddenly, the same patriotism, which united them in the hour

of danger, disembroiled their embarrassments and partialities; and that sublime virtue, which was universally displayed in our revolutionary contest, conciliated their minds to compromise different interests and opinions; and thereby enabled them to bring their arduous labors to a final issue.

May we not ascribe, the happy issue of that important event, to him, in whom are the issues of life, and the original source of all causes!—Does he not hold, in his Almighty Hand, the eternal chain of events? and, by an invisible power and wisdom, guide and direct their infinite relations and results. Politicians and philosophers may explore causes by their events; but GOD alone is the GREAT ARCANNA of them. From HIM all our blessings flow. HE raised up Moses to deliver; David to defend; Solomon to instruct; and Cyrus to restore his ancient chosen people. May we not recognize the same Almighty Hand, in raising up, and continuing through the revolutionary contest; and the equally important crisis, the framing, adoption, and organization of our constitution and government, that Illustrious Citizen, who directed our battles, and led our armies to victory: who taught our Senators wisdom and prudence, and our exactors righteousness. In him was a rare assemblage of virtues and talents. The majesty of them awed treason; united division; conciliated differences of opinion; and the disaffected; and caused sedition, slander and intrigue, to shun his presence; and vice to hide its head. “His exalted virtues abashed tyrants, and baffled the *destroyer of nations*.”

Our constitution, as I observed on a former occasion, contains an admirable balance of power to protect rational liberty, and the rights of man; and also give energy to its operations. It rests on the election of the people, directly, or indirectly in all its departments.

To preserve its vital principles ; to secure our happiness and protect our rights, that election must be free and unbiased, without partial views, and unalloyed with party spirit. The electors must act without prejudice, unawed by power ; uninfluenced by the flattery and deceitful professions of demagogues ; uncorrupted by the allurements of gain, or office ; without the fear of reproach ; regardless of the fnger of scorn ; or the upbraidings of men. In short, they must be guided by the unerring rules of truth, virtue and the good of community.

The elected must be men of information, industry, economy and ability ; of truth, virtue, and unimpeachable integrity. In public and private life their characters ought not to be tarnished with corruption, oppression, profanity, crimes and vices. "Men do not gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles."

If our elections are made on these principles, worthless men will *more seldom* obtain offices. The neglect of them enables artful men, like cock-roaches creeping out of the holes of ships, to work their way into notice, out of the bowels of vice, corruption, and obscurity. These men will trouble the water of political opinion, and stir it up from the very bottom, so that they may, the more easily, emerge from their native mud, and swim on the surface, in the foam which they have made. Such men can seldom be trusted with safety. They will never live by laudable industry, economy, and the labour of their own hands ; but possessing power, they will, therefore, so use and contrive it,

“ that honest men,

“ Become the soft and easy cushions,

“ On which knaves repose and fatten.”

The form of our government when adopted, appeared in theory, well calculated to secure our un-

ion, peace and happiness. The apparent concomitant evils, were a consolidation of all the states, into one government ; which might end in monarchy ; ~~and~~ divisions and parties, which would expose us to discord, and civil war. Against the first the different interests, the vigilance, and I may add the pride, and local prejudices of each state are very great securities. To prevent small states from being swallowed up by the power and influence of the large, each state has an equal voice in the Senate, which has a negative on the house ; and in certain cases, in the election of a President. In short, the Senate are the immediate representatives of the sovereignty of each state ; and the house of the people. —

Under a government so beautiful in theory, all would be ready to say, it must promote the peace, happiness, freedom and equal rights of every individual in society ; and become perpetual. But, alas, experience, the most correct instructor of mankind, has often taught us, that practice frequently baffles the wisdom of theories in government, and confirms the sentiment of Pope, that,

- “ For forms of government let fools contest ;
- “ What'er is best administered is best :
- “ For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight ;
- “ His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.”

From experience we have great reason to fear, that divisions and parties are inherent in our government, and the constitution of man. These have already prepared their whip of scorpions to scourge us for our folly, and teach us wisdom by their awful and more effectual lessons of adversity. Prosperity often elates us above reason, and precipitates us beyond the limits of wisdom and prudence. Regardless of the voice of reason, wisdom, or fear, multitudes are wafted, by popular gales along the tide of opinion, until they are brought to their sen-

ses, by sufferings. Divisions and parties are calamities which I greatly dread. Greater evils cannot befall us ; except the loss of Liberty and Independence. Foreign wars, compared to these, are a blessing. Should they continue to baffle every effort of the virtuous and patriotic part of community, to unite and harmonise the discordant parts of government, oppression, tyranny of party,* anarchy, civil war and slavery are inevitable !

Since our government has been so wisely calculated, and justly administered to promote the peace, happiness and prosperity of the people, I have seen with infinite regret, divisions and political parties arise among us. I have noted their rise and progress, and dread their issue. They are growing more and more inveterate and obstinate. They have already frittered away the most valuable part of the constitution, relative to the election of President and Vice President. The powers of the office of President, and the recent use of them, tend to promote party-spirit. By the late amendment of the constitution, as to the election of President and Vice President, every barrier to intrigue, governmental combination, and the corrupt bartering of influence for office, through the medium of the President, is removed. The influence of bartering office is more sure and effectual ; and less easy to be detected, and the evil remedied, than secret and

*The tyranny of a dominant party is often more inexorable, oppressive, cruel and bloody, than a Nero, Caligula or the tyrant of Syracuse. What can be more so than the proceedings of the several dominant parties in republican France, under their leaders, Marat, Danton, Robespierre, and others ? Millions fell an helpless prey to their party-rage and tyranny. Has not the same malignity, and virulence of party appeared, in embryo, in the United States ? What character has been so virtuous and exalted, as to be safe from the malignant shafts of slander and abuse ? Has not the preservation of the majesty of the laws been the only restraint to the bloody hand of the assassin ? What virtue, integrity, or ability will recommend a man to obtain, or retain an office of profit or trust, against the power of a dominant party ? Are not the confidence and merit of the ruling party pre-requisites, and the *sine qua non* qualifications, for office or public employment ? Pause, candidly consider and reflect, and all must assent to the facts.

direct bribery by money. Many would be swerved from the line of their duty, and their integrity shaken by the alluring temptations of an office, who would disdain the greatest bribe. The flatteries and specious promises of Cæsar, had more effect, and a greater tendency to corrupt and destroy Roman virtue and patriotism, and undermine their liberties, than the bribes of Phylæus. While the latter had no effect upon the Roman people; the former proved too powerful for the unshaken virtue and patriotism of a Cato.

The power of the President in nominating and appointing, and the practice of arbitrarily removing from office* are enormous; and in the hands of some men, more effectual to procure an election, or be continued in that office, against the true interests of the people, than holding the purse-strings of the nation. Proposed amendments of the Constitution are now under consideration, or rather in operation, to destroy the independence of the Judiciary. This proposed amendment will destroy the Palladium of our rights and liberties, against the encroachments of the Executive, Legislative, and Military departments of government, and greatly increase the powers of the President.— These things will finally destroy the free and unbiassed expression of the will of the people in that important election. To what lengths, parties will proceed to decompose and destroy the harmonious system, and defeat the beneficial effects of our excellent form of government, God only knows! Next to eternal slavery and death, I should depre-

* Some may think that I mean to apply *this practice* to the present Executive. I honestly say I do; for upon reflection and enquiry, I do not find any instances of Presidents Washington and Adams, having arbitrarily removed any man from office, because he differed with the administration in political sentiments. President Jefferson and E. Randolph differed with President Washington in political sentiments and measures; and espoused the interests of an opposite party, yet neither were removed from office. And upon the resignation of Mr. Jefferson, as Secretary of State, Mr. E. Randolph was appointed his successor.

cate its dissolution. Unless we apply some virtuous, patriotic, and conciliatory correctives, we shall soon, very soon, become like Republican France, the prey of one another, and of worthless demagogues; the sport of foreign influence and intrigue; the submissive tools of tyrants in sheep's cloathing; and at last, the sure and helpless victims of foreign, & domestic ambition.

I have heretofore avoided naming parties, or applying principles to any man or party, on a day, which ought to be observed as sacred to *union, harmony and freedom*. But facts, and the effects of parties, are so destructive to that *union, harmony and freedom* which ought to exist among us; and are so notorious in our government, and the triumphs of party are so much boasted of, by leading men in power, I should be forgetful of the duty I owe to my country, which gave me birth, and to my God, who has preserved me in existence, to suppress the truth on this occasion. Truth, I hope, will offend none, if it will, its haters must be offended. By a simple relation of facts or sentiments, I would give no offence, or injure the feelings of any person, but excite a candid enquiry into the origin and progress of parties in our government, and awaken the virtuous and patriotic part of community to attend to those things, which belong to our peace, happiness and safety, "before they are forever hidden from our eyes."

Our present happy form of government may survive these decaying limbs of ours; for we must soon sleep with our fathers; yet, most of us have children, whom we love, to leave behind us: And who is there in this assembly, so base, as to be willing to leave them exposed to the direful effects of party rage, and oppression? If any, him I may offend. Who is there so servile, as to feel indifferent about the fate of posterity, and not earnestly wish to leave to them the same union, free-

dom and independence, which he has received from his ancestors, as the price of their precious blood? If there is any, I fear not to offend him.

Is it possible, that the body of the people, composing the two great parties, which have arisen in our land, and have been like two armies, set in battle array against each other, can have distinct views and separate interests? Have not these parties principally progressed from the misapplication, and wanton abuse of the terms *Federalism* and *Republicanism*; which originally meant, and I believe still mean, the same thing, and rest on the same foundation? The great body of the American people are enthusiastic admirers of the leading principles of the Revolution, which secured to us the blessings of Liberty and Independence. They are friends to their country, zealous advocates of good order, and rational liberty, and firmly attached to the Constitution of the United States. Tho' the public mind has been agitated and deluded by misrepresentations and abuse of terms, yet, at heart, and in principle, the people are Federalists, and in many cases, without knowing it. For no person can be a Federalist without being a Republican; they are, in fact, one and the same thing. All wish or pretend to wish, to promote their individual interest, and the interest and good of community. The rights and interest of all are blended and linked together by one common chain, and are inseparably connected. The same government and laws secure and protect your rights and mine. This government is, or ought to be, a government of laws which can have but one meaning, and not of men. If any administrator of the laws, from party views, or corrupt principles, judge of them differently, let all the people curse him!

Almost all will agree, that our general government is a representative Republic;—and is preferable to any other form of government. From the

latin word *fœdus*, signifying a league, or confederacy, it is called, the Federal Government, to distinguish it from the State Governments. The one is composed of an union of sovereign and Independent States, the other of towns or districts. Those, who approved and supported the present Federal Constitution, were, therefore, with the greatest propriety, called *Federalists*: which term, was originally used and is still considered, by its advocates, as synonymous with the term, *Republican*.* Those, who opposed the formation, adoption, organization and administration of the Federal Government, assumed the name, and were, with equal propriety, called *Anti-Federalists*; or in other words, opposers of our present constitution and confederation.

To organize the government, the constitutional voice of the people unanimously placed the immortal Washington in the Presidential chair. From principles of gratitude, wisdom and prudence, he sagaciously nominated to the Senate the sages and experienced patriots of the revolution, to fill almost all the important offices, in the several departments of government. These were generally Federalists and Republicans; or in other words, the advocates and firm supporters of the Constitution and its administration. These official acts of the President were purely American; for no foreigner ever received from him a nomination or appointment, of any consequence. This assisted the Anti-Federalists to organize a party, and add to their numbers almost all foreigners, the ambitious

* That there is no distinction between the terms Federalism and Republicanism, we have from high authority. Mr Jefferson, in his inaugural speech, declares, "We are all Federalists, we are all Republicans." This is expressly saying, that there is no difference in the meaning of the terms. How, then, can it be considered, that Federalism is Anti-Republicanism? Vain and absurd must be the attempt to use it as a term of reproach, or to designate its advocates as monarchists, aristocrats or tories, unless it be a reproach to support, and be attached to the Constitution of the United States.

and disappointed. Yet this lover of virtue and patriotism, so pursued the principles of an honest, prudent, firm and magnanimous policy ; and so laid the foundation of his administration in the unerring principles of public and private virtue, of morality and religion, and so confirmed them by his own examples,* that, in spite of that powerful opposition, it became popular, acquired strength, and promoted the peace, union, happiness and prosperity of the States : Consequently the anti-federalists became unpopular, and the number daily diminished.

The determination of the bill, in 1791, to establish a national bank, and fund the national debt in the hands of the holders, made deep impressions on the minds of some, and mortified the feelings of other influential members in Congress. They sensibly felt the chagrin of ambitious competitors. This scism in Congress, added new strength to the opposition, and tended to organise more completely two different parties, which, in their progress and conflict for power, have since shook the United States to their centre. At this time the principal things, by which public declaimers operated upon the minds of the people, and prejudiced them against the administration of government were the President's levees, † which they said were the hum-

* These things fully appear in his Inaugural speech at the opening of Congress, on the 30th day of April, 1789. The principles and purity of sentiments contained in that dignified address, are worthy of the perusal of all, and will afford instruction to the legislator, moralist, and divine.....See Marshal's Hist. Washington, vol. v. page 157 to 173, and the Journals of Congress.

† To justify the appointed times to wait on company, called *levees*, the President assigned the best of reasons, to wit, economy of time and expence, and the accommodation of all who wished to call on him. He said, that before he adopted these levees, " Gentlemen were calling, says he, before breakfast until he sat down to dinner ; which gave him no time to attend on public duties, unless he broke in upon the necessary hours of sleep."...." At meetings, says he, gentlemen come and go in great numbers ; chat and act as they please."" Upon their first entrance, are mutual salutations"....." What pomp there is in all this, I am, says he, unable to discover."

ble imitations of the *ceremonics* and *pomp* of European Courts. : High salaries, which manifested a disregard to that simplicity and economy, which characterizes a republic, from a monarchy : The banking and funding systems, which had a tendency to perpetuate the national debt, though provisions were made, in the same system, to cancel it : And the excise laws, which collected a revenue after the manner of Great-Britain.* Some of the heads of the departments of government, became warm partizans, and treated each other with great asperity.

This scism, among men of talents and the personal friends of the President ; and the increasing rancour of the opposition party, sensibly affected and extremely mortified him. He thus expressed himself in one of his letters, written in 1792, to the heads, or leaders of the parties, then in office.

“ How unfortunate” said he, “ that while we are encompassed on all sides with avowed enemies and insidious friends, internal dissensions should be harrowing and tearing our vitals. The last, to me, is the most serious and alarming of the two. Without more charity for the opinions of one-another in governmental matters, &c. in my opinion the fairest prospects of happiness and prosperity, that ever was presented to man, will be forever lost.”

“ My earnest wish, and my fondest hope therefore is, that instead of wounding, &c. each others feelings, there might be liberal allowances, mutual forbearances and temporizing yieldings on both sides. Without them every thing must rub ; the wheels of government will clog ; our enemies will triumph, and by throwing their weight into the dis-

* To the rational part of community, the mode of collecting a necessary revenue is perfectly immaterial ; provided it is simple, easy, and not expensive. And the objects of taxation are of no consequence, if they operate equally on every part of the community, according to the interest protected, and ability to pay.

affected scale, may accomplish the ruin of the goodly fabric we have been erecting.”

In another letter to the same persons, speaking of the inevitable mischief, which the prevalent asperities and divisions would create. He says “and for what?—Because mankind cannot think alike, but would adopt different means to obtain the same end. For I will frankly and solemnly declare, that I believe, the views of both to be pure and well meant.” “And why”, said he, “should men, having the same object in view, be so tenacious of their own opinions, as to make no allowance for those of others, so that the cup of blessings, which had been presented to us, may not be forever snatched from our lips.”

The immediate effects of these divisions and parties were to encourage and organize societies in opposition to the administration of government throughout the United States, and an open and daring resistance of the execution of the laws. In the western parts of Pennsylvania, the whole system of government and its measures had been for some time reprobated with peculiar bitterness, and the passions and the prejudices of the people artfully excited by popular declaimers and their most influential characters. This produced a pre-existing temper in the people to openly reprobate every law and measure of Congress, which was opposed on the floor of the house, by the leaders of their party, as tyrannical and oppressive, and tending to subvert the liberties of the people.

All who advocated or obeyed laws, were deemed enemies to the great body of the people, and attempts were made to brand them with the opprobrious epithets of *tories, monarchists and partisans of Great Britian.*

Conciliatory measures were taken to sooth their minds. Proclamations issued requiring obedience to the laws, and prosecutions were

out any beneficial effect. These only added fuel to the fire.

This fire was fanned by warm partisans, until it burst into a flame, which could not be arrested in its progress, unless by a military force and by the trial and conviction of a number of their leaders. This in the opinion of the party, made them martyrs in the cause of freedom ; martyrdom made them popular. Some of them even foreigners are now loaded with praises, and the honors and emoluments of office. These men, like Sampson's bees have made much honey out of the carcase of the dead Lyon. Perhaps they may live and leave the world, admiring their arts and talents, before they have fully tasted, the contempt, which they deserve.

That malignant and visionary philosophy, which arose in France in seventeen hundred and ninety one or two, secretly and imperceptibly gained ground in the United States. Philosophy, falsely so called, which owned not God, nor regarded man, which estimated as nothing, the miseries and destruction of the human race, provided it could coolly and deliberately pursue, through oceans of blood, abstract systems of government, and new experiments to obtain some fancied and unknown good. The French, and almost every nation in Europe have drank to the very dregs, the bitter cup of these visionary schemes ; and the deadly potion has been fatal to every Republican government in the old world.

Upon the death of the King of France, Genet, a man well-versed in the Philosophy and politics of the day, was sent to America, as minister of the French Republic. From the noble feelings of gratitude, and (as many then believed) from reciprocity of Republican sentiments and principles, the people of the United States received the Republican ambassador, with enthusiastic marks of joy, and attachment. Flattered with these marks of attach-

ment, Genet, before he was accredited, commissioned and enlisted men in our territory, fitted out privateers in our ports, to cruise against nations then at peace with us, and establish Courts of Admiralty. This was complained of as a breach of our Neutrality. The President considered these proceedings, as a direct violation of our sovereignty and neutrality; and took effectual measures against them. Two Americans, who had enlisted and cruised in the French service were arrested. Mr. Genet, in a most insolent and imperious manner, demanded their release, but to the honor of our government without effect.

The president continued firm in his resolution to preserve our neutrality, and to maintain the honor and dignity of the nation. The parties, already formed, took different sides in the contest. The President's conduct, relative to the proceedings of the French minister, was reprobated with great acrimony, and vilely represented as conclusive evidence of strong attachment to the British government. The French minister was even advised not to relax in his demands, and "was assured, that in the affections of the people, he would find a firm and certain support"

These extravagant proceedings were sanctioned by certain societies, calling themselves *the people*; and the *guardians of the people!*—These societies were transformed by the fostering hand of Genet into democratic societies. The first was formed at Philadelphia, on the 30th day of May, 1793, under the fascinating professions of preserving freedom, which was threatened by the despots of Europe, "and," as they said, "endangered by the pride of wealth and arrogance of power, displayed in the United States."

Many virtuous and well disposed citizens were induced from pure and patriotic motives to join these societies, without comprehending the real mo-

tives of the founders. They were soon extended throughout the United States, and were controuled by the antifederal opposition.

Fresh aggressions were daily made, by the French and English, on the sovereignty of the nation, and on our neutral rights. Unparalleled insolence was used towards the *Father of his country*, by that emanation of modern philosophy and then French policy, until Genet was dismissed and discarded by his own government, and I blush to say it, *that insolence* was ungratefully defended by many of our countrymen, under the specious garb of *liberty and equality*.

In the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety three, the executive was openly disregarded and the administration reproached in the opposition papers, “*as the violators of national faith, the partisans of monarchy, and the enemies of Liberty and France.*” Real patriotism will ever consult the utility and beneficial result of any measure, more than its temporary popularity, and will not shrink from, or shun the path of duty, because it appears rugged “*and beset with briars and thorns.*”

PRESIDENT WASHINGTON ever approbated the *real* people’s occasionally assembling together, in a legal way, “*to express their sentiments on political subjects.*” But those self created societies, usurping authority to controul the constituted authorities, or dictate and direct public opinion, he ever considered as dangerous to rational liberty, and the scourge of all free governments.* In his letter to Mr. Jay, written in 1796, he observes, “*that the self created societies, which have spread themselves over this country, have been laboring incessantly to sow the seeds of distrust, jealousy and discontent ; and thereby to effect some revolution in the government, is a fact, not unknown to you,*

*See 5th. Vol. of Marshall’s life of WASHINGTON.

That they have been the fomenters of the western disturbances admits of no doubt, in the mind of any one, who will examine their conduct.”

The state of parties, in one thousand seven hundred and ninety six, is justly described in his letter to President Jefferson, and shows, that he had an invincible desire to quit the arduous services of an ungrateful country, and retire to the peaceful shades of private life. “That until the last year or two,” says he, “I had no conception, that parties would, or even could go the lengths I have been witness to ; nor did I believe until lately, that it was in the bounds of probability, hardly within those of possibility, that while I was using my utmost exertions to establish a national character of our own, independent (as far as our obligations and justice would admit) of every nation on earth ; and wished by steering a steady course, to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of being the enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another ;—and to prove it, that every act of my administration should be tortured ; and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations of them be made, by giving one side only upon a subject ; and that too in such exaggerated and indecent terms, as would scarcely be applied to a Nero—to a notorious defaulter—or even common pick-pocket.”

These causes, with Jay’s treaty, and the President’s refusing the papers, relative to the same, though they had no direct relation to any matter before Congress, imperiously urged us to an important crisis ; and we should have fallen a prey to French intrigue, slander and the direful effects of party, had not that wise and prudent magistrate firmly stood in the portal of the *ark* of our union, peace and safety, and repelled every attack.

During his administration, was the most eventful period of changes ; revolutionary principles ;

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