



Mr. Bond's Oration.



ORATION,

DELIVERED AT HELLOWELL,

THE *FIFTH* DAY OF *JULY*, 1802,
(THE *FOURTH* BEING SUNDAY)

IN CELEBRATION OF THE ANNIVERSARY

OF

American Independence.

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BY THOMAS BOND, jun. A. B.

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1802.

HALLOWELL, JULY 6th, 1802.

SIR,

PERMIT us to offer our thanks for your compliance with the request of the Gentlemen of Hallowell, in pronouncing an Oration on the 5th instant, commemorative of the birth of our Nation, and to desire a copy of the same for the press.

*In behalf of the Committee of Arrangements of the
Town of Hallowell,*

NATHAN MOODY.

Mr. THOMAS BOND, jun.



JULY 6, 1802.

SIR

THE Oration, agreeably to the desire of the Committee of Arrangements, is submitted to their disposal, with an impression of its many imperfections. The author entertains a hope, should it ever be read, that it will be regarded with candor and indulgence.

THOMAS BOND, jun.

To Mr. NATHAN MOODY,

*In behalf of the Committee of Arrangements
of the Town of Hallowell.*

AN
ORATION.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS,

WE are assembled to celebrate the festival of our liberty ; to commemorate the origin of our nation. Memorable is that day, brilliant in the annals of freedom, when the voice of virtue, indignant at the wrongs she had suffered, announced the emancipation of a world ; the exaltation of a brave people to honor and independence. It is grateful to the just pride of Americans to retrace the steps which led to their revolution, wonderful in progress, in termination glorious and triumphant ; to contemplate the growing prosperity and dignity of their country ; and anticipate its future greatness and felicity. An employment like this, which animates the spirit of patriotism, and impresses on the mind a due estimation of our transcendent blessings, and the means of their preservation, is, on this occasion, peculiarly important and proper.

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The cruel aggressions of the British nation, her illegal and repeated attempts to fill the treasury of avarice, by exhausting the riches of industry, justly alarmed the apprehension and jealousy of her colonies. They remonstrated in language, energetic, but respectful, against the oppressive edicts of parliament. Averse to hazard the unknown consequences of war, unwilling to separate from the parent state, they adopted every mild expedient to secure their natural and civil rights. But expostulation was worse than vain, and argument served only to irritate masters, resolved on the ruin of their faithful subjects. The corrupt and rapacious ministry of England, guided by maxims of savage policy, determined to reduce our countrymen to unconditional servitude. America, fired with indignation, animated with the genuine spirit of liberty, arose in arms to defend her insulted rights.

The robes of peace were exchanged for the garments of war. Preparations for manly resistance were undertaken and prosecuted with energy and expedition. The people were impressed with the importance of repelling the earliest encroachments of despotism, and sensible of the necessity of breaking the chains of slavery, before they were fastened on the necks of a devoted nation. They had contemplated with deliberation all the possible

events of the approaching contest, and beheld nothing in war, terrible as it is, so distressful as abject submission to the domination of their enemies. The British king, in the proud language of an ancient monarch of Asia, commanded the Americans to surrender their arms; they returned the heroic answer of Leonidas, "come and take them." Unawed by the magnificent power of her enemies, undaunted by their threats, America boldly stood forth, resolved to maintain her rights, or perish in the noble cause. She had to contend with the greatest force on earth; with a nation, whose fleet sailed in triumph on the ocean; whose veteran armies inspired with dread the strongest in the old world. Mankind beheld, with a mixture of astonishment and admiration, an infant people opposing the gigantic strength of Britain. The grandeur and novelty of the spectacle was interesting beyond any thing recorded in the history of time. The friends of humanity wished for our success; but success appeared to them impossible. A host was embattled against us; men, correct in discipline, skilled in the art of war, of tried valor; commanded by officers conspicuous for bravery, address and experience. To these were opposed the hale and robust sons of freedom, accustomed to hardship, bold and resolute, firmly attached to the principles

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of civil and religious liberty, and exasperated beyond sufferance by the tyrannic measures of an imperious despot. This illustrious band of heroes was stigmatized with the name of cowards; every epithet of reproach and contempt, which language could furnish, was applied to provoke and insult them. But contemptible as our enemies esteemed them, they humbled in dust the arrogance of the British empire, vanquished the regular armies sent to subdue them, and exhibited this important lesson to the world, that millions are not able to subjugate a gallant people, fighting in the cause of freedom.

Our revolution was a warfare of the rights of man against the will of lawless power; of virtue against iniquity; the issue was the victory of justice over oppression. The flame of enthusiasm, which was kindled on the plains of Lexington, diffused itself with electric velocity, through the continent. A generous ardor to engage in the protection of our country, and every right, that man deems sacred and valuable, warmed and encouraged every virtuous bosom. Too numerous are the signal deeds of bravery, which were achieved in the course of the war, to be rehearsed. The high grounds of Charlestown will testify the undaunted courage, which repulsed the regular attacks of a

formidable enemy, and exalted the troops of America to the character of heroes. But America, though generally successful, was doomed to experience the disappointment and calamities of adverse fate. Before the brilliant exploit at Princeton, a dark cloud of misfortune obscured our hemisphere. Then was the crisis of the revolution. And this great and glorious enterprise, while it reflected high honor on its projector, revived the despondent spirits of our countrymen. It would be an invidious task to make partial mention of those illustrious characters, who fought the battles of the revolution. We remember the renowned heroes, who led our armies to the field of victory, whose blood was nobly shed for the happiness of posterity. And their companions in glory shall never be forgotten. Patriotism has erected monuments to their fame. Virtue has written their blessed names in bright and durable impressions on the affections of our hearts. Liberty has adorned her temple with their godlike figures. The champion of the revolution, the saviour and benefactor of his country, whose ashes are interred in the tomb, and whose divine spirit is translated to taste the bliss of saints, will forever command the applause and veneration of grateful freemen. What

a great, what an immortal character has he left behind ! His example is worthy all imitation. On comparison, every ancient and modern name is lost in obscurity. His fame shines with a pure and brilliant lustre. He redeemed you, under the auspices of God, from slavery. His wisdom constructed the beautiful columns of your national peace and prosperity. Does this country embrace in its bosom men, base enough to forget his exalted services, wicked enough to blacken the brightness of his reputation ? Truth blushes to record the fact.

We are now free from the stern power of Britain ; free from a nation, who oppressed and then took up arms to assert her unjust pretensions ; who marked her path with rapine and desolation ; who destroyed public and private property without necessity, or discrimination ; who delighted in the conflagration of dwellings of elegance ; who exulted at the sight of the wretched victims of her ferocity and revelled in the ruin of innocence and happiness. She invited the Indians to join her in the work of carnage ; and even these monsters of cruelty she excelled in the tortures, which she inflicted on our brave citizens. With savage complacency she enjoyed the agonies of the expiring captive. Our unfortunate countrymen, when taken, were consigned without compassion to the

disfmal recess of prison ships. Here they miserably perished for want of sustenance. But all these aggravated misfortunes are less than the burden of civil and religious evils, which we should have sustained under the corrupt and oppressive government of Britain. These sacrifices, great as they are, are a cheap purchase of the blessings of independence and freedom.

Americans, you have experienced the convulsions and terrors of war; you know the felicities of sovereignty and peace. Resolve by the venerable names of those, who fell in arms defending your liberties, and whose bones whiten your fields, that you never will submit again to foreign dominion. Let no weak jealousy divide, let no intrigue distract your nation. You are invincible. The world cannot conquer you.

After the storm of war was over, and the rainbow of peace set in the sky, a work of great magnitude and difficulty presented itself. We had no adequate system of government. A compact was framed and articles of confederation settled. But this form exhibited all the features of imperfection. It was void of that energy, which is requisite to controul the conflicting passions of man. It was not sufficient to regulate the various and opposite interests of an extensive and increas-

ing community. The nation sensible, that this weak ship was not competent to bear them in safety over the waves of public commotion, abandoned her without reluctance. In the congregation of sages a harmonious, free and benign constitution was erected ; composed of materials, proof against every thing but national corruption. Here many have supposed is the great defect. For they hold it a maxim in politics, that no people can long exist, who enjoy so large a portion of liberty. Let us demonstrate to the world, that we can live in order, without having a whip of scorpions brandished over our heads. Our constitution is designed for a community of virtuous, patriotic and enlightened citizens. Human wisdom cannot construct a system of government better adapted to the regulation and happiness of this description of men. The vital principle of all republics is integrity. Dissension is their mortal enemy. No government is so strong as this, in which the laws are obeyed from affection. None so unstable and contemptible, when ambition usurps the place of merit ; when offices of honor are conferred on the vicious ; when men and not laws assume authority.

But while we expatiate on the excellence of our national laws, and wish for their continuance and pure administration, faction rings the alarm and

discord waves her torch. Already has a wicked party, proud of authority, and irritated by the opposition of superior virtue and talents, boldly attempted to subvert the constitution ; to destroy this hallowed abode of liberty.

The judicial department, the guardian appointed to protect against executive and legislative ambition, to sit in judgment on our lives and property, has received a poisoned arrow from the hand of revenge. The unwise reduction of the national revenue, although it may occasion a temporary relief, will, in its consequences, embarrass the public and increase the burden of individual industry. The quantity of taxes, previous to their abolition, was no more than adequate to discharge the public debt in due season, and meet the expenses of the national government. Their apportionment was the best that could be made. In what does the economy of this party consist ? In a wasteful bestowment of what they save, on their favorite partisans. Why should I mention in detail the blunders and perverse measures of the ministry, when it is apparent to the world, that they intend to degrade the nation and arrest her in the career of prosperity ? Even their great chief does not hesitate to violate the constitution to gratify

his domestic and foreign friends. But the President, visionary man, claims our indulgence. His official conduct has displayed his true character; it has sunk him from the station of a philosopher and statesman to the low rank of vulgar fame. It is correspondent to the great plan settled for your moral and civil ruin, to depress the modest and virtuous, and exalt the profligate. Hence your national treasury, in contempt of the native talents of America, is filled by a foreign fugitive, whose manners are hostile to the genius of your government. Hence men of resplendent abilities and integrity are expelled from office to make place for unprincipled citizens of our own country.

But we trust there is yet too much virtue and intelligence in the community, to be long deceived by naked professions, when the deeds of these men speak their own condemnation. Those who declaim loudest on the subject of liberty are not always the best friends of the people. Watch this party. Their principles are baneful to the felicity of your nation; their administration has already shaken the foundation of government, and covered with disgrace the character of your republic. But the starless night of democracy is passing away, and the bright day of federalism fast returning.

Under the original administration of our government America advanced in prosperity and honor with a rapidity, beyond example. No people, in so short a period, ever attained so exalted a height of renown and happiness. The full enjoyment of the blessings of good government increased the attachment of every lover of virtue and regular liberty to his highly favored land. The maxims, upon which the federalists have acted, maxims founded in reason, must be materially pursued in the execution of public affairs, or our prosperity will decline, and we be involved in confusion and civil war. These facts ought to have been an admonition to the successors of the federal administration, not to depart from a system characterized by wisdom, and productive of such happy consequences. The spirit of innovation, which prevails, and has penetrated our public councils, must be discouraged and resisted by the sober reason of the nation, or the constitution will waste before it.

The frequent recurrence of election affords a safe corrective of the evils, which have already resulted. In using this high privilege, it becomes the friends of order and true liberty, to promote men of correct and firm political sentiments, of unswerving integrity and useful information.

The excessive indulgence of party spirit is ever hostile to republics, and after their ruin and destruction. It inflames the most malignant passions, perverts the judgment, and corrupts the moral feelings. It excites a tempest in society and gives wicked men an opportunity to rise on its violence. While it rages, honest characters are seen in the walks of retirement, and ambitious demagogues sway the bloody scepter. It sharpens the sword and points it against friends and kindred. It will ravage and desolate our fair land, if not controlled by the sound discretion of its citizens. To restrain its violence in private life is the duty of every man ; and those, who are invested with authority, are under solemn obligation to resist its influence on their official decisions. It is not to be expected, that a government elective and free as our own, will be totally exempt from the agitations and excesses of liberty. The commotions, which occasionally disturb the harmony of the public scene, are dangerous evils, but such, as freemen must suffer for their unequalled civil blessings. At this eventful crisis, it is all important to administer the general government with rectitude and fidelity, to execute its powers in such an honest manner, as to restore and strengthen the national union, which the collision of party has diminished. For if

faction should annihilate our great political character, we should have one in its place written with the sword, crimsoned in the blood of patriots. The union and friendly co-operation of the States are the pillars, which sustain our independence. Destroy these, and our freedom and sovereignty will fall with them.

The political pestilence, which walketh in darkness and threatens to destroy in the day time, proceeds from the south of our empire. It is there we behold the preachers of liberty, scourging the sable African, while the equal rights of man is their constant theme. There, are cherished and disseminated principles, which shock humanity and menace the dissolution of our government.

The progress of immoral and prophanic sentiments among our citizens; sentiments, which tend to produce an universal corruption of manners and render us unworthy the enjoyment of civil freedom, demands the most decisive disapprobation. The day is not far distant, when virtue will be a reproach, when every vestige of religion and pure morality will be swept away in the general inundation of vice. To delay this evil period the genius of the country invokes the assistance of the faithful, it calls on the ministers of the gospel. Al-

ready has Christianity been ridiculed as the hope of fools ; and the Bible, the consolation of the just, been denounced as a gross imposition. Already has the temple of reason, in the centre of our country, been erected on the ruins of the temple of God, and youth invited to become the pupils of atheism, to learn the rudiments of vice. As this horrid scheme is intended to corrupt and ruin those, in the morning of life ; the young men, by whose appointment I have ascended this sacred desk, will permit me to say ; that we detest the abominable principles, which more abominable men, have circulated among us ; principles which subvert the pillars of society ; principles, which are repugnant to nature ; principles, which debase man and blaspheme his Creator. We aspire to merit the approbation of our country by an unshaken attachment to her constitution ; by a virtuous and upright course of conduct. We are ambitious to attain the accomplishments of the soldier and the citizen ; to cultivate the arts of peace and prepare for national defence. And should our country in danger call for our assistance, we will cheerfully assume the habit of war and risk our lives in her vindication. We now tender her the unwasted ardor and vigor of youth. Under the mild authority of our laws, we rejoice and wish not to outlive their existence.

While we deplore the calamities, which war has spread over the face of Europe, we congratulate her on the restoration of peace. The great and terrible nation, tired out by the slaughter of millions, has reclined her bloody limbs under the shade of the olive. The origin of this accursed war, however plausible, was a restless and cruel ambition ; its progress has unfolded scenes of horror, which exceed the power of description. They pretended to give liberty to countries, which submitted to their arms. The peace they gave was the sleep of death. They murdered quiet citizens, and then rifled their treasures to reward themselves for the havoc they committed. Their principles ruined what the bayonet spared. And a large and fair portion of Europe now mourns the desolation and infamy, which these demons have entailed upon it. Every page of this horrid revolution blushes with the blood of innocence. Such have been the moral and civil evils, which this corrupt, faithless and abandoned nation have propagated among mankind, that it is almost virtuous to wish, that an earthquake would sink their polluted land, that Frenchmen and sea-monsters might form a republic of liberty and equality beneath the ocean. They have been fighting for liberty. What have they gained by this long, ferocious and unjust war ?

What their crimes merit ; and what every man of common sagacity has long expected ; the most absolute despotism on the face of the earth. The sword of the chief consul commands every thing. His power no one dares resist or controul.

Americans, let not the Gallic sons of rapine and violation form an establishment on the confines of your empire. Long have they wished to annihilate your independence, and fatten on the blood of your countrymen. They intend to restrict the aggrandizement of the United States, by settling on your borders a turbulent and ferocious band of ruffians, who will devour your commerce and promote division among you. If they establish their intended colony, and attempt to excite insurrection and disturbance within your territories, assemble your armies, and exterminate these savage hell-hounds of war. No law of nations or nature compels you to wait till they have reduced to a certainty your destruction. Their designs are obvious ; their ambition is boundless. The wide Atlantic does not separate us far enough from this profligate and murderous nation. We are even too near them, when we dwell on the same globe.

To secure the enjoyment of peace and prosperity, and transmit their rich blessings to latest posterity ; it is requisite to be in a state of prepara-

tion to resist and defeat the ambitious designs of external enemies, and to repress the factious machinations of domestic traitors. The most tranquil governments find it necessary to support and encourage a well regulated militia. This is the bulwark of national defence and safety. Under its victorious banners we obtained the trophies of independence ; by its energies, we must assert the justice, honor and felicity of our country. *Before us, we have a distinguished specimen of discipline and emulation in the profession of arms ; a pleasing evidence that we never shall be slaves. Should war threaten our shores, the thunder of your cannon would proclaim the rights of man, and your glittering swords chastise the insolence of invaders. In our situation, having an extensive line of sea coast, and an increasing intercourse with other nations, it is an object of immense importance to establish and maintain a competent navy to protect our expanding commerce from hostile depredations, and our cities from foreign attacks. Wooden walls were an ark of salvation to an ancient republic, when assaulted by a numerous foe. Our resources enable us to appear with equal majesty on the ocean and land. No nation can ac-

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* Addressed by Capt. Paimor's Company of Artillery.

complete our subjection, if we preserve union, and constantly be in preparation to vindicate our rights and dignity.

Where on the globe can we find a nation so free, happy, and prosperous, as America? Virtuous, refined, intelligent, industrious amid abundance. In a clime temperate and salubrious, equally distant from polar cold, and the scorching ardor of a vertical sun. Living under the influence of mild laws; the most rigid execution of which, never made an honest man miserable. The luxuriance of our vales and hills supplies the storehouse of the husbandman with plenty. The artisan finds encouragement and ample reward in transforming the materials, which the country furnishes in profusion. The sails of our commerce whiten the arctic seas, and swell in the gentle breezes of the torrid zone. In the perfect enjoyment of the bounties of nature, and the blessings of heaven, we have the strongest inducement to love our happy country; to adore and praise the all-wise Power, that rules its destiny.

Let us cultivate harmony with each other; cherish the spirit of patriotism; venerate religion; avoid the embarrassment of foreign alliances; observe with good faith engagements with other nations; guard against intrigue and faction; frown

with indignation on vice ; respect and promote virtue ; and yield a cheerful acquiescence to the wise execution of our laws. Then will our independence rest on an immovable foundation ; and peace with all her delightful train forever inhabit and bless this land. Then will our prosperity bloom in perpetual spring ; and the fame of America expand and brighten, till the destroying angel shall announce an end to the world and time !

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