

PRONOUNCED AT SALEM,

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THE FOURTH DAY OF JULY, 1804;

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COMMEMORATION

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NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE.

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By JOSEPH STORY, Esc.

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Where LIBERTY dwells there is my Country. FRANKLIN.

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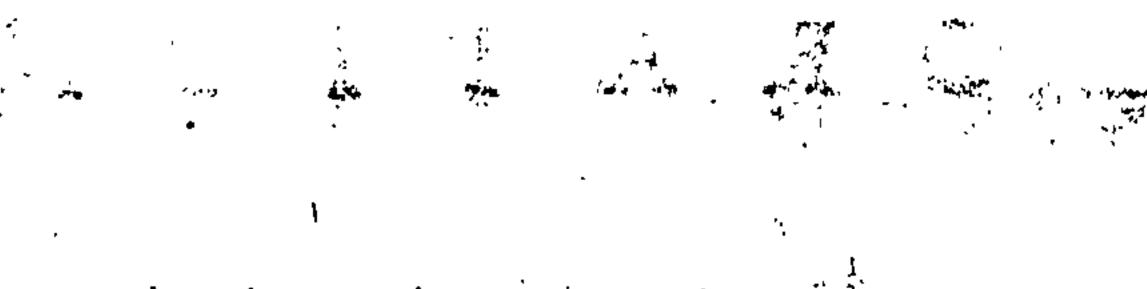
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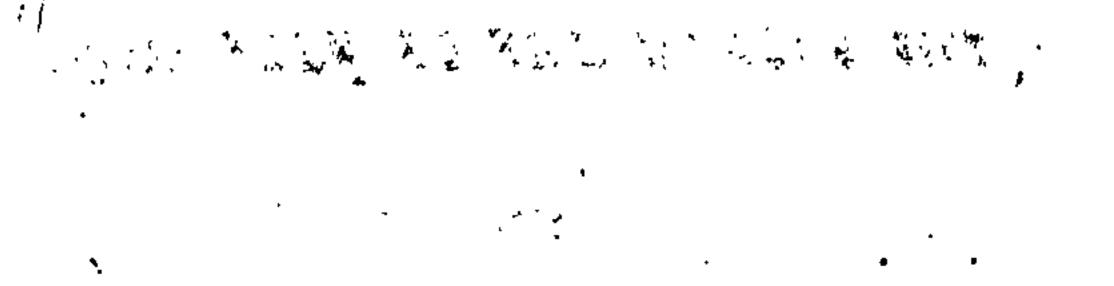
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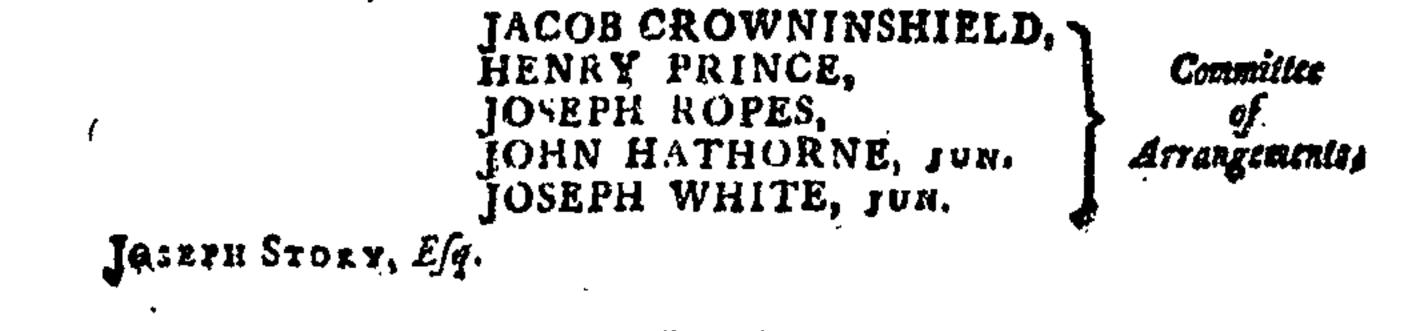
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Selen, 5th July, 1804.

DEAR SIR,

THE Committee of Arrangements return you thanks for your truly elegant Oration, delivered yesterday in commemoration of American Independence; and request a copy of the same for the press.

We are, Dear Sir, Your Friends, and Humble Servants,



Salem, July 6, 1804.

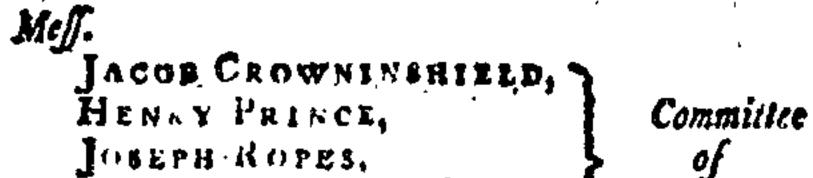
GENTLEMEN,

Your polite attention has my most grateful return. If the, part which I had the hear to perform, in commemoration of our Independence gave latistiction to my iriends, I am amply repaid. I submit the Oration to your disposal; and I trust that it will not be confidered an unmeaning spology to claim the cander of criticism for a composition which has been haiting written, under the preffure of business and ill health. Hith the highest respect,

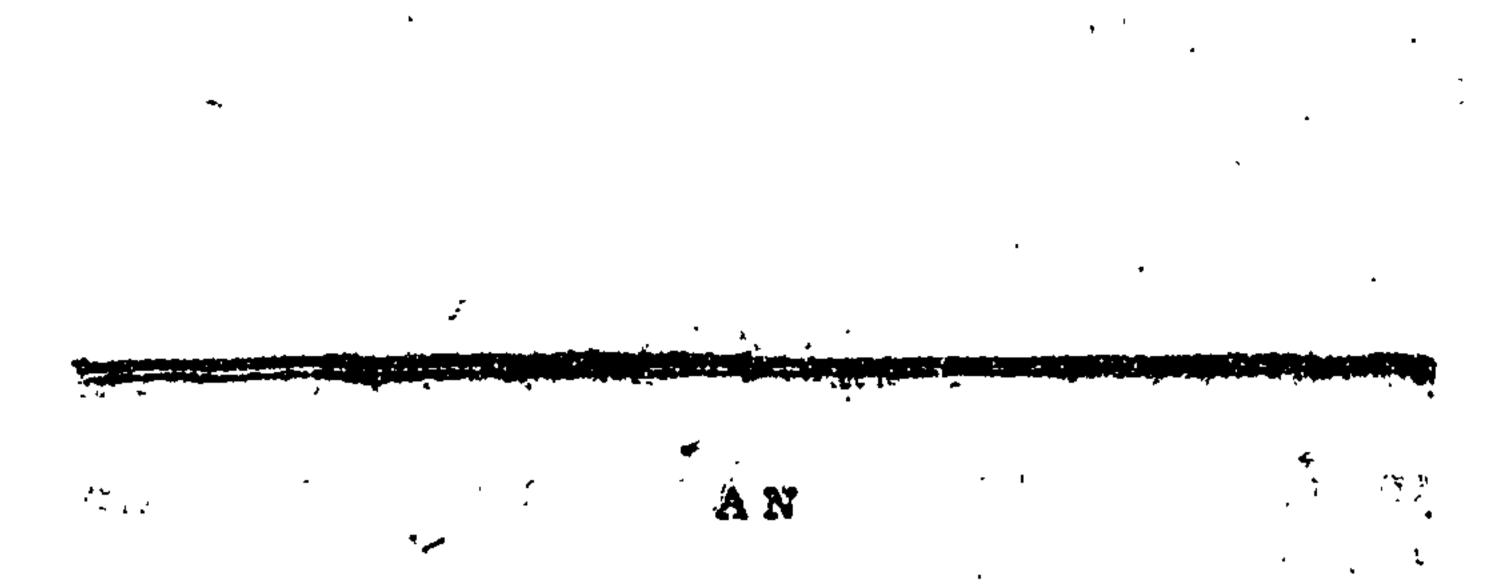
I have the horor to be,

Yow friend and humble fervant,

JOSEPH STORY.



JOHN HATHORNS, jun. Arrangements, JOAEPH WHITE, jun.



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FELLOW CITIZENS,

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HE celebration of national atchievements adds luftre to national character. It cherishes the spirit of emulation, and exalts the ardor of patriotism. It quickens into action every latent principle, and imbues the foul with the deepest coloring of national sentiment... Why has the Minstrel attuned his lyre to the toils of antient heroism? His flowing eloquence, his varied pathos, and his rich expression, have entranced the attention of ages, and drawn tears of delight from the favage and the fage. Greece has not alone fung the battles of her warriors and the splendor of her art. Rome has not alone touched the fympathies, by unfolding the enterprizes of her patriots. On the banks of the Danube the voice of victory has fwelled the festivity of the Vandal; and the music of the chiefs of other times yet echoes through the highlands of Caledonia. The tide of gratitude has flowed from fire to fon; and

the fpirit enkindled by valor has descended with the memory of its gallant deeds.

What more august occasion could have convened us together ! Other nations have celebrated the birth of a hero, or the apotheofis of a faint. We have anobler caufe for exultation... the triumph of Liberty. This day our count try has reached the twenty-ninth year of her fovcreignty and independence. It is worthy of the dignity of freemen to record in their annals the time of such admirable attainments. It is worthy of generous enthusias to immortalize the fpirit which purchased the invaluable inheritance. If it were not due to the honorable wounds of our patriots, it were the prudence of civil polity to embalm the narrative of events which fixed the fluctuating deftiny of ages, and eftablissed the rights of mankind on an imperishable basis. Deep in disgrace mußt they be funk, who behold, unmoved, the monuments of their fame decay, and fuffer the rank weeds of neglect to feed on the mouldering trophies of their valor. Such unalterable infamy belongs not

- to human nature but in its lowest degradation.
- Should the time ever arrive when the folemn appeal, which this day once witheffed, shall be viewed with indifference or difdain... when the

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fublime declaration, that America was free and fovereign, fhall be deprecated as a paroxifm of political madnefs...well may we weep over the ruins of our country...well may we exclaim, in the holinefs of claffic lamentation, *Hic Troja* fuit. The forms of Liberty may remain, but the foirit will be loft forever. The Ghoft of its departed excellence may moan and wander through our deferted capitol; but it will be an

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unreal mockery, "without a local habitation or a name."

Let no fear of fuch prophetic evils fully the pleafure of this affembly. The joy with which we celebrate this national jubilee, is an earnest of our future confistency. It pronounces to our fathers, that what their honor acquired, our intrepidity shall preferve ; what their blood purchased, our gratitude shall redeem ; what their wisdom reared as the temple of liberty, we will ornament and protect as the perfection of political architecture.

The causes which influenced, the principles, which guided, and the spirit, which executed the exploit, present glorious examples of virtue and perfeverance. They accomplished a change, at once unexpected and perplexing to the cabinets of Europe. They displayed the novel

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fpectacle of a province shaking from its feet the chains of foreign domination, and assuming the imperial purple; of a nation, rising in the majefty of youth, to encounter, confound, and enervate the counfels and the arms of organized authority. But this spirit, these principles, and these causes were not of momentary impulse. The experience of centuries had given them a maturity, which nothing could advance, and an energy, which nothing could result. / Perfecution had stimulated virtue; and virtue secured the triumph of valor.

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Our anceftors were truly the fons of enterprize. Having fled from the tyranny of religious intolerance, they fought in the uncultured wilds of America an afylum from oppression, and a heritage for their children. Nurfed in an adversity the most trying, at a time when the rights of confcience were established by inquisitorial edicts; when religious apostacy was decided by trials more abfurd than Gothic ordeals; when heretical convictions were enforced at the stake and the scaffold, with cruelties which might appal the heart of a Caligula, and arreft the purpose of a Suwarrow...nursed in such an adversity, they knew the full value of liberty, and liberally paid for the purchase. They efteemed conscience more than life; and unfet-

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tered poverty more than luxurious dependence. The pampered indulgence of floth was in their view no equivalent for inglorious fervitude. It was the bells and the trinkets of the African, which amufe his fancy, while they found his difgrace and fefter his finews. The land which they explored was indeed no Canaan flowing with milk and honey, to fweeten the repofe of wearied pilgrimage. The yell of the favage

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fwept frightful on the blafts of night; and the day star fickened at the desolation of the pestilence. Whom the tomahawk faved from its fury, the famine fmote with difeafe; whom the mercilels winter spared from destruction, funk under the hectic of fummer. But a courage, which like the principles which inspired it, knew no ruler but heaven, added perseverance to zeal, and fuccefs to perfeverance. The intrepid exiles gloried in their toils and fecured the transporting triumph of liberty. They eftablished rights, not on the piescription of antient usage; they established authorities, not merely on the chartered bounty of royal munificence; they established a nation, not by the gradual usurpation of aspiring vassals on feudal feignories...but they eftablished the whole on the legitimate basis of popular consent. No, Fellow Citizens, we were not like the convicts of Botany Bay, the planted colonies of domef- \mathbf{B}

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tic humanity; nor, like Ireland, the fraudulent conquest of a crafty enemy. We were not, like feudal Villains, attached to the demennes of a Lord ; nor descended, like an heirloom. the heavy appendage of an imperial crown. We grew by the firength of native vigor; we rose by the force of internal regularity, unfostered by foreign smiles and unaided by maternal protection until we became an object of jealous ambition. Like the oak of our own forefts we were born and nurtured in a fky, which never knew the blight of oppression, or the engraftment of despotism. The soil cultivated by the labor, and the rights advocated by the voice of our fathers, were equally our allodial and unincumbered inheritance. They mortgaged no fervices to prerogative, and they claimed no equity from regal justice. Whatever Britain gained over our fovereignty was the mere right of power over infant weaknefs; the filent though irrefiftible ties of a common origin, a common language, and a common fympathy. We submitted to her encroachments, because we were unable to resist them

we wore her fwathing bands, becaufe we wanted ftrength to burft them.

These circumstances ought to be well recollected in order to ascertain the nature of our revolutionary contest; and vindicate it to those

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who have not a scended to first principles. Without these confiderations we might be unjustly branded with the ignominy of a rebellion against the falutary discipline of parental authority. Miserable indeed would be the sophistry, and worthy of the dissoluteness of eastern fervility.—The ties of the political compact, have no analogy with natural affinity. The remorseles parricide under every pretext is indignantly banished from society. E opinion, that no infringement of national ribut, no exercife of despotic vengeance, no oppresfions of plundering cruelty, can justify a renunciation of fovereignty, is too abfurd, too monstrous, too destructive, for the adoption of reason or honor. The furious zeal of an mprefs who could murder her hufband, and the bloated ignorance of a Pope, who could anath. ematize a world, would shrink from a vindication of fuch atrocious doctrines. The grofs obelfance of the Rufs, and the indifcriminate appetite of the Ecclesiastic, would loath the unfeemly poifon. They might fwallow the dogma of transubstantiation; but no Jesuistry

could win from their confeiences, that political infallibility supercedes the laws of nature.

To the honor of Britain let it be remembered, that in her worst days this doctrine was never seriously assumed as the basis of her do-

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minion over us. It can be found only in the black lettered rubrics of monkish folly, or the debasing catechisms of modern policy, more wicked in purpose, than contemptible in character. To make way for the grand promulgation of it, conspiracies of political demoralization have been conjured up; prophesies of impending ruin industriously circulated, the misshapen notions of a few fanatics organized into the principles of a new philosophy; and in fine, the mangled skeleton of Illuminatism, dug from the bowels of Germany, to fill up the cauldron of forcery and brew the ominous witchcraft...But I pause from the pursuit. The doctrine of political infallibility is now quietly buried in the fame grave with papal iupremacy. Should any unholy charm raife it once more to " revisit the glymples of the moon," we trust the genius of liberty will exorcise the fiend, and lay it forever in the Red Sea of oblivion.

A half century has nearly elapsed lince the pride of Britain, unveiled and undisputed, first

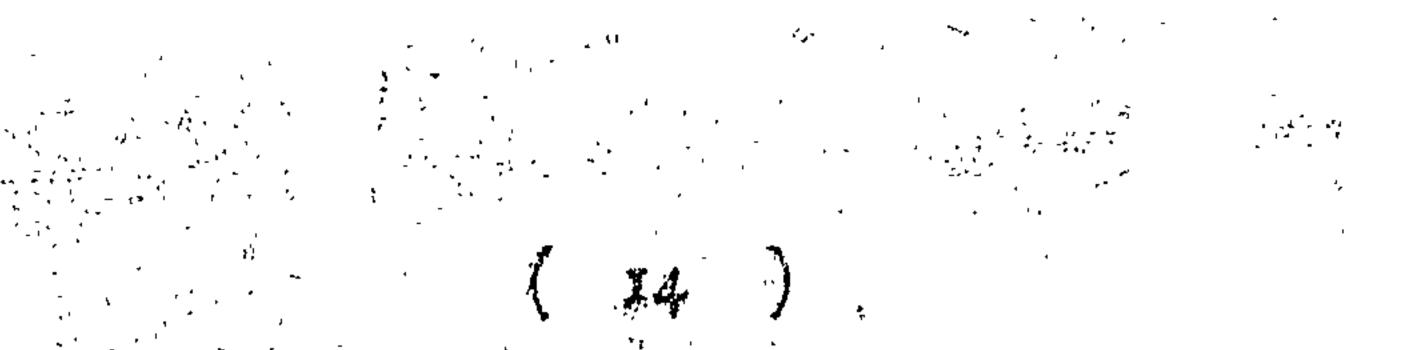
disclosed to our fathers, the extent of her arbitrary pretentions. It had been the prefcriptive rule of her conflitutional policy, confirmed by the charter of one monarch and ratified by parliamentary wildom on the abdication of another, that the right of Representation was co-

extensive with the right of taxation... that life, liberty, and property were controlable only by juries in the Courts of Law, or by peers in the Courts of Legislation. This was the darling birthright of Englishmen; softered with unequalled solicitude; felt and inculcated with catholic enthusiasm. It was bought by herces worthy of the acquisition, and descended to a posterity worthy to preferve it. It was the unalienable privilege for which Hampden bled, and Sidney suffered on the Scaffold. / If we were the subjects of England, this right was also our unquestionable inheritance; if we were not, we possessed it from the bounty of nature. Yet in defiance of all principle, in opposition to all authority, she boldly advanced the doctrine, which subjected us to the dependence of a province, and the assumptions of a conquest.

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The fpirit of America kindled at the infolent pretensions. She was governed by a mild, but inflexible policy.—In tranquility, like the Christian charity, pure, holy, gentle, easy of access, without partiality and without hypocrify. But roused to indignation, like Hercules, the role in the freshened energy of youth, and strangled the ferpents that usurped her cradle. To a mild petition for redress, an ambitious ministry returned an imperious, the ambiguous answer...to a modest statement of wrongs, they



replied with compulsatory edicits, poiloned with the bitternels of sarcasm...to a definitive remonstrance of reason, they retorted menacing accufations, which converted the bitternels of farcaim into the luftfulnefs of vengeance. The cup of reconciliation was drained to its very dregs... Our fathers faw that they must fink inthe tameness of flavery, or affert the dignity of freedom by the fword and the bayonet. The habits, the sympathies, and the affections of life, forced on their minds the former alternative. On one side they beheld a nation, gigantic in power, abundant in revenue, and elate with recent victory; with troops of hereditary valor, gallant in enterprize, and steady in discipline... On the other fide they beheld a country divided in councils, distracted by jealousies, and limited in refource; undisciplined for war, but unused to submission.-The fituation was fraught with perils. But life was the boon, and they exclaimed, with the generous Roman, " a day, an hour of virtuous Liberty, is worth a whole eternity of bondage." The awakening ardor electrized every heart; and furmounted every obstacle. The genius of our Country waved his banners in protection; and the 4th of July, 1776, witnessed the solemn appeal to the God of Armies, that America would be free, or perish in the effort. Sublime Determination! Glorious Resolve! It will remain

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an eternal monument of honor to the Heroes who conceived it...it will remain a fplendid example to lateft posterity of what a handful of brave men can effect, when supported by the energy of independence. The character of human nature never approaches so near to divinity, as when struggling to preferve the rights, and accomplish the falvation of mankind. Our

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Fathers merited fuccefs, and they obtained it. They fought; they bled; they triumphed.----From the perilous enterprizes of an eight years' war, they role to the full polleffion of the best gifts of heaven, civil and religious liberty.

Fain would I drop a veil over the conduct of Britain during this momentous contest of the spirit of reason against the spirit of domination. Would it were possible to blot her mercenary cruelties from the annals of our hiftory. But they must and will descend to future ages the difgraceful mementos of civilized barbarity. Let no one imagine that I think meanly of the British Character. / I honor a people, whose Conflication has been for ages a folitary instance of jurisprudence, founded on the acknowledged rights of man. I honor a people whole munificence has patronized the arts, and given the fciences a liberal refuge from papal opprellions. I honor a people who, in their laws and manners, in their valor and enterprize, have discov-

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ered a perfeverance and illumination, which have blended speculative wisdom with practical grandeur. I wish it were possible to honor the humanity of their martial atchievements, or the rectitude of their ambitious projects. Their lust for dominion has for centuries deluged the plains of Europe with blood, and disgraced the ocean with oppressive plunders. National justice has perished on the altar of pride, and even

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the fanctity of religion been prostituted to the support of ministerial crusades.

Moderation in resentment is not only the refinement of philosophy, but the dictate of na-The polluted jealousies of national rivalture. ry have too often sharpened the retaliations of cruelty, and stimulated the fury of the passions. The fatal projects of an EDWARD have unfortunately fettled an hereditary hatred in the Inhabitants on either fide of the English channel, which neither time, nor reason, nor generosity can subdue. But though as men we disdain to confult the indignation of accumulated wrongs; though as christians, we forgive the brutal revenge of our revolutionary foes, "we must remember fuch things were," and pass the wholesome lesson to posserity. Can we forget the time when, to glut this odious passion, our cities were wrapped in flames? our widows and children impaled on the bayonet? our wives and

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mothers exposed to the merciless ravisher, or lost in the fury of contending elements ?... Happy, thrice happy had it been, if but one CREus a had perified in the tempests ! Can we forget, that the tomahawk and the fcalping knife were not beneath the refearch of martial policy ? that the Indian warwhoop was the fignal for the execution of deeds, " which freeze the young blood and harrow up the foul?" Can we forget, that prison ships, more fure in their purpose, though less rapid in their fatality, than the black hole of Calcutta, were the loathfome abodes of thousands of our injured uncomplaining countrymen; who lingered for months in the agonies of corrupted horror. Death had been sweet to them; but it came not to relieve till emaciated pestilence had exhausted every feverity of torture. The affrighted Hudson " heard nightly plung'd beneath his fullen wave the frequent corse," till his waters thickened with the fhining pollution. To this very hour the shrieks of the unburied dead roll on the blast of midnight, and accuse the ungrateful neglect of their country. Can we forget these things? No...We will forgive them; but posterity shall learn, that a civilized nation in an enlightened age has not been ashamed to record her infamy by fuch fanguinary ftratagems.

While we mourn over these unfortunate vic-C tims, whole filent fortitude was denied its reward in the death of honor, let it fix in our hearts the mighty price of our political falvation. Shades of departed heroes 1 ye who fell in the fury of the battle, and ye who perifhed in the poifon of the prifon...ye have not died in vain 1 Sweet is the voice of your fame....The bleffings of nations have fwelled your requiems...the laurels of glory thicken on your fepulchres...the gratitude of Liberty immortalizes your memories. Your children fhall triumph in your deeds ; and by perpetuating the rights which you purchafed, fhall elevate the dignity of your atchievements, and brighten the fplendor of your renown !

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Lefs grateful is the tafk to trace the hiftory of later times, and mark the aberrations from revolutionary principles. Deeply is it to be regretted that any can be found, who, fubfervient to foreign influence, or fubtle in infidious purpofe, depreciate the rights which they enjoy, and ftain their anceftry by apoftacy and ingratitude. After fifteen years of the pureft civil liberty, protected by a conflitution admirable in defign, and beneficent in operation; after fifteen years, in which commerce has guided to our fhores the treafures of the eaft and weft, and the arts and fciences been cultivated with an enterprize unequalled in fuccefs, it would feem hardly poffible that any could be found fo

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loft to human dignity, as voluntarily to renounce these bleffings, and ask an asylum under the dangerous protection of royalty. But Americans are to learn that ambition, like Meffalina, thinks no prostitution beneath its boast, and no corruption beneath its communion.----Lassata, necdum satiata, recessit; wearied, bire never satisfied, it retires for a moment only to re-act its iniquities with renewed vigor. Terror and perfecution after exhausting Europe, have been destined to cross the Atlantic, and roam from Altamaha to St. Croix. The rich and the powerful have been dazzled with the magnificence of courts, and the blushing ensigns of nobility. The prudent and the good have been alarmed with the dangers of experiments, which seeming to set every thing afloat, might overwhelm them in their progrefs. The veil of the temple of Liberty has been rent in twain, and the very altars devoted to fanguinary accufations.

On every fide Republican inflitutions have been attacked. The quarrels and diffentions of revolutionary zeal have been artfully fomented and exaggerated. The order of defpotifm, a bloated carcafe of unweildy difeafe, calm only from want of life, has been dreffed in the robes of an Apega, though, like her, concealing in the ornaments of its bofom a poifoned dagger, it folds to corrupt, and embraces to deftroy....

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These events are not here recited to awaken indignation or extenuate error : they are recalled to your minds merely to shew that even innocence and virtue may become the deluded apologists of intolerance and crime.

Far be it from me to vindicate the atrocities which have fometimes difgraced the best of caufes. The accufations, the banifhments, and the favage perfidies which have crimfoned the Gallic annals, are deeply to be regretted by every friend of humanity and reason. They have left a stain on the altar of Liberty, which her vestal worshippers have scarcely washed away. But let those who have added the torch to the faggot, as well as confounded the principle with the action, let those respond to their consciences for the unholy horrors. I Let them weigh against revolutionary woes, the massacres cf Charles, the Siberia of Catharine, the cremations of Mary, and bloody perfecutions of Philip. Let them decide if the oppressions and cruelties of ten centuries could be too fiercely retaliated. Let them decide if these accumulated wrongs could be redreffed, but by the awful facrifice of the innocent with the guilty.----Alas ! the best cause cannot decompose the corrupt elements of ambition; the worst cannot extinguish every gleam of virtuous glory. But coubly guilty are those, who, to subserve the

