

On the tent-covered plains of Shinar, Nimrod converted his bow and javelin against his brethren. To rear a magnificent palace for his posterity, he projected the tower of Babel ; and, as if to awe the Almighty, he contemplated its overlooking his throne. But He, before whom the nations of the earth are *as grass-hoppers*, checked his mad career. To destroy this monopoly of power, the God of Heaven descended, confounded the language of his subjects and dispersed them over the whole earth.

The Assyrian and Babylonian, Persian and Macedonian monarchies have successively passed away. Like the gourd of Jonah, they sprang up in the night of ignorance, and when the sun of knowledge arose, they withered.

The republics of Greece and Rome have been shipwrecked upon the tempest-tossed ocean of revolution. Upon the fragments of their constitutions, which have drifted down to posterity, is indelibly inscribed the wisdom of their Lycurguses, Solons, and Numas. Whilst these stern, inflexible republicans instruct us in the true art of legislation, the fate of their republics premonishes us of the dissolution of our own.

After the inundation of the Roman Empire by the Goths and Vandals, ages rolled away, during which the world presented nothing but anarchy, wretchedness and slavery. Upon the broad theatre of Europe ambition and fanaticism vied in spreading misery and desolation. At length *the sun of righteousness arose with healing under his wings*. He prostrated the altars of the Pope, and silenced the thunders of the Vatican. But, alas ! too often have we seen ambitious tyrants gird on the sword of religion ; too

often have we seen their soldiers clad in the livery of the king of heaven ; too often have we seen external force applied to bow the will and subjugate the mind. The pages of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are stained with Christian blood. Bigotry and zeal are the characteristics of those days. Papists and Popes, with Satan and his infernal machinery racked their inventions of torture. To enlighten the minds of heretics, they enveloped them in flames. To convince them of their religious errors, they sent them to heaven in chariots of fire. But blessed be the Almighty, who makes even the wrath of man to praise him. This exterminating zeal brought about an era of infinite importance to the world. To escape this sanguinary persecution, our pious Forefathers meditated a retreat for themselves and their posterity, where the arm of Popery would not be long enough to reach them, nor strong enough to bring them back. In the most inclement and boisterous season of the year their barque approached these shores. Our rude coast presented no Arrarat, upon which it might rest in safety. Interesting fugitives ! Whither, ah whither shall they flee ! If they turned their eyes to the land of their nativity, the flames of persecution still streaked the horizon. If they looked toward the west, gloomy forests intercepted their sight. There was no alternative. To return was to perish, to proceed almost inevitable destruction. At this momentous crisis, when heaven and earth seemed to have abandoned them, they had nothing, upon which they could rely, save their religion and their God. And He, who hears the young ravens, when they cry, who numbers our hairs, and notes the fall of every sparrow, was not unmindful of his wandering children.

Amidst poverty and distress the same stern dignity, which awed their tyrants, marked their actions. The religion of the meek and lowly Jesus was not forgotten in the wilderness. In his cottage, the sire appeared the king and the priest. He, who taught his children to labour, led them to the fount, whence all blessings flow. Soon "the woods bowed beneath their sturdy strokes." The rose, which had flung its fragrance on the desert, bloomed not unseen. "Their cattle grazed a thousand hills," and in autumn the plains waved with golden harvests. Villages and cities almost magically arose in the wilderness. The vallies that had re-echoed the war-whoop, resounded the high praises of God. Where stood the Pagan altar, was reared the Christian temple. Every breeze wafted their commerce, and every wave undulated their riches. In the full tide of this prosperity, England *graciously* offered to take under her fostering care *the bantling*, which she had strangled, and cast out. All the indignities imposed upon our ancestors could not obliterate their allegiance. They received patents and charters under the signature of the crown. Under the benedictions of Providence, their transition from poverty to wealth, from impotence to opulence, is unrivalled. They compelled the savage tribes to bury the murderous tomahawk, and bloody scalping knife, and drove the treacherous Frenchman to his home. With filial reverence they bowed before the constituted authorities of their mother country, and unanimously acknowledged her sovereignty. Not even a dream of emancipation had entered the brain of the most visionary projector. And it still remains a problem unsolved, whether America might not have realised, at least, an equal tide of fortune, had the rulers of

Great-Britain feared God or regarded man. But a king arose who knew not Joseph. He cast an envious eye on the rising glory of his western colonies. In them he saw a nation, increasing in wealth, increasing in power. He knew, that if he did not immediately assert and enforce his sovereignty, that his decrees would be regarded no more by them, than the whistling of the wind. One act of oppression succeeded another. The parliament of Great-Britain asserted the right *to tax America in all cases whatever*. At this her hardy yeomanry rose indignant. They made the voice of remonstrance reach even the British throne. In language so plain, that he who runs must read, they declared to George III. that they would become hewers of wood and drawers of water to no power upon earth. Relying on her invincible fleets, and irresistible armies, England disregarded this solemn asseveration. America assumed an attitude, at which the wondering world silently gazed and admired. Then arose the Genius of Columbia. Then appeared man in his greatest glory. Then was offered the last alternative—chains for our neck, or the sword for our bosom. The breast was opened to receive the sword, the chains hurled in the tyrant's teeth. The heroes of '76 appealed to heaven's chancery for the rectitude of their cause, and, before the throne of the living God, swore to live and to die free.

This, my fellow citizens, is the anniversary we celebrate. This is the American jubilee. This is the natal day of our nation. This morn, thirty-four years, witnessed a spectacle, solemn and sublime. A nation dashing in pieces the manacles of slavery, rising in the majesty of freedom, resolving to immolate their oppressors upon her altar, or entomb them-

8

selves amid the ruin of their liberties. This is the day upon which Franklin, Hancock, Adams and Jefferson, pronounced and promulgated an eternal separation from the British empire. Each son of freedom caught the spirit of patriotism. The highlands of New-England echoed with the shouts of liberty and independence. They reverberated from one end of the continent to the other. A host of heroes arose, who in consummating their own glory, made their country immortal. To commemorate their achievements, have we this day assembled. Let me intreat you, indiscriminately, to leave all party spirit and animosities at the threshold of this sanctuary, harmonise in this celebration, and strike unison notes in the song of liberty.

Led on by their gallant officers, these intrepid sons of freedom braved every danger. Though in many a hard fought battle, the melancholy glory of counting and telling the slain was reserved for the British soldiers, yet our troops achieved wonders. Almost every hill witnessed their valour, and every plain their intrepidity. On the plains of Bennington, Saratoga, Trenton, York-Town, at the fords of the Catawba, and on the banks of the Paulet, your Starks, your Gateses, your Greenes, your Lees, your Montgomeries and your Sullivans, tore from the brows of the British troops, those laurels which their Edward and Henry had won, and encircled them with the gloomy cypress. Think you, my fellow citizens, that your liberties were purchased with the song of triumph? No. They are the price of the best blood of America. They are sealed with the lives of a Warren, a Montgomery, a Worster, a Mercer, a Lawrens, a Scamel, with a host of worthies, the mention of whose names, should thaw the frost of age,

and with martial vigor renovate the grey-bearded soldier.

Yes, sainted martyrs, though your bodies lie en-  
 tombed upon the high places of your country, though  
 not even a grey stone marks your interment, yet  
 your names shall be consecrated to freedom, your  
 trophies shall decorate her temple, and your virtues  
 be inurned in our hearts. *Virgines, puerique mani-  
 bus liber plenis, purpureosque spargite flores.\** But  
 where is the leader of these worthies; where is our  
 WASHINGTON; whose head was a cabinet, and whose  
 arm a host; who was a cloud by day and a pillar of  
 fire by night to the American Israel; who led them  
 through a wilderness of oppression, and a Red Sea  
 of revolution?

“On the whirlwind of the war,  
 High he rode in vengeance dire,  
 To his friends a leading star,  
 To his foes consuming fire.”

Washington, who led our armies to victory and our  
 councils to honor, is not. Washington, the Patriot,  
 the Statesman, the Warrior, and the Christian, is no  
 more.—His bow hangs in the halls of his country,  
 but who can bend it? His sword is returned to its  
 scabbard, but who has strength to draw it, or cour-  
 age to wield it? Like the sun, he pursued his course  
 through our political firmament, with a firmness,  
 which nothing could shake, and a lustre, which  
 nothing could tarnish. But this splendid luminary  
 of our country's glory has set forever. And whilst  
 on earth Washington receives the acclamations of  
 every grateful son of Columbia, in heaven he shall

\* Virgil.

**ORATION,**

PRONOUNCED AT

**HOLLES, NEW-HAMPSHIRE,**

**JULY 4, 1810.**

BY

*Isaac* **FLETCHER.**

..... "TYRANNY  
 Absolves all faith ; and who invades our rights,  
 Howe'er his own commence, can never be  
 But an usurper. ....  
 For though the structure of a tyrant's throne  
 Rose on the necks of half the suffering world,  
 Fear trembles in the cement, prayers and tears  
 And secret curses sap its mould'ring base,  
 And steal the pillars of allegiance."

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

**AMHERST, N. H.**

PRINTED BY RICHARD BOYLSTON.

**1810.**

# ORATION.

**LIBERTY** is the birthright of man. From his Creator he received the charter of his independence. He acknowledged his God his law-giver, and to his throne only stood he amenable.

Whilst the patriarchs fed their flocks upon the oriental hills, parental government was exercised. Every family was a distinct republic, and every father a legislator. Soon were they scattered far and wide. Few wants originated few dependences. Like the aborigines of this country, they lived with little knowledge of each other, and less intercourse. But when agriculture unfolded its riches, when from her *cornû copîæ* Ceres poured the profusions of harvest, they were again aggregated, they founded cities, they constituted governments. Their fears and their wants were the adamant chains that bound them. To suppress the one, and supply the other, was the ultimatum of civil polity. Merchandize was the natural consequence of society; and as passions became disjoined commerce lifted her sail. Hence the multiplicity of laws; hence the avarice and oppression of the rich; hence the ambition and tyranny of the great. Infatuated by the dazzle of opulence, man's insatiable hand grasps even the *widow's mite*; intoxicated with the maddening draughts of ambition, he tramples down all laws, human and divine. Ever since these infuriate passions dilated his breast, he has invaded the prerogatives of his fellow man.



hear the plaudits of saints and angels. Language is too impotent to paint the horrors of an eight years' exterminating war. A war, which with more than wanton barbarity desolated our villages and depopulated our cities. A war in which the British sword and Indian tomahawk strove with each other in the *refined* art of human butchery. A war, which made thousands of widows and tens of thousands of orphans. A war, disgraceful to England—glorious to America. If there be in this assembly any, who do not duly appreciate their liberties, upon you, ye widows, I call ; I call upon you, ye orphans ; I call upon you, ye veterans, whose hoary locks, in proclaiming your martial honors, declare that, like the servants of Job, you only are left to tell the news ; to tell and to teach them the worth of their birth-rights. In imagination take them to Bunker's heights. Show them Prescott and his gallant band, the American Leonidas, resolving to perish upon the vestibule of Freedom's temple, amid the flames of the adjacent country. Let them follow you to the Hudson, there see the bones of the miserable wretches who perished in the English prison ships, still bleaching its shores. Tell them, that you were forbidden giving them that morsel, for which they famished. Tell them, that their inhuman captors denied them the mournful privilege of common sepulture. If still unmoved, let them boast of their stonism, let them swear allegiance to George III. and glory in the trophies of his myrmidons.

My countrymen, "is this fancy or is it fact?" Is the history of our American revolution a fable? Are the sufferings of our soldiers a fiction? But I will not appeal to history. I see here and there in this assembly a living witness, who was an actor in these

tragedical scenes. Let them testify to the present generation the authenticity of these facts. Let the present generation tell it to their children, and to their children's children, and when they see their little hearts bursting with patriotism, and their infant eyes overflowing with tears of gratitude, say to them, that these were the *tender mercies* of Great-Britain. That these were the sufferings of our Patriots. That these were the prices of their liberties. But I draw a veil over this picture, at the sight of which humanity shudders. I pass in silence the recital of crimes, which none but Britains could have perpetrated. For the honor of England, let the butcher and the butchered sleep together in the dust.

Our independence achieved and acknowledged, the world anxiously looked for our slaying and devouring each other. They had never seen the paradox of thirteen separate states consolidated into one government. But those, who knew how to conquer, knew also how to govern. They framed a constitution, which under providence, remains the bulwark of our liberties. They placed Washington, the great and the good, at the head of our federal republic. He was our pillar of state; the pivot, upon which vibrated the prosperity of our nation. The eight years of his administration were the golden age of our country. He received the reins of government under the happiest of auspices. Party spirit had not arisen in its serpent coils, and spit around its venom. British nirelings and French emissaries were then without a name. All united heart and hand in supporting the administration, and enforcing its resolves. While we harmonized in sentiment, and united our strength, foreign nations feared our resentment, and respected our rights. A tide of

prosperity broke in upon us, which the wildest and most chimerical enthusiast had never anticipated. With colossal strides our country approached wealth, opulence and grandeur. In the full career of glory, Washington retired from public to private life. Adams, his worthy coadjutor, was raised to the chair of supremacy. He explicitly declares, that he had to struggle with party and faction. That against his better judgment, he adopted measures, the inutility of which has been sufficiently proved. However, with a few exceptions his administration with his successor's was prosperous.

No laws bind tyrants and despots. Give them power, and they will always assume the right. With them solemn treaties are but solemn mockeries; only a lure to draw the unwary within their grasp. Their interest and friendship are coextensive. Create the one and you secure the other. In vain do you prate about national friendship. It exists but in theory. It means nothing more, than *your friend and humble servant* at the bottom of the duellist's challenge. A wise and prudent government will rely on their power to awe, not to conciliate. It is the duty of every executive to be prepared to meet every emergence; and it is no less the duty of every citizen cheerfully to support his own government against the lawless aggressions of foreign powers. Better be wrong with a friend, than right with an enemy. But it can never be wrong to support our own constitution. It is treason to do otherwise. For seventeen years wars, civil and foreign, had marched over Europe, carrying death and desolation in their van. The despot of the continent, and the tyrant of the ocean, had seen America enjoy exclusively a trade too lucrative not to be envied. It had annually enriched our country between ten and twelve millions

of dollars. This was drawn wholly from foreign nations. These warring powers, which never united in any thing else, seem to have united in a system to paralyze our commerce, and to beggar our citizens. The imperial decrees and the orders in council are the *besom* with which they have swept the ocean. It is not my intention to weigh their aggressions by drachms and scruples. Suffice it to say, if we have been insulted by one, we have been abused by the other ; if we have been kicked here, we have been cuffed there ; if we have been spit upon by this, we have had our noses tweaked by that. England seeks for nothing, but to glut her avarice. France nothing, but to satiate her ambition. Can there be a partisan so bigotted, who has not seen with abhorrence the annihilation of our national rights by these freebooters ? If there be, let him step forth, and the voice of truth shall silence him. It shall be no sophisticated argument, drawn to bewilder and perplex his judgment. No fine speech graced with the charms of oratory and decorated with the flowers of rhetoric. The power to do this belongs not to me. Neither the occasion nor the subject require it. It shall be the simple truth in a plain, homespun, rural, dress. Stubborn facts, inflexible to all sinister and party views. Then let him, if he have an appetite, answer these questions, and controvert these statements.

Has not France forbidden our trading with England ? Has she not sequestered and confiscated our property ? Has she not burned our ships upon the high seas ? Has she not imprisoned our citizens ? Has she not told us, that we must go to war either for or against her ? Has she not violated the most sacred of treaties ? Has she not now in her imperial

treasury millions of our property? On the other hand, England has pursued a destructive commercial system, unknown to the law of nations. She has seized thousands of our citizens piratically, and compelled them to fight her battles. She has violated the rights of hospitality. In our own waters she has captured our merchantmen, murdered and enslaved our citizens. Will any one say that this flagrant outrage has been disavowed? Has his gracious majesty been pleased to mark the conduct of the gallant officers of the *Melempus* and the *Leopard* with any expressions of his displeasure? Or has he not advanced them to more important stations? By the orders in council, our commerce was excluded from all Europe, except Sweden. Under these circumstances an embargo was recommended by your Executive, and established by your Congress. The wisdom and utility of which have been generally approved, notwithstanding the preponderating interest, the consummate wisdom, and profound talents of our costive patriots, have been marshalled to excite rebellion, and dismember the union.\*

We must look for the origin of our commercial evils, not in the hostility of our executive to commerce, as some have suggested, but in the convulsions of Europe, that have shaken her empires and her thrones to their centres. And when time shall have obliterated all party bickerings; when the faithful and impartial historian shall have chronicled the transactions of our administrations, it will then appear, who is the meritorious servant, who has been faithful over what has been committed to his charge.

\* Should any one be dissatisfied with this expression, he is referred to Washington's Farewell Address.

If a monarchy concentrate more energy; if an aristocracy combine more wisdom, a republic embraces more freedom. The wisdom of the framers of our constitution needs no comment. The excellence of the constitution itself has been sufficiently verified. Never did any other nation rise so rapidly to opulence and power. But mutability is enstamped on all material objects. In the vitals of every government are deep sown the seeds of its dissolution. But we confidently hope, that the time may never come, when our constitution shall be changed. But this remains with our citizens. Religion, public virtue, and a general diffusion of knowledge, are the main pillars of a republican government. When a cold indifference to public worship, when avarice, like the canker, shall corrode the public mind, when ignorance shall overspread the lower class of citizens, our fair fabric of liberty must tumble to ruins. The tree of freedom is inflexible to every revolutionary blast, until the worm of corruption has perforated its core. Should the time come, when in your elections you look to measures, not men, when your national legislature shall be composed of the legitimate sons of mammon, you may bid adieu to your liberties. The letter of your constitution may remain, but its spirit will be fled. You may tear the parchment, and scatter it to the winds of heaven, it will no longer protect your immunities. With the degenerate sons of Greece and Rome, you may bow before your lords, kiss the rod of their power, and thank your GOD that it is no heavier. But may this judgment be averted, until the streams of time be lost in the ocean of eternity.

*Gentlemen Officers and Fellow Soldiers,*

To your guardian care are committed the dearest rights of your country. It is yours to defend and preserve its liberties. Whilst ambition is abroad in the earth, whilst it is overturning an empire here, and crushing a throne there, a government without a martial force adequate to its protection, cannot exist. Your duty imperiously commands you to be at all times prepared. As yet you are strangers to the tented field. Your ears have never heard the groans of the dying, nor your eyes seen garments rolled in blood. But the time may not be distant, when the the tempest of war may approach our shores ; when the rattling of drums, the clangor of trumpets, and the roaring of cannon, may arouse us from our peaceful slumbers, and call you to form the embattled line. And when those banners shall wave over the field of battle, when that gloomy silence shall pervade every rank, like the awful pause that precedes nature's convulsion, in that hour of peril and danger, may a spark from the altar of liberty kindle in your bosoms the fire of patriotism ; may the God of hosts, who marshals the armies of heaven, inspire you with more than mortal courage ; may each of you prove, that you have caught the mantles of our revolutionary Elijah, and that a double portion of their spirit rests upon you, and may you so acquit yourselves, that a Washington, as he bends from heaven, may see and approve your valour.

Should England ever demand your tribute ; pay it them in powder and ball. Should France ever invade your shores ; meet them upon the beach, oppose them, until each of your firelocks shall be

liquified, and every sword worn to the hilt. Thus shall you stand a terror to your enemies ; a shield and a bulwark to your country's liberties, until the millenium shall commence,\* when swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, spears into pruning hooks, and man learn war no more.

*Much respected Audience,*

The present moment is pregnant with events of lasting importance. Never did our national concerns devolve with more weight upon our citizens. They hold in their hands the destinies of not our government only, but perhaps of the world. America is the only asylum of persecuted liberty. By every art the great belligerents are striving to disseminate the seeds of discord. Every section of our country is infected with a political pestilence. Why is it that in our national legislature our New-England representation has no more influence ? Is it because a political dearth has passed over our land ? Or is it because those who could adorn and dignify our councils, refuse to be held up, a mark for the arrows of calumny and malice ? Would you measure the abilities of a politician by the strength of his lungs ? *As well might you ascertain the skill of a quack by the magnitude of his saddle-bags ;* patriotism speaks in a still small voice to her friends, but in a voice of thunder to her enemies. Away then with your milk-and-water gentlemen. As well might you send your petticoated politicians ; they would sip their tea with as much grace, and say *yea* and *nay* with equal facility. Let union cement every party. Unite in electing men, who have talents to plan and courage to execute. Support the government of your own

*How old will they be by that time ?*



choice in preference to any other under heaven.  
The man who would not do this, *the measure of his soul is as much below that of an American's, as is the vilest reptile beneath its Creator.*