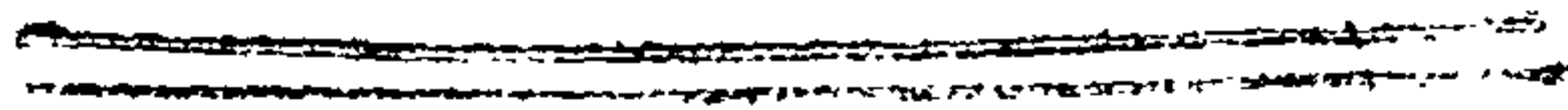


Mr. CLARK'S

ELECTION SERMON

MAY 30, 1781.



4.

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY

JOHN HANCOCK, Esq;
G O V E R N O R ;

H I S H O N O R

THOMAS CUSHING, Esq;
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR;

T H E H O N O R A B L E T H E

C O U N C I L ,

A N D T H E H O N O R A B L E T H E

S E N A T E

A N D

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
O F T H E
C O M M O N W E A L T H
O F

MASSACHUSETTS,

M A Y 30, 1781.

B E I N G T H E F I R S T D A Y O F

G E N E R A L E L E C T I O N ,

A F T E R T H E C O M M E N C E M E N T O F T H E
P R E S E N T C O N S T I T U T I O N ,

A N D

I N A U G U R A T I O N O F T H E N E W G O V E R N M E N T .

B Y **JONAS CLARK, A. M.**

P A S T O R O F T H E C H U R C H I N L I N C O L N .

N. B. Several passages omitted in the delivery of this
Discourse, are now inserted.

BOSTON, (Commonwealth of Massachusetts.)

P R I N T E D B Y J. G I L L I N C O U R T - S T R E E T , A N D
B. EDWARDS AND SONS, IN STATE-STREET.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In SENATE, *May 30, 1781.*

OR D E R E D, That *Walter Spooner, Samuel Adams,* and *Charles Turner,* Esquires, be and hereby are appointed a Committee to wait upon the Rev. Mr. JONAS CLARK, and return him the Thanks of the Senate for his Sermon delivered this Day before his Excellency the Governor, the Council and the General Court, and to request a Copy thereof for the Press.

Attest,

JOHN AVERY, Sec'y.

A N

ELECTION SERMON.

P S A L M XLVII. 8, 9.

—GOD sitteth upon the throne of his holiness:
*The Princes of the people are gathered
 together, even the people of the GOD of
 Abraham; for the Shields of the earth
 belong unto GOD: He is greatly exalted.*

AT what time, or upon what occasion,
 the Psalm before us was composed,
 is neither certain, nor easy, at this
 distance of time, to determine.—

“Many have supposed it to have been pen-
 ned, on occasion of bringing up the *Ark* to
Mount Zion.”—Others, “that it looks further,
 and is prophetick of the ascension of the *glo-*
rious Mediator, after he had finished his work
 on earth, and the setting up his kingdom in
 the world.”

B,

From

FROM the sentiments it contains, it might also be considered as a Psalm composed, and well adapted, for the congregation of *Israel*, when all the tribes came to *Hebron* to receive *David*, and by their *elders* to make a league with him, as their *chief magistrate*; and to establish him in the government. *a*

BUT, which, or whether either of these suppositions hath any solid foundation, must be left to the learned and judicious to determine.—Be the primary occasion, of this *devout composition*, what it may; it is beyond dispute, that the subjects of it are interesting and important:—Subjects well suited to inspire the church and people of GOD, at all times, with a sense of his government and their dependence, and of their indispensable obligations to celebrate the glories of his perfections, herein displayed, as the ground of their confidence and theme of their praise.

IN a word, it is an exhortation to *the people of GOD*, to praise the LORD, as “*The Great King over all the earth*,” who should *subdue the people*, their enemies and oppressors *under them*, and *the nations under their feet*: And as that GOD, who should *choose their inheritance for them*, and establish them in the quiet possession and enjoyment of it.

Agreeably,

a Vid. 2 Sam. 5. 3, 2, 3.

AGREEABLY, in confirmation of this their confidence, it is said, in the text—That *GOD sitteth upon the throne of his holiness: The Princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of the GOD of Abraham; for the Shields of the earth belong unto GOD: He is greatly exalted.*

IN these words, we have a striking representation,—a lively portrait of the happy state of a people, or nation, in covenant with GOD, and favoured with his protection and smiles; of a people established in the enjoyment of the blessings of a *civil government*, whose constitution is founded in principles of liberty and equity, whose laws are administered with justice and righteousness, and whose end is the glory of GOD, in the good of mankind. *The Great GOD*, as the sovereign, the supreme ruler, *sitting on the throne of his holiness*, with all the powers of government, originally and ultimately, vested in himself, and exercised by him, agreeable to the eternal laws of righteousness and equity.—*The Princes of the people*, their leaders, or delegates, *are gathered together*, from all parts of the land, in the name of their constituents, and under the direction and influence of their supreme ruler and sovereign, to consult the public weal, to enact laws and to transact the great affairs of the nation and of government. The people, the body of the nation, are there introduced, as *The people of the GOD of Abraham,*

Abraham, in covenant with him, and devoutly acknowledging their fealty to him, as their sovereign, and their dependence upon him and his blessing, both for counsel and defence. And in fine, that nothing might be wanting to compleat the view, we have *The Shields of the earth*, representing both the powers of government and the persons vested with them, exhibited, as *belonging to GOD*, religiously devoted to his service and glory, or under his direction and controul, to carry to effect the purposes of his benevolence and wisdom for the good of his people, or the designs of his justice and righteousness in the government of the world.—The whole is intended to show—‘That magistracy, or civil government, is of divine institution—‘That the end of it is the good of the governed—and ‘That, as all power and all authority are derived from him, the glory of all should redound to his name ; to the end, that *GOD*, who *sitteth on the throne might be greatly exalted.*

THAT GOD, who created and preserves, of right, doth govern the world, is a truth, which the light of nature teaches, which revelation confirms, and a truth, which the common sense of mankind in all ages, concurs to establish.

THAT the power, authority and sovereignty of GOD are absolute and uncontrollable is a truth justly deducible from the preceding, and equally indisputable. THE

THE sacred scriptures are far from being silent, or doubtful; upon a subject so fundamental, so important. We frequently find all the powers of moral government, in the highest sense, solemnly assumed by GOD, or devoutly ascribed unto him, in the divine oracles. Hence GOD is introduced by the holy prophet, as saying, "I am the LORD, and there is none else; there is no GOD besides me. I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the LORD do all these things." *a* "I will work, and who shall let it?" *b*—And to show the vanity of opposition to his government or authority, it is added,—“Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth: But wo to him that striveth with his maker.” *c*

AND what GOD hath thus justly assumed, is devoutly ascribed to him by his saints and people; and frequently mentioned as the ground of their confidence, as well as the reason of their submission.—At all times, yea, even in times of perplexity and darkness, it was the language of GOD's people—"The LORD reigneth, let the earth rejoice" *d*—"The LORD is our judge, the LORD is our law-giver, the LORD is our king; He will save us." *e* Holy *David* observes, that "the kingdom is the LORD's, and he is governor among the nations." *f* and to add no more, it is
said

a Isa^t. 45. 5, 7.
b Psa^m. 97. 1.

b Ibid. 45. 13
c Isa^t.

d Ibid. 45. 6.
f Psa^m. 22. 28.

said—That “The LORD sitteth King forever :” *a* And, that “His Kingdom ruleth over all.” *b*

IN this light considered, the Deity is to be acknowledged, as that GOD, whose power and authority are supreme, universal and uncontrollable.

IT is not, however, authority or power alone, that forms the character, or gives an idea of the great moral governor of the universe ; but this power, and this authority, as tempered with wisdom, goodness, justice, truth, faithfulness, and other moral perfections necessary to a government founded in equity, exercised in righteousness, glorious to himself and a blessing to his creatures.

IT would have been easy to an infinite being, to have carried to effect the purposes of his government, by the influences of his spirit, or the word of his power ; but, for wise reasons, the supreme Ruler hath been pleased to employ angels and men, as ministers in his kingdom ; and to render even second causes subservient to the great designs of his wisdom, justice and goodness, in the government of the world.

FOR the glory of GOD, and the preservation of order and communication of happiness

it

a Psal. 29, 10. *b* 103, 19.

it is both natural and rational to suppose, that government subsists among intelligent beings, of whatever rank, or degree in creation.

THIS conjecture is the more probable, with regard to the heavenly hosts, and those bright intelligencies, who inhabit the celestial abodes, and are favoured with the nearest approaches unto GOD, from the account the sacred oracles have given ; of the various names, orders and degrees subsisting among them ; as *Angels, Arch-angels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities* and *Powers.* a

SOMETHING of this kind, also, would, undoubtedly, have been advantageous, if not necessary, to have perfected the felicity of mankind, had they continued in a state of innocence and rectitude : And for the order, harmony and happiness of society and the world, it is reasonable to suppose, that rule and government would have taken place among men, however virtuous, benevolent, or just.

THE still greater importance of such an institution to the peace, liberty, safety and happiness of individuals, of society and the world of mankind, since sin, lust, passion, imperfection and every evil work have been introduced, needs neither time to consider, nor arguments to prove.

Were

a Col. 1. 16.

WERE there no civil government, laws, magistracy, nor *Shields of the earth*, for the preservation of peace, the guard of liberty, the protection of property and the defence of life, it is easy to see, and, without a spirit of prophecy, to foretell, what the event must be :—that anarchy, confusion, blood and slaughter, waste and destruction, would soon take place in the earth.—The weak would be devoured by the strong, the innocent, like *righteous Abel*, would become an easy prey to the vicious, abandoned and ambitious :—and the longest sword must quickly determine the fate of mankind.

HENCE it appears, I had almost said, to a demonstration, that, under GOD, the supreme ruler, this wise institution of *civil government*, this richest of temporal blessings to mankind, takes its rise from *Necessity*.

IT is true, reason teaches the propriety, convenience points out the advantages, and all the social affections concur to urge the importance of civil government. But however engaging or interesting these arguments might appear, to the wise, the benevolent, or judicious, they would be, at best, but a feeble support to the peace and order of society,—would never have availed to establish government, over the lawless lusts of vicious, aspiring, or blood-thirsty men.—It is *Necessity*, *Necessity alone*, which combines men in
society

society; and gives rise to civil government. And had not mankind been effectually convinced of *this necessity*, and taught to realize that there was no living without it, it is very much a doubt, whether ever such an institution would have taken place in the world.

THIS Necessity, in a great measure at least, is founded in and takes rise from the lusts, the corruptions and vices of mankind.

'Tis not indeed pretended, that any one man, or any number of men, have any natural right of superiority, or inherent claim of dominion, or governmental authority over any other man, or body of men.—All men, by nature, are *free, equal and independent*, in this matter. It is in compact—*in compact alone*, that all just government is founded.

THE first steps, in entering into society and toward the establishment of civil government among a people, is the forming, agreeing to, and ratifying an *original compact*, for the regulation of the State, describing and determining the mode, departments and powers of government, and the rights, privileges and duties of the subjects.

THIS should be done by the whole body of the people; or by princes, leaders, or delegates, by their choice, appointment, or consent.

B

THIS

THIS right in the people, whether emerging from a state of nature, or the yoke of oppression, is *an unalienable right*—a right which cannot be given up by a people, even though ever so much inclined to sell or sacrifice it.—Yea, should a people be so lost to themselves, as, upon any consideration, to give it up, it may justly be *re-claimed*, at least by the next generation, who cannot be supposed to be deprived of *their birth-right*, because their progenitors, like *E/au*, despised and parted with theirs.

WHILE the *social compact* subsists, the whole state, and all its members, are bound by it:—a sacred regard ought to be paid to it. No man, order, or body of men, in the state, have any right, power, or authority, to alter, change, or violate the social compact. Nor can any change, alteration, or amendment, be lawfully introduced, but by common consent. Any and every attempt of this kind, endangers the whole.

IT remains, however, with the community, state, or nation, as a public, *political body*, at any time, at pleasure, to change, alter, or even totally dissolve the constitution, and return to a state of nature, or to form anew, as to them shall seem meet.

THESE principles admitted, it is evident that no man, or body of men, however wise,
great

great or good ;—no state, nation, or power on earth, hath any right to make or impose a constitution of government upon another state or nation : Such a constitution, however free, is a *mark* of dependence, a *badge of slavery*, the most distant thought of which, the high spirit of a free people would justly despise.

EQUALITY and INDEPENDENCE are the *just claim*, the *indejeasible birth-right* of men ;—In a state of nature, as individuals ; in society, as states or nations.—Nothing short of these ever did, or ever will satisfy a man or a people, *truly free, truly brave*.

TRUE it is, a conquered nation is obliged to submit to the terms, the laws, the conqueror is pleased to impose : But this being matter of compulsion and not of choice, alters not the right. The claim to liberty and independence remains the same. When opportunity offers, and power is attained, it is, beyond dispute, the *duty*, as well as right, of such a people, of such a nation, to assert their *native liberty*, to shake off the *tyrant's yoke*, to maintain their equality and independence among the nations ; and either resume their former, or establish a new constitution of government, as they shall judge best.

UPON the whole, this is a right, the violation or infringement of which, upon any consideration whatever, no man can justify upon

the principles of reason, the laws of nature, or rules of equity.—Even God himself, the supreme ruler of the world, whose government is absolute and uncontrollable, hath ever paid a sacred attention to this *important right*, hath ever patronised this *interesting claim* in the sons of men.

THE only constitution of civil government that can plead its origin, as immediately from heaven, is, *The Theocracy of the Hebrews*. But even this form of government, though dictated by *infinite wisdom*, and wrote with the *finger of God*, was laid before his people for their consideration, and ratified, introduced and established by their common consent.

WHAT form of government will answer the best purposes to society, and most effectually display the glory of the supreme Ruler, in the good of mankind, is a question truly delicate and important; and a question, which, in the hand of a *masterly politician*, might admit of a discussion both interesting and entertaining. But as neither time, nor capacity, will permit me to enter largely into so high and critical a subject; it shall suffice to observe,—

THAT a little acquaintance with the world and the history of mankind, in the several ages past, will clearly decide, that no one constitution, or form of civil government, can be supposed to be equally adapted to answer the
best

best purposes of such an institution, in every society, nation or state.

THAT in the rise and progress of society, different modes of government have been adopted and introduced, at different stages and successive periods, cannot be doubted.—And whether there hath not been, in many instances, at least, a gradation in the modes of government, keeping pace with the progress of society, in the several ages of the world, similar to that gradation, which is easily observed in the several stages and periods of human life; is a question, with all deference, submitted to the candor and judgment of this respectable assembly.

AT first sight, indeed, this circumstance may not have been observed; nor can it be said to have been the case, without many exceptions. But, in an attentive review of the history of mankind, have we not seen, in various instances, a people emerging from a state of nature, and perhaps obscurity, with all the life, vigor, heat and zeal, as well as undisguised simplicity of youth, entering into society; and their pulse beating high for *liberty*, forming the *social compact* upon principles of *freedom*, and establishing a constitution *purely popular*—A form of *civil government*, in which every man considers himself a part of the authority, having a right to give his voice upon every law, measure, or public act of the state?

In a succeeding stage, have we not seen a people, perhaps the same, by gradual alterations and improvements, or by some thorough reform or revolution, like man arrived at mature age, for wisdom, firmness and strength, establishing *true liberty* and a *settled civil government*, upon the more *permanent basis* of a FREE COMMONWEALTH? And under this happy form, flourishing for ages, and in the unmolested enjoyment of the sweets of freedom and the blessings of government, rising to the height of strength and dignity, prosperity and glory?

MOREOVER, Have we not seen, at some distant period, this same society, state or nation, like man passed the meridian of life, and beginning to feel the infirmities of age approaching, by insinuating corruptions, by the influence of parties, the malevolence of factions, and frequent disorders, warned of its danger, and reduced to the necessity of strengthening the bands of society, and the powers of government, by a monarchical constitution; and putting the reins into the hands of a sovereign, with certain limitations, to guard, as much as may be, the liberty of the subject and freedom of the state?

In fine ;—Have we not seen, in the closing period, the same society, state, or nation, like man, in the decline of life, bowed with the infirmities of age and time, the constitution broken ;

broken ; the spirit of virtue, wisdom, liberty and firmness gone ; the *political body*, filled with vicious humours, attacked by painful diseases, rack'd with malignant disorders, which surpass the *political physician's* skill to heal or remedy ? In a word, convulsed to the very foundations, by internal oppressions and violences, by public tumults and commotions ; and divided and rent by the furious factions of wicked, designing, artful and ambitious men, tending to and ending in *blood-shed, slaughter and civil wars*, which nothing but the hand and sword of absolute power could restrain, quiet or controul—and thus prepared to be an easy prey to the *daring tyrant*, whose hand could seize, whose sword could secure it ! !

It is not, indeed, pretended, that this hath been statedly or literally the case, with nations that have entered into society, and established civil government in the world.—But whether, in the rise and progress of society, and the modes of government which have been adopted by mankind, something of this kind hath not appeared, in various instances ? And whether this, or some similar gradation in the constitutions of government, at the several periods and stages of society, are not natural and necessary, rational and just ; and, upon the whole, for the best,—is humbly submitted to the learned, the wise and judicious to consider.

CERTAIN

CERTAIN it is, that as different societies and states may require different modes of government; so the same societies or nations may require different constitutions, at distinct and distant periods and stages of their existence.

WHEN *Brutus* the Elder greatly dared to attempt a *radical revolution*, from an *arbitrary* to a *free* government, by the expulsion of the *Tarquins*, and the establishment of a *commonwealth* at *Rome*; the virtue of his fellow-citizens, seconded and supported him: And the glorious plan was carried to effect to the inexpressible joy of every friend to liberty, to his country and the rights of mankind.—But when, from the same *patriotic* principles, *Brutus* the Younger, by the death of *Julius Cæsar*, several ages afterwards, nobly attempted the deliverance of his country from the *shackles* of *tyranny*, and the *oppressor's* yoke; and to re-establish a free government; the virtue of his fellow-citizens failed him; and *Rome* was enslaved, never—never to enjoy the blessings of *liberty* or a *free government* more!—And this was *her choice*!—otherwise she would have roused, seconded and supported the arms and attempts of so faithful a friend and so valiant an *hero*, in the glorious cause of freedom and his country.

UPON the whole, the propriety or impropriety of this or that constitution or mode of government,

government, for this people or another, depends upon a variety of circumstances; such as character, situation, manners, customs, trade, connections, &c.—of which the people, are, or, most certainly, ought to be the best, if not the only competent judges.—And happy is that people, who, having the opportunity, have wisdom to discern and virtue to pursue their true interest, in a matter of so interesting a nature, and such lasting importance.

MYSTERIES in government, *secrets of state*,—those *Arcana Imperii*, by which the artful and ambitious have inflaved the greater part of mankind, are totally abhorrent to all principles of liberty, and naturally tend to sap the foundations of civil government, in a free commonwealth.

A people have an *unalienable* right to know the constitution they enjoy, the government they are under, the laws they are subject to, and what is justly expected and required of them as subjects.

NEXT to a good constitution, therefore, the *laws of the land* are the inheritance of the people.—All laws should bear a resemblance and carry the features, of the constitution; being deduced from its principles and founded in its maxims. And, if I may be allowed the expression, the laws should flow from the constitution, as the streams from a

fountain, and even *grow out of it*, as the tree from the root, or the branches from the stock.

It is also necessary to the well-being of society, that laws be adapted to the state and necessities of a people, and to the circumstances and exigencies of the community.

It is of no small importance to the liberty of the subject, as well as the support of governmental authority, in a free commonwealth, that laws be as few in number, and as plain, concise and expressive, in their form, as possible.

It hath been often said, 'The more laws, the less government.'—The institutions of *Lycurgus*, the great founder of civil government in *Sparta*, and the laws of *Solon*, the wise lawgiver of the *Athenians*, under the happy influence of which those states, from small beginnings, rose to the height of strength and glory, were few, plain, concise and expressive.

When laws become numerous, or voluminous, it indicates the decline of virtue, the weakness of government and increase of vice.—For laws, taking rise from necessity, hold up to view the vices, or crimes, they are intended to suppress, as the reason of their existence.—Several ages passed, in the republick of *Rome*, before any law existed

for

for the punishment of a *Parricide*; evidently taking for granted, either, that this crime had never been thought of, or that it was of so atrocious a nature, that no *Roman* could be so debased as ever to commit it.

I only add, that to render laws effectual, to the purposes of their existence, it hath ever been the care of the wisest legislators, especially in *free states*, to have such penalties annexed as are, not only apportioned to the malignity, but, as near as possible, expressive of the nature, of the crimes they are intended to punish, or suppress. *a*

BUT laws, however good in themselves, or wisely adapted to the state and necessities of a people, can be of but little advantage, unless duly observed and carried to effect. Hence the necessity of appointing certain persons to be rulers, of investing them with power and cloathing them with authority, to administer government, and carry the laws into execution. CIVIL

a Whether the multiplying sanguinary laws and capital punishments, in a state, can be justified upon the principles of equity, or even sound policy, is a question not unworthy the attention of wise legislators.—And whether punishing certain offenders, with loss of liberty, and hard labour, *at the oar*, or elsewhere, in some places of public resort, where they might be held up to view, as *spectacles of justice in terrorem*, for a certain term of years, or for life, according to the nature of their crimes, would not answer the ends of government & the purposes of civil society, better than even an *ignominious death*; is also, humbly submitted.

CIVIL government, duly established and organized, is fitly compared to a *Shield*, as it is instituted for the defence and protection of the subjects and the state. And hence rulers and magistrates, being vested and intrusted with the powers of government, are, with great propriety termed *Shields of the earth*, in the words of our text.—And as the powers of government give existence to the ruler, to the magistrate : So it is with rulers and magistrates to give life to the constitution and energy to the laws, by a faithful administration.

GOOD and faithful rulers are raised above their brethren, to places of honour, trust and authority, not for themselves, but for the people, and the good of society. They are intrusted with several powers of government, that individuals may be protected and defended in their life, liberty, property and rights—that the internal peace and order of society might be preserved ; and that the external defence, of the whole, against the encroachments, violence, assaults, or invasions of enemies, or oppressors, might effectually be provided for.

In this way, wise and faithful rulers are *Shields* to the state, and *Shields of the earth* ; as by this happy institution, under their administration, the wisdom and strength of the whole state, may, at any time, be collected in
defence

defence of the public, or of any part of the community, as occasion may require. And thus every member is engaged for the peace, safety and defence of the state; and the whole for the peace, safety and protection of every member: For these obligations are mutual, and equally sacred and binding.

IN this light considered, rulers, by accepting a seat or an office in government, are fitly said to pledge themselves, their faith and sacred honour, and that in the most solemn manner, to the people for their fidelity: and to them are they accountable.

BUT there is another argument, of yet higher importance, suggested in our text, which demands the attention of rulers of whatever station; and may not be passed over in silence.

It is said, in the words before us,— *the Shields of the earth belong unto GOD.*

CIVIL government, as hath been said, is of *divine institution*. GOD, as Supreme, *sitteth on the throne of his holiness*. All power, rule, or authority is derived from GOD. In the government of society, states and nations, men are employed to carry his purposes of wisdom and goodness to effect. And hence civil rulers are fitly stiled—“the ministers of

GOD.”

GOD"— And in the language of the text, it may be said, they *belong unto GOD*, in a peculiar manner, and in various respects.

'Tis GOD, by his spirit and providence, who qualifies, raiseth up and calls them forth to publick view, in places of honour, trust and importance, in the various departments of government.—Men indeed, may act freely in all their elections and appointments.—But after all, a divine agency attends them;— An all-superintending providence is religiously to be acknowledged.---“the lot” saith the wise man--- “the lot is cast into the lap : But the whole disposing thereof, is of the LORD.” ^b And in terms yet more nervous and expressive, the Psalmist tells us, that “promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south : But GOD is the judge. He putteth down one, and setteth up another.” ^c

CIVIL rulers *belong unto GOD*, as it is his power with which they are vested, in his name that they act, and by his authority that they administer government and discharge the duties of their several offices and departments, whether as supreme or subordinate.

CIVIL rulers *belong unto GOD*, as he hath explicitly directed them upon what principles, in what manner, and with what views they are to act in office and administer government.—

That

^a Rom. 13, 4.

^b Prov. 16, 33.

^c Psal. 75, 6.

That they are to *fear GOD—hate covetousness—shake their hands from bribes—to judge righteously—to be no respectors of persons in judgment—not to be afraid of the face of man; but always to realize, that the judgment is GOD's.* *a*

CIVIL rulers, the Shields of the earth, *belong unto the LORD, as the end of their administration is the glory of GOD, and that he might be greatly exalted, in the good of mankind.—Hence the apostle—He is the minister of GOD to thee for good.* *b*

IN fine; civil rulers, *the Shields of the earth, belong unto GOD, as they are under his immediate inspection, as they are accountable to him for the whole of their conduct, in this character, and as their reward is with him, "GOD standeth," saith the psalmist "in the congregation of the mighty: He judgeth among the GODS."* *c*

DEEPLY penetrated with a sense of the importance of these considerations, a good ruler hath the most engaging, as well as awakening, motives, to a faithful discharge of duty, and the most substantial arguments to support him, under the weight and care of government.

IT is, indeed, readily admitted, that rulers, in devoting their time, talents and capacities

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a Deut. 10. 17. &c. *b* Rom. 13. 4. *c* Psa. 82. 5.

to the service of the public; have a just claim to respect and support; and, in an upright discharge of their trust, they have a right, not only to a *pecuniary reward*, in proportion to the dignity of their stations, and importance of their services; but also to the grateful acceptance and cheerful approbation of an obliged people. And it is very happy indeed, for both rulers and people, when it may be truly said of persons in authority, as of *Mordecai*, of old—that “they are great among their fellow citizens, and accepted of the multitude of their brethren, seeking the wealth of their people, and speaking peace to all their seed.” *&*

BUT should faithful rulers fail of so just, as well as pleasing, a return, as hath sometimes been the case, they are not without support, encouragement, or reward.

THE fear of GOD, the sentiments of religion, the approbation of their own minds, the acceptance of their judge and the rewards of his kingdom, are sufficient to support them under every weight, and to excite them to fidelity and perseverance, under every discouragement.—Neither the frowns of the great, nor the flatteries of the multitude; nor yet, *the more pleasing charms of future promotion*, will ever be permitted to influence the measures, or direct the conduct of the *faithful ruler*, acting under the influence of those exal-

ted

ted sentiments, which religion inspires. But, realizing what he owes to God, and what his country may justly require, he is faithful to the one, and true to the other, even though the *Ostracism* of the *Athenians* should be
 E his

"The *Ostracism* makes a great figure in all the *Greek* history, and occurs frequently in that of the *Athenians*," among whom it is generally supposed to have had its rise.—This peculiar law was originally designed, as a guard to liberty; though sometimes abused, to the purposes of licentiousness and faction. "By this law men, eminent to such a degree, as to threaten the State with danger, were banished for ten years.—The method in which they proceeded to inflict the *Ostracism* was this: Every citizen took a piece of broken pot or shell, on which having wrote the name of the person he would have banished, he carried it to a certain place of the *forum*, which was inclosed with rails; then the magistrates began to count the number of the shells; for if they were less than six thousand, the vote did not take place; but if they surpassed that number, they laid every name apart, and the man whose name was found on the greatest number of shells was of course exiled for ten years."

This law speaks a people jealous of their liberty to an extreme.—For, however well intended; yet, through the craft of rivals in power, or the insidiousness of ambitious and popular men, this punishment sometimes fell upon the worthiest characters in the state. *Aristides*, by the wisdom of his councils, the firmness of his courage and the inflexibility of his integrity, at home, abroad, in peace and war, had proved himself an illustrious patriot, acquired the surname of *the just*, and obtained the character of the most worthy and virtuous of the *Athenians*.—But these very virtues and this high reputation, were as fully improved, by his rival *Themistocles*, as arguments against him, and to prove him a man dangerous to the state. "It may seem strange (say the writers of the universal history) that *Themistocles* could raise the popular resentment against a man amiable from peaceable virtues; yet he effected it by causing it to be whispered about, that

Aristides

his lot, and the fate of the noble *Pericles*. his reward. *a*

CONSCIOUS integrity is a solid support.—
A support, which the world can neither give
nor take away.—Like *Cato*, the virtuous
roman Senator, “to have done his duty,”—to
have approved himself to that God, *who sit-
teth on the throne of his holiness*, is more to
the good ruler, the *true Patriot*, than the
approbation or applause of united worlds.
With a serenity of mind, which no words
can

Aristides having assumed the name of *just*, and acting
frequently as an umpire between contending parties, had
insensibly erected a monarchy, though without pomp
or guards.—On a sudden, and when it was least ex-
pected, citizens and countrymen flocked to the *forums*
and demanded the *ostracism*—When the magistrates
signified to him, that the *ostracism* fell upon him, he
retired modestly out of the *forum*, and as he went
out, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, *I be-
seech the Gods, that the Athenians may never see that
day, which shall force them to remember Aristides!*—†
What an exalted spirit! What heroic sentiments!
What a divine example!—This is the good ruler—the
true Patriot—neither the ingratitude of his fellow
citizens, nor the unjust severity of his own cruel laws,
could remove his love from his country, or prevent
his prayers for the blessing of heaven upon an ungrate-
ful people, who, for his faithful services, had just ex-
cluded him the rights of society, and drove him into
banishment.

† vid. universal Hist. vol. 6. p. 377, 378, &c.

a Pericles, after many and eminent services rendered
to the state, in the course of a long and faithful ad-
ministration, was unjustly, as well as injudiciously,
dismissed, disgraced and fined by the *Athenians*; and
this at a time when his presence, council, and directi-
on were more needed than ever. Ibid. p. 443.

can express, such a ruler most cheerfully leaves it with heaven to estimate his fidelity and apportion the reward. His only request is that of pious *Nehemiah*, the faithful governor of *Judea*,—"Think upon me, O my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people." a

ANOTHER thing necessary to the ends of civil government, and to render it a blessing to subjects and a *Shield* to the state, is the concurrence of the people, with their rulers, in their faithful endeavours and unremitting exertions, for internal peace and external defence.

A sacred regard to the constitution, a cheerful obedience to the laws, and a reverend submission to the authority of those who are vested with the powers of government, are as much the duty of subjects, even in free states, as it is of rulers to be faithful to the trust reposed in them by the people. The obligations are mutually binding, equally indispensable, and equally necessary to the liberty, safety, prosperity and happiness of society.

THE best constitution, the wisest laws, and the most faithful rulers are all in vain to a perverse, restless, factious, remiss or disobedient people. If

a Neh. 5. 19.

IF a people violate the constitution, trample under foot the laws, cast contempt on authority and despise government; or fail, when lawfully required, to make those exertions for defence, which the exigencies of the state may demand; they must thank themselves, and not their rulers, for that ruin which threatens and will most certainly overtake them. In the language of the prophet, it may justly be said to such a people,—“thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee.” *a*

THE apostle *Paul* observes, “that the powers that be, are ordained of God”: And justly considers civil government as *an ordinance of GOD*. And that rulers are “the ministers of God”, to a people, “for good.” *b* From hence he concludes, that a people should acknowledge their authority and yield an obedient subjection:—And expressly says, *that they must needs be subject: not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.* *c*

THE subjection here enjoined is not absolute, or that *passive obedience and non-resistance*, so absurdly preached up, in the darker ages of the world: But that obedience and subjection to good and faithful rulers, which the social compact and the laws of the land require. And without this, government is at an end.

If

a Jer. 2. 19. *b* Vid. Rom. 13. *c* Ibid. ver. 5.

If rulers are not seconded and supported by the people, in the exercise of their authority, in the execution of the laws and the administration of government, their best attempts, their most upright endeavours will never avail to the purposes intended by such an institution.

It is with the people to add life to the constitution, energy to the laws, and dignity as well as strength to government: And that, both for internal peace, order and freedom, and external defence, against all who openly oppose, assault or invade the state.

IN a word, as by the social compact, the whole is engaged for the protection and defence of the life, liberty and property of each individual; so each individual owes all that he hath, even life itself, to the support, protection and defence of the whole, when the exigencies of the state require it. And no man, whether in authority or subordination, can justly excuse himself from any duty, service or exertions, in peace or war, that may be necessary for the publick peace, liberty, safety or defence, when lawfully and constitutionally called thereto.

As in the body natural, all the parts and members are necessary; and in their places severally concur to the health, strength and beauty of the whole: So in the body politick,

a well regulated state, a similar-adjustment takes place.—And as all parts and members are necessary : So in their place and use, they all concur to the health, safety and happiness of society ; and to the beauty, strength, glory and defence of the state.

WHEN the parts are disadjusted, the body is out of health, and the constitution in danger.—So in the body politic, if the parts are disadjusted, its health will be marred, its strength impaired and its constitution endangered. Thus when the legislative assumes and exercises the powers, by constitution, vested in the executive department ; the executive, those of the judicial ; or the judicial, those of the legislative ; or either of them : Then there is an evident disadjustment of the parts, in the body politick, which tends to confusion in society. jumble in government, danger to the constitution and destruction to the commonwealth. *a*

IT

a As far as human wisdom and foresight could avail, to prevent any thing of this kind, the people of this State have affirmed and declared it, as one of their important rights ; that “ in the government of this Commonwealth, the legislative department shall never exercise the executive and judicial powers, or either of them : The executive shall never exercise the legislative and judicial powers, or either of them : The judicial shall never exercise the legislative and executive powers, or either of them : To the end, it may be a government of LAWS, and not of MEN.” Great attention was paid to this inestimable right, in settling the departments and adjusting the powers of government, by
those

It is of the highest importance to the well being of society, that every man, that all the members should know their place, and the duties of their station, in the Commonwealth, whether in authority, or subordination : And every thing that tends to an alteration, or abridgment, of the powers of government, on the one hand, or of the rights of the people, on the other, should awaken the attention of both rulers and people, and put all upon their guard.

For instance : The compromise of *individuals*, the plans of a *junto*, the schemes of a *faction*, or the intrigues of a *court* for the disposal of offices or the obtaining elections, have a threatening aspect on the liberties of the people, the powers of government and the constitution itself. *Julius Caesar* would never, perhaps, have had it in his power, to have totally subverted the *republick* of *Rome*, usurp'd the government and seated himself on the *imperial throne*, had not his way thereto been paved and prepared, by the private compact and *artful compromise* between *Pompey the Great*, *Crassus* and himself, which formed.

those who assisted in framing our *New constitution*.— How far they succeeded in so difficult a work and so critical an attempt, the public will judge, and time and experience more fully discover.— At present, however, it must be allowed, that the prospect before us is not unpromising.

form'd the first *triumvirate*, that appeared in that great *Commonwealth*. a

IN all such cases, therefore, "*Obsta Principiis*", is a good maxim, and worthy the attention of all: And the first appearances of

Pompey and *Cæsar* were not yet at open enmity, nor profess'd rivals; but the *former* having taken various steps, which clearly indicated his ambitious views; the *latter* could not content himself with any thing short of the same supreme power to which his rival aspir'd. To accomplish the purpose of this ambition, *Cæsar* considered the consulship as an essential step. In order to his advancement to the consulship, as well as to effect his ultimate designs, *Cæsar* found it necessary to avail himself of the influence not only of *Crassus* his rich and powerful friend, but also of *Pompey* his rival; and to serve himself of both: And this gave rise to the *artful compromise* we have mentioned. In this remarkable compact, *Pompey* and *Crassus*, as well as *Cæsar*, had undoubtedly their views: But to adopt the words of celebrated historians, "*Cæsar's* management, upon this occasion, was a *master-piece* of policy, and the foundation of his future grandeur. The two citizens, who at this time made the greatest figure in the *republic*, without dispute, were *Pompey* and *Crassus*: but these two powerful citizens were declared enemies, and, all things considered, much upon a level. As they both had great interest, *Cæsar* plainly saw, that he could never obtain the consulship without gaining one or other of them to his cause; but the difficulty was, which to choose. If he clos'd with *Pompey*, he would meet with a strong opposition from *Crassus's* friends; and if he join'd *Crassus*, he was sure to have all *Pompey's* party against him. He therefore undertook to reconcile the two rivals, and by proposing to them a *triumvirate*, in which should be lodg'd all the authority of the senate and people, he prevail'd upon them to make up their differences, and enter into a strict friendship with each other. In order to make their confederacy the more indissoluble, they solemnly bound themselves, by mutual oaths and promises, to assist each other, and to suffer nothing to be undertaken or executed without the unanimous consent of all three.

of such baneful machinations should be beheld with abhorrence and check'd with severity, by all orders of men in a *free Commonwealth*, as they are friends to their country and wish to preserve the liberties of the people, the powers of government, or the rights of the constitution, inviolate to the State.

THIS precaution is always necessary.—It is more especially of importance when first entering into society; or when a radical revolution takes place, and a new form or constitution of government is introduced—Bad precedents are growing evils; and fatal consequences commonly attend them, if not seasonably checked and effectually crushed.

THE last thing which we shall mention, as necessary to the well-being of society and the happiness of a free state, is the cordial concurrence

F

currence

“ Thus was the first triumvirate formed, by which
 “ Rome became a prey to three men, who, by the interest
 “ of their united parties, arbitrarily disposed of all the
 “ dignities and employments in the commonwealth. The
 “ public were long strangers to the mysteries of this new
 “ cabal. Nothing more appeared to the senate than the
 “ reconciliation of Pompey and Crassus; and Caesar was
 “ congratulated by all ranks of men for having brought
 “ it about. Cato alone foresaw the evil consequences of
 “ this new alliance, and exclaimed against it, saying,
 “ That Rome had lost her liberty: but nobody hearkened
 “ to him till it was too late to follow his prudent coun-
 “ sel. This association subsisted to the death of Crassus,
 “ and was followed by the intire subversion of the *repub-*
 “ *lican state* ”

Vid. Univers. Hist. Vol. 13. p. 150, 158.

obedience of all orders of men, in authority and subordination, in a sacred regard to religion; in a devout acknowledgment of their dependance upon God, his providence and blessing, for all the benefits they expect to derive from a settled civil government.

This sentiment is evidently suggested in the words of our text.—*The people*, whose *princes* are here introduced as gathered together to consult for the common good, and transact the public affairs for the government and defence of the nation;—*The people*, whose rulers are here termed *shepherds of the earth*, and justly said to *belong unto GOD*; In a word, *the people*, in whose settled government and flourishing state, God, the supreme ruler, is said to be greatly exalted, are fitly stiled *the people of the GOD of Abraham*,—a people in covenant with God.—A people of his fear—of his praise.—A people deeply impressed with a sense of the Deity, his government and providence; and a people who cordially acknowledge their dependance upon him and their indispensable obligations to fear and obey him, and to preserve and exercise a sacred regard to his worship, and to the doctrines and duties of that holy religion, which he had taught by his word.

THE importance of religion and morality, and a devout acknowledgment of the government of heaven, to the support of order and government among men, and to the liberty, safety

safety and happiness of society, is what reason teaches, and what the common sense, as well as universal practice of ma-kind, in all ages and nations, concurs to confirm.

IN civilized nations, and where civil government hath been established, many cities and places of importance may be found without walls, without guards, and even without weapons or any preparations for common defence: But it is not easy to find any without, a *temple*, an *altar*, a *grove* or some other place appointed and appropriated to the purposes of religion, the acknowledgment of heaven, and the worship of the Deity, in some shape or other.

IN all the free states of *Greece* and the great *Republic of Rome*, the regard that was paid to the worship of the gods and the rites of religion, was constant, punctual and expensive; and in many instances, especially on great occasions, rose to the height of superstition. And no affair of importance to the liberty of the people, or the safety of the state, in peace or war, was undertaken, without a religious acknowledgment of their dependance upon heaven and the influence of the gods.

“ THE great CAMILLUS who was twice saluted ‘ The Deliverer of his country,’ to awaken in his fellow citizens a sense of the importance of religion, appealed to the *Romans* whether they ever had better success than

when they carefully served GOD, or worse than when they neglected him."

"XENOPHON very justly observes, 'That Cyrus, one of the best and greatest kings of Persia, laid the foundation of that powerful empire, not so much by his valour, as by his religious acknowledgment of heaven, and his liberality in the worship and service of GOD.'"

BUT to instance from a yet higher authority: Doth not the holy prophet of the LORD both reprove and exhort the king of Judah, in terms which clearly express the high importance of a sacred regard to the precepts of religion and morality, to the safety, happiness and flourishing state of a people, in that plain and faithful exhortation—*Did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice and judgment, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him: Was not this to know me? saith the LORD.**

WHEN the Supreme Ruler of the world gave notice to Moses, the great law-giver of the Hebrew nation, that the period of his administration was hastening, and the time near at hand, when he must quit the high station he held at the head of the commonwealth of Israel, for a more exalted seat of immortal glory

* Jer. 22. 15, 16.

ry in his kingdom above,—It is said, He called a solemn assembly of the people ; and having recapitulated the heads of the constitution God had given them, and rehearsed a summary of the statutes and precepts of the religion he had made known unto them, he closed his address, and took his leave of them, with this expressive and pathetic exhortation, saying, “ Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day : For it is not a vain thing for you ; because it is your life : And through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land whether ye go over *Jordan* to possess it.” *

THE truth is, religion, more especially as taught by the word of God, and enforced by the powerful arguments and engaging motives of the gospel of *Jesus Christ*, is the source of liberty, the soul of government and the life of a people.—Its doctrines are sublime, its precepts excellent, its motives persuasive and endearing, and its rewards rich, glorious and all divine.

RELIGION inspires the soul with the noblest sentiments, inflames the heart with the purest affections, and forms the man for every virtue,—for every service, which God or his country may either expect or require.

Its benevolent precepts are all contained in *love to GOD* and *love to man*. And where

* Deut. 33. 46 & 47.

this

this divine affection takes place, inspires the soul, warms the heart, influences the temper and governs the conduct; piety to God, and justice and charity to men, will mark, distinguish and dignify the character. And the same divine principle, penetrating the hearts of the various orders of men in society, and pervading the state, cannot fail producing the happiest effects.—Vice and immorality, wickedness and unrighteousness, in every form, in every character, will soon disappear: And justice, temperance, truth and love,—every virtue, every grace which adorns human nature, or tends to the peace and happiness of society, will quickly take their place,

UNDER the sacred energy of so god-like a principle, rulers will become *true patriots, real bene actors*; the people willing and obedient subjects: And all orders of men will most cheerfully concur in every measure which wisdom can dictate for the common good.

IN a word, religion among a people, in its power, purity and governing influence, is the guardian of liberty, the strength of government, the energy of laws, the band of society, and both the glory and defence of the state.

IN times of prosperity, a people, that have made God their fear, and religion their care, may rest assured of the establishment and continuance of their flourishing state.

IN times of perplexity, when dangers surround, oppressors threaten, or enemies invade, such a people have GOD for their refuge: And committing their cause unto him, in the way of well-doing, may humbly expect that light will arise in darknets, that the power of the oppressor shall be broken, that their enemies shall not prevail against them, and that GOD will maintain their right and their cause.

AT all times, under all circumstances, at home, abroad, in peace and war, such a people may safely & cheerfully leave all their concerns in the hands of GOD; and in filial confidence of his presence, protection and blessing, may say with the Psalmist—“The LORD is on my side, I will not fear: What can man do unto me?”* — *Happy is that people that is in such a case: Yea, happy is that people, whose GOD is the LORD.†*

IN the above representation, we have seen the fair side of the question: Government a blessing, and the *shields of the earth*, as they ought to be, employed for the good of mankind. But it may, notwithstanding, be justly said, that this is not always the case. And the question may still be asked—How, then, can it be asserted, “That the shields of the earth belong unto God?”

UPON this question it may be observed,—That it is admitted, that **THE SHIELDS OF**

* Psalm 118. 6. † 144. 15.

THE EARTH may be reversed.—The powers of government may be abused. Rulers, however promising at first, may become oppressors. Yea, this hath been too often the fact. But should this be the unhappy case; and, contrary to the just expectations of God and men, should *the shields of the earth* be reversed, and turned against those whom they were intended to defend, it alters not the truth or propriety of the assertion. “The shields of the earth still belong unto God:” and “the Lord still sitteth on the throne of his holiness.”

SUCH is the nature of the divine government, and such the wisdom of the Supreme Ruler, that good is brought out of evil. Even the oppressors of mankind are the servants of God; and their oppressions are so over-ruled as to be subservient to the designs of infinite wisdom and goodness, in the moral government of the world.

THE shields of the earth reversed, the powers of government abused, may be and are over-ruled in providence, so as to be productive of great good to society and mankind.

SUCH, indeed, is the *inertia* of mankind in general, that they are more prone to undue submission, than the contrary. Even a bad government is better than none, in the estimation of the greater part of the world. And
so

so great is the risque, the uncertainty and danger attending the attempt of a revolution, that it is not an easy matter to persuade a people, even under an undue exercise of power, to rise and resist. They will bear much, and long, before they can be brought to unite in such an attempt: but there are degrees of oppression beyond bearing; and which mankind, unless totally lost to all sentiments of liberty, and entirely broke to the yoke of slavery, will not submit to. And it is wise in God, and happy for a people, when the strides of oppression are permitted to be so great, and the violences of oppressors so hastily increased, as to rouse them effectually before it is too late.

OPPRESSORS are fitly called, "The rod of God's anger, and the staff in their hand is his indignation,"* They are wisely employed by the Supreme Ruler, to correct the errors, reprove the vices, and reform the disorders of societies, nations and states. They are more especially improved to rouse and restore the true spirit of liberty, when declining; and to bring on a total revolution, if necessary, to the preservation or restoration of so inestimable a blessing.

INSTANCES of this are too numerous and too well known, to admit of dispute.

As it was the afflicted state of God's people *Israel*, that moved him, in mercy, to send *Moses* to deliver them : so it was the oppressions of *Pharaoh* and the cruelty of the *task-masters*, that gave weight to his messages, and effectually roused them, in the face of every danger, to assert their freedom, and attempt their deliverance from the *Egyptian* yoke.

CHRISTENDOM would never have been roused, with firmness, to have attempted to free themselves from the *hierachy* of *Rome*, had not the oppressions of that power put them upon the expedient.

It was a long series of injuries, and intolerable oppressions and cruelties, which taught the *United States of Holland* to assert their native freedom, independence and sovereignty, against the power of *Spain*, then at the meridian of its strength and glory.

BRITONS would never have so frequently resisted their kings, and flown to arms in defence of their invaluable rights, had not the *iron rod* of oppression convinced them of the necessity of such strenuous exertions, to preserve and protract the remains of liberty among them.

It was the oppressor's hand, in church and state, which drove our *worthy ancestors* from their native land, in the face of every danger,

every distress, to seek a secure retreat for the unmolested enjoyment of *Liberty*, civil and religious, in the inhospitable wilds of *America*,

AND the same oppressive hand, which pursued and persecuted this *injured people* over the wide *Atlantic*, from time to time, in *lawless claims* upon their *rights* and *liberties*, under *God* and providence, hath been the means of preserving and transmitting that *glorious spirit* of *liberty*, for which the *Colonies of America* have been so illustrious, in the several periods of their existence.

AND, to add no more; a series of oppressive measures, and lawless claims of arbitrary power adopted and pursued by the Court of *Great-Britain*, in open violation of the most sacred *chartered rights*;—arms to enforce obedience;—and the power of the *British* legislature to “*make LAWS binding upon the Colonies, IN ALL CASES WHATSOEVER,*” being openly assumed and declared, roused and raised the spirit of *LIBERTY*, in the *FREE-BORN SONS* of *AMERICA*, to the highest pitch. And, no other alternative being left them, but the *SWORD* or *SLAVERY*; these Colonies hesitated not a moment, but unitedly declared their choice of the former: And **GREATLY DARED TO BE FREE!!!**

The important *Die* was cast; and the glorious *ERA* of *Liberty* commenced!—The

Sword of *violence* drawn; and the *innocent blood* of our brethren, slain at the opening of the interesting contest, was the *cement* of the *union*, and *jeal* of the *freedom* of these injured *American States* !*

ALL

• *Lexington* was the place in which a just God was pleased to permit *hostilities*. between *Great Britain* and *America*, to commence. The persons who *first fell victims* to the sword of the oppressor, and who were **PRO-TOMARTYRS** in the *glorious cause* of **LIBERTY** and their *country*, were inhabitants of the town; and it was my lot to be an *eye-witness* of that *horrid scene of bloodshed* and *slaughter* which opened the war!—To be an *eye witness* of the unprovoked, ungenerous and unjust assault, of about eight hundred *British* regular troops, upon fifty or sixty undisciplined *Americans*, who neither molested, nor had it in contemplation to oppose them, unless drove to it by the *Britons*, in defence of themselves, their rights and their country.———To see the *sword of violence* drawn, the **INNOCENT BLOOD** of our brethren *murderously* shed, and the *flames of war* bursting upon us, without notice, without provocation; when war was neither proclaimed, nor so much as professedly threatened: and this by a prince and nation which, for ages past, had sustained the character and gloried in the appellation of *The Parent State*:—By a nation, from whom we had a just right to look for protection and defence, against every *lawless invader*:—To see war commenced upon us by such a nation, so related for no other reason but because we were unwilling to give up our *most sacred rights*, as *free men* and a *free people*; and this too, with various circumstances of indignity and insult, was, and must have been, *affecting* and *distressing* indeed!—And the more so to us, a people, who, 'till these unhappy and impolitic measures—'till this unjust and barbarous war took place breathed loyalty to our sovereign, and the sincerest affection and respect for the Mother country. Language would fail to represent, and words to express, the feelings of a free, a brave, a generous, a loyal people, upon such an alarming occasion!—Nor can it be justly supposed, that any but those who have seen and felt the
shock,

ALL AMERICA heard the *alarm*, deeply felt the wound, and bravely rose to revenge their *brethren's blood*, and join the common cause !

To Heaven the appeal was made !—By Heaven, the claim was supported !—That God, who sitteth upon the throne of his holiness, the Governor

shock, can form an adequate idea of its real and interesting effects.

But however distressing, savage, or severe these barbarous measures of a *blood-thirsty* oppressor, might, at that time, appear to the inhabitants of *Lexington*, who were called by Providence to receive the shock—however unrighteous and cruel it might seem to the injured, the *free-born sons of America* ;—The hand of God and of Providence was in all these things. The wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Ruler should be devoutly acknowledged, as gloriously displayed, in over-ruling these acts of outrage, barbarity and murder, as the means of the greatest good to this injured and oppressed land.

This ungenerous, unjust and barbarous manner of opening the war, hath effected more, perhaps, in the cause of freedom and *America* than the wisdom and counsel of all the *American States*, or even *united worlds*, could have done. This ill timed severity and murderous cruelty of the *British troops* and the *British court*, have answered the most valuable purposes to the *American cause*—It confirmed the resolute, strengthened the weak, established the doubtful, encouraged the timid, gave a spring to the faint-hearted, roused the stupid, and silenced the perverse ; and happily produced that union of sentiment, and those exertions of power, in the noble contest, which no other measures, in human probability, would have ever effected. And to apply the expressive words of *Joseph* to his brethren, it may fitly be said—to the haughty *Britons*,—
“As for you, ye thought evil against us ; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive.” Gen. 50. 20.

Governor among the nations, *the Patron* of the *injured* and *oppressed*, hath plead our cause, and maintained our right to freedom, equality and independence : And given us a name among the nations of the earth.

THE wisdom of the counsels, the firmness of the resolutions, and the equity of the measures of the United States, *in Congress assembled* ; and in the states respectively :—The exertions that have been made, in the cause of liberty and of mankind ; and the success which hath attended :—The *Articles of Confederation* which have been formed and compleatly ratified, by *all the States*, as the basis of freedom and mutual support :—And the *glorious revolution*, that hath taken place in *America* ; as they do honour to human nature, and engage the attention of an admiring world ; being transmitted by the pen of the faithful historian, will be a subject of most pleasing contemplation, to all true lovers of liberty and the rights of mankind, in succeeding generations, to the end of time.

In the rise and progress of this interesting contest, the smiles of heaven have appeared, in the supplies afforded, in various instances, when needed most ; by captures from the enemy,*
the

* Witness the large ship taken from the enemy, by the brave Capt. *Musford*, in 1776, and sent into the port of *Boston*, laden chiefly with *Powder*, to the amount (if I mistake

the generosity of friends, and the kindness of strangers : And also in the generous support, and effectual assistance, of those powerful states, who, with a benevolence of spirit, and magnanimity of conduct, which does honour to themselves and mankind, have essentially favoured and patronized our cause.

THAT GOD, who girded Cyrus, of old, and called him *his shepherd*, to raise up his afflicted people, oppressed under the *Babylonish yoke*, and to restore them to their country, their religion, their liberties, † and their possessions, inspired

mis)take not) of about 1500 barrels ; and this at a time when we were in the most critical situation, for want of such a supply of that essential article.

Witness also several other large and valuable vessels, taken by our privateers, and sent into *Salem*, or elsewhere ; laden with *fire-arms, mortars, ordnance stores* of various kinds, cloathing, provisions, &c. &c — Articles necessary, useful, seasonable and important, to our military operations. — In these, and many other instances, the providence of God hath been apparent and wonderful, in the course of the war ; and ought to be gratefully remembered and devoutly acknowledged, by this people.

† Should it be said here, “ That the *Jews* were not restored to *their liberties*, by the decree of *Cyrus*, upon their return from *Babylon* ; but were still a *dependent people* ; and even *Tributaries* to the *Persian princes*.” — It might be answered, — ‘ That it is readily granted, the children of *Israel* were not restored to a state of *perfect freedom* and *independence*, by the decree of *Cyrus*, upon their return from *Babylon* to *Judea*.’ — It is acknowledged they were still dependant on the *Persian kings*. — Nor could they, in the situation and circumstances, in which they were at that time, have desired to be less dependent, upon that power-
ful

inspired the *King of France*, and the powerful nation under his government, from principles worthy the character of a great—a benevolent Prince,

ful court, than that generous decree of *Cyrus* made them — Just emerging from a long and distressing captivity, it is easy to believe, they were not in a capacity to support and defend themselves in their former independence; even tho' it had been granted them, in the fullest sense.—It was their safety and happiness, that God appointed *Cyrus* his and their shepherd, that under the wing of his patronage and protection, they might securely return to their country, take possession of their lands, rebuild their cities and the temple, restore the worship of God according to the *Levitical* institution; and re-establish their laws polity and government, agreeable to that divine constitution, which God had given to their fathers, by the hand of *Moses* — In short, the revolution, in the affairs of the *Hebrew* nation, which took place under this benevolent prince, and in consequence of the above mentioned decree, was a glorious revolution — A revolution, in and by which the people of God were redeemed from captivity & restored to their country, their possessions, and their laws, liberties and religion, in all their peculiarities; and to a greater degree of national freedom and independence, than ever they could have expected or promised themselves, in their late depressed, scattered, enslaved and captivated state. Agreeably we find not only the decree of *Cyrus*; but the several prophecies which have reference to it or to him as the deliverer of God's people; and even other eminent prophecies, concerning the return of the *Jews* from the *Babylonian* captivity, expressly representing their restoration, in general, as full and compleat; and without any let or draw-back. For further light and satisfaction upon this subject and question, vid. and comp. these following places and passages in scripture. *Ezra*. chap. 1, throughout. chap. 6. first part. *Isai* 44. 28. *Ibid* 45. 1—5, and 13. *Jerem*. 29. 10. and especially that illustrious prophecy, *Jerem*. 30. ch. 18, 19, 20 and 21 ver.

I only add, that, in my reference to *Cyrus*, and the prophecy concerning him, the judicious reader will easily see, that the main point in view, was not to illustrate the compleatness

Prince, and a wise and politick nation, early to favour the cause of these injured infant states : And finally to take a decided part, and make our cause there own, by a *public treaty*, both *generous* and *just*, and nobly founded in principles of *equality* and *independence*.

THE advantages resulting to the *United States of America*, from their happy alliance with so *puissant* a Prince and so powerful a nation, in the course of the war, are too many to be enumerated, too important to have escaped notice, and too well known to need a mention.

THE accession of the power of *Spain* to the common cause, brightens the prospect And the late addition of *the United States of Holland*, and, probably, of *Russia*, and all the powers of the *armed neutrality*, in consequence of the unjust measures and unheard of *outrages* of *Britain*, must, under GOD, give the clearest assurances of an happy issue ;

H and

pleasness, or degree, of that freedom and liberty, to which GOD's people were raised, by the kind, the generous and effectual interposition of *Cyrus*. for their redemption and restoration ; but the hand of GOD and the wisdom and goodness of his all superintending providence, in directing the measures, influencing the policy and over-ruling the conduct of men, princes and kings, of states and nations, and powers on earth, for the carrying the purposes of his benevolence, in the support and relief of an afflicted people, and the redemption and satisfaction of the injured and oppressed.

and of the compleat establishment of the freedom, independence and sovereignty, of the *United States of America* ; if we are not *criminally* wanting to ourselves.

AMIDST the convulsions, the ravage, bloodshed and distress that have attended the war ;—amidst the great and complicated exertions, we have been called to make, in this all-interesting contest, we have seen, to the glory of God and honor of *America*, a degree of internal peace, order and unanimity, far beyond what could have been expected, in a struggle of this nature, and in effecting a revolution so extensive and important.

IN a word, to the honor of God, who *sitteth upon the throne of his holiness*, as *Governor among the nations*, to the joy of *America*, to the disgrace of our enemies, and the astonishment of the world, we have seen these *infant states*, in the midst of the alarms and shocks of a distressing war, and in the face of every danger, rising from a state of dependence and obscurity, to a state of liberty, independence and sovereignty. And with a spirit of wisdom, firmness and resolution, which, perhaps, hath never been equalled, forming constitutions and establishing government, upon the basis of freedom and the solid foundations of justice and equity.

UNDER

UNDER the smiles of heaven upon this Commonwealth, in particular, have we not seen the social compact formed, and a constitution of government ratified, introduced and established, with a degree of unanimity, which could scarcely have been looked for, in a matter of so delicate a nature and such lasting importance?—A Constitution, which, for the solidity of its principles, the liberality of its sentiments, the importance of its rights, the wisdom of its arrangements, the propriety of its boundaries, the adaptedness of its institutions, and that spirit of liberty which inspires the whole, may justly *viz* with any other upon the continent, if not in the world.

UNDER this happy Constitution we have seen, to universal satisfaction, that blessed prophecy, concerning God's people, after their return from captivity, literally fulfilled unto us.—“*Their congregation shall be established before me :—their nobles shall be of themselves, and their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them.*” *a*

THE energy and happy effects of a Constitution, thus formed, ratified, introduced and administered, have been too clearly seen and too sensibly felt, by this grateful people, to admit of dispute, or even a doubt.

MAY

a Jeremiah 30, 21, 22.

MAY we not,—yea, rather, ought we not, upon this joyful occasion, in a deep sense of our obligations to heaven, to ascribe the glory of all to GOD, and devoutly acknowledge that *this is the LORD's doing*; it is *marvellous in our eyes*!—a

THIS day, which defuses the *smile of freedom*,—*the joy of liberty*, in the countenance of the *true Patriot*, of every friend to his country and mankind, is a fresh evidence of the care and benevolence of heaven to an injured people,—a new testimony that GOD hath not forsaken an oppressed land.

THIS day is great, as it is the first, on which we commemorate the goodness of GOD, the supreme ruler, in the blessings of a *settled government*, under a Constitution established on the purest principles of liberty and equity.

THIS day is great, as it is the first, appointed by the constitution, for the *stated* meeting of the Princes of this people,—the fathers of the Commonwealth, in General Court: And it is also great, as it commences an *ÆRA of Anniversaries*, for the same joyful purposes.—to commemorate and partake of the *blessings of LIBERTY* and a *FREE GOVERNMENT*, which (we trust in GOD) will last, but with time itself! !—

ON

ON this joyful day we are invited to see GOD, the supreme ruler, *on the throne of his holiness*, the saviour and defence of an afflicted land : “ The princes of the people of the GOD of *Abraham* gathered together” : And “ The Shields of the earth,” The rulers of every department, devoting themselves to the service of GOD and their country, in devout acknowledgment of his government, to the end, that GOD might *be greatly exalted*, in the good of his people, by their administration.

To add lustre to the joy of this day, we behold, *a second time* raised to the chief seat of government, in this Commonwealth, by the free suffrages of the people, a *Gentleman*, whose *patriotic principles* early engaged the attention of his fellow-citizens ;—whose uniformity of conduct, in the several offices he sustained, effectually gained their esteem ;—whose firm attachment to the liberties of his country, and determined resolution, at every risque and in the most trying times, to do all in his power to support them, established their confidence :—In a word, a *Gentleman*, whose disposition, ability and integrity, in the service of this and the *United States*, have been tried and approved ; and whose name is illustrious, both as *proscribed by Britain*, and as *authenticating that glorious act*, by which the *United States of America* are forever separated from her, and declared to be a *free and independent NATION*.

As this is the highest mark of esteem and confidence, in the power of an obliged people to give ; it cannot fail of being a support to His EXCELLENCY, under the weight and perplexing cares of government, and a pleasing inducement to those returns of attention and fidelity, in the duties of his high station, which they may justly expect.

WE are also happy, this day, in beholding the next seat of government filled with a *Gentleman*, whose amiable disposition, excellent qualifications, *patriotic* spirit, long experience and faithful services, in various departments, have endeared him to the people, and established a confidence in him, as worthy that exalted station, to which he is called by the general voice of the citizens of this free Commonwealth.

AND to compleat the gladness of our hearts upon this joyful occasion, we see the princes of the people, *the honorable, the members of the Senate and House of Representatives*, delegated by the suffrages of their brethren, from all parts of the state, *gathered together* and in General Court assembled, to consult the common good and transact the important affairs of government.—And, as the *first step* of importance, we behold these *princes of the people, these Shields of the earth*, in solemn assembly, in God's holy sanctuary, met, religiously to acknowledge their dependence upon
 GOD,

GOD, the supreme ruler, and devoutly to implore his presence, direction and blessing.— O may that *GOD, who sitteth on the throne of his holiness, who is the fountain of wisdom and Father of lights*;—even that GOD, whose ear is ever open to the sincere prayers of his people, send them his blessing and an answer of peace !

MAY the most high GOD take these SHIELDS of the earth, this day, under his immediate care and patronage, guidance and direction. May the spirit of GOD and of glory descend and rest upon his EXCELLEN-CY, his HONOUR, the *honorable, the Council, to be chosen, the Senate and the House of Representatives* : And may the divine presence and blessing attend them this day, and in all their councils, debates and governmental acts, through the whole course of the year. Thus may it appear to all this people, that the LORD hath directed their choice ; and that these *Shields of the earth*, these rulers of the people, do, indeed, *belong unto GOD*, are devoted to his service and instruments of his glory.

THAT plainness of speech which hath been adopted in the whole of this discourse, may well superceed the necessity of any particular application, by way of address.—The whole is intended as *an humble address to the fathers of this Commonwealth*, and to this respectable assembly.

assembly.—If any thing hath been suggested worthy attention, or adapted to the occasion, we trust in the candor of the assembly for a cordial reception. Whatever is of a different complexion, is not likely to be made better, by any thing further added, to render it more acceptable.

OUR *political fathers*, however, will permit me, with all deference, to observe,—

‘ THAT the elections of this day ; and which, agreeable to the *social compact*, are to take place, as the first business of the *General Court*, (however limited) are justly considered, as interesting and important.

WHEN we consider the importance of the *executive department*, to a due administration of government ;—The high rank of Counsellors ;—How much the power of the Chief Magistrate is limited by their advice, in the disposal of places, the appointment of officers, and other things interesting to the community—or the important influence they have in the administration of government, and the management of the great affairs of the Commonwealth ;—it should influence to the wisest use of that power of election, with which the honorable *Senators* and *Representatives*, by Constitution are vested.

Is the election limited?—Still there is a choice,—A choice, which made with wisdom and fidelity, may be of great utility to this Commonwealth;

It is no impeachment of the abilities, honor or integrity of any man, to suppose, that, in a body of wise, great and good men, there may be different talents and improvements, and distinct characters, that may have an opening for exercise, and shine with a peculiar lustre, in different departments of civil government.

WHAT these talents and characters are, how to be distinguished, in whom to be found, and where to be placed, for the purposes of government, and best good of the Commonwealth, is not for me to determine. But certain it is, these are questions of no small importance to the public good: And questions, to which our *honored civil fathers* will give that attention, which their interesting nature demands.

Not only to preserve, as distinct as possible, the several departments of government; that so they might be a mutual check upon each other; but also to give dignity to government and energy to the laws, as well as ease to administration, were evidently in view, by adopting this branch in the constitution: And it cannot be doubted, that, not only those

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who

who assisted in adjusting the constitution, but also the people at large promised themselves much from this *high department*.

THE election of counsellors, therefore, however limited, will always be justly considered as a *sacred deposit* in the hands of the General Assembly, of the highest importance to the liberty and safety, the peace and prosperity of this Commonwealth. And, with all deference, it may be said by the people, upon such an occasion, "We claim it as our right, That, among those who are returned for Counsellors and Senators, the persons best qualified to serve God and their country in that exalted department, be elected to *the council board*." And may God send a perfect lot!

THE foundations which have been so happily laid in our *new constitution*, are to be established: and, we trust, in the hands of wise and faithful rulers, and by a good administration they will be established for "THE FOUNDATIONS OF MANY GENERATIONS."

Much depends upon the steps that have been and are still to be taken, under this constitution: and to derive the benefits and blessings we promise ourselves and posterity from it, the greatest care should be taken, not only to preserve the constitution itself, in all its parts,

parts, sacred and inviolate ; but also, as much as possible to have the genuine spirit and principles of it inspiring the laws, and directing the exercise of the powers of government.

WE have seen, in the preceding discourse, a specimen of the importance of attention and fidelity in rulers, and something of the nature of the engaging and powerful motives hereunto : As also the glorious rewards which those are intitled to who are faithful and persevering in the discharge of the duties of their several offices and stations. And surely there never was a time when the calls of GOD, of providence and our country, to the practice of these virtues, were greater than the present.

MANY things, interesting in their nature, and important in their consequences, demand the attention of our *civil fathers*, in the several departments of government ; but especially in the *General Court* — Inattention and remissness are at all times inexcusable, in those who have accepted seats in government or places of trust and authority : And I need not observe, that at such a day as this, they must be *criminal* indeed ! The laws, distributive justice, the order and peace of society, the internal policy and government of the Commonwealth, and the trade and commerce of the land, are subjects which stately call for the care and attention of rulers and government. — The still wretched state of our *medium*, by which trade

is obstructed, the poor oppressed, the course of justice, in matters of property, retarded ; the community defrauded, the public faith and public credit perplexed, is truly affecting, and demands immediate consideration ; and if any thing within the limits of human wisdom and penetration can yet further be thought of, to remedy so great an evil, it is fervently hoped, it will not escape the notice of the General Court.

THE declining state of religion, morality and virtue ; and the great prevalence of vice and immorality, irreligion and profaneness, in almost every form, and in the various orders and ages of men ; it is humbly conceived, are subjects, not only important in themselves, but of the highest consequence to the well-being of society, and call aloud for the interposition of rulers, who are ordained of God to be *a terror to evil doers* and to *evil works*. In vain do the teachers of religion and even the *ambassadors of Christ* preach and teach the importance of religion, the excellence of virtue, and the necessity of morality, justice, temperance, truth or righteousness ; while vice, in its various forms, is winked at by authority, and iniquity established by law.

I WOULD not be understood, as supposing this to be our case ; but rather to express an earnest desire to prevent it, by those timely exertions which wisdom and policy, as well

as piety and godliness, teach us to make, for the glory of God and good of society.—And certain it is, that much depends upon those in authority, and much is expected, and much may be done by our *civil fathers*, by *well-judged* and *well-executed laws*, for the suppressing and punishing of vice and immorality, and the encouragement and support of religion and virtue.

BUT after all, it is by example, *a living example*, of justice and righteousness, temperance and chastity, faithfulness and integrity; and that glorious assemblage of christian graces and moral virtues, by which human nature is adorned, and society rendered happy, that rulers give energy to laws, effectually suppress vice in its various forms, encourage virtue, and introduce and promote a thorough reformation among a people.—Virtue in high stations shines with an increased lustre, hath an extensive influence, and sweetly attracts the attention and engages the imitation of all around.—But without this, reproofs are in vain, punishments ineffectual, and laws to little or no purpose.

IN a word, a want of attention to religion and virtue, in rulers or people, may blast our wisest counsels, sap the foundations of our most raised expectations and bring confusion on all our measures.

WITH grateful souls and thankfulness to heaven, we revere and admire the wisdom, the piety and policy of our *fore-fathers*, in the early and effectual care they took, even while weak-handed and yet in an infant state, for the good education of children and youth.—Laws, for the support of *grammar schools*, in the several towns, were made, established and *sacredly* regarded. *Colleges* were founded and endowed, and cheerfully and generously supported.—These institutions have been, for several generations, the sources of light, of knowledge, of literature, of liberty and religion ; and under GOD, the happy means of forming many worthy characters, for eminent usefulness, both in church and state. And to these institutions, we are not a little indebted for that knowledge to discern, that wisdom to state, and that spirit to defend our rights and liberties, civil and religious, for which the inhabitants of these States have been so justly celebrated, in the present contest ; and which have introduced and established that *glorious revolution* which hath taken place in *America*. May the present generation be impressed and inspired with the same excellent spirit ; and may it be encouraged and prevail, in those that succeed, to the end of time !

THE *University at Cambridge*, the *American academy* of arts and sciences, and all other institutions for the promoting of *literature*, are most fervently commended to the care and patronage of the *civil fathers* of this Commonwealth,

BUT

BUT it is not so much in the high attainments in science, to which *the learned few* may arrive, as in the diffusing *common and useful knowledge* in all orders of men, that the liberty and safety of a *free Commonwealth* consists. The *former* may flourish, and in fact have been encouraged, and carried to an eminent height of glory, in despotic states, while the latter hath been depressed; and even at the same time, that it hath been the ungenerous policy of persons in power, to frown upon, and artfully to discourage the means of common education, and to keep the multitude in the lowest state of ignorance, that thus they might be *fit tools* to carry to effect the purposes of oppression and arbitrary power; and be continued in a state of *slavery*, without ever knowing, either the loss of their *liberty*, or *their rights as men*.

It hath been said, ‘The law is the inheritance of the people.’—I wish to God, that multitudes of the people of this Commonwealth, had no reason to complain, that they have been abridged of a *precious* part of this inheritance, in that too general neglect and contempt, with which *the law*, for keeping *grammar SCHOOLS* in the several towns, hath been treated for a number of years past.—In the name of God, our country and posterity, it may be pertinently asked—What becomes of the *children of the poor*,—the *widow*, and *them that have no helper*, when so useful, so necessary

necessary a law is trampled under foot!—How can rulers be said to be *shields of the earth*, and to belong unto God, while authority is despised, and the laws evaded, dispensed with, or set aside with impunity?—In fine, may it not be asked, whether *more is not to be feared*, with regard to the liberties of a people, and the well-being, safety and prosperity of a free state, from the shameful neglect of the instruction of children and education of youth, in society, than from the sword of an enemy, or the power of an oppressor?*

RULES

* A number of other questions might have been pertinently asked here:—As:—What becomes of the *oaths* of *grand-jurors*, upon the question, ‘Whether their towns are provided with *grammar school-masters*, according to law?’—‘What *sort* of schools have been kept?’—‘What *kind* of masters have been, at least, *too often*, employed.—‘What the orders, the prayers, the means of instruction and education, in those schools are?’—‘Whether any schools, at all, have been kept, and how long, or what proportion of the year, in towns where the aforementioned law hath been evaded, dispensed with, or set aside?’ &c &c—The answer to these, or other questions upon this subject, I leave to those who know what belongs to *school education*, and to all candid, impartial, wise and judicious observers, to make.

Two things were, undoubtedly, in view, by our worthy ancestors, in the standing law for grammar-schools: Both tending to promote learning and knowledge in the community.—One was, ‘that towns being obliged, under certain penalties, to provide themselves with *well qualified grammar school-masters*, the people in general, the *poor*, as well as *rich*, might, without immediate personal expence, be provided with good means of instruction and education for their children.

The other was, that parents or friends, whose circumstances were not affluent, might be induced to encourage a *genius* and inclination for learning, in promising children

children

RULERS are stiled *shields of the earth*, as it more especially belongs to them, to look to the protection of society and provide the defence of the state.

STANDING armies are abhorrent to the first principles of freedom, and dangerous to the liberties of a free Commonwealth. The sword, in the hands of the free citizens, is the protection of society, and the safety and defence of a people truly brave, truly free.— May I be permitted to ask, whether the sword is in the hands of all the inhabitants of this Commonwealth?—Whether *all* the people have arms?—Or, whether, having arms, they are taught the *art-military*, and the use of their arms, so as to be effectually prepared to oppose an *invading enemy*, upon the *shortest notice*?*

K

T H A T

dren or youths, by giving them a liberal education; upon this pre-umption, that as soon as they had perfected their studies at *College*. and received the honors of an *academical* education; they might *immediately* support themselves, by engaging in schools:—An employment suitable to their character, honorable to themselves, and useful to society.—And I believe it may, with the greatest truth, be added, that this consideration hath often determined parents and others, to give their sons, or other promising youths, a public education; which otherwise they would not. And thus many a good scholar and worthy character, hath been introduced to public usefulness, in church or state, which, but for this law, must have been lost to the public, and remained in obscurity.

* Had I seen or known of the late excellent and well-adjusted *militia act*, before the writing and delivering this discourse, I should not, perhaps, have troubled the audi-

THAT GOD, who *sitteth upon the throne of his holiness*, in the rise, progress, and even unto the present state of the great contest, in which we are engaged, hath gloriously appeared for our help and support, in numberless instances. And it is not easy to suppose, nor is it agreeable to the general course of divine providence, that such beginnings,—such *goodly foundations*, as, at this day, are seen, in the *rising States of America*, should be crushed or overthrown.—But their deliverance, their freedom and independence may be greatly checked, and their rise, growth and glory, shamefully retarded, by the inattention or remissness of rulers, or the negligence and languor of the people.

HAD the glorious success of our arms at the Westward, and the surrender of General *Burgoyne* and his *whole army*, in the year 1777, been followed with spirited measures, and backed with those exertions, which wisdom and sound policy dictated, and which the *United States* were able to have made; we may rationally suppose, it might have gone far towards the reduction of the enemy and hastening a peace, upon terms of justice and equality.—How this success was improved, is not pleasing to remember!—May past omissions prove lessons of wisdom, for time to come.

THE

ence with these plain and interesting questions: every thing necessary to a well-regulated *militia*, being fully comprehended and provided for in the act.—I most sincerely wish it may be strictly observed,

THE present year is important, and seems to open upon us, big with the fate of *America*,—of *Europe*, and, perhaps of *the world of mankind*.—This is the *interesting crisis*, for which the enemy have waited, and to which they have looked, with anxious expectation, as the period for the success of their arms and the subjugation of *America*. And it is both natural and just to suppose, that this year *all* their strength, and *all* their rage, will be put forth, with the utmost energy of exertion.—May GOD ALMIGHTY defeat and disappoint them!!—But can we expect, if we are wanting to ourselves, or reluctant and negligent in making those strenuous exertions, to which we are so loudly called, by God and our country, that the desired success will attend?

To rouse all our attention; and give the spring to the noblest exertions, may we realize more deeply than ever, the *greatness* of the cause, and how much is depending upon its success. May we seriously contemplate the distresses of our *bleeding* country; and with all the feelings of humanity, call into view, the sufferings of our brethren in the hands of the enemy, and the ravage, the waste and destruction, which mark the steps of *British cruelty*, throughout the land, and now take place in the Southern States!—Above all, may we attend to the *voice* of our *brethren's BLOOD*, which cries for vengeance from

the ground!—To the MANES of our *slaughtered friends*, who first *fell a sacrifice* to the oppressor's rage, and suffered as MARTYRS in their country's cause!—To the MANES of all these *brave commanders* and ILLUSTRIOUS HEROES, who have nobly fought and nobly bled in its defence!—!

O MY fathers and brethen! ALL! All is yet at stake!—All may yet be lost, if we rise not, as one man, to the noble cause!—How inglorious must it be, for want of attention, for want of exertion, to ship-wreck in the harbour—to fail at last?—Where, then, the pleasing scenes of LIBERTY, INDEPENDENCE and SOVEREIGNTY, which we have promised ourselves?—Where the glorious foundations of FREEDOM and safety, which our CIVIL CONSTITUTIONS have laid?—And where the beautiful superstructure of government and laws, which has been erected upon them?—Alas!—They are dashed, they vanish, they are gone—lost! Forever lost!!!

BUT can this be the event? Shall this be the fatal end, the shameful issue of all the glorious exertions that have been made,—of all the bitter sufferings that have been endured—of all the *precious blood* that hath been shed? Is this possible? Can it ever once be? Forbid it RICHTEOUS HEAVEN! Forbid it, O MY COUNTRY! —————

— AMERICA

— *America rises, indignant, at the flaw with thought.*—Her FREE-BORN SONS are not so lost to the sentiments of liberty, the love of their country, or the feelings of humanity, as to bear the most distant idea of such a disgraceful end, to this glorious contest. Nor can they ever be so debased, as to retain a wish to survive the loss of liberty, or their country's *ruin*.—Much less to stand the tame spectators of the sacrifices, that (in such a case) must and will be made, of noble patriots, wise counsellors, faithful rulers, brave commanders, and illustrious heroes, and, in fine, of the best friends and best blood of AMERICA, by the AX or HALTER, to satiate the *rage* and glut the *malice* of a British conqueror! Or, perhaps, that which is still more affecting and degrading—to be doomed to waste away the remains of a wretched life in poverty, chains, slavery, or a cruel imprisonment!

THAT this hath been the end of civil wars, when the struggles for liberty have failed of success: And that such hath been the fate of those, whom conquering oppressors have been pleased to stigmatize, with the names of REBELS and TRAITORS, numberless instances in the most celebrated histories, abundantly prove.

'Tis after the war is closed, whether by conquest or submission, that the bitterest re-
venge

venge takes place ; and under the pretence of law, justice or necessity, it is then, that *the worthiest characters are sacrificed, the noblest patriots fall, and the richest blood of a nation flows.*

THIS was the case at *Rome*, and these the consequences that attended their *civil wars*, from time to time. This was especially so, in those between *Marius* and *Sylla*, by which that *great republic* was, for many years, convulsed to its foundations. In their turns, during the contest, both *Marius* and *Sylla* stained the streets of *Rome* with the blood of her most *venerable senators* and *worthiest citizens*. But the cruelty of *Sylla*, after he had conquered the party of *Marius*, and gained the summit of absolute power, over the whole commonwealth, was beyond the power of description, and I had almost said, of belief itself.*

WHEN

* To confirm the above representation, to show that it is not too high coloured, and to give a specimen of what a people may justly expect from a conquering TYRANT at the close of a civil war ; I beg leave to insert a passage or two from an authentic history of *Rome*.

“ The taking of *Prænestæ* and *Norba* put an end to the
 “ civil war in *Italy*. *Sylla* therefore, having placed in all
 “ the *Italian* provinces such governors as were intirely at
 “ his devotion, and pitched several little camps in different
 “ districts, to keep the country in awe, returned to *Rome*,
 “ which he entered at the head of his troops. The same
 “ day he assembled the people in the *Comitium*, and told
 “ them with an haughty air, that he had conquered ;
 “ but that those who had made him take up arms against
 “ his country, should expiate the blood they had made him
 “ shed,

WHEN, mad with loyalty, the British nation restored their flattering tyrant, Charles II. a scene of blood was opened, more affecting, perhaps, to the more judicious part of the people, than all that had appeared in the civil war.

Notwithstanding

“ shed, with their own. *I will not spare one*, said he, *who has*
 “ *borne arms against me. They shall all perish to a man.*
 “ These words, from a man who was absolute master of
 “ their lives & fortunes, made the most resolute tremble.
 “ They filled the whole city with dread and horror; and
 “ the consternation was doubled the next day, when they
 “ saw fixed up in all public places, a list of proscribed
 “ persons, containing the names of *forty senators* and *six-*
 “ *teen hundred knights*. If any man gave shelter to a
 “ person proscribed, though his son, his brother, or his
 “ father, death was the certain reward of his humanity;
 “ whereas the assassin was recompensed with two talents,
 “ though a slave had murdered his master, or a son his
 “ father.—The tyrant chose such agents to execute his
 “ decrees, as had even less pity than himself. The chief
 “ of those was the infamous *Cataline* ——— At the head
 “ of a band of assassins, he scoured the streets, and killed
 “ many knights and senators before they knew they were
 “ proscribed. The persons named in the list were sought
 “ for in their own houses, in the porticoes, and even in
 “ the temples; whence they were dragged to *Sylla*, and
 “ cruelly butchered in his presence.

“ The massacre was not confined to those named in
 “ the list. *Sylla* extended his revenge to all who had
 “ borne arms against him, of what rank soever, or condi-
 “ tion. Nay, his cruel agents took this opportunity to
 “ gratify their private revenge and avarice, confounding
 “ the most innocent and peaceable with the most guilty,
 “ out of some private grudge, or purely for the sake of
 “ their wealth and rich furniture. In short, the slaugh-
 “ ter was so dreadful, that *Sylla* was reproached with it
 “ even by his best friends. Among others, a young sena-
 “ tor, named *Caius Metellus*, ventured one day to ask
 “ him in full senate, when he designed to put a stop to
 “ the calamities of his fellow-citizens. *We do not inter-*
 “ *cede*

Notwithstanding the *exile-king* promised every thing to regain the throne ; and upon his return and restoration, made public proclamation of an act of *amnesty* or general pardon ; not only the *king's judges*, so called ; but many of

“ *cede*, said he, *for such as you have resolved to destroy ;*
 “ *but only desire you to free those from uneasiness, whom*
 “ *you have determined to save.* Sylla, without seeming
 “ to take this bold speech amiss, answered coolly, that he
 “ knew not yet whom he should save. Name to us then,
 “ replied Metellus, *those you are determined to destroy.*
 “ *That I will do,* answered Sylla, very smugly, and im-
 “ mediately caused a new list to be fixed up of *eighty ci-*
 “ *tizens*, whom he proscribed, most of them senators, and
 “ persons of great distinction. The next day he proscrib-
 “ ed *two hundred and twenty more*, and an equal num-
 “ ber the third. Among these was *Marcus Marius*, who
 “ was nearly related to the great *Marius* and highly fa-
 “ voured by the people.—He was seized by *Cataline*, and
 “ put to death, after having suffered the most exquisite
 “ torments tyranny could invent. He was whipped thro’
 “ all the streets of *Rome*, and, after this ignominious pu-
 “ nishment, carried beyond the *Tyber*, where by Sylla’s
 “ barbarous agents, his eyes were put out, his hands and
 “ ears cut off, his tongue torn out, all his joints dislocated,
 “ and his bones broken. One *Marcus Platorius*, being
 “ moved at such an affecting sight, could not help pitying
 “ the unfortunate young man ; which so offended Sylla,
 “ that he ordered him to be killed on the spot. And now
 “ after *nine thousand* senators, knights, and citizens had
 “ been inhumanly murdered by Sylla’s agents, he assem-
 “ bled the people, and told them, that he had proscribed
 “ as many as he could think of at present : and as for
 “ those he had forgot, they should be proscribed too, as
 “ soon as he could call them to his memory !”

This was the scene in the city of *Rome*—What awful havock, then, must the same measures of cruelty have made in the other cities and states of that great Commonwealth !—But no comment is necessary.

Vid. Univers. hist. vol. xiii. pag. 83, 84, &c.

of the worthiest characters were soon *attainted* and *proscribed*: And it was quickly found, that nothing short of the *best blood* of the nation, would be a sacrifice sufficient to appease his own resentment, or his *father's ghost*.

THE same, or perhaps, more affecting scenes will probably be opened in *America*, should we fail of success in the present contest; or should these *United States* be ever subdued by *arms*, or cajoled by *arts*, to a return and submission to *Britain*.—But this is an event, which (we firmly trust) will never take place.

UPON the whole: in our united counsels and exertions, we may yet hope, and even assure ourselves, that God who *who sitteth upon the throne of his holiness*, will behold our state, hear our prayers, and still *maintain our right* and *plead our cause*.—That he will hasten the period of our present distresses, and give us to see, in his own way and time, the liberty, independence, sovereignty and glory of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, established on a foundation that shall never be moved.

AND what a bright, what a glorious scene of liberty and felicity doth such an happy issue of this *great and interesting contest*, present to our view?—*America*, redeemed out of the hands of her enemies—the United States

States, delivered from the oppressors yoke; the secure retreat of injured innocence and the happy *asylum* of the oppressed and distressed. — The seat of justice and equity, of freedom and empire—extensive in trade and flourishing in commerce—abounding in riches and wealth—and illustrious in literature—in arts and sciences;—and, above all, glorious in the knowledge and practice of the pure and peaceful religion of our LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST:—And the *unborn millions* of succeeding ages, uniting in their grateful acknowledgments of praise and thanksgiving to GOD the supreme ruler, for that spirit of wisdom, liberty, patriotism and bravery, with which he was pleased to inspire the *patriots* and *heroes*; and even *the whole body of the people* of the present generation:—and, in fine —THIS PEOPLE, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, a name, a praise and a glory among the nations, throughout all generations, to the end of time.

THAT such may be the end, such the reward, and such the important and lasting effects, of this *great and glorious contest*, may GOD, of his infinite mercy, grant, through Jesus Christ, our LORD

A M E N,

ERRATA

PAGE 3, line 24, read, delegates. Ibid. line 31, read, are then. P. 10, l. 21, r. indangers. P. 14, l. 23, r. monarchical. P. 20, l. 18, r. with the several P. 26, note a. l. 2, r. faithful. P. 32, n. a l 6, r. the purposes of his ambition. P. 39, l. 12, r. cheartfully. P. 44, n. l. 24, r. so related, and for. P. 46, l. 2, r. hath pled. P. 47, n. l. 6, r. ordonance stores. P. 51, l. penult, r. grateful people. P. 52, bot. r. Psalm 118, 23. P. 63, l. 10, r. cheartfully. P. 65, l. 3, r. provide for.