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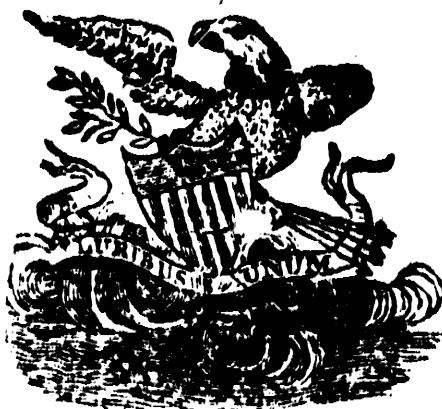
GEORGETOWN, (S. C.)

ON THE

4TH DAY OF JULY, 1816;

By *ALEXANDER MACLEOD, Esquire.*

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GEORGETOWN, (S. C.)

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1816.



FELLOW-CITIZENS,

THE commemoration of important events, is a laudable practice, coeval with the political existence of nations. The glorious luminary of Heaven, in his perpetual revolution has forty times brought to our fond recollection, that memorable period, when first the refulgent ray of liberty shone upon our nation. When first, a brave and virtuous people acquired the right of self government, and sealed its perpetuity with their blood. Memorable, then, as the Ides of March were in the annals of Rome, will the 4th of July — '76, be in those of America. Let this memorable day engrave on our hearts the insidious devices which were laid to enslave us, and to exterminate our dawning liberty in its infancy. Let us travel back in imagination, to the cause, conduct, and consequence of our late war, let us rejoice in our victories and sympathise in our disasters. Let us shed the tributary tear of gratitude over the remains of our fallen heroes, and indulge in emotions of grateful respect for the services of our surviving patriots. In appreciating the benefits resulting to us, individually, and politically, from the revolutionary toils of our ancestors, let us take a brief view of our situation previous to our independence, as colonies of the British monarchy. And without, here attempting to lay open the vices and tyrannical systems of policy inseparable from a monarchical government, it must appear

obvious to the most moderate capacity, that as a colony dependent on a foreign power, we could neither enjoy the blessings of self-government, nor controul ~~our~~ ^{own} resources, to the interest and advantage of ~~our~~ ^{our} citizens. The mother country, not only usurped the power of regulating our commerce, but also, the right of fettering our internal resources. Hence, we were the slaves of an absolute master, and although, under his rod, we possibly, might have enjoyed a faint shadow of liberty, it would not have proceeded from the nature of his government, but from the clemency of the ruling tyrant. A subject of the absolute despotism of Turkey, may, possibly, enjoy a small portion of liberty, but it is the precarious liberty of a slave. Controuled by a spirit of oppression, actuated by selfish and tyrannical principles, imperfectly acquainted with our resources, and unmindful of our interest, we, not only, suffered from neglect; but also, from the insults of a standing army, composed of the refuse of villainy, the dregs of brothels, and sweeping of prisons. For such indignities, what were we to expect in return? Protection. And how were we protected? We were plunged into wars in which we had no interest, our citizens exposed to danger, put to the slaughter without their consent and the expense of all this drawn from our own coffers without our leave! This was the protection the indulgent parent afforded to her defenceless offspring. The burthen was too grievous. The dignified and manly souls of our gallant ancestors revolted with disdain from such trammels, and in the face of an applauding world, declared themselves a free and independent people. Matchless in virtue and patriotism, with an accurate knowledge of the rights of man, and their own resources,

the disunion was inevitable, independence was the voice and order of nature. As the lightning of Heaven, in blazing torrents, pours from the dark clouds of the south, so the radiant beams of liberty burst forth from the incorruptible hearts of the heroes of the revolution, and dissolved the bonds of oppression. That patriotic zeal and wisdom, which immortalized them in the field, and guided their counsels in the cabinet, has descended, *unsullied* to their posterity, and we fondly hope, will not be *extinct* in the bosom of remote generations. No, its force, again, has quelled the fury of the same rude foe, and curbed the Ignis Fatuus of disunion. Ask we, then, why those veterans fought, wherefore these lives were ^{un}estimated? Let the war-worn veteran, with smiles of triumph glowing on his victorious brow, answer the question. The conquest of a world, like the Macedonian madman, was not their object, it was the acquisition of independence, they fought for their liberties, it was their right by nature, and we, their posterity, enjoy the fruit of their toils. Europe stood astounded, beheld with wonder, an infant colony bursting the chains of bondage, poising herself with gigantic strength, from the dungeon of slavery, assuming the most exalted stand in the temple of liberty, enrolling her name high on the list of fame, and acquiring the dignity and consequence of a mighty republic in the solitary wilderness of the west, where but lately, the dismal yell of the savage, satiating his voracious appetite, with the unhallowed plunder of his native forest, frightened the way-worn traveller on his lonesome path-way. France, that ill-fated victim of oppression, beheld with admiration, the star-spangled banners of liberty waving in triumph on the ramparts of Little-York, rejoic-

ed in her heart at the sight, and to the list would
 fain have fixed the seal of her liberty. But alas!
 the duplicity and lust of power, the ruling passion
 of that fell tyrant who led her arms to victory,
 were, in multiplied and haggard forms, insurmount-
 able obstacles to so respectable and exalted a station.
 Unfortunate victim of the combined despotism of
 Europe, distant far from the original object of thy
 struggles, thou art delivered, *indeed*, from the ruth-
 less sword of the Corsican; but subjugated and
 more immediately under the lash of despotism than
 thou wert in the days of priestcraft, and in lieu of
one, has all the tyrannical yokes of Europe about
 thy neck. This, O! France, thou owest to the
 black and insatiable passions of that Corsican, whom
 thou hadst snatched from the bosom of obscurity to
 wield thine arms, and to bow thy neck with the
 stern rod of oppression. As a solitary slave, he
 now lies prostrate, degraded and despised, he may
 pant for deliverance, the desponding sigh of des-
 pair, may start the tear of regret from his soul,
 Hope, the balm of affliction, has no abode in his
 breast.

“Inveni portum, spes et fortuna valet,
 “Sat me lucistis, ludite nunc aliis.” — *Lucius*

In eluding the grasp of his enemies, his dexterity
 and address, were admirably calculated to dupe the
 credulity of the ignorant, and flatter the vanity of
 those who were dazzled by the splendor of his
 military fame, and enriched by his plunder. At
 last, in the bitter agonies of despair, as “Daniel
 braved the fury of the lions,” he threw himself up-
 on the mercy of those of his enemies, whom he
 had most injured. The European Allies, the black
 hearted fiends of despotism, the combined mur-
 derers of liberty, under the guide of its faustering

friends, congratulate themselves, that now, they will envelope France in the same dark abyss of ignorance and superstition she was in, before the distant hope of liberty had opened her eyes, before Napoleon marched her arms in triumph over the Alps. But in vain, the fire of liberty once kindled, the human mind once enlightened, can never be extinguished and trammelled by priest craft or terror. England, the grand oracle of falsehood and duplicity, in the malignity of her heart, charged us with a co-operation with this modern Hercules in his chimerical project for the universal conquest of Europe. In this false conjecture, she forgot our love of honor and our high sense of justice, she forgot, also, our strength, and the consequence of our wrath, rudely trampled on our dearest rights, and violated and insulted the neutrality of our flag. The fact cannot be denied, nor will it be pretended that such a wanton violation of our rights and neutrality, would, in itself, not only justify, but demand any degree of hostility on our part. In her black orders in council, she has published, and as far as was in her power, has executed an interdict excluding us from all commercial intercourse with every power subject to the control of France, except such as she chose to license. In the height of her arrogance, she has declared to us, that in our own ships, navigated by our own seamen, we dare not transport the produce of our own soil to exchange it for European manufactures and commodities. Yet, a more grievous cause of complaint existed, called aloud for redress, and demanded the shield of deliverance. This was the cruel impressment of our citizens. A grievance which sorely afflicted the heart, and has wrung from the weeping eyes of beauty, torrents of tears in limped

streams of heart-rending agony, for the loss of a husband, a brother, or a son, of whom they had been bereaved by the rapacity of a ruthless tyrant. Ask your flag the number of your impressed citizens, that gallant flag, whose honor has never yet been sullied, which, after having struck the flag of the Ocean's tyrant, from her proud and lofty masts, has, in every instance of its triumph, detected Americans in the ships it vanquished. Had we to suffer only the loss of the many millions of property of which we had been spoliated; we might, and possibly would have longer continued to remonstrate, and still have avoided a war. But treated with indignity added to insult, till cowardice had almost, stared us full in the face:—At length, in the climax of our wrath, we drew the sword of justice, and solemnly appealed to our arms and to the God of battles! At a period when our forces by land and sea, were reduced to a cypher, the angry trumpet of war roused our peaceful citizens from their quiet firesides, and assailed the tranquility of our country with its furious blast, when embattled legions of kindred-men were to meet in dreadful conflict on the field of battle.—Humanity stood appalled and veiled her face, the God of war leaped into his chariot, brandished the flaming sword of vengeance in his right hand, bade defiance to the victorious legions of the foe, dared him to the combat, and wrested the meed of valor from his formidable grasp. Our virtuous citizens, strangers to the murderous art of war, but jealous of their rights, and tenacious of their honor, hastened to the conflict, humbled the bravest troops in Europe, commanded by the most gallant and experienced officers in the world. Such a bold onset gave rise to many predictions of our downfall and recoloniza-

tion; but we hoped for, and were determined on better things. We hoped that *that* intrepid valor, that invincible spirit of independence, which roused our forefathers from their tender families, and comfortable fire-sides to seek a redress of their grievances at the cannon's mouth, was not yet extinct in the bosom of a brave and grateful posterity. We hope that *that* bright Angel, who, with a flaming sword in the hour of danger, had safely guarded our tree of liberty, that *that* sacred Dragon, who watched over the garden of our country would not suffer a single apple of our rights to be lost! These sanguine expectations were happily realized. Our navy, that by neglect, had fallen into obscurity, and vanished, almost, to an empty name, has gallantly retrieved her character, braved the fury of the enemy's thunder, stemmed the whirlwind of his wrath, fought herself into favor with her own country, and reputation with all nations. Nor has a reverse of fortune tarnished her character. Equally in defeat as in victory, has she sustained the honor of her flag, and the clouds of adversity served only to display her prowess in a new and more brilliant light.

Loud as had been the shouts of applause in honor of former naval victories, they were comparatively silenced by the torrent of huzzas, which poured forth in peals of joy from the hearts of a grateful people, in honor of that immortal victory achieved by the youthful and intrepid Perry on lake Erie. This victory was in itself so complete, and in its consequence, so important to the United States, that it could not fail to excite the most unbounded marks of joy in every patriotic bosom. Every eye sparkled with gladness, every cheek glowed with triumph, and every heart expanded

with gratitude to the supreme ruler of the Universe for this signal mark of favor conferred on his people. All parties, forgetful of their political feuds, vied with each other in bestowing honors on, and crowning with laurels the temples of this young hero and his brave compatriots! On this occasion he displayed that gallantry, that circumspective courage, and that cool deliberate presence of mind which has always characterized the hero and true American tar, not only by his dauntless and inflexible valor in the moment of danger and in the midst of carnage, but, also, by his modesty, compassion and humanity to a vanquished foe amidst the shouts of victory. Gallant little squadron, commanded by a matchless band of heroes! The eternal power that inspired the boundless mind of the immortal Columbus, and directed his needle to the unknown shores of your country, took his stand at your helm, conducted your brilliant and victorious career, and now holds you up as in the hollow of his omnipotent hand to receive the gratitude of your country, and the tacit applause of your enemies.

The operations of our land forces, though in every instance, not crowned with success, yet in their consequences were equally brilliant and importance. When it is recollected that the declaration of war roused the nation from the slumbers of thirty years of halcyon peace and tranquility, that the heroes of the revolution had, for the most part, "slept with their fathers," consequently the nation was almost destitute of military establishments or military science. When we contemplate the comfortable mediocrity of fortune which every one of common prudence and industry may enjoy, and that high-toned spirit of independence which is breathed by every patriotic citizen in our

happy country, when the humblest plebeian sees in the most exalted statesman, but his political equal. When we recollect that with such means, armies were to be levied, and organized to confront the best disciplined troops in Europe, we should have been better prepared to meet the few unavoidable disasters our armies have experienced. Could we have penetrated the secret counsels of the enemy, and entered into his sensibilities, we might have discovered that our misfortunes have been magnified, and our success diminished by the partial optics through which they were presented to our view. Could we have entered into his disappointments and compared them with our own, we could have discovered but two solitary instances of reverse, of which we could have complained, the first in the surrender of Detroit, and the second in that of sacking the capital. These were our principal misfortunes. On the other hand, the defence of Plattsburgh was highly spirited, brilliant and complete. The discomfiture of the enemy was great, his retreat precipitate and disastrous, for the gallant Macomb pursued him hard by and poured a galling fire on his rear.

“ He came forth with the strength of his people, but they met a rock : Fingal stood unmoved, broken they rolled back from his side, nor did they roll in safety, the spear of the hero pursued their flight.”

The vandal expedition of Amdiral Cockburn on the Chesapeake, will long execrate his memory in the annals of civilized warfare, and stigmatize the valor of British arms in the eyes of remote posterity. His prowess and personal courage were signalized, and the valor of his troops distinguished, by plundering and laying waste the unprotected

villages and farms that skirted the margin of the bay. As an eagle upon his prey, so he pounced upon the humble villages of Hampton and Havre-de-Grace, and there he perpetrated scenes of woe, "the like of which no eye hath seen, no ear hath heard, and which no tongue can adequately tell." But the noon-tide of victory was yet to come, a military exploit destined to immortalize a Jackson, the favorite son of Carolina, and the Leonidas of America, lingered in the womb of futurity! The most renowned exploits of an Alexander, a Cæsar or even a Bonaparte, are totally eclipsed by the superior splendor of his triumph at New-Orleans. None can exceed and but few will bear a comparison with it: Gibraltar itself, the strongest fortress ever besieged in Europe, does not surpass it. Who would have dared to conjecture, that such a formidable band of veterans, the chosen legions of the invincibles of Wellington, commanded by so gallant an officer as a Pakenham, could have been beaten by *half* their number of raw militia collected from the forests of Kentucky, Tennessee and Louisiana! But their defeat was disastereous, the supremacy of British valor was humbled, fell prostrate in open day, by honest citizens who felt and valued their independence, and have not, on this globe, that superior to whom they would look up with awe. Thus terminated the enemy's last demonstration upon our land. Disaster upon defeat marked his course, and should the same rude foe, again pollute our sacred shores with his unhallowed footsteps, may he find every plain a Marithon, and every defile a Thermopelœ. The Corsair of Algiers envying our growing prosperity and prompted by British duplicity, attacked our defenceless vessels, and loaded their unfortunate crews with the bonds

of servitude, to drag a miserable existence under the lash of despotism. The valor of these renowned freebooters has long been connected with the romantic exploits of chivalry, and is associated with our earliest national recollections. It is a proud recollection that we have, in our national infancy humbled those proud barbarians, that have long been the terror of the Mediterranean, and the scourge of the christian name. To the gallant navy, which first desolved the enchantment of British superiority, are we indebted for our emancipation from the Algerine powers, and for this, among other benefits, are we indebted, to a race of officers, who seemed to be conscious, that whatever other men might be, *they* could not be more than their equals. In contemplating the gallant acts performed by our small force, conducted as it was, with characteristic promptness and energy, we are called upon to compare it with what was done by the most powerful monarch of Europe, and the comparison is a subject of honest exultation. Perhaps, to assume a superiority over those mighty potentates, who occupy so large a space in modern history, may be called boasting. Be it so. It is by performing such deeds that nations become illustrious, and it is by speaking of them as they ought, that courage and enterprise meet their reward, and emulation is awakened from its slumbers. The pride of our hearts is gratified with the knowledge, that while the Corsairs laughed at the demands of a superior European fleet, they sunk before the energy of a republican commodore, and gave up what they never before yielded to any nation. In addition to this, both our pride and our humanity are so- laced with the conviction, that our ships of war enobled as they are, by many other trophies, have,

by the late treaty with Algiers, become a *sanctuary*, not like the Catholic and Mahometan churches, for robbers and assassins, but for the oppressed christian slaves of all nations. The bloody sword of war is now sheathed, and peace hath descended from Heaven, mild as "the moon-beam on the spere of Ossian." The virtues and the graces attend her on the shores of the Atlantic, even on the Allegany, and on the great waters of the Mississippi; the rural nymphs and sylvan deities pay her the homage of their warm adoration. The genius of liberty, the guardian Angel of our rights conducted our arms, secured our independence, and taught us, that union and freedom and virtue, alone, shall elevate our republic to honor and glory and happiness. The blessings of liberty, again smile upon our land, agriculture now sits rejoicing under the shadow of its own bower, fearless of the corrosive tooth of the canker-worm, for it is guarded by the circumspective eye of cultivation, which, like "the flaming sword of the cherubim" prevails and secures its blessings. Commerce hath, also, hoisted her canvass and pointed her needle! spread her flag and extended her commissions to every quarter of the globe, such are the rewards of valor, such the blessings of peace and of a free government.

In the midst of our dangerous struggles, delusion barbed its arrows with the poison of party spirit, and walked forth under the guise of patriotism to trample down our dearest rights, and dissolve our union; but our political ship has beat through the storm, outrode the current and whirlpool of disunion, and now in the haven of prosperous security, rides at anchor, in the full tide of national honor and prosperity. It was war, rude war, that

thus denationalized our nature, and directed the hand of the child to the heart of the parent, patriotism veiled her face and wept over the impending disaster. But cruel war has now ceased, and it is our privilege to celebrate the blessings of our independence and prowess of our arms. The grim fiend no longer brandishes his iron ceptre over our land, which trembled and was greatly convulsed beneath the monster's rod. With anxious solicitude we cast an eager eye to our oppressed sister in the south, peace hath deserted her golden regions, nor has liberty yet smiled upon her borders, she is not yet seen to hover over the lofty cliffs of Andes, nor has she yet planted her olive on the margin of the Orinoco. From the extremities of Cape Horn to the borders of Louisiana, she seeks for an asylum whereon to plant her standard, but she finds her altars abandoned, and her temples filled with continual commotions of despotic power, not a vestige is yet to be found whereon to discover her delightful abode. But thou, my country, hast taken her in thine arms, as the daughter of thy bosom, here is her delightful abode, and here a people capable of performing her divine honors. Here she hath erected her triumphal arch, and here sits surrounded with the affections of a whole nation! While hill and dale, cloathed in rich luxuriance, "laugh and sing" amid the multiplied joys of nature. To perpetuate those blessings resulting from her influence, and to estimate them as patriots and citizens, the first and strongest pillar of support, is the virtue and intelligence of the people. Constitutions may be formed, but in vain, if the morals of the people be corrupt, if self interest predominate over the love of country, and vice and licentiousness usurp the place of religion. A free people will ever be

studious of cultivating knowledge and morality. Like the soil which is rendered fertile by its own productions, free countries, the native clime of the liberal arts and sciences, are cherished and supported by their generative power. Between morality and religion there is an intimate and necessary connection, without their combined influence a representative government cannot exist. If, by necessity, the people be driven to vindicate their rights, their situation becomes alarming. When remonstrance fail, the sword must decide the contest, and civil wars, pregnant with the worst calamities of human life, will convulse the bosom of our country. Freedom of opinion is necessary to knowledge and morality, an unrestrained communication of opinions, and discussion of public sentiment, is the scourge of tyrants, and the strongest pillar of republicanism. Let the mind be independent and the chains of slavery crumble into dust. In our happy country, the freedom of opinion, both in civil and religious concerns, is happily secured by our constitution. May the vengeance of an angry Heaven, and the popular indignation light upon the unprincipled wretch that shall dare to trample on so valuable a privilege! Let none presume to assert that our territory is too extensive, or our interest too dissimilar. A small territory is the seat of faction, when the malignant spirit of discord is prevalent, it pervades every section, infuses its poison into the bosom of families, and contaminates the whole. A government over an extensive country promises duration, permanency and stability, its views are enlarged as its territory; local interest affect not the mass of the community, and where one part becomes disordered there is sufficient vigor in the rest to restore the health of the

political body. National vigor is necessary, and let its example teach us the advantages of union. Never may it be recorded in history, that the posterity of a people who combined against despotism, and by their united efforts, shook off the yoke of tyranny, have become a divided and dismembered nation. Let us at all times, and upon all occasions be ever ready to defend and obey the sacred call of our country, let us evince to the world that we are resolved to live free or die, to transmit to our posterity the liberty acquired by our ancestors, and defended by ourselves, and so long as the Atlantic rolls, the Mississippi flows, or the Niagara thunders down its rocky precipice, so long shall the names of our heroes and their valorous deeds be united in the grateful remembrance of admiring posterity.