

AN

ORATION,

PRONOUNCED AT WISCASSET,

On the Fourth of July, 1808—

IN COMMEMORATION

OF THE

INDEPENDENCE

OF THE

United States of America.



By **JOSHUA CUSHMAN.**



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Liberty Hall,

WISCASSET, 4th July, 1808.

To the Rev. JOSHUA CUSHMAN, Orator of the Day,

THE Committee of Arrangements, in conformity to the wishes, and in behalf of the Republicans present—present you their thanks for your elegant, patriotick and impressive Oration, this Day delivered, and request of you the favour of a copy for the press.—You will please to accept from us assurances of our high respect, gratitude and esteem.

ORCHARD COOK :

ABIEL WOOD, jr.

NATHANIEL AUSTIN :

WILLIAM M. BOYD :

FRANCIS COOK :



I yield, Gentlemen, to your wishes, and submit the Oration in commemoration of Independence to your discretion. As there seems to be a plan concerted to bear down all that is Republican, is foreseen that our POLITICO-LITERATI, will not be sparing of their remarks. Those Magazines which are incessantly discharging volumes of scurrility and rancorous abuse on the MASTER of the house, have somewhat of venom in reserve for the humblest member of the household. There is, however, but little of terrour in the criticisms of those whose mental opticks are formed "to inspect a mite, not comprehend the Heavens." The strictures of the illiberal, and the witticisms of the splenetick, with whatever complacency they may be viewed by their own factors, can have no effect on a mind conscious of rectitude and only intent on defending the truth :

" To virtue only and her friends, a friend ;

" The world beside may censure or commend.

" Know all the distant din that world can keep,

" Rolls e'er my grotto, and but soothes my sleep."

I receive Gentlemen, with pleasant emotions the expressions of your candour and urbanity, and beg you and the citizens with whom I have enjoyed the " feast of reason and the flow of soul," to accept the assurances of my high consideration.

JOSHUA CUSHMAN.

The Committee of Arrangements.

An Oration, &c.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

TO love our native country—to glory in her brilliant exploits, and to indulge a train of joyous emotions in reviewing her splendid attainments, are affections congenial to the patriotick bosom. Among the splendid achievements of which our country can glory, is that of our *National Independence*.—This, in its origin and consequences, its aspects and bearings, is pointed out by the occasion, as our theme. A theme so momentous in itself, so important in its effects, that the mind, anxious to do it justice, unavoidably feels some tremulous emotions; whilst the tongue, but moderately conversant in this species of oratory, cannot fail to express itself in faltering accents.—But, instead of yielding to sensations which have a tendency to damp the mental powers and to constrict the bodily organs, let me survey objects truly exhilarating. Justly may I congratulate myself on the honour of addressing an audience respectable and discerning; the benignity of whose countenances, bespeaks a candour of heart, equalled by nothing but by the brilliancy of their personal charms, and the splendour of their civick appearances.

THERE are, Fellow Citizens, two ways by which the people of all nations have lost their liberties. The one is, the suffering of themselves to be misled by interested, unprincipled, designing men—men who, unable in a well regulated order of things, to elevate themselves to the heights at which their ambition aspires, labour to introduce a state of confusion, that out of this confusion, they may rise up *Lords, or Kings, or Dictators*.

It was in a manner not wholly dissimilar, that some of the most ancient Commonwealths lost their freedom.

THERE other way in which the people have lost their rights, is their not counteracting the *intrigues* of the No-

bles—their not resisting the gradual, and almost imperceptible, encroachments of the wealthy, the great, the influential men, the *well born* of the nation. These united by a similarity of condition, and tending, by the force of a common attraction, to the same point, are busily employed in lopping off branch after branch from the tree of Liberty, and engrafting somewhat more potent in its place: proceeding in like manner, till not only the flavour of the fruit, but the essence of the tree is changed.

In this way it was that the people of Venice lost their liberties. Originally blessed with a free government, democrattick in form, which laid the foundation for renown in arts and in arms, through the *intrigues* and gradual encroachments of illustrious families, or *self-created* Nobles, that people have yielded to the domination of as an arbitrary Aristocracy as the world ever beheld. Nor should it escape our recollection, that it was by this system of encroachment the Government to which we formerly acknowledged allegiance, attempted to fix the yoke on the necks of the American Colonies. But thanks to the POWER which gave to our Fathers and Brethren, a spirit to discern, and energy to resist—the *snare was broken, and we are escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler!* In reviewing the past scene, deeply sensible shall we be, that our help was in *the name of the Lord who made Heaven and Earth.*

EXPULSED by the frowns of civil and ecclesiastical authority, as our venerable ancestors were from their native country, because they were determined to *stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free*—subjected to a series of hardships and perils in quest of new settlements—defending themselves, and laying a foundation for future empire, without *expense* to the Parent State; it might in reason and justice have been expected, that the children of these *despitefully used* Parents, succeeding to a fair inheritance, purchased by blood and toil, would have been permitted to remain free and unmolested in the full enjoyment of their Fathers' labours and their own improvements. But from the Consular Government of Rome, to the limited monarchy of Britain, the history of Colonization is a narrative of abuse and oppression—of elaborate systematick attempts to

enrich the *Mother Country* at the expense of her dependent children. Not content with acknowledged allegiance and the benefits of exclusive trade, the British Government, jealous of the rising greatness of her American Settlements, early manifested a disposition to infringe on their rights. Encroachment was added to encroachment, till the most enormous claim was set up and enforced by threats and coercive measures—*the right of the British Parliament to bind us in all cases whatever*. Alarmed at the enormity of the claim unblushingly advocated, indignant at the insidious attempts to draw a revenue from us without the shadow of *representative* consent, and threatened with the full displeasure of Power, grown insolent by success, and deaf to the language of humble remonstrance, the Colonists, as if moved by one soul, nobly resolved to resist aggressions, and to preserve their freedom, or to die bravely in its defence. In the mean time, while the intrepid Sons of Liberty were exerting their own strength, and supplicating Heaven and Earth to aid them in their righteous cause; every engine of terrour was put in motion by the aggressor, in order to strike a deep panick, and to awe an affrighted people to unconditional submission. Hostile fleets, bearing vengeance on their prows and thunder on their decks, rode in triumph at the mouth of our harbours, blocked up our ports, and threatened our most beautiful towns or flourishing cities with signal ruin! Whilst mighty armies, in all the glory of martial strength, whose prowess and skill in war, had filled the most gallant nations with dismay, waved their proud banners in the streets of our Capitals, or watered our plains with the blood of our brethren!

In these perilous conjunctures and pressing exigencies, an *illustrious band of patriotick sages*, inspired and animated as by Heaven-derived wisdom and courage, abhorring the imputation of *rebellion*, and spurning at the idea of *dependence*, rose in the *majesty of FREEDOM*, and with an heroism astonishing to the world, boldly asserted the right of our country to rank among the Powers of the earth. Supporting our declaration of national equality by union and energy, and enforcing our claim with the sword, wielded by the hand of an *able Commander*, after brilliant successes in the field and the cap-

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ture of armies, we wrested from tyranny the *arbitrary sceptre*, and forced an *imperious* nation to acknowledge us FREE, SOVEREIGN, and INDEPENDENT. *Who hath seen such a thing? Who hath heard such a thing? Though the earth is not made to bring forth at once, yet a nation was born in one day!*

THE DAY which announced to the world the rank we assumed as an independent Power, was a proud day to our nation—*this emphatically was a day which the lord hath made.* And as long as time shall last, its glories shall be recounted to teach posterity lessons of patriotism, of firmness, and of heroick virtue. With minds swelling with joyous emotions do we hail its Anniversary; while with hearts deeply penetrated with gratitude, we glory in its effects.

THERE is, Fellow citizens, one feature in our contest for Independence which distinguishes it from many of a like nature which have preceded. From the faithful page of history it is too plainly to be seen, that few have been the Revolutions which have terminated in the happiness of the people immediately concerned. Instead of Freedom's fair structure, which had been the lure to exertion, a lofty edifice of tyranny has been erected on a *firm* basis. But in America, owing to obvious causes, the result has been more benign. The people in the United States never had been *slaves*. From their Ancestors they had inherited the spirit of liberty; but this liberty was a *rational* liberty, tempered by morality and regulated by law. Actuated by no romantick love of novelty, no blind hatred of order, no vain ambition; but compelled by the force of imperious circumstances, they contended for *sovereignty* and *independence*—and when crowned with desired success, they established, according to the cool dictates of wisdom, a Government preservative of civil liberty and protective of equal rights. There is also a result which adds lustre to the American *Independence*. In consequence of this splendid event, light is diffused, a veneration for ancient opinions, founded in ignorance and supported by prejudice, weakened—religious and political dogmas not consistent with reason, exploded—and truth and virtue rendered more lovely by being painted in their *native* hues. Hypocrisy, super-

stitution, and *pious grimace*, carried in their outworks, driven from their strong holds, and finding no safety in their citadel, like the British forces to our *allied armies*, have been obliged to surrender themselves to the combined powers of reason, knowledge, and true religion.

THE Union of the states under a national compact for reciprocal advantage, and common safety and defence, is such a happy result of Independence, that it seems *the Lord's doings, while it is marvellous in our eyes!* By the adoption of the Federal Constitution, local attachments are weakened, jarring interests compromised, the causes of rising jealousies removed, brethren of the same family drawn together by a stronger tie, and states, rivals for glory, and opposed to each other's greatness, united and rendered a flourishing and respectable nation.

A CONSTITUTION, Fellow Citizens, thus producing beneficent effects, guaranteeing your civil and religious rights, promoting your prosperity and extending your renown, will share largely of your attachment and esteem. Beholding your own wisdom and virtue reflected to great advantage through this Constitution, you will cherish for her a paternal tenderness, and view her opening beauties with maternal rapture. You will suffer no ligatures to embarrass her easy natural air; no incumbrances to impede the gracefulness of her motions. Under pretence of giving *energy* to her frame, you will add no severity of feature; nor with a view to *soften* her aspect will you impair her strength or tarnish her lustre. Pure in heart, blooming in complexion, and inassuming in demeanour, as she now is, you will guard her reputation, support her dignity, and be emulous to introduce her to posterity in all the brilliancy of primeval charms.

To the acts of Government, which result from the Constitution, you will, Fellow Citizens, render a prompt and cheerful obedience. Nor to the Constituted Authorities will you refuse the suitable expressions of *civick* respect. If by *these* you have enjoyed *great quietness*; if by their *providence very worthy deeds have been done to our nation*, you will cherish towards them warmer emotions than those of mere deference. With minds filled with gratitude and tempered with affection, you will place confidence in their wisdom and integrity, manifest an ap-

probation of their measures, and a zeal to aid their designs.

It will not escape the reflections of liberal minds, that, as every man has a degree of imperfection, and as the Constituted Authorities are composed of men, an *absolute freedom* from error in their measures and arrangements, is not in reason, to be expected. From reflections of this nature; no more liberal than just, you will, Fellow Citizens, while you reap a rich harvest of the most *substantial* benefits from an Administration, view its imperfections with a benignant eye; consider them as not originating in *sinister* policy, but in that *frailty*, from which it is not the privilege of humanity, however exalted, to be free.

THERE is such a *stubbornness* in things, such an *inflexibility* in matter, such an *untractableness* in nature, that out of *these* ancient philosophy created a *Fate* which the power of the *Deities* was not able to control. In all Governments, events take place and emergencies arise, which, no more than the *Fate* of the Ancients, are to be counteracted or controlled by the wisdom of the wise, or the power of the mighty—which irresistibly influence the publick measures, and force the Authorities of the nation upon expedients, not as a choice of good and evil, but of evil and evil. In state affairs, interest not unfrequently clash with interests, and policy stands opposed to policy; so that a Government, in its political, like an individual in his moral, conduct, with the conflicting principles of his nature, *cannot* always *do the good which it would*. It is only by adjusting interfering claims, and balancing opposing interests, so that the greater evil may be prevented, and the best good secured, that the wisdom and virtue of the Statesman is displayed. And time is often necessary to bring these fully to light. But with all the merit of consummate wisdom and unsullied virtue, some measures of Government, like some dispensations of Heaven, may be said to have *clouds and darkness round about them*. Viewed from a certain point, or seen thro' a certain medium, they may not exhibit to *all minds* irresistible proofs of their intrinsick excellence. The *disaffected politician*, who only surveys these measures, as the gloomy Atheist looks at the works of nature, through the mists of a *vapoury imagination* or the fogs of a dis-

tempered mind, may be inclined to pronounce all to be wrong. But would he suffer the fillets which prejudice has formed, to be removed from his eyes, and be prevailed on to view objects in their true light, in perceiving the symmetry, order, and beauty, in what he had pronounced to be *void and without form*, he might be convinced of the energy of a forming hand, and the wisdom of a presiding mind.

THERE are not unfrequently existing in all Governments, *reasons of State*, which authorise the prompt adoption of measures, which are known in operation, while the secret reasons which demanded them, cannot be disclosed. Thus circumstanced, in some degree, was the EMBARGO. But, though policy required that *all the secrets* of the Cabinet should not be ostentatiously exhibited on the publick stage; yet the *well affected* citizens were furnished from their native good sense, with weighty justifying reasons. The Father of a family, who should be so situated, that if he suffered his children in their wonted excursions, they would be in danger of being devoured by the *Lion*, and that all who had the fortune to escape, would be seized on by the *Tiger*, in an attitude to spring on the prey,* could not long hesitate what line of conduct a Government of a country in the like predicament, ought to pursue.

IN such a predicament was our nation; and reasons as forcible called for the EMBARGO. The contending rival nations of Europe had *poured out their vials upon the sea*, by means of which, *it became as the blood of a dead man*, baneful to the American commerce and navigation! In favour of the Embargo, I shall not, on this occasion, offer all the arguments which in reason and justice, might be urged. But if it be more politick and wise in a naval Commander to blow up his armed ship, than to suffer it by capture, to add to the number, and encrease the strength of the enemy's Marine, certainly it is more wise and politick in our Government to interdict commerce,

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 * Alluding to a memorable State Paper, by the celebrated Timothy Pickering, in which the French are represented as the Tiger in the above described attitude.

and to subject the country to a temporary suspension of its benefits, than to suffer it, by falling a prey, to fill the coffers of the aggressor. And if we, who are an agricultural, and not merely a manufacturing commercial people, we who have an extensive territory inviting the hand of cultivation, and ample resources for supplying all the real wants of life, feel, or *affect to feel*, this suspension of trade, how distressing will it be to a nation of *Mechanicks* and *Shop-keepers*, pent up in an Island and sparingly permitted to traffick with the continent of Europe?

THERE is nothing of which Great Britain is more jealous than of her commerce; and for the best reasons--- from it she derives her wealth and grandeur. Covered with armour as she is, at this point she is vulnerable. The Embargo is calculated to touch her in the most *feeling point* of her sensibility; and therefore, a wise measure on our part to obtain from her, justice. To say nothing of the condition of distant dependencies, which cannot but be *affected*. The commodities annually exported from England to the United States of America, on which labour bestows the principal value, amount in price to Millions sterling, and afford employment and *bread* to *thousands* of British subjects. If then the British Government has any sympathy with her people, reduced to distress by the operation of our Embargo, she must yield to their cries, and make us some atonement for her series of wrongs, insults, and aggressions. But I will not enlarge on the topic. The *well affected* and good are reconciled; and such is the *clumsy subtilty* of some minds, such the *vis inertiae* inherent in them, that they cannot be wrought upon by the utmost weight of argument, enforced by all the powers of elocution. *They are like the deaf adder which stoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming ever so wisely.* Mankind do not always grope in darkness through the defect of information. There are some to whom without injustice, it may be said, *ye have both seen and hated the truth.* And in politicks as well as in religion, this is the condemnation of too many, that, though surrounded with the clearest *light*, *they love darkness rather than light*, because the workings of their hearts are *evil*.

THE *ostensible*, are but too seldom the *real*, motives

by which the politician is actuated. A body of men in a nation, opposed in views and in principles, to the Government, can never be really hurt at the weakness or errors of the Administration. From certain passions peculiar to *oblique minds*, the violent opposition to the Embargo must be presumed to be prompted by motives the reverse of those which are avowed. In the Republick of Rome, *Manlius* was the patron of the people, and the defender of their rights. He had distinguished himself by a series of humane and generous actions; and frequently rescued the brave soldier covered with scars, from the power of the *unfeeling* extortioner. He had also by his vigilance and valour in defending the *Capitol*, saved the Roman name and State from ruin: and, as a reward for services so noble and important, obtained from his country the name of *Capitolinus*, and the honour of erecting his house on the *consecrated eminence*. As he rose in fame, he became an object of jealousy—and though the glory of Rome, was sacrificed through the *arts of the Patricians*.

IN like manner MR. JEFFERSON is the *friend* of justice and humanity; the *lover* of the people and the *patron* of their liberties. He has rendered to his country the most useful services, and without the effusion of blood, enlarged her territory and extended her fame. And should he crown his other great and beneficent actions by wresting from the *Mistress of the Ocean* the *freedom of the seas*, he will have erected to his fame a monument as glorious as the *Manlian Seat* on the Capitol at Rome. At the prospect of such an accession to crown the Man of the People, the natural Aristocracy are alarmed. The mild radiance of his moderation and clemency, is too painful to their eye. The splendour of his illustrious deeds, excites anguish in their bosoms; whilst the *immortal glory* awaiting the Republican Administration, rouses all their acrimony, edges their envy with the bitterest invective, and occasions their malice to assume a most *deadly hue*.—As it was glorious in our revolutionary heroes and sages to have expelled the *British Lion* from the American forests; so it will have reflected equal glory on brethren of the same principles, and successors to the same views, to have set bounds to

the rage of the *Leviathan of the Ocean*. To prevent this glory, Aristocracy has made its stand. It is straining every nerve, exerting every power, employing every art, and putting in motion every engine. And rather than not succeed in the bold attempt, it seems to be determined to *deluge the land in blood, and to prostrate the sovereignty of our nation at the feet of the British throne!*

FAR be it, Fellow Citizens, from your minds to perpetuate hatred or resentment. It is philosophick as well as christian, to forgive your enemies. The recollection of past injuries should have but little influence on your present feelings. The attempts of a nation to enslave you, the blood of your countrymen which that nation wantonly shed, the *mouldering bones* of your brethren who expired with agonizing groans in noisome Prisons where the air was pestilence and death, the profanation of venerated domes, consecrated to piety and the publick worship of God, the violation of youth and beauty, together with a series of atrocities which would blacken the savage character, and at the recital of which barbarity would recoil, should all be suffered to remain in that oblivion to which time is assigning them. *Recent injuries* added to injuries, and followed by dispassionate insults, are sufficient to excite all that resentment which is dignified or just. The depredations made on our defenceless commerce by the lawless hand of power, is an injury which calls for redress. The seizure of our vessels laden with no contraband article, and bound to no port *actually* blockaded, are calculated to fill the American bosom, naturally mild, with execration. The *right of search* so insolently urged, the indignities offered to our Flag, the *murder* of our citizens at the mouths of our harbours, together with avowed claims to services of citizens expatriated by the frowns of their native, and grown grey in their adopted, country, to which they are attached by the strongest ties of the heart; and the refusal to make satisfaction for these accumulated *unprecedented* wrongs, till the Independence of our nation should be laid low in the dust, are aggressions and insults able of themselves to kindle and keep alive the keenest resentment, even in placid natures.

THE first emotion of the mind upon the reception of

unprovoked injuries, is that of revenge. But it is no part of wisdom or magnanimity to pursue the measures suggested by a blind impulse. The greatest perfection of the human character consists in giving nothing to passion of any kind ; but alternately employing caution or energy, as the one or the other is conducive to the object in view. Such was the character of *Fabius*, who saved the Roman State. Such was the character of *Turenne*, who conducted the armies of France, with the highest honour to himself and glory to his sovereign. Such was the character of WASHINGTON, who, under God, established the Independence of our country. And such is the character of our *philantopick President*, who, more than could have been done by a proud warrior, regardless of the treasure and prodigal of the blood of his fellow men, has extended the boundaries, and contributed to the *substantial felicity* of the nation. To this perfection of his character it is owing, that, on the tempestous sea of Liberty, he has navigated the grand ship of State in safety, and held her, thus far, on a *neutral course*, amid adverse winds, raging billows, and storms big with danger ; and to this perfection are we indebted for the hope, that, keeping her still firm with the anchor of truth and cable of justice, and so expanding her sails as to catch the steady breezes of patriotism, he will continue to guide her clear of rocks and quicksands, cause her to ride on the stately current of prosperity, and spread her flag in triumph.

LET it not, however, be presumed, that indignity accumulated upon indignity will be forever tamely brooked. Christian patience has its bounds, and meekness itself may be provoked to resentment. Peace can be no further an object with the enlightened and brave, than as it is connected with their true interest and solid glory. And whatever be the calamities of war, too great sacrifices will not be made to avoid them. The din of arms, the confused noise of the warrior, and garments rolled in blood, though frightful to the imagination, are not to the American people the worst of all evils. The loss of *liberty*, of *honour*, and of *independence*, is more abhorrent to their feelings. Our youth have received the noble impression, that, rather than groan under the iron hand of

tyranny, it is glorious to meet death in defending the rights of their country. True it is, that to wage war for a mere point of honour, or to brighten the laurels of some aspiring hero, is no trait of the American character. The American people have an aversion to the shedding of human blood. But this aversion arises not from cowardice or meanness of spirit; but from a refinement in the social system, but little known to the people of other nations. If a deadly blow should be aimed at their liberty, or injuries heaped upon them which would justify an appeal to the sword, collected in their energies, and shining in armour, they would undauntedly, and with ardour, take the field. At a former crisis, the American character and spirit were sufficiently displayed. When attempts were made to deprive us of our dearest rights, it was with reluctance that we resorted to the ultimate reasons of the oppressed. But finding our humblest entreaties unavailing, and indignant at the unredressed wrongs which we endured, we flew to arms; and emboldened by the justice of our cause, in its defence performed wonders which astonished the existing age, and will remain the admiration of remotest posterity. The spirit of the people is not extinguished which animated them to such heroick achievements—nor is the power of the Almighty restrained that he cannot inspire us with the like noble resolution and patriotick ardour. The commerce of our country is of sufficient importance to justify some efforts for its safety and defence. By commerce individuals find lucrative employment, towns and cities are made to flourish, and riches and refinement diffused throughout the community. An enterprising people will not forever forego its benefits; nor, without some *manly struggle*, suffer the great highway of nations to be rendered inaccessible to their navigation. If it be lawful to go to war in defence of liberty or life, bold and energetick measures may be justified for the protection of property and of commercial rights. For what are liberty and life, if stripped of all that renders them most valuable, their comforts, ornaments and delights? Our country is possessed of the ability and means of becoming a great maritime power. It is not wanting in materials for ship-building. Our soil is not unfavourable to the production of hemp. We have

Mines capable of supplying the coarser metals. The American Forests abound with the lofty Oak and towering Pine. Our citizens are not deficient in skill dexterity or enterprize. In naval tactics they have already displayed an adroitness and valour glorious to the American character. Of our resources, in the course of events, we shall be compelled to avail ourselves, even by the folly and madness of Europeans.

But a Navy, though materials are at hand, cannot, in our country, be instantaneously formed by the *word of Executive Power*. As it is with the human race, a dependent infancy and a progressing youth must precede the commanding ability of vigorous manhood. But if, as emerging from the cradle, the American navy held in awe the pirates of the Mediterranean, may we not rationally expect, that when arrived at full grown strength, it will be able to contend for the Trident with the sovereign of the boundless ocean?

In contrasting the glory of Republicks, with that of other Governments which have figured on the theatre of the world, the UNITED STATES of AMERICA, though a Republick, will find no reason to blush at the character, no cause to be ashamed of the name. In Aristocracies, where all the wealth, honours, and emoluments are engrossed by the Few, and virtuous ambition denied all hope of elevation, the common mind, degraded and depressed, loses its ingenuity, nobleness and force. And in arbitrary Governments, where the Monarch is the source of all elegance and grandeur, the native and original colours of genius fade away, and are lost in the splendour of the sovereign—just as the primitive rays of light on being blended together display one dazzling glare of white, without distinction, lustre, or variegated beauty. But Republicks alone furnish a field for emulation, call forth the best feelings of the heart, and give the highest polish to the human character. The elevation of soul and sentiment, the noble pride of independence, the various and characteristick traits of the human mind, there expand and flourish in all their glory, deriving their vivid lustre from liberty. Through the fostering influence of a Free Government, Sparta became the nurse of heroes and legislators—Athens the seat of literature and polite-

ness, and Rome the illustrious Mistress of the world. The Republick of Rome, in duration, equalled the Roman Empire. It was the scene of all its acquisitions, of all its conquests, of all its triumphs—the theatre upon which was displayed all that is glorious in arms, all that is elegant in the arts, all that is splendid in elocution. In times more modern the Republick of Venice, deriving wealth and greatness from Commerce, attained to high renown, and eclipsed by her transcendent lustre, most of the European powers. And the States of Holland, enriched and invigorated from the like source, whilst kings were becoming bankrupts, and rendering themselves, through fraud and oppression, odious to their subjects, supported their credit and gave noble proof of their justice, and said to the proud Monarch of France, like Omnipotence to the Ocean, when striving to overflow the earth, *hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed!*

THE Republick in America is not, I trust, destined to act a part of less importance and renown. Her genius is not formed to grovel in the dust. The *American Eagle* is capable of a flight as lofty as the Roman. UNITED AMERICA, since she has holden the rank of an independent nation, has no reason for an humiliating sensation, upon the review of her own conduct. Like Hercules in his cradle, in her infancy, she gave a presage of future strength. By the wisdom of her Cabinet she counteracted the intrigues, and by her prowess in the field defeated the arms of the nation which, by stratagem or force, had humbled the proudest kingdoms, and held all Europe suspended in the balance. And whilst most of the nations of the Earth, can furnish no other proof of their profound policy, “*but blood spilt to no purpose—uncultivated and ruined countries—villages destroyed and families reduced to beggary*”—our country, enjoying plenty, smiling in peace, and basking in the sunshine of prosperity, has given a noble specimen of the excellence of her Government. The ferments which the frequency of Elections are calculated to excite, have but served to purify the political elements. The oppositions, which heretofore have existed, have been rather symptoms of the *vigour*, than of the *languishment*, of the body politic. And what have

been the evils of our most formidable insurrections, compared with the blood spilt and treasure wasted, to establish the present royal family quietly on the British throne? Why then such continued strains of abuse and sarcasm, such unceasing discharges of virulent invective, and of all that is contemptuous in language? What can be the motive, and what the object in view? Is there, in any class of citizens, a deliberate intention, by disgracing our own Constitution, to pave the way for that of the British? Set down, Fellow Citizens, and in your dispassionate moments count the cost, compute the gain, and estimate the clear profits of the bargain: Look at the crimes committed, the atrocities perpetrated, the scenes of blood and slaughter through which the English nation passed, in order to fix the *balance* of their Constitution. And after all, what are the blessings now enjoyed under that "*stupendous fabrick of human invention*?" Why truly, straightened finances, an enormous accumulating debt, a people groaning under taxation, manufactures decaying for want of encouragement, an interdicted commerce, war with all Europe, a Government whose main spring is *influence*, establishments which threaten to crush by their weight, or to overpower by their splendour.—And are these the blessings which are so alluring? The hope of obtaining which has given to patriotism a singular direction, inspired it with an uncommon ardour, and animated it with the *sage* resolution to build up in our country, the British Government on the ruins of our own. But as execrable as this project is, there are grounds, Fellow Citizens, for the suspicion that our Aristocracy, would not copy after the English model. The supreme Executive whom they would impose, though *permanent* would not be *independent*. He would not be a King of England, who by patronage and prerogative, is capable of being the ornament and defence, as well as the terrour and scourge of the nation. Their first Magistrate would be a Doge of Venice, an instrument to execute their oppressive decrees, and screen them from publick odium. Or a king of Poland, a mere royal pageant, to awe the popular mind, and to give to the baleful radiance of Nobility a more dazzling lustre.

It is, Fellow Citizens, with patriotick grief, and ever

pious concern, that we perceive the movings of a spirit, and the reviving of an influence, which portend no good to the cause of freedom. The Aristocratick passions, deriving strength from desperation, and availing themselves of inauspicious events, seem to be gaining a dangerous ascendancy. After exhausting all their arts, to but little effect, they are now, like Sampson with *new grown locks*, bowing themselves with all their might on the *main pillars* on which the Republican Edifice rests its support. Combinations seem to be formed to bring Republican virtues and talents into disgrace. The National Administration is marked out for destruction; and the greatest *Lights* of our country are to be thrown from their spheres, and cease to shed on the community the beneficence of their beams. The better to effect the design, an *opiate potion* is artfully administered to render you insensible of your danger. The blood-inflaming draught, made palatable by a variety of delicious mixtures, is also held to your lips, by the gentle hand of well-dissembled friendship. The seeds of distrust, of jealousy and dissention, scattered by a *foreign*, are cultivated by a *domestick influence*. The design is conceived to level with the dust the glorious monument of wisdom, reared by your toil, and cemented with your blood. The arm is already extended, and the blow aimed, which, if it should be struck, the reign of Liberty would be at an end, and the beauty of her Temple tarnished forever.

I should, Fellow Citizens, despise myself, were I capable in the mere spirit of the politician, of giving a dreadful alarm, by raising up an host of imaginary dangers on a foundation less solid than the baseless fabrick of a vision. The dangers which I have presented to your view, are justly to be apprehended from the operation of the passions peculiar to Aristocracy. In all nations of the world they are the body whose influence has been the most inauspicious to liberty. In our country we have much to fear from their power, their arts, and intrigues. Like the Serpent with the powers of fascination, they keep their eye steadily fixed on their object. Like the ancient phalanx, they move forward as the wedge. And like this mechanical force, whatever they gain, they hold fast. With wealth, *exterior sanctity* as gravitation, and clo-

quence and splendour as attraction, they are ever tending, and drawing into their centre. With such advantages they are *going forth conquering and to conquer*. And if not kept within due bounds by the *people*, and Executive of the people's choice, they will soon bestride our country like a Colossus, whilst the poor duped and brow-beaten Republicans will have enough to do to peep about between their legs, to find themselves dishonourable graves. "If the prudence of reserve and decorum dictates silence in some circumstances, in others prudence of a higher order may justify us in speaking our thoughts." Instructed by the experience of ages, not ignorant of the devices of Aristocracy, and apprehensive of danger from this quarter, we feel it our duty to sound the alarm. Seeing the bowl, which contains the poison, *smilingly* held out to your taste, we cannot but give you the salutary warning to refuse its deadly contents. Beholding the dagger brandishing, ready for the fatal plunge, we call aloud to you to ward off the blow and to arrest the hand. And perceiving the combustibles placed, the train laid, the match prepared, and all things ripening for the explosion, we are ardent to awaken you to a sense of your danger, and to animate you to the utmost caution and vigilance. We solemnly appeal to the soundness of your understandings, and pathetically address the feelings of your hearts, conjuring you, by all that you value as men, by all that you hold dear as citizens, to be on your guard against those imposing arts and wicked machinations, which are alluring you to slavery, and plotting the downfall of Liberty. Under God, it is only by union firmness, caution and vigilance, heroick efforts of patriotism and manly patience in submitting to *temporary* inconvenience for the sake of *permanent* good, that you can disconcert the schemes which are so artfully pursued, to dupe you out of your senses, and to render you and your country, subservient to the views of the ambitious and aspiring. If by any arguments, exhortations or entreaties, we can rekindle within you the ardour of patriotism, animate you to heroick exertion, prevail on you still to cleave to the Constitution, as your Ark of safety and Rock of defence, and to make the Republican Administration your rallying point, we shall long enjoy the

blessings peculiar to the citizens of a Free, Sovereign and Independent Nation. But if Heaven, because the measure of our ingratitude is full, has given us over to strong delusions to believe a lie, that we may groan under Aristocratick oppression—One consolation will still remain to the patriotick Republican, that, as long as there was hope, he acted the part of the faithful Watchman, who, when he seeth the sword coming upon the land, bloweth the trumpet and giveth the people warning. By a few more efforts of virtue and wisdom, we shall place our liberties on a basis too firm to be shaken by the winds and storms of Aristocracy, raging and beating with redoubled violence: and by continued displays of that patriotism and energy which first brought our country into notice, we shall transmit our Independence to posterity with increased glory. But if we suffer the *evil genius* of nations to gain an ascendancy among us, to rear his hydra-head, and to stretch his gigantick stature over the land; instead of a splendid Republick, and that felicity and grandeur, on which, from the fertility of our soil, our advantages for trade, and the enterprizing spirit of our citizens, we might justly calculate, the UNITED STATES will exhibit a deplorable spectacle. The eye of the patriot would be pained in viewing the melancholy scene. The philosophick mind would labour with a sigh in pondering the sad reverse of our fortune. The historian in relating the tale of our woe, would blot his page with a tear. The Orator, as for a warning to others, he contrasted our morning brightness with the sable aspect of our noon, would melt with grief, and glow with indignation. And the Republicks of former periods, by whose catastrophe we should be admonished, arising to our view, and insultingly sympathising in the fate of our Republick, would seem to address her in terms, strikingly appropriate—*Art thou also become as weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? How art thou fallen from Heaven, O, United America, Son of the Morning! How art thou cut down to the ground!!*—BUT, Fellow Citizens, we are encouraged to predict a destiny more propitious to our country. The knowledge and temper of the people, their unconquered love of liberty, and their strong attachment to the Republican institution of their Ancestors, are the happi-

est presages. As Omens equally favourable, our country can boast of honourable numbers among her most enlightened citizens who contend earnestly for the political faith once received by our sages and heroes. A band of Worthies, in the nobleness of an ADAMS, are furnishing illustrious testimony that they would choose rather to suffer affliction with the friends of liberty, than to enjoy the pleasures of ill gotten power, for a season—esteeming the reproach of Republicanism greater riches than the treasures of Aristocracy—having respect to the patriot's reward, an immortality of praise. A LINCOLN, a SULLIVAN, a DEARBORN, a MADISON, a CLINTON and a JEFFERSON, are exerting their united and benign influence for national peace, prosperity and glory. And if a country can be saved by the exertion of its best talents and virtues, ours is not yet doomed to fall. The Sun of our Glory, shining in the beneficence of his beams, will chase away unwholsome vapours, and dispel the hovering clouds that shed a baleful influence, and diffuse light, and splendour and joy. The God of our Fathers who guided them in their wanderings and assigned to them this land as their assylum, and who conducted their posterity to empire, with favour will compass us as with a shield; and cause our nation to look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the Sun, and as brilliant as an army with banners. The American Eagle in a serene sky, shall soar aloft to the Stars of Heaven. Fame with her loudest trumpet, will sound the greatness of our country from pole to pole. The proudest nations of the globe, in admiration of her renown, shall court her friendship. Canada and Nova Scotia, allured by the beneficence and wisdom of her institutions, will stretch out their suppliant hands, for an admittance into the Union. The Floridas, consulting their own interest, shall become a willing victim. South America, a Sister Continent, in token of fellowship, will burn incense upon the altar. The AMERICAN REPUBLIC shall have dominion from sea to sea—from the Atlantick to the Pacifick Ocean, and from the River, Amazon, or La Plata, unto the ends of the Earth! Nor will her Empire cease, till all human Governments shall be superceded by the auspicious reign of the PRINCE of PEACE, through whose benign influence,

" ALL crimes shall cease, and ancient fraud shall fail,

" Returning Justice lift aloft her scale ;

" Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,

" And white rob'd innocence from Heaven descend."