

AN
ORATION,

DELIVERED IN

ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH,

BEFORE THE INHABITANTS OF

CHARLESTON, SOUTH-CAROLINA;

ON FRIDAY, THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1817.

IN COMMEMORATION OF

American Independence;

BY APPOINTMENT OF

THE '76 ASSOCIATION,

And published at the Request of that Society.

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o. o. o.

1817.

ORATION, &c.



AMERICANS,

THE Day of Freedom has again convened us—Proud are its recollections, delightful the duty it imposes. Now are we invited to give ourselves to the enjoyment of that æra, which an admiring World would emulate ; an æra that at once entertains, sublimates, and imparts those sentiments, which both adorn and protect our elevated station. Valor has been commemorated—Hypocrisy has used the machinery of gorgeous festivals, to draw more closely the chains with which a senseless multitude were already encircled. But never has the globe been dignified by a spectacle of loftier moral grandeur, than this hour presents. Here is a community who exult in the fulness of real bliss, yet remember it was won by virtue, and by virtue only can be retained. Applauded by millions, yet unintoxicated with impious self confidence, they place the success of their counsels on the aid of him before whom strength is weakness, and human wisdom folly. And, my countrymen, were there a period, which could peculiarly evince your distinction, this would be the period. Every section of

Europe writhes under distress, the triumphant are in misery, and the humiliation of the unfortunate is aggravated by the contrast of their former pre-eminence. Still Columbia remains untarnished—you, the one people who have never deserted the cause of man, or been visited with the curse of kings. Nature urges the enquiry, how shall we continue to ourselves, how ensure to our posterity, the beatitude we inherit? Why, like the statuary, we must study a model whose perfections all acknowledge. Our revolutionary ancestors are that political model. If ever one generation should bow to another, we should bow to them—to them are we indebted for a condition which renders the age of Saturnus no longer a poet's fable. Let us then not only indulge, but cherish the feelings which lead through their history. So often is pity touched at their sufferings, high-minded ambition so often is fired by their deeds, and philosophy so charmed at the profundity and bold developements of their schemes, that he, indeed, must want a soul, who can know the story of '76, and not be an American.

In the revolution we discern every trait which belongs to national greatness. Early were displayed an unsurpassed intelligence and enthusiasm. All efforts seemed centred on one object—the emancipation of their country. Oppression had but perpetrated its first outrage, when a thousand prostrate mercenaries on Bunker-hill

were an admonitory proof that the zeal of republicans would equal the tactics of Royalists. Harsher trials, and succeeding years, manifested more brilliantly this encouraging fact. Shall we recal Trenton, where upwards of nine hundred Hessian allies yielded to their supposed captives? King's Mountain, where Shelby checked the torrent, and turned invasion on the invaders? Bennington, where farmers conquered regulars, twice in one day? Or Lincoln's pursuit, when Provost of old fled like Prevost of Plattsburgh. The intuition of democracy levelled to insignificance the learning of monarchy.

To these resplendent qualities, was added a dauntlessness, which viewed danger only as the Theatre of Fame. Moultrie was told "your incomplete fort will be blown down"—"then we'll conquer amidst its ruins," was his reply. When Tarleton was beaten, militia, not merely stood the bayonet, but led by our venerable Pickens, made an irresistible charge through the most awful fire. What did not Sumpter achieve—that soul whom peril could not intimidate, nor misfortune unnerve! How many have died in transport, under the colors of Independence. Was not this the spirit of Hume, of M'Donald? And of how many nameless martyrs, whom capricious fame will not allow us to adore, but whose lives were voluntary offerings for our liberation?

Another trait, on which admiration must dwell,

is the magnanimity of these Heaven-souled patriots. Insulted by the opinions, incensed at the atrocities of their heartless foe, yet never did they wantonly add mortification to his disasters. Even, Burgoyne, sent with the cannibal Indian to slaughter, not only the warrior, but the babe, could not force them to cruelty. Compelled to lay down his arms at Saratoga, Gates with his comrades, would not even witness the humiliation, and the sympathies of friendship could not more have mitigated his sorrows, than did the unmeasured beneficence of republican hospitality—This sensibility to misfortune, was reciprocated by Cornwallis, in attempting to degrade the brave Lincoln, who with one third his number had stayed his approach for forty-two days, at the nominal barriers of Charleston. His Lordship however, at Yorktown, was made to present *his sword* to the same Lincoln, and undergo his own prescription; that he might be enabled to instruct his countrymen in the folly of expecting to humble a people, who delight in no contest, but that of humanity. Often has the prisoner blessed the mansion of his captor, and the suffering hireling found himself cherished by the hand he was subsidized to destroy.

But the virtue, that made every other more august, was a devotion to country, which adversity invigorated. Domestic ease—the comforts, the grandeur of wealth were foreseen as the victims to be immolated. Events confirmed their anticipations yet each calamity, but incited to new

sacrifices. Marion, driven from his home, was more than consoled, that the oak under which he slept, grew in the soil of liberty, and the roots, that subsisted him, were not the donation of a master. And the Patriot-sentinels of West Point, (tho' traduced by one, who boasts intimacy with the profligate convict) proved that poverty and America were preferred to opulence and treachery. Our enemy, to break the spirit, violated every custom of civilization. Citizens were incarcerated in pestilential dungeons, called prison-ships, whence they were allowed to escape on the single condition, of being enrolled against their country. They chose death. When Barlow painted Britain, under the form of cruelty, presiding o'er these repositories of horror, he acted the simple historian, fancy cannot deepen, truth, herself, in detailing what was suffered, becomes incredulous and drops the pen. The last groans of our fathers was music to Englishmen, and it seemed a victory, that their bodies had yielded, though their souls would never bend. Ignominious executions were added, and murder was legalized—The murders at Camden, the martyrdom in our own city on the 4th of August, shall never pass to oblivion, until we despise our freedom and merit chains. During these gloomy hours, the daughters of Columbia, feelingly illustrated, how the beauty of patriotism transcends the charms of persons—The fêtes of joyous Britons were disdained, and the abode, where the continentalist pined in want, was their selected resort. They

gladdened at every success of their country and when calamity came, cheered the anxious with those days, when the banners of America, should wave, never again to droop.

If the virtue of our ancestors expands the heart, their policy cannot but illumine the judgment. Here indeed was philosophy made practical. They resolved a scheme of, emancipation after a full study of the character of their constituents—of the cabinet to be opposed—and of the dangers to be encountered. The people seemed to lead when Congress already had given the impulse. For every event they were prepared, and when the tempest raged, it had already been foreseen. The great enterprise was conducted by these new statesmen, without once receding from a position to which they had advanced.—Whilst the experienced ministers of Britain, never proceeded but in disgrace, and from the denunciation of “unconditional submission” were happy to leave the colonies free, sovereign, and independent states. This triumph of wisdom is the more interesting, from having formed the epoch when man saw demonstrated his capacity for self government. Dickinson awakened his countrymen to their situation, and first shook the colonial despotism. Other luminous minds increased the approaching day, when arose the author of Common Sense. Fearless of the prejudices of ages, he urged Americans to prove to their species, that kings were afflictions, and the people who would be happy,

must regulate themselves—The hearts of republicans vibrated to the doctrine; and the felicity we boast is the comment on its correctness. It has been our mortification to see royalists, and the dupes of royalists, misuse the religious errors of this valuable champion and friend, to sink his political truths. But we, I trust, will honor all whom our fathers honored.—Sacred be the name of each, who stood to the standard of Independence; and tho' his frailties were as crimson, this alone were sufficient to efface them, and robe him in ermine.

Ever to be guided by the principles of this æra, my countrymen, evinces both sagacity and gratitude. Blessed as we are with the means: the dissemination of such principles should be our pride. The Arts should resuscitate our heroes, who encircled with their resplendant deeds, would impel ourselves and our descendants to an honorable imitation.—Marble may become animate in the cause of liberty, and point our youth the road to immortality. Already, Americans, have you constructed to '76 two monuments more august, and not less permanent, than those of Egypt.—The code of freedom, our constitution is one. By it have been realized what seemed the ethereal dreams of philanthropy. The sages of antiquity were not allowed to see the government which could make a people free, but not licentious—polished, but not effeminate—brave & magnanimous, enlightened and not supercilious.

Such a government America now presents, and tyrants, as they contemplate it, tremble at its splendors.

Of similar grandeur, with the establishment of the constitution, is the late triumphant war. Here is a monument, at which distant posterity will glow, and by which we shall ever be instructed. All the hate, all the artifices, all the depravity, which were exercised against our fathers, aided by a similar tremendous disproportion of power, were brought against us. From the peace of '85 Britain had established among us a deep Jesuit system, to throw into contempt sentiments of independence—to make us either relapse into colonies, or separate into hostile communities, whose only policy would be mutual misery and degradation.—Henry's mission is one evidence; but that which renders argument superfluous is, the Hartford Convention. Here we saw the fruit, if before we doubted the existence of the deleterious tree. A coalition had trampled popular sovereignty in Europe, our ferocious enemy had become more terrible by a sudden accession of means, when an organized band of inflated aristocrats, leagued with envenomed tories, start up, deny assistance, and recommend secession from the confederacy. Shall this ever be forgotten? Not until experience ceases to be your guide. It was not a transient phrenzy, it was the test of a scheme planned by a foreign cabinet, to incite us to self-destruction, and prove that a republic

was a chimæra. The vain hope of seeing this magnificent continent the appendage of a transatlantic island, never died, until the Hartford Convention exploded in impotence. The attempt is not to be lamented. But for this, Dexter would not have appeared, spurning the trammels of party, and impressing on the age, the devotion with which Americans bow to their laws. Holmes would not have beamed forth, dismaying the foe, and filling us with pride for the worth and talents by which we were supported. The deluded, themselves, indignant at their infamy, already declare their reform. Nor can the benefit be local. Every section of our empire, with an elation that cannot be reprehended, will contrast its demeanor, and remain inflexibly true to the directions of patriotism. With what elevation may you review your conduct, citizens of South-Carolina. You did not call forth a pharisaic dastard to recommend you to the enemy for services against your own government. Your religion did not forbid encomiums on the heroes who bled for your safety. Your holy ministers did not sacrilegiously invoke the wrath of Heaven on your public guardians.—No—You selected as the chief of *your* state, a patriot who regretted he had but one life to expose for his country. An advanced corps you entrusted to another, with whom integrity and valor are inmates, and who in the field would have furnished Englishmen no strong considerations for gratitude. It is your boast to have been eminently auxiliary in effect-

Dexter's copy

ing this "second struggle for Independence." Posterity will learn, with pride, that as in '76 so in 1812, every representative of South-Carolina advocated hostilities against Britain. The enthusiasm with which your monumental ramparts were reared, evinced the spirit opposed alike to submission, to dread, to partiality. You are, my fellow-citizens, guilty of being without one claim on the enemy's love. May you continue to merit her hatred, the irrefragable attestation of fidelity to America.

With us, Gentlemen of the '76 Association, the memory of those days will ever revive the noblest and most endearing recollections. Moved at the trials, our republic was passing, we were cheered by the smiles, but never addened at the waywardness of fortune. Failure seemed but a stimulant to a people, who we thought would not tolerate insignificance and contempt.—The sentiment has proved correct; hope has not been fallacious, and our bliss is complete in the bliss of our country.

If the war has demonstrated that the councils of America, may be embarrassed by treason, but not discomfited, it will also impress in fulness the disposition of that enemy, who endeavored to enslave our fathers. Did any citizen ever question, whether England would use against us every mean of destruction, his error is now dispelled. To throw into perdition the land of his nativity

or adoption, he has seen her become the associate of the negro, the pirate and the savage. At Fernandina, citizenship was proffered to all who would assassinate their masters—the pirates of Barrataria, were invited to join Britons, as brethren in principle—in Fort Mims, 160 mothers, children, and fathers were consumed together at her instigation—and on the Raisin, the wounded helpless prisoner whom mercy would have cherished, was massacred by her allies, and then devoured by dogs and swine. But one atrocity seemed committed that uncertainty might never return—the conflagration of our infant capitol. The tyrant imagined she had realized the wish of Nero, and at a blow could annihilate a people. But when the incendiary Englishman applied the torch, he lighted, in the heart of every American, a fire which may brighten the world, with the flames of the execrable nation, that missioned him to the deed.

This champion of religion, was indeed unrivalled in plunder, burning, and similar warfare; but who was enwreathed with eternal laurels? Not Britain. She titled herself MISTRESS of Ocean, yet of sixteen combats, in which mutual skill was tested, the Republicans won fourteen.*—Of these two were in squadron. We know of no superiority obtained by a fleet of the enemy—unless in the unparalleled performance on the Serpentine—

* The following are the conspicuous engagements, in which

but there the American ships were manned with Englishmen.

To terrify and chastise us, the élite of her army were pompously arrayed. They were scourged, and chased home. When attacked they were beaten, and in most of their assaults they were foiled. Need Brown's sortie be recalled, the attacks on York and Fort George? Can we forget the transcendent defences of Fort Meigs, Sandusky, Mobile, Fort Erie? Shall this day ever pass without reviving the fame of Armistead? Democratic Baltimore was a suitable victim for royal vengeance.

the naval skill of Britain and America was tested. In the term loss, we include both wounded and killed. Thus in Warrington's victory over the Epervier, there were but two wounded in his ship, his whole loss.

AMERICAN VICTORIES.

<i>American Vessels.</i>	<i>Captains.</i>	<i>Am. loss.</i>	<i>British Vessels.</i>	<i>Br. loss.</i>
Constitution	Hull	14	Guerriere	76
Wasp	Jones	10	Frolic	80
United States	Decatur	12	Macedonian	104
Constitution	Bainbridge	34	Java	210
Hornet	Lawrence	3	Peacock	40
Decatur	D'Iron	20	Dominica	60
Enterprise	McCall	13	Eoxer	39
Lake Erie	Perry	123		160
Peacock	Warrington	2	Epervier	21
Wasp	Blakely	25	Reindeer	65
Wasp	Blakely	3	Avon	44
Lake Champlain	McDonough	110		194
Constitution	Stewart	15	Levant } & Cyane }	77
14 Hornet	Biddle	11	Penguin	42

The British successes were over the Chesapeake and Argus. 2

ance. It was thought republicanism would crouch to monarchy ; but the undaunted Baltimoreans “ made a demonstration ” that the eagle of liberty shall hover victoriously o’er the lion of despotism. For four and twenty hours the atmosphere flamed with the vindictive cannonade. Yet when the morning dawned still

The star-spangled banner, in triumph did wave,
O’er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

But what seraph shall descend to speak the glories of Orleans. Jove did not hurl the Olympian thunders, nor did Mars mingle in a conflict, immortal as that of his own Ilium ; but thou, unconquerable genius of America, thou wert at once the God of War, and avenger of the wronged. The whirlwind is meek, the torrent slow, compared with the band that rushed from the Alleghanies. Children of peace, they but saw the invaders, and became soldiers. Three times did the disciplined myrmidons of Britain advance in desperate column—each time the earth was strewed with the enemies of the Republic. Europe was benighted in tyranny, when burst forth this star, attesting, one nation yet shone, who would never bend to Kings.

In this resistance to your unchangeable foe, MY COUNTRYMEN, you have shewn yourselves worthy your descent. Cheering must it have been to the few revolutionary fathers, who remain with us—they must now feel that they have toil-

ed and lived for great purposes.—And yet the bliss of their posterity is not the sole cause of their holy exultation. The revolution has exalted the world. At it became emulous, that nation which seems sacred to Mars, the Loves, and Minerva. Frenchmen learnt in the camp of Washington that the soldier's highest renown was gained in the battles of freedom. At their own court, in Franklin and Jefferson, they saw, splendidly illustrated, how republicanism was adorned with science, patriotism, and genius. The great people of Europe moved, and every crown shook. Tyrants conspired, and the tri-colored flag waved o'er their submissive capitols. Domestic ambition and foreign artifice convulsed, and but dismembered the new empire. Bonaparte appeared, faction vanished. He flew abroad, the anointed cowered as he swooped, and were exposed in *legitimate* nothingness. The groans of modern Britons—the supplications of all Europe, proclaimed that the confederates of Pilnitz were o'erwhelmed by their own tempest. Prodiges were his daily acts, when fortune struck him from her roll. Yet a night had scarce passed, the revelries of his inebriated inferiors were not closed, when, like Phœbus, he again fired the horizon, covering with his beams a gazing world. Again has Providence allowed this great character, and his great country, to sink together. Legitimacy dreads his name, and would extinguish his being. Policy, impotent and senseless! Can the sods that bury the limbs of Napoleon, bury

his fame? A spot may contain his body, his renown—the Universe barely holds.

An amiable sensibility makes us partake the afflictions of one, so identified with a people to whom we desire the highest prosperity. Circumstances, however, emanate from his fate, at which every American should awake. The discomfiture of a French army has been mistaken for the annihilation of the human mind. We are told, man has no rights, but God created him the property of Kings. It is even said equality was not designed between those who acquire, and those who inherit crowns. This may be correct. Cæsar, Cromwell, and the greater Napoleon, cannot be equalised with “Mr. Guelph, and his profligate sons.” Of what benefit has monarchy been to our race? Why is the old world flying under the wings of the new? To escape Kings. Are they essential to the defence of nations? Their armies are always vanquished by republicans. Greece proved this. Switzerland proved it at Morgarten. France at Gemappe, Fleurus, Hohenlinden and Marengo—and two triumphant American Wars substantiate the assertion. Is monarchy inspiring? Why then, have they, who have inspired the world by their genius, been remarked for a contempt of Kings? So felt the empyreal-souled Alfieri. So, in France, Montesquieu, Voltaire, D’Alembert, Carnot. In England, Milton, Sidney, Locke. And in our own country!—in our country, I trust, it is the single sentiment; for were there a thing

so vile as an American who admires monarchy, it would be a thing formed to crawl on earth; and Earth herself would shrink at her own debasement, when knowing this was her true offspring.

Our present relation to the world, would alone characterize American Independence, as another salvation. But for this solitary asylum would not our fellow-beings, be involved in the tartarean blackness of despair? What loftier honor, shall national pride desire? Protector of man, comforter of misfortune. Such is our country, already admired in infancy—but only time can develop her grandeur.—How vast that number, who, hereafter, like us, will hail this immortal day! Activity, intelligence, and the productive arts are the agents of population. We have seen them give France 174 inhabitants, to the square mile, the Netherlands 252, and Holland the prodigious average of 275. Eminently operative as they are in America, possessing as she does upwards of two millions of square miles, and estimating 150, to the square mile, her full growth will be constituted by THREE HUNDRED MILLIONS OF FREEMEN.—Russia's empire, the great empire of Napoleon, never exceeded forty-five millions.

Astonishing as will be the magnitude of our population, not less astonishing is the rapidity

with which it will be attained. In 1607,* one hundred in the Wilderness of JAMES River, were all the inhabitants of the present United States. In 1701, they reached two hundred and sixty-two thousand, and are at present, about nine millions. Will not the two centuries ensuing, then, give us our entire amount ?

Another trait in our political futurity will be, the more complete amalgamation of these states, into one community. We were unnerved with the dread that our union was transient. Europe presented hostile clans, combined and converted into mighty nations ; and yet we were taught that colonies affiliated by interest, affection, sympathy, could not harmonise. The world was seen fraternised by commerce, and we were told, that the Potomac should only echo the cannon, and redden with the blood of the North against the South. This, with other colonial prejudices, is disappearing. Union has become a national sentiment, and will be more

** Progressive Population of the United States.*

YEAR.	NUMBER.	AUTHORITY.
1607	100	Chalmers.
1620	2,300	Chalmers.
1660	85, 000	} Chalmers, and Spafford's N. York.
1701	262,000	
1740 40	1,053,000	Rev. Dr. Humphreys.
1774	2,141,307	Provincial Census.
1790	3,929,326	Gov. Pownall.
1810	7,239,903	United States } Census. }

adored by our children, than even by ourselves.

Yet the most beautiful aspect of the new world, ever will be, her domestic beatitude, and disregard of ambition's enticements. If the amiable man, blessed by his consort, encircled with his innocents be the spectacle in which the blessed delight ; how shall the world be affected at beholding the greatest nation, the most harmless, and occupied only in extending felicity ! What has been like this ? Conquest is hateful, science frivolous, compared to such glory. In thy domain only, Father of Love, shall we see the prototype of America's emulation !

Note continued.

Population of each of the old States in 1701, according to the Rev. Dr. Humphreys—and in 1749, according to the Provincial Census.

	1701	1749
Massachusetts	70,000	220,000
Connecticut	30,000	100,000
Rhode Island	10,000	35,000
New Hampshire	10,000	30,000
New-York	30,000	100,000
New-Jersey	15,000	60,000
Pennsylvania	20,000	250,000
Maryland	25,000	85,000
Virginia	40,000	85,000
North-Carolina	5,000	45,000
South-Carolina	7,000	30,000
Georgia	0,000	6,000
Louisiana	0,000	7,000
Total	262,000	1,053,000

Blighting to arbitrary government, as would be this spectacle, "this mischievous example of democratic rebellion," intrigues against our tranquillity might be apprehended. But Providence here gives one of the brightest manifestations of her benevolence towards her favorite children. Even kings are made instrumental in cherishing America. Our navy has avenged Europe, and every monarch of the continent is elate at its success. Britannia rules the waves, was rung to their humiliation, and felt in their most peaceful concerns. Was any kingdom enriching itself with domestic establishments, or opening new sources of opulence abroad? The jealousy of this island intruded, their towns were battered, their commerce desolated. Britannia no longer rules the waves. Your skill, your heroism have annihilated her odious fame. When Hull coolly assailed the Guerriere, and made her cower beneath his banners—to many it seemed a deed not to be repeated. From Champlain and Erie, from the Southern Seas and African coast, ascended new beams of American pre-eminence—it then shone but as the first star of a galaxy. And when we recall the inexperience of many who have given celebrity to their republic, our admiration augments. Thus no victory was more resplendent than the capture of the Boxer, by our young townsman. Never had he witnessed a conflict, the brave Bourroughs lay slaughtered before him, yet with veteran composure he makes the war-work proceed, and gives the

Union a token that Gadsden and Moultrie yet live in their countrymen.

Our Naval skill is appreciated by European statesmen as their best security. May not America then, ere this century shall close, lead a maritime coalition to the shores of Britain, carry retribution to tyranny, and restore to man his long-usurped domain?—Such events are evolving—and with delight may the patriot advocates of this establishment contemplate the fulfilment of their predictions—justly may they share its lofty renown, and claim applause for the beatific revolution it is destined to effect.

Grateful as is this perspective abroad, not less exhilarating are domestic changes already begun. The United States have unalterably determined the establishment of Manufactures. Independence is then safe.—Arts will be introduced—variety offered to every species of talent—union confirmed—foreign influence superseded.* Greater minds never guided a nation than those who have urged this policy. From the first movement of liberty it was recommended as a mean both of opulence and protection. What has already been performed is a rich exhibition of

* Among the many able productions enforcing the policy of America's establishing Manufactures, see Dr. Rush's Address, 1775. Hamilton's Report, 1791. Gallatin's Report, 1810. Coxe's Digest, 1812; and Sampson's eloquent Address on behalf of the New-York Association, 1816.

our capacity, and the unyielding perseverance of Americans will never be overcome by the stratagems or competition of a vigilant rival.

One improvement more is wanting to give our country that distinctive character, that splendid influence fully within her acquisition—a national system of national education. We established the æra of republicanism and are inundated with Monarchical doctrines. Particularly with the doctrines of that nation who desires our humiliation. But, my countrymen, why should you bend to Britain? America surpasses her in her political institutions, to America has she struck her flag, on the land and on the ocean, and France is a century beyond her in civilization. Use those powerful faculties, those wondrous advantages with which nature has designated you for greatness, and this infatuation passes,—Feel your destinies. Here is the hope, here is the pride of man. It must not sink. Let us cherish science as our friend, venerate religion as our guardian, and give to freedom a lasting abode.

