



MR. F A Y's

Oration.



AN
French
Oration,

DELIVERED AT

C O N C O R D,

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,

JULY 4th, 1801.

BY SAMUEL P. P. FAY.

*“ La liberté n'est pas dans aucun forme de
gouvernement ; elle est dans le cœur de
l'homme libre.”* ROUSSEAU. EMILI.



PRINTED BY WILLIAM HILLIARD.

1801.

AT a meeting of a number of the Citizens of the town of Concord, Voted, That Messrs. EPHRAIM WOOD, JOHN WHITE, THOMAS HEALD, ABIEL HEYWOOD, and JOHN RICHARDSON, be a Committee to wait on Mr. SAMUEL P. P. FAY, and thank him for his truly ingenious and pertinent Oration, delivered to a respectable audience in the Meeting-house in Concord, on the 4th July 1801 ; and likewise to request a copy for the press.

GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE,

HAVING written the following pages under circumstances unfavourable to the display of even the small abilities I possess. I had determined not to submit them to the press. Your request is however, flattering ; and alas, my vanity is more eloquent than my judgment !—The manuscript is at your service.

With the proper sentiments,

I am, Gentlemen, yours, &c.

S. P. P. FAY,

EPHRAIM WOOD, Esq.
Mr. JOHN WHITE,
THOMAS HEALD Esq.
ABIEL HEYWOOD, Esq.
Mr. JOHN RICHARDSON. } Committee.

AN
ORATION.

CITIZENS,

THIS day closes the twenty-fifth year since the declaration of American Independence. We are assembled to celebrate the anniversary of that august act, which gave us freedom, and a rank among sovereign and independent nations. This occasion, so deeply interesting to freemen, furnishes equal cause of gratitude, serious reflection, and unreserved joy.

ON this short festival, agriculture shall suspend its labours, commerce shall resign its cares, and the meaner considerations of private interest, and party heat shall repose under the broad shade of liberty and peace.

IF there be any man among us, whose groveling spirit aspires not to the privileges of freemen; who is willing to renounce the rights he received from the impartial hand of nature, and bend his neck to the yoke of an hereditary master; let him go hence; let him shut his ears to the voice of joy and exultation, that this day echoes through our land. To that man this must be an hour of melancholy and chagrin! He will remember, that this jubilee is sacred to him, whose blood frolics at the name of liberty;

who feels adequate to the office of thinking and acting for himself; whose bosom swells with honest pride at the glorious achievements of his fore-fathers: and who will expose his life in defence of the rights they have transmitted him. Let such pour out their hearts in devout thankfulness to the Parent of all good: let them remember the immediate authors of their happiness with gratitude, and rejoice in possession of the blessing. We will, for a few moments, cease troubling ourselves with those imaginary evils that exist only in the prolific brains of ignorant or designing politicians, to congratulate ourselves on the real benefits we enjoy. The discordant tones of civil dissension shall not be permitted to interrupt the harmony of the scene, and the green-eyed monster, faction, shall sleep undisturbed on this annual union of sentiment and joy.

THE part which has been assigned to me in the rites of this sacred anniversary, is conspicuous and honourable. Invited by a number of respected fellow-citizens to the discharge of this office, pride, gratitude, and duty forbid my declining the attempt. Should I have the good fortune to contribute to the pleasure or utility of this commemoration every wish will be attained. I shall not trouble the audience with apologies for my want of abilities, or with solicitations for their candor. I disdain the contemptible hypocrisy of the first, and the last would imply an insult on those feelings which ought to characterize this occasion. In awakening the dignified and patriotic feelings of other times, I will endeavour to be useful; and I shall utter my sentiments with that honesty and freedom, which becomes a republican.

WE are not now to perplex ourselves with the political controversies of 1801; the events of 1776 furnish a more noble, useful, and interesting subject. It will be our duty to sketch the history of liberty; to turn our recollection to the origin of our glorious revolution; to pay our tribute of gratitude and applause to the brave and patriotic actors, who graced that august scene; and to congratulate ourselves on the fortunate issue. We are to con-

template the new duties and relations we assumed with independence ; we shall examine the republican character, and remark the errors and dangers that lie in ambush for our happiness.

IN the accomplishment of man, liberty, like the Promethean fire, was necessary to give activity to the human mind, and a moral qualification to human actions. Political liberty, of which we now speak, has had, from the early ages to the present time, the most romantic and interesting vicissitudes of fortune. In Greece and Rome, for some centuries, her reign was auspicious, and her character supported with more dignity and splendor, than at any other period in the annals of civilized man. Under her influence all the great and ennobling virtues there flourished in their highest luxuriance. There shone, with unobscured lustre, that simplicity of manners, that invincible integrity, that hardihood of character, and that heroic courage, which are still the admiration of degenerate posterity.

FOR more than eighteen hundred years, the greater part of the civilized world has been enveloped in a continued night of despotism ; while liberty, like the moon, has but occasionally glimmered on man through the transient opening of the cloud ; or, like the midnight flash of lightning, has only made his situation more dreadful, by sometimes rendering it visible ! In most countries of Europe, the fetters of slavery seemed fast rivetted on the human race. Liberty was a persecuted vagrant, and scarce found a spot, that could yield security or repose. She occupied but few places, and her influence was feeble. The small republics of Italy she held by a precarious tenure, and in the United Provinces of the Netherlands, she enjoyed but a divided dominion. Her most valued asylum was chosen in the impregnable mountains of Switzerland. It was to be expected, that, on the ice-bound tops of the glaciers, her hardy sons would find undisturbed tranquility and freedom ; that their simplicity, their poverty, and their mountains could have offered no temptations to the lustful

eye of avarice, or the distempered appetite of ambition. But "Alps on Alps" oppose no effectual obstacles to those scourges of human happiness!

DISSATISFIED with her narrow possessions in Europe, liberty sought a retreat in the new world, from the corruptions and miseries of the old. This country, from the ruggedness of its soil, and its remoteness from the intrigues and vices of courts, seemed equally propitious to rearing a brave and spirited race of men, as to the culture of the republican virtues. Animated with the souls of freemen, and disgusted at the political and religious intolerance of their native countries, our forefathers here sought liberty and peace. Thus was a new empire peopled, and such the origin of the destined assertors of freedom.

GREAT BRITAIN, (who claimed this country as her right, with no other reason, than that she had seen it,) when she saw our youthful colonies thriving and prosperous, treated us with kindness and attention. While we were yet young; while too weak for resistance, and too tender for oppression, she established a dominion over us, to which her only title was her power. Lest we might be unable to govern ourselves, she generously supplied us with magistrates of her own appointment. She even permitted us the liberty of fighting our own battles with the Indians; and the honour of aiding her in the conquest of Canada from the French. But her kindness carried her a step too far, when she undertook to save us some trouble, by taxing us without our concurrence! Then her politeness became officiousness, and her goodness a grievance. Neither her rights, or our obligations, were a sufficient authority for a submission to that illegal measure; and pretence wore too thin a veil to cheat the eagle-eye of Americans, jealous of their rights and their liberties. But Britain had too little delicacy to disown her real designs because they were detected; and henceforward our chains were prepared without disguise. We felt the injury, but we sought our remedy in the mild methods of petition and memorial. In vain were we told that we were Brit-

ish subjects, and blessed in the enjoyment of British liberty ; that liberty was seen to be a thing of "shreds and patches," and Americans found but a poor shelter under its mantle.

GREAT BRITAIN from a series of success in war, and an unparalleled extent of commerce, had become rich, powerful, luxurious and corrupt. She had attained a degree of corpulence little short of disease. She became careless of her duty towards her children, and arrogant in her pretensions towards all. Too illiberal to allow us any merit, too proud to make herself acquainted with our spirit and resources, too unjust to listen to our complaints or apply the remedy, she cancelled all obligations by her oppression and contempt. Her language was that of power and arrogance ; that of her colonies conciliatory and respectful. We sought not a separation from her government, we wished only the redress of certain grievances, and the equal privileges of English subjects. We would have flown into her arms, but she turned from us with disdain ! She was deaf to our remonstrances and blind to her own interest. Thanks to her impolitic counsels, thanks to her headstrong measures, they gave us our freedom !

YES, the ties of affection were broken, the bonds of filial duty were loosed, and the child stood on equal grounds with the parent. America now felt herself able to walk without leading-strings, and she resolved to free herself from their constraint. We did not want a pretext—Hostilities had begun the bloody business of war, and the moment of reconciliation was past. The empurpled fields of Lexington, Concord and Charlestown, dissolved the charm that held us in suspense ; affixed the bloody seal to the instrument of our separation ; and gave to resistance, unanimity and effect. At this moment, to waver was to submit ;—to submit was to become slaves. No doubtful "cast of thought then sicklied o'er the healthful face of resolution ;" all was energy and action. The fate of freedom was now to be determined. Arbitrary power was grasping at universal dominion, and the destruction of those rights, which are the birth-right of all, was the object of her efforts. Liberty seemed already to

have yielded her last struggle, and the tomb to have closed over her forever. But guided by reason, the genius of America, "like the resurrection angel, rolled back the stone from the sepulchre, loosed the cerements of slavery," and the celestial form of liberty rose on the enraptured eye of Americans. From her countenance beamed beneficence and love, and she was hailed with affection and joy. The people, governed by the same impulse, flocked to her standard, and solemnly pledged themselves to each other and to the world in her support. At her altar, they devoted their lives and fortunes to her service, and challenged death or victory in her defence. The moment of action was arrived, and to act with effect required the collected spirit, the united exertions of all.

THE conduct of our patriots was dignified and firm. They spoke in the manly and impressive tones of injured right and determined resentment; while conscious rectitude gave strength to the voice of honest indignation. Fired with the same sentiment, they rose with all the sublimity of soul, and solemnity of manner, inspired by the great resolve, the glorious act they were about to execute. The destiny of the American people was now to be sealed; the great question, between liberty and slavery, to be finally determined. This country had sought reparation for her violated rights by every peaceful method.— In vain; her complaints were not to be listened to by a corrupt judge bribed on the other side by interest! No; America was necessitated to do herself justice; she was driven into the high court of national appeal; her cause was to be tried in the face of the world; her points to be argued in the conclusive logic of iron and gun-powder; and the decision to rest with the Judge of Heaven.

IN the presence of all nations, the United States abjured their allegiance to the crown of England, and declared themselves a free, sovereign and independent state. Recoiling Britain paused in amazement at the boldness of the design, and at the steadiness and unanimity with which it was pursued. Surrounding nations were struck with equal astonishment at the daring spirit of the attempt, and

admiration at its unexpected success. That these United Provinces, without an organized government, without money, without discipline, and almost without arms, should be able to resist the power of Imperial Britain, commanding an irresistible navy, veteran troops, and an exhaustless treasury, was a political paradox not to be explained by the distorted and ill-founded maxims of European statesmen. No, it was impossible that any should calculate our resources, but those, who had felt the sacred fire of liberty; who had witnessed the heroic actions performed by freemen, fighting for the security of their rights. Britain confided in her gold, her mercenary armies and well-stored magazines — America trusted in the valor and perseverance of her sons, in the justice of her cause, and in the favor of the God of battles.

THE 4th of July, '76, when a new empire struggled into life, was a day of anxiety and dismay. On one side, the English Herod sought the destruction of our infant state, with all the violence of power, armed with all the machinery of death. On the other, the intrepid votaries of freedom opposed their bosoms in its defence, with all the magnanimity of resolution and despair.

MANY, now present, will remember with a sigh, the emotions and sufferings of that hour. To paint them with truth and feeling is above my powers. The distress of a mother, rendered childless by the barbarous hand of war, and in helpless age mourning the lost solace and support of filial kindness:—The agony of the wife, while she sees the partner of her joys binding on the long disused implements of death, and quitting the loved scenes of domestic life, to seek a hapless fate on the blood-stained fields of battle:—The shrieks of the fond maid, whose ardent hopes of happiness expired in the last embrace of her departing lover: these are subjects, that require the pencil of a master. Here imagination reaches not the colouring of reality, and description falters at the threshold of its theme!

AFTER the continued bloodshed, sufferings and horrors of seven years of war, victory declared for liberty and America. This joyful and glorious event justified our hopes,

and repaid all our sacrifices and toils. Peace, like the freshened sun from the ocean, once more shed its cheerful beams on our shores, and gave auspicious promise of a new and happier day. From the ravages of war our country presented a most affecting picture of devastation and ruin. But although destitute and naked, we were free, and could repair our losses! British vengeance, like the burning lava of a volcano, had poured destruction on our people, and desolation over our land; but like that, it was only to render our labours more productive, to give a new fertility to our soil, and increased luxuriance to the flowers, that again bloomed in our fields.*

It is time to pay our tribute to those patriotic heroes and statesmen, who in this struggle, so nobly devoted their lives and talents to the necessities of their country. Did our limits permit a particular eulogy on the merits of each, it would be unnecessary. Their names and services are fresh in the recollection of all. Their actions are the highest panegyric on their characters, and an everlasting monument to their fame. One only will I mention, and to mention will be sufficient. The pages of history already emblazon his deeds; and the admiration of the world is the unequivocal evidence of his greatness. Trenton, Princeton, York, and Monmouth are the indelible records of his valour; but his virtues and services, are written in the glowing characters of gratitude on the hearts of his countrymen. He is now a saint—He has quitted this earth, and a nation has wept at his departure. All doubtless anticipate me. Shall I say more? He was our political saviour, our father:—His name—WASHINGTON!

In our labours for independence, we were not without assistance from foreign states and foreign individuals. Of the latter, it would be ungrateful not to mention those two illustrious volunteers in the cause of liberty, Fayette and Kosciusko. Their services here, and their sufferings in Europe will be ever remembered by Americans with a tear of gratitude and sympathy.

* It is a well known fact, that those places which have been deluged by volcanic eruptions, have gained a fertility of soil, much exceeding what they originally possessed.

FROM certain nations we also received important aid and support. At the time, filled with sincere and generous gratitude, we disdained to question the motives of that assistance, which relieved us in a moment of distress. But time and reflection have placed the nature and degree of our obligations in a more just light; and we have ample reason to conclude, that, at this day, all favors from foreign states are repaid. Such as we still feel, we will not hesitate to acknowledge. For our independence, we owe thanks to the injustice and folly of Great Britain; we owe thanks to the ambition of France, and her enmity to England; we owe thanks to Holland for her money and good will; and lastly, thanks to God, that all other obligations are cancelled. America, then, at this hour, is truly and unconditionally free!

WHEN our states were acknowledged sovereign and independent by the courts of Europe, *the recording angel of heaven enrolled a new name in the list of nations.* Happily for us, the Architect of the world, separated our country, by three thousand miles of ocean, from the complicated intrigues and politics of the eastern continent. Thus situated, it is in our power to baffle their influence, elude their designs, and preserve our neutrality and independence. Our foreign relations have been a subject of political difference: but the interests of a distant republic, that is fully competent to its own protection, appear very plain; and the principles which ought to dictate her conduct towards other governments, very simple. Treaties, whether of alliance or commerce, can have no other object, than political advantage. Those for the regulation of commerce are perhaps necessary; but treaties of alliance, founded on friendship, are but toils, spread to ensnare our peace and freedom. To talk of friendship among nations is absurd. It is a word not to be found in the catalogue of national passions, and we might as well talk of national love, or national matrimony. It never did or ever can exist, except in the splendid theories of visionary enthusiasts, or in the fanciful construction of a political romance. The policies of different nations are so various and fluct-

uating, and the violations of national engagements so frequent, one is ready to conclude, that leagues and conventions are the mere play-things of sovereigns, of which the sole object is to shew their dexterity, and amuse their admiring subjects;—that their promises in these covenants, like the polite language of a man of fashion, mean—nothing. We hope America may never be “entangled in alliances” with any nation. With a monarchy, such a connexion would be unnatural and absurd; and with a government founded on principles similar to our own, unnecessary. No; Americans, the best security for the justice, respect, and good faith of foreign states, is an “equal conduct to all,” a fervile complaisance and concession to none; union among ourselves and a constant preparation for war. Our well-mounted batteries, our brave seamen, and intrepid militia, will ever be found of more importance to our safety, than a thousand treaties.

FROM the moment our independence was declared, we were no longer to be British, French, German, or Irish; we were to become Americans. We were to assume a national character, as peculiar and distinct as our constitution and sovereignty. We have been the subjects of a king, we are now the sovereign people. We have become the citizens of a new government, and have incurred new duties and relations. We have framed for ourselves a constitution on the just and eternal basis of reason, liberty and equal rights. A man here knows no restraint, but that of law; and law is here no other than reason, acting under the authoritative sanction of government. The spirit of man is now free, the shackles which confined him are broken, and his faculties are once more allowed to expand in the broad luxuriance of native liberty. The human character is unveiled, and the philosophic painter may now pourtray its features with accuracy and truth. Man is again his own master, the uncontrolled governor of his own actions, and it is now to be seen, of what he is, as well as of what he is not capable. The great question is at length to be decided, whether man can support a government, whose fundamental principles are liberty and equality; or, whether

he be constitutionally a slave ; whether he must, as the last sad alternative, seek a sanctuary from the turbulence and obliquities of his nature, in the fearful temple of despotism.

THE love of liberty is one of the strongest affections of the human breast, and yet in the world there is scarcely a free people. This is a truth at which the mind recoils, and whose solution cannot fail to degrade the human character. The few popular forms of government, that have yet appeared have had, comparatively, but a short duration. Without an exception, the civilized nations of the world have ever been unable long to maintain sufficient knowledge and virtue to perceive their interests and to pursue them. The history of states is but a continued tissue of human greatness and human folly ; and, since the disaster of our first parents, mankind seem ever to have needed a guardian ! Monarchical government, by taking all exercise of sovereignty from the people, favours that natural indolence in men, which has so often induced them to relinquish those advantages they could not preserve without labour and attention. Thus have they purchased the indulgence of their passions at the expence of their rights and liberties. Thus they have sold their best privileges to kings, to buy a precarious and destructive protection for the remainder !

NOTWITHSTANDING these discouraging reflections, this country has made one more effort to rescue the human character from disgrace, by uniting in the support of a free and rational constitution. We are now making a last experiment, and, with the experience of three thousand years to direct us, if we fail, the friends of humanity must despair. Liberty sees the last act of her drama ; if she finds America without spirit to protect her, she must return to her mansion in heaven, till returning chaos announces the dissolution of the universe, and the promised regeneration of man.

OURS is unquestionably a government of the people's choice ; but to choose is not enough. Let us not

weakly imagine, that to will a free constitution is sufficient to produce or support it. The principles, on which it is founded, must be cherished and defended with vigilance and labour. We must preserve that simplicity, which is the basis of the republican character, that "equality so necessary to secure obedience to the laws," and that love of the public weal, to which every thing else ought to give precedence. Civil freedom can never be securely grounded on any other than incorruptible manners, and a system of strict and austere morality.* Virtue is pronounced by antient and modern philosophers the vital principle of republics, without which they cannot exist. Hence the grand object of our laws, manners, and education should be calculated to inspire and preserve it.† The first duty of old age should be to awaken in youth an attachment to liberty and virtue: the second, to give the example. The first virtues youth ought to acquire, should be republican; and the first passion, which should grow in his bosom, love for his country.

THE manners and habits of life, and the nature of government are the reciprocal indications of each other. Opinion is an engine of mighty power in the production of political effects, and, among the antient republics, had a stronger influence on their actions than law. With them, liberty was an associated deity in their religious worship; and virtue and simplicity of life were habitual. Opinion there rooted the base passion of selfishness from the human bosom, and planted public virtue in its place. The property, talents and lives of all were enrolled in the service of the commonwealth; and it was an envied fate to die in defence of their country.

SUCH were the noble sentiments, that produced the heroes who fought at Marathon and Thermopylæ. Such were the feelings which fired the patriots, who bled on the heights of Charlestown!

THESE high-souled virtues have effected our glorious revolution: and these alone can preserve our liberties.

* Mr. Burke's reflections on the French revolution.

† Montesquieu's spirit of the laws.

A republican constitution is, from its nature, surrounded by innumerable evils. It is an elegant but delicate fabric, easily disfigured, and that requires the unceasing attention of its possessors, to guard its purity and beauty. Let us not rest in careless security. Let us not imagine our freedom is without its enemies, or beyond the reach of danger. There are enemies and there are dangers! Do you ask where? I answer among ourselves; in the corrupt morals and licentious opinions, that are creeping into our country; in political dissensions; in the ranour of party spirit; in the disrespect shewn the administrators of our government, and the ingratitude which follows those patriots, who have grown grey, who have worn out life in the service of their country. Here are our errors, and heaven grant, they be not fatal! I say nothing new; these truths are acknowledged by all men, though no one chuses to criminate himself! I speak of principles, whose correctness every individual and every party is willing to avow, but whose violation each charges upon the other. Unfortunately, liberty is the native soil of faction, and by securing to wicked and ambitious citizens an equal right of publishing what errors or opinions they please, she furnishes arms for her own destruction. This is an unavoidable evil; an evil, to which no remedy can be opposed, but the good sense and discernment of the people. We sincerely hope with our President, that our constitution may never find itself in danger, from "error of opinion, while reason is left free to combat it."*

ANOTHER rich source of evil we have in foreign influence. I mean not to make a common assertion with regard either to French or English gold, for I could furnish no proofs. But while every vessel that arrives on these shores from Europe, is freighted with her principles, luxuries and vices, can we affirm ourselves free from foreign influence? No; and it is a poison the more dangerous, because its operation is gradual and unsuspected. By these polluted channels, our country is deluged with contagious refinements on vice, and licentious outrage on morals.

LUXURY and faction are the parent evils, whose numerous offspring assail, on all sides, the party of the re-

* Inaugural speech.

publican character. By turning our eyes to the history of other free states, we shall perceive the fate which threatens, and learn how to avoid it. The remembered fall of former republics, whose errors were their graves, like the midnight apparition, forewarns us of our danger. Recollect Rome! Under the reign of liberty and morals she was happy! The republican virtues gave her a superiority over other nations, that was not to be resisted. Success attended every step, and she quickly rose to that dizzy height of greatness, where, intoxicated with her own magnificence, she forgot the noble virtues by which she had ascended. Prosperity, like fabled Jupiter of yore, descended in a shower of gold, and begat luxury, corruption and ruin. Her simplicity, moderation and liberty were no more, and the republic was crushed under the incumbent weight of its own folly and grandeur. In the modern commonwealths of Italy, liberty seemed a mere name, hung out as a sign by ambition, to cheat the sense of the spectator. Faction there rioted in all the miseries of civil discord, and was ever wresting the sceptre from the hands of one tyrant, to bestow it on another. The same reflections will apply to the French republic. But of France I am silent.* The effects of irreligion and anarchy in that nation are a lesson, big with important instruction for America; and while we commiserate her misfortunes, we will extract wisdom from her errors. †

AMERICANS! we have escaped in safety the storm of revolution; our political sky is again serene, and should

* We might indeed lament the extreme inaccuracy and impatience the French have discovered in their experiments on government, as much important intelligence on that subject was expected from the result. The French must surely have a most fastidious taste in politics, or ere this they would have been suited with some one of those numerous and brilliant constitutions, that within twelve years have issued from her political laboratory. Buonaparte seems to have discovered the greatest address in that art, and has at length fitted them with one, which, while its operation is facilitated by that powerful engine the French bayonet, will undoubtedly give perfect satisfaction to the French people. In her institutions and names France seems to have drawn many hints from the ancient republic. She has sought to give her liberty a Roman dress, but it has not become her. It looked, as would the armour of Moentius, upon a Parisian monarch! Of the French government, at this day, I will say nothing; for, like the Cenciemon, it changes colour to often. I never could be sure I was right. The republic assumes as many phases as the moon with out her regularity; and it would confound the political astronomer to predict the figure she will exhibit tomorrow! While France was struggling for national liberty she naturally had many friends in this country, and we called her by the endearing appellation of Sister; but what epithet would now be appropriate I know not. She appears a perfect non-descript among nations, and we are ignorant in what genus or species to class her.

† "Felix, quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum."

we be now wrecked, it must happen from mutiny among ourselves, or treachery in our pilots. So long as we can maintain the simplicity and virtue of the republican character; so long as we have the knowledge and patriotism to perceive the public good and to pursue it, we shall be free. But when vice and immorality enter; when we can no longer preserve unbroken the barriers between liberty and licentiousness; when crimination and invective take place of candid enquiry; when political discussion degenerates to party heat; at that moment adieu to liberty! We shall then be fited to receive a perpetual dictator as at Rome, or a chief consul as in France. We will then throw ourselves at the feet of some tyrant, who, with compassionate hand, shall strip us of those rights, which, in our own possession, were the instruments of calamity. The bayonets of a standing army, or the peaceful walls of a bastille, shall then compel us to that tranquillity, submission and happiness, which, free, we knew not how to maintain. Like the abandoned wretch, who, without the resolution to provide for his own sufferings and wants, procures by his crimes, the ease and comfort of a prison! In that hour shall the enemies of liberty, the advocates of aristocracy, triumph in the fulfilment of their predictions!

THANK God, these are but the apprehensions of one deeply solicitous for the welfare of his country and the honour of human nature. Heaven grant, the picture may exist only in imagination. Yes, America shall still be free, for she is the mistress of her own destiny.

UNDER our excellent constitution, we enjoy as ample liberty and as many rights, as is compatible with the state of society, or necessary to happiness. We exercise sovereignty by representation; and while we preserve our own purity, we can never have a corrupt administration. While we bestow offices only on talents and virtue; while we make "merit the only road to honour," and honour exclusively the reward of merit, our legislators and magistrates will possess wisdom and integrity.

IN peace we are our own support; in war our own protection. America must be equally a nation of citizens and a nation of soldiers. At the call of their country, her

people must be as ever ready to resign the plough for the sword, as to resign the sword for the plough. In peace they must ever remember they are the soldiers of liberty ; in war they must not forget they are the citizens of a Republic. An error on either side is ruin!

I HAVE now performed my task. I have sketched the history of our independence, the principles that produced, and the patriots who accomplished it. Our attention has been turned to our relations as an independant state, our duties as citizens, and dangers as republicans. We have seen that liberty has here made a last stand, and that we are her guardians. The government of the United States, in the language of Mr. JEFFERSON, is “the world’s best hope ;” and Americans will answer the expectation at the expence of their blood.

OUR fathers thought liberty dearer to them than life, and their children will disdain to survive the loss of their independence. To the noble motives which actuated them, we have the additional sentiment of affection and regard for their memory. With us, it shall be a sacred point of honor to defend, at any sacrifice, the patrimony they have bequeathed us. On the foundations laid by our fathers, their sons will erect a structure, that shall surpass, in strength, beauty and duration, the most admired fabrics of the world. On this festival, shall America ever indulge “the feast of reason and the the flow of soul.” This anniversary shall be ever sacred to freemen ! With this commemoration, the actions, principles and virtues of our fathers shall descend to latest generations. Another word and I have done.

ON this day 1776, the united people of America swore to live free or die ! In glorious imitation, shall their children, on each returning year, solemnly renew the oath, and pledge themselves for its performance, to the fainted spirits of their fires ! Thus shall America enjoy happiness and glory through indefinite ages ; and the mantle of liberty, wrought by the noble labors of our ancestors, like that of Elijah, shall rest on succeeding posterity.