

# ORATION

PRONOUNCED

AT SAUGUS, JULY · FOURTH,

1815,

THE ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

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BY M. HALL, JR.

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Res cum re, causa cum causâ, ratio cum ratione  
pugnabit CICERO.

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1815.

THE undersigned committee, appointed by the citizens of Saugus to wait on Mr. HALL to request him to give them an Oration on July 4, last, return thanks to him for the patriotic Oration he delivered, and request a copy for the press.

ROBERT EMES,  
ZACHERIAH MANSFIELD.

MR. MOSES HALL, JUN.

*Saugus, July 6, 1815.*

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SAUGUS, JULY 7, 1815.

GENTLEMEN,

SENSIBLE of the high and distinguished honour you have conferred on me by this application, I cannot but comply with it. But, while I thus bend to your wishes, I must sue for those elevated charities which cast in the shade many imperfections:—not doubting but I shall meet with them in all their benignity, when you remember my youth, the ill state of my health, and the paucity of the moments allotted me for this production.

Respectfully yours,

M. HALL, JUN.

ROBERT EMES, Esq.

MR. ZACH. MANSFIELD.

## ORATION.

MY FELLOW CITIZENS,

**T**HERE is a beauty and grandeur in the scene, which fills my mind with sublime perceptions, and my heart with the most delectable feelings, when a *great and happy* people throng annually to their hallowed temples, to celebrate the memorable era of their national Independence.

Is there any in this assembly who have heard and who remember the events which gave birth to this bright anniversary, and can look with cold-hearted indifference and stupid apathy on its periodic return?—No, I would not think there is one here who does not feel as he ought on so brilliant an occasion. He who cannot perceive, who cannot affix a proper estimate on the blessings of rational liberty, cannot be expected to mingle in common with us grand and delectable feelings.

When our progenitors first came to this country they found it a howling wilderness:—The Indian, brutes and birds, were tenants in common of the dismal shade, which, tangled and matted, was almost impenetrable to the solar beam. The soil had never

been subdued by the hard hand of agriculture. Rivers, on which commerce had never spread her milky sail, and minor streams which are now subservient to the wants of man, were seen to range unmanaged, and to waste their waters in the wide bosom of old ocean, or dissipate them in reedy fens and sleeping stagnant pools.

The aboriginals were fierce, numerous, warlike and hostile to our fathers;—though hospitable to *friends*, yet implacable to *enemies*; and they looked on our fathers *as* their enemies, and were ever plotting their utter extermination. The faith and sanctity of their treaties were never thought binding, when they found themselves the stronger of the two. The pilgrims' (as our sires were called) dwellings were often assaulted, plundered and burned, and the wretched inhabitants tomahawked and scalped. Pestilence and famine leagued with those horrors, and presented death in every ghastly shape! Three thousand miles from their parent state, the only source of succour, where their cries and groans could not be heard.

The wintry hour, long, cold, stormy and dreary.— Thus circumstanced, our brave progenitors reared the standard of liberty! “Where liberty dwelt, there was their country.” Her divine spirit sustained them in every danger, through all their reverses of fortune. They chose rather, with the illustrious Polander, *to have liberty with danger than security with ignominious slavery!*

“O Liberty, can man resign thee,  
Once having caught thy sacred flame;  
Can dungeons, bolts, or bars confine thee,  
Or scorpions whip thy spirits tame!!!”

Anon, (we see in a retrospect of those dismal times,) the *wild man* of the desert retire, and our sires advance. We see their towns increase, their

population multiply. And, what just before was an bowling wilderness, o'erspread with bramble, and noisome weed—the solitary abode of untutored man, devouring beasts and hooting owls, became the habitation of *civilized man*;—and was made to *rejoice and blossom as the rose*. During these events our parent state had humbled the house of the proud Bourbons.—The maritime nations of Europe, long jealous of her naval superiority, now had the mortification to see Neptune present her with his trident. But though her victories had been brilliant, the expenses of her wars, and her well known liberality, added millions to her public debt. Proud of her conquests, elated with her victories, with the laurel still green round her temple, and *glory* still radiating from her coronet, she rose in tremendous majesty and cast a haughty look over the Atlantic wave, and declared *her* right to the purse strings of her children here, without recognising *our* right to a representation in her parliament there. Over our heads outstretched the threatening arm of OPPRESSION, and shook with deafening clark the massive chain of SLAVERY. The trifling sums she would have exacted from her colonists, would not have been an object worthy of a solitary hard thought, or sigh, or murmur from our countrymen. They were willing to *contribute* their pittance to lighten the heavy burden of our mother country; and only objected to the mode, or principle, she had employed to raise contributions.—The right of taxation they were willing to admit on their part, if the right of representation were admitted on the part of Great Britain. But was the Lord North administration willing to admit a principle of reciprocal advantage? No.—Flatteries, persuasions and threats were employed by them, and all with equal effect. Disgusted at their flatteries, unseduced by their persua-

sives, and undismayed by their threats, our patriotic sires resolved to confront every attempt on their chartered rights, however disguised by artifice, or openly enforced by terror. They canvassed in a calm, dispassionate manner the probable consequences of a *brave* resistance to encroachment, and those of a timid surrender of right. They had *long* felt the blessings of PEACE, and in the event of non-resistance they were to be continued: but they were not the men to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage; nor could they enjoy the promised blessings while the *pretension* of Great Britain like the sword of Damocles hung threatening over them.—The tremendous scene now opened. Long, ardent, and bloody was the conflict. But the Almighty saw fit to decide it in favour of the children of LIBERTY.

Our minds naturally run along the dark events of that hour, which tried of what stuff men's souls were made! And what do we see?—a legion of ruthless myrmidons let loose on our beautiful country, to burn, sack, scatter death, blood and carnage, and stupifying dismay! We behold a chosen band of heroes preparing for the terrible onset, unappalled at the sight of these myrmidons of mischief, snatching their sleeping sabres from their scabbards, and *appealing* “to the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of their intentions.”

In times of public calamity and danger the *uncommon* virtues and extraordinary talents of man, have, for the most part, shone most conspicuous. And here then was offered an occasion which challenged and developed the excellences of men, of whom all the world talk, and admire; who gave *freedom* to a country, and shed additional glory on the human race!—Look through the portals of the temple of FAME,—they occupy the highest niche,

and appear in full stature ; while below, the gods and heroes of antiquity, the mere butchers of the human species, dwindle into insignificance, and seem conscious of being unworthy of a place in their majestic presence. Washington, the Adamses, Hancock, Warren, Gates, Hamilton, Montgomery, Mercer—and where shall I end the far famed worthies, who flamed as a pillar of fire, in the dark night of our revolution, to guide our benighted Israel through the wilderness of trouble, to the promised fruition of the blessings of FREEDOM !

If it be possible, let us repress the bitter reproaches of indignation, amid the disgusting recollection of the bloody inhumanities of the British armies during that calamitous time. Let us not forget, that they received no countenance, no sanction from the British nation. And that the blood of our slaughtered countrymen rests only on the heads of the imprudent and corrupted administrators of her government at *that* time. Let us, therefore, repress all unmanly resentment for the wrongs we have suffered from our parent country, and *hail* them as we would hail the rest of nations—“ *enemies only in war, but in peace, friends.*”—It is a quality of the liberal mind to pass from those things which debase human nature, and to fix on those more congenial with its constitution, and honorary to man. At the close of our revolution, a scene unfolded to the world, as unexpected as astonishing, and astonishing as extraordinary. To see an intrepid, victorious and warworn army, returning from the field of blood and slaughter, marred with cicatrices, disfigured with amputations, but covered with glory, bending to the tranquil pursuits of domestic life—is a scene indescribably grand and affecting. The prophetic scene rushes through our mind, when warriors shall convert their swords to ploughshares,

and their spears to scythes, and tygers lie harmless with lambs. We found them in *war* terrible as a famished lion, but in *peace*, harmless as the vernal lambkin.

Most revolutions in the governments of the world, have only had for their object the downfall of the tyrant, or, if the subjects aimed at the abolition of the tyranny, they all came far short of their object. But in our own, the world beheld both of these effected, and at one effort. And they saw the wisdom of our sages employed in condemning the cobweb, the imperfect mode of legislation resorted to during the war; and a new and free constitution of government pass the ordeal of public inquisition. A new and elegant political edifice is erected on the ruins of the old, of better materials and more finished workmanship; combining all the choice principles and perfections of the old, with none of its defects. You have seen each state or political division of this grand *federal republic*, assume to itself, by consent of the whole, collectively, the right, power and burden of its internal or local legislation; with a guarantee from the states, collectively, for the integrity of such internal and separate legislation. And all effected with few symptoms of disquietudes and jealousies; little commotion, civil or popular; events which beggar the annals of nations for parallels.

The Spartan lawgiver had less extent of territory to apply his system to, and fewer minds to govern; yet he met with *more* opposition in *his* reform.

A spectacle, instructive and interesting, now regaled the eyes of the expectant world. To view a society in the incipient stages of its political existence, to observe the gradual development of its principles, and by what means it attains those characteristic traits which impress the stamp of nation-



ality, is what modern ages ardently desired.— Among speculative men, and practical statesmen, it has ever been a problem, whether a country, embracing a large extent of territory and much population, could for any considerable length of time, and without the continual danger of the usual transition from freedom to despotism, be governed by a constitution of government on the principle of free or popular representation!—Remote from the enemies of freedom, a fair opportunity now offers to such inquisitors to witness a decision on that important problem.—Thus far have we progressed in resolving the doubts of mankind. But whether our future progress will be as promising, time only can determine.—Yet from the character of the great body of the American people, their genius, simplicity of our manners, the geographical position of the country, the singular concatenation of northern and southern interests, the nature of our soil, the influence of our climate from the proportion the several interests bear to each other; our unshaken attachment to liberty, and utter detestation of a tyrant;—and last of all, the peculiar nature and principle of our constitution of government, we may indulge the most gratifying anticipations, without incurring the charge of ignorance or extravagance.

To persuade men to submit to such a government as ours, how necessary it is to attack and show the absurdity of those prejudices, which are known to be the worst enemies in all republics, and which are spreading like Mayweed and bramble in our country, to the detriment of that which it is our true interest to cultivate. These prejudices or false notions persuade many of our misguided citizens, that there is need of *no* government, or, what is the same thing, that a democracy is sufficient.

In a free country, like ours, every thing dear to us seems to depend on a general information on *this* point, that civil exactions are no invasions of just liberty, or that obedience to wholesome laws is not hugging the chains of a tyrant; and that the government is instituted for the people's benefit, and not (as their jealousy and prejudice would persuade them) for the exclusive benefit of the governors. One and the same kind of government, is not applicable to every people, and all countries. A democracy may have been suited to Athens or Sparta, but it is not suited to our country. It is pregnant with many evils, and the harbinger of despotism. The wisdom of the statesman may be seen in the congeniality of his system with the genius, habits, and character of the people he governs; and the *wisdom* of the people in knowing when it is proper to obey it. And their *character* may be determined by their government.

When Solon had instituted the government of Athens, he gave them, as he said, as much liberty as they could bear. And did not the Hebrew legislator do the same with his people?—I would ask those people who are such advocates for a democracy in our country, whether a republican government were found applicable to Great Britain in the days of her Cromwell? To descend to a more modern date, Did unhappy France find it suited to her people in the days of her Robespierre? As little applicable is a democratic government to *our* country.

Every people will be governed by as good a government as they deserve. Did either France or England deserve the governments they pretended to struggle for?—They, who hurl vengeance at a tyrant for wrongs he has done them are worthy of freedom: but they, who abuse *liberty* for her *favours* are only worthy of a tyrant!

Let us not mistake a harsh spirit of party for the mild spirit of liberty, as was the case in those unhappy countries!

The spirit of party is the sworn enemy of liberty. Under the malignant influence of this spirit a man forgets himself:—he professes to be a friend to liberty, and steps forth, with the enthusiasm of warm devotion, as her champion. He holds freedom of speech as a *common* right: but in his inflammatory zeal for it, denies it to another whose opinions may differ from his own; forgetting, that the divine spirit of liberty extends privileges equally to *all*: and the satanic fiend of party restricts them to a *few*!—The spirit of party must ever be looked for in a commonwealth. There all its *good* and *bad* effects will be felt. This arises from the peculiar constitution of free governments. This spirit, in its best influence, is like the friendly zephyr, that gently agitates the fields, the woods and lakes, which, without its motion would settle in a torpid calm, and send forth a pestiferous vapour, obnoxious as the deadly *upas*, and desolating as the Persian *semeyel*. In its worst influence it is not unlike the furious whirlwind, which, after all the mournful ravages of its ruthless progress, exhausts its fury and subsides in the same deathlike tranquillity which preceded its commencement.

I beseech you, my countrymen, for the love of heaven, to guard against the frantic excesses of this spirit. Whether it shall increase its malignity and end in such horrible proscriptions, and inhuman butcheries as was witnessed at Rome in the days of Sylla and Marius; whether it shall introduce the ostracism and exile our just Aristides; or pour out for the divine Socrates the fatal draught of hemlock;—whether it shall enter and pollute our altars devoted to Astrea, and our Sidneys and Russels die

martyrs; whether it shall burst out in such blind extravagance, such wild and maddening fury as inundated France in human blood, and raised a blood-thirsty Robespierre to power; or, whether it shall *again* disgrace any section of our country with such outrage on justice and humanity, as when the brave Lingan perished; whether *all*, or such as *any* of these melancholy scenes will disfigure any age of *our* country, will depend on a reciprocal moderation of the parties which at present or hereafter may divide our citizens. Even in our own country how many friends have been separated, how many ruined friendships by this infernal spirit. And even those who have drawn nourishment from the same maternal bosom, divide in its fury, and forget the endearing sweets of that fraternal *unity* which is the bond of amity and the ligament of hearts.

It will fix the circular tri-coloured badge; hold out the red and pale roses of distinction; and demand from our lips the Shibboleth of discrimination. Who has not witnessed the natural tendency of the human passions and affections in one individual, to excite corresponding ones in another. He, then, who suspects all others will find all others suspect him in their turn. If one party suspects another of unjust views, it will be suspected of the same by the other, and thus is laid the ground work of everlasting suspicion, misrepresentation, and all their concomitant evils.

Let us never suspect mischief from another, without valid proofs of his disposition to it, of whatever political party he may be. If this be observed, the parties in our country will conduct their measures with more moderation and with equal effect. And those indecent criminations and tart rejoinders which we so often hear and are disgusted with would lose much of their vulgarity and asperity, and prove a

fair step toward abating party *malignity*.—This hateful spirit enlists all passions and prejudices in its service, and, like Aaron's serpent, swallows up all the subordinates. It has assailed our commerce, defamed her character, and fixed on her the unmerited stigma of reproach. But it has blundered and injured our agriculture, the very cause it has professed and designed to advance! In a country like ours, peopled with a brave, hardy, enterprising and intelligent race, occupations may naturally be expected to divide the pursuits of the citizens. We may look for the merchant, agriculturist, and manufacturer. Their several interests become one and indivisible.

It has been alleged that commerce opens a multitude of sources to corruption, that no laws can divert or purify; no public virtue proof against.—I admit, that a long and profitable intercourse with ultramarine countries, may produce a partiality for foreign manners, customs, and policies, with their merchandise. Every one knows the influence of a relative charm. We love the place that furnishes us with those productions which administer to our necessities or gratifications, as we do the *productions themselves*; and this partiality may, in some cases, even so far pervert the minds of some individuals, that patriotism may be sacrificed a victim to it. But who had not rather love and inhabit where those productions may be enjoyed in quiet, than the country where they are produced?

Commercial pursuits allure from the other pursuits of society. Disgusted with those patient assiduities, necessary in agricultural and mechanic employments, in our approximations to wealth or competency, and infatuated with the speedy advances which commerce promises, men are often seen to abandon those other employments and en-

gage in commerce. But society sustains no injury by such transition. It is the natural and common tendency of all things to produce an equilibrium or balance. If by desertions one branch of life's pursuits becomes too much thinned and another too much increased, the circumstance will soon rectify itself. And the impolicy of legal interference to regulate it must be obvious.—The solitary anchorite, wrapped in sublimated speculation, amid the gloom of his cell, may fashion systems to regulate the mere *visionary* mischiefs of *every* occupation. But a day's experiment will *convince* him of their futility. And an hour's reflection afterward of the impolicy and absurdity of all such attempts.

It is admitted, that commerce tends to those vast accumulations of wealth, which is unfavourable to the *equality* so necessary in a republic. And that this wealth exposes nations to continual wars against the rapacity of avaricious invaders. If commerce bring together this seductive allurements for any rapacious adventurer; she also furnishes her equivalent means of annoyance and defence against him. But what becomes of such allegations against her when balanced with the solid truths in her favour!

Her influence on the human mind is apparent in *every* civilized country. She produces a liberal expansion of the human heart, sublimates our manners, brings a flood of useful and agreeable intelligence, invites to patriotism, and sheds an unspeakable charm over the face of the earth. The vast empire of Russia was but yesterday a horde of savages. Ignorance and barbarism deformed the face of that region. But, now, visited by commerce, old scenes have disappeared, and the wretched, the uncouth and dirty Russian, has emerged from his disgusting barbarism, glittering in arts, in arms, and all the polish of *civilized* man.

*Were it not for commerce*, the cultivator of the soil would raise no more produce than would supply his immediate wants. Were the exertions of man confined only to the supply of mere natural wants, the face of the world would assume a very different aspect. It is the factitious wants which give a spring and elongation to human activity. Without them a retrocession to primitive barbarism must ensue; the *very* state, which it is man's glory to have emerged from.

It is a *capital* error, that places commerce among the enemies of freedom.

The most free and intelligent countries have been commercial, and the most despotic and ignorant have been agricultural. And, nations uniting the benefits of *both*, have at one time been free and another time in chains. It is evident, there have been faults some where that will account for such mutations. And we shall not find it in their agriculture, neither in their commerce; but in their *abuses* of them. But shall *we* not partake of these blessings, because others have injured themselves by their *abuses*?

What shall we say of that man, who would deny us the use and benefits of *fire*, in that forbidding season when life's fluids are ready to petrify with cold, because, *possibly*, by accident, our own and neighbour's dwelling may be wrapped in conflagration! Or what shall we say of him, who would extinguish the effulgent luminary of heaven, because it is *possible* it may kindle a fever in our veins! No less absurd would he be, who would deny us the enjoyments and benefits of commerce from an apprehension that her indulgences may *possibly* injure our country. The breeze, which to-day spreads a delectable fragrance, may to-morrow spread a suffocating vapour. To-day it may send health and

vitality ; to-morrow, pestilence and death. But who would not partake of the blessings of to-day, for *fear* of the *possible* evils of to-morrow ! Then let us away with those disgusting prejudices, and narrow political systems, which would *tear* from us the comforts, the *blessings* of life, for the visionary apprehension, that they may *possibly* be abused, or that some *enemy* may come and take them away from us !

Nor are these prejudices of some among us directed against commerce *alone*. Of all prejudices there is none more predominant, none more absurd, none more dangerous, than that which induces us to distrust another, because his learning, wealth, or situation, may differ from our own ; because he cannot join issue with us on political topics. A defective mind will ever suspect its own deformities in another. Like a jaundiced eye that casts a false shade on every object, it cannot be made to perceive that the fault is in itself. The honourable acquisitions of the intelligent man is looked on with jealousy. And he is considered so much the more formidable to liberty, as he is learned, wealthy, and intelligent. But while I would deprecate unfounded and unmanly jealousies and prejudices, I would not be understood to condemn a wise caution.—The opportunities these prejudices have to do the *most* mischief are at our periodic elections. Then their shapeless uncouth labours are seen, and their malignant influence felt. Then the men most beloved by the discerning for the amiable qualities of their hearts, most esteemed for the soundness of their heads, are the victims of ignorant and cowardly distrust ; while the ignorant but artful demagogue, destitute of almost every merit, is too often the favourite of the people's hearts, and the successful angler for their electoral suffrage. Can the demagogue, who, at our elections, encourages



those habits among the people, he is bound to *discourage*, who flatters their vanity at the sacrifice of *truth*, who pampers their vices at the hazard of their *health*, who descends to vulgarity at the sacrifice of decency, be a fit claimant of their confidence, a faithful trustee of their liberties and rights, when he is not *de facto* so much as a friend to *their* health and morals and his own respectability? No.

Such an one, however he may *profess* to be the friend and defender of the rights of the *good* people, ought to be watched with a legion of sleepless vigils, each having all the eyes of Argus. Absalom blew the trumpet in Israel, and vowed in Hebron to relieve their mere *ideal* miseries, and involved his unfortunate countrymen in all the *real* miseries of a desolating civil war. The salutatory kiss of Judas was followed by an act of perfidy. The embrace of Joab, plunged a dagger in the loins of the unsuspecting Amasa. The softening caresses of Delilah brought ruin on the mighty Sampson. And the soft melody of the Syren bewitches the unsuspecting mariner, and allures him to the coral reef, to strand his bark, and seals his doom for ever. No *less* treacherous have demagogues been, and are, in all popular countries, and no less bitter have been the consequences of bending to their seductive fascinations. Let such never enjoy our confidence, and he never will betray it. Let none command our suffrage, who is not well known in private life to be a man of probity and intelligence. Remember, that he, who was found unfaithful over one talent, was deemed unworthy of any further trust. He, who in a private station, disregards the common maxims of justice, will have no scruples of conscience about the sanctity of an inaugural oath, for he cannot but know, that moral obligations in private life without an oath are no less binding than in public life with one. And he who

*dares* act the villain, in one case, will for the same reason, in the other. The great barrier to *crime* being passed, the way to it is unobstructed by any sacred impediment; and the passage to it usually rapid and certain.

Let us also guard, with equal circumspection, those candidates for popular favour, who may be infected with foreign partialities or antipathies. Antiquity has been full, modern ages full of the melancholy consequences of indulging these dangerous affections.

Why should we be partial to France for an act of *cool policy*, rather than as some affirm and believe, an act of *warm affection*, during the revolutionary scenes? Or why encourage a deadly antipathy to England, for the blunders of her ministers and cruelties of her armies during the same time?

Did France *love* the colonies any more than England! Does *national love* burst in on a *defenceless, peaceful* frontier, let loose the savage blood-hounds of war to drink the blood and banquet on the yet palpitating heart of our countrymen? If this be their *love*, what can their *hate* be!

He, who looks for disinterested favours from any nation, will find it, when nations have no designs of ambition or no interests to defend. Did not the tremendous Hannibal at nine years old, swear on the altar to be an eternal enemy to the Romans? Here was imbibed at an early age a hatred which increased in malignity with his years, fed by continual hostility of Rome, and acquired force by an habitual indulgence. And what were the bitter consequences of such folly? He brought disgrace and death on himself, and on his unhappy country all the calamities of an hundred-years-war, conducted with all that rancour of malice, and those detestable acts of perfidy, which the human mind revolts at, and which

such national hate may be expected to give birth to, together with the final extinction of his nation. Let us search for the people who once rose and flourished in the delightful region of Palestine. Can we find them? Here and there a solitary few are obscurely scattered among all those very people they so heartily despised, hating all, and hated *by* all!

The Swiss have, till the invasion of their country and destruction of their liberties by the intrigues and ambition of Bonaparte, had a partiality for the French nation, and furnished recruits for the armies of her spoilers!

Imprudent Switzerland, we find thee struggling in the miseries of thy inconsiderate folly. Unhappy Switzerland, why so blind to thy best interest. Why suffer the hungry polypus of Europe to grope with his rapacious arms among thy sacred mounts and rocks, and to seize and devour with appalling avidity the flower of thy hardy youth! Could the sons of Tell endure such outrage on their right? Where those clubs, formidable as Hercules, that once dashed in pieces the brazen crowned helmets of thy Austrian tyrants!

In our own country, a partiality for France, and hate to England, once let loose all the infernal passions of the ignorant, and has often threatened us with the deprecated consequences of such folly. Such are the effects of national partialities, and such the effects of national antipathies. The valedictory voice of the hero and father of our country warns us against them. When Washington speaks let all the nation *hear*, and to what he *says*, let all the people shout, Amen.

The prejudices of our countrymen have been seen to favour a course of policy *professedly* intended to bring about *equality of interests*, when it struck a deadly blow at commerce, which they think unfa-

vourable to the purpose of that policy. But there is, in fact, no such thing as this equality which some are so infatuated with. Nor can any system of political economy be devised, or at least found in a practical experiment, able to effect such a chimerical purpose.

Divide your wealth, place all our citizens on an equality this year, and on the next, unless your statutes tye up the hand of industry, by for ever limiting territorial possessions and pecuniary profits ;—unless your laws can make the elements equalize their fertilizing influence on every man's land ;—unless you can control fortune and bid her send her favours *equally* to all—the *equality* is gone.

It is no less for the benefit of man, in society, that the right to acquire property to an imprescriptible amount be maintained, as that the possession of it be secured.

What did the famous Spartan reformer? Did he not abolish a monarchy, where there could be no equality from the nature of such a government, and divide the lands ;—burn the deeds of former possessors, and destroy for ever the validity of former titles in Sparta?

The Romans did the same, and *both* fortified the possessions of their citizens by legal barriers. Yet notwithstanding all the caution of the Spartan and Romans, notwithstanding the congruity and apparent applicability of the Spartan system of laws, and the small extent of territory to which they were applied, we find systems like every thing else of human origin, depending on the *character* and *constitutions* of the people they are intended to govern for durability, invaded, broken in upon, and finally destroyed. Thus we find mankind in every country, not more willing to be fettered by *systems*, than by *chains*. If, however, any principle of government can be

devised and applied to happify the *general* condition of a people, the particular exceptions, as such there will be, offer but faint allegations against its adoption.

But, we shall find that is the best which is free from the narrow infection of systems ;—which allows commerce, agriculture, manufactures, all, to progress unrestrained. The hand of government is often like that of an unskilful pruner, who, intending to detach superfluous ramifications, to the annihilation of the tree, dooms the most essential and prolific to excision. Although, in many cases, private convenience must bend to public expedience ; yet, in adopting the systems of either Rome or Sparta, in such a country as ours, to bring about equality, what manifest injustice would follow. Oppression and injustice is still oppression and injustice, whether proceeding from the Ottoman Sultan, Napoleon Bonaparte, a Protector, Doge, or President of the United States ; whether palliated by the plausible allegation of public expedience or not.

A government, liberal as the last mentioned, will be found like Aaron's *rod*, to blossom and yield solid fruit ; the dry systems of speculative men, like the *rods* of the rival princes, in the sanctuary of experiment, will prove unproductive of honour to the inventor, or profit to their people.

The blessings of such a *government* are beginning to be felt in our highly favoured country. And, as long as we are worthy of it we shall have it. And we have every incentive to that rectitude of conduct, which is the faithful and true *test* of national worthiness. Even in the geographical position of our *country*, the varieties of the soil and the beautiful diversification of its face by mountains and plains, rivers and lakes, we find much to inspire us with *patriotism* and to that rectitude of conduct. Far from the sultry and dissolving heats of the tor-

rid zone, on the one hand ; and far from the petrifying rigors of the frigid, on the other.

Submissive to the hand of Agricola, our soil pours forth, in redundant measure, the bounties of POMONA and the returns of CERES into the lap of the husbandman. The labour required to draw out these blessings is just sufficient to expand his frame, invigorate his sinews, and impart elasticity to his muscles. Its effects on his mind are no less happy. It gives a *spring*, a *vigor*, and *serenitude* to his *thought* ; far from the vapid levity of the Frenchman's, and as far from the gross stupidity of the Ethiopean's.

If we are disaffected with our country, will it be said it is for the want of a good one ? If we are not persuaded of its natural and political advantages, it cannot be alleged that we have no opportunities of being apprized of them. If we are not satisfied with the present share of *civil liberty*, let us remember that we are human, and unless the *invisible numen* shall inspire us with his divinity, or array us in angelic innocence, we cannot rationally expect to possess more than our happy government and laws allow.

*Fellow citizens at arms.*—The most noble achievements recorded in the annals of republics have been performed by citizen soldiers. The plains of Marathon, and strait of Thermopylæ witnessed the bravery of men in defence of their country and liberty. As military establishments, or standing armies, have ever been considered inimical to the liberties of commonwealths, as the instruments of tyranny in all its deformity and of usurpation in all its rapacity, the defence of our commonwealths devolves on the citizen.—The great and predominant evil observable in our militia has been defect of discipline and want of a spirit of subordination. But improvements in discipline are daily appearing, and that spirit of insubordination disappearing. Subordination is the *soul* of discipline. It is a maxim, that he who

knows not *when* to obey, will not know *how* to command. When all command, none obey. The prompt obedience of the private is as necessary as the skill, conduct and orders of an officer, and is no less honourable.

“ Honour and shame from no condition rise,  
 “ *Act well your part, there all the honour lies.*”

Let the right to bear arms be esteemed sacred, never to be surrendered. Let the ordinary military duty be esteemed a pleasure and not an imposed *task* or disgusting toil. Remember you are then preparing yourselves to defend your happy country from the foes of its liberties and glory. In the countries of tyrants the citizen is not permitted to bear arms, formidable to *none* but *tyrants*.

Citizen Soldiers, should ever a foreign or domestic tyrant insult you by daring to command you to deliver up your arms, may you send him back the Spartan answer, Come and take them! Remember the *right* to bear them looks for safety, and fears no violence while you *retain* them!

If superior *skill* in the science of war, and attention to the duties of the field in the officer; if superior *discipline* and *respect* for the *orders* of an officer, and promptitude and obedience by the private, perform such brilliant wonders in the armies of European *mercenaries*, who never mount the breach, and mingle with the flame streaming from the death-dealing cannon's mouth for liberty; what may not be expected from a well organized and well disciplined corps of *freemen*, glowing with an unshaken love of liberty, when called to contend for the *rights* of the *citizen*, the *dignity* of the *man*, the *glory* and honour of the soldier!

In the hour of danger from foreign or domestic enemies, the eyes of all our country's friends are *upon*, their heart *with*, and their prayers *for* you.—

When you march to battle, they present you with a *sacred trust of honour*, the *defence* of their country and their liberties for safe-keeping. They expect you will never let an enemy plant his triumphant banner on the citadels of our country, and profane the hallowed sod that embosoms the slumbering manes of our sainted patriots, who fell martyrs in the cause of liberty.

When tyrants get possession of a land of freedom, they insult the departed shades of its heroes. Every monumental pile is beaten down, that not a solitary vestige be left, as a rallying point for the children of liberty, when maddening into fury by insufferable oppression.—We look to you as the defenders of our UNION; and trust that the brave militia will never allow the gordian knot of our UNION to be severed by the *sword* of our *enemies*; when the bribes of venality, the foreign ministers of intrigue, or the domestic instigators of disaffection, can never succeed to unloose it.

When our country calls you to the field of Mars in a *just war*, we have nothing to fear. But engage not in a mad war of conquest; rather let your sabres slumber in their scabbards, then use them to the injury of your happy country; and may you return from the toils and dangers of the field, amid the shouts and plaudits of your country, with the waving banner on which VICTORY may have written her name; while the arms of *love* and friendship are open to receive you.

If I were to pass over, unnoticed, the war we have lately closed, I should disappoint many expectations; I shall, therefore, without equivocation, give you my sentiments on that point.—Whatever may have been the motive of that war, it was, in my apprehension, undertaken at the hazard of almost every thing dear to us. As the pretensions of our enemies were of a



singular character, the manner of resistance on *our* part, was no less singular.—Embargoes, non-intercourse interdictions, apparently to coerce our enemy, all forming a systematic plan, were proposed and applauded; received and applied; found incompetent, and rejected.—The only resort left for coercion was a war, which, under the peculiar circumstances of the American people, and those of the leading belligerents of Europe, must be considered as very unwise and very inexpedient. The fears on our part, that a neglect for a few years to maintain a right, by the *ultima ratio* of nations, may be construed into a renunciation of it, were certainly chimerical.

Remonstrance, if not so daring as an appeal to arms, to vindicate claims and redress wrongs, was surely more safe, and no proof of *national* inability, want of spirit, or inclination to defend our rights against invasion from any quarter.—The relative conditions of nations is analogous to that of individuals. Competitions and quarrels must be expected to arise between them.

The measures of the rights of nations, in the two capacities of belligerent and neutral, should be founded on principles of reciprocity. Nations have found it both convenient and expedient to admit such measures. But, what they admit and defend at one time, we find them meanly *quibbling* about and disputing at another. Can this palpable *contrariety* in their *conduct*, and contemptible *contradiction* in their *language* with the transforming power of Proteus, make that *right* at one time, which was *wrong* at another.

The principles of right are as eternal as the *great* AUTHOR of them.—When we became an *independent* people, we were entitled in common with other nations to the *rights* of sovereignty. Then let us maintain them. Let us never abandon a *right* to any nation through *partiality*, or deny to another *their*

right through *antipathy*. If we do not defend our own rights and redress our own wrongs, we may rest assured no nation will be so kind and accommodating as to do it for us. But, let us all dispassionately reflect on the expedience of the *mode*, and consider whether the object be *attainable* by a resort to it; and, if attainable, whether sufficient to balance the hazard of such a resort.

Let us never give a sanction to, by enduring those arbitrary and oppressive measures, we have seen impolitically resorted to; and which, while they pretended to have for their object a redress of ulterior *wrongs* from nations, invade and jeopardize interior *rights* of citizens.

The bond of our confederation invests a power with congress to *regulate*, but not to *destroy* commerce.

The manner in which the war has been prosecuted, has been directly subversive of that *design* which led the northern section of our country to accede to the *federal compact*; and it has been evincive of that *hostility* to northern commerce, more to be dreaded than all the famous orders in council, or all the empty decrees of Bonaparte. We can meet our *enemies* in open and declared war, and vanquish them. But that insidious hostility to commerce, conducted by a regular system of governmental war measures, is not so easily opposed, not so easily guarded against, because not so easily suspected or understood!

The conquest of the Canadas *seemed* to be another object of the war, and, perhaps equally incompatible to the solid interests of the nation as that hostility to commerce. No conquest ever added to the *happiness* of any people. It ranks among the proximate causes of the ruin of many nations, now swept from the earth.

It would tend to our strength, our common safety, our union, and should ever be our policy to have some separate people, or even enemies, on our frontier. There is such a thing as a nation being too secure from ulterior dangers. Do we ask for confirmation? The chronicles of nations *teem* with examples.

After the states of Greece had subdued their foes, or gained those signal advantages over them, as to render themselves secure from even the apprehension of danger or invasion from them, what did they, but present to the world a shameful, unsightly tragedy, that beggars all description! Their reciprocal jealousies gave birth to the most deadly animosities, and these animosities were the precursors of furious and calamitous civil wars, that ended in the depopulation and final extinction of many beautiful and powerful states.

When Rome had humbled or conquered her enemies *without*, do we not find her the sport of the worst of enemies, intrigue, faction, proscriptions, assassinations and bloody butcheries *within*.

Is it not the proper work of the statesman, or ruler, to diffuse happiness among his people? Is that not the ultimatum of every wise political institution? Has not the statesman either lost sight of his proper object, or mistaken the best means to advance his people to it, when projecting a conquest of a territory, and adding it to one already by far too extensive? A nation bewitched with and bending to the charm of conquest, will, certainly, bring on its head the blood of the slaughtered, the crime of injustice, the mingled reproaches of the conquered and its *own* posterity, and lay the ground work of their own ruin.—Has Spain been more secure from internal mischief, more happy since her South American conquests? Have they added to her na-

tional respectability? No; she is not only more unhappy at home, but has spread her miseries like contagion *abroad*. Sunk into absolute national insignificance, with all the gold of Potosi at command, she is but a beggar in Europe. Her commerce sits lingering and ready to expire on her seaboard, while her agriculture stands leaning beneath some solitary tree, with head reclined, and downcast eyes, repining at neglect, and the hum of industry scarce heard in her factories.

Nor has France advanced in happiness by her rage and restless spirit of conquest and domination. Has she made a single people she has conquered more happy? Ask the Fleming, the Saxon, the Italian; and above all ask the generous Helvetian, whether he were better or happier under the dominion of the iron-crowned colossus of Europe, than while under his own government? Were his slumbers more refreshing;—did he rise to his labour with more serenity;—did the echo of his rocks, or the murmur of his waterfall, linger *more* sweetly in his ear? He will answer you with sighs and tears at the obtruding thought of his departed liberty, and bursts of indignation at the inhumanities of his oppressor. And—

“For his country he sighs, when at twilight repairing,  
To wander alone on his wind-beaten hill.”

How much more *noble* and *great* does the hardy Swiss appear in the weakness of his amiable simplicity, than the blood-thirsty miscreant, his oppressor, made *noble* only by *power*, and *great* only by villany!

Rome did, indeed, incorporate all *her* conquests into their empire; but it proved her ruin. And, the conquered parts, like the woodbine clinging to the elm, rose when she *aspired*, and perished when

she fell. The policy of Rome appears to favour an opinion, that she wished to be rather a *great*, than a *good* nation; rather a *powerful*, than a *happy* one.

But, if *we* are determined to incorporate *any* people into our confederation, let it be done by the consent of the parties concerned; and not by a brutal and desolating war, at the hazard of *our* liberties and price of our UNION.

It does not yet appear, that a single object of the war has been attained. The hateful subject of impressment is left where we found it at the commencement of the war. Our enemy it seems has made no concession on that point. But we had the mortification to see our own government assume the *extravagant* principle of maritime practice, determined on by the treaty of Westphalia, and enforced or defended by the armed neutrality, at the same time.—Was there wisdom manifested by the American government in assuming this principle? Was there temperance? Our own public acts, *afterward*, disavowed the principle, by an express law against employing foreign mariners, either in our public or merchant vessels!

The colonial West India trade likewise remains in the same disorderly state as before the war.

The Canadas remain unconquered, and the extraordinary principle of blockade, only receded from, because there is no *occasion* to enforce it. What, then, have we gained by the war!—It has, indeed developed many important truths, *some* of which were obvious to all the world before.—It has discovered to us the immense resources of our country: but it has *also* discovered, (*what had been expected*) how impotently those resources may be applied, by a government apparently more solicitous for its own popularity, than to repair the wrong of the nation. It has given public virtue a fair test,

by presenting an opportunity for sufferance. It has proved our naval and military prowess, by pointing out an enemy, the best calculated to test it. It has proved the attachment of *New England* to the UNION and the best interests of the United States, and expunged the odious and false charge of disaffection to it.

Here, in our own state, the aspect of things was gloomy. A dismal cloud hung convolving over our heads, and the prospect before us was forbidding, rendered *more so* by the retrospect of past delights, and the adoption of a course of policy, the best, and ingeniously calculated to place our state in the back-ground of national significancy. The chances of employment, the wages of labour, and the prices of life's necessaries, (discarding the privations of the accommodations of life) bear no *just* proportion each to each. The circulating medium, disappeared "like the baseless fabric of a vision"—and what hope was there of our fisheries, and trade beyond the African cape. The manufacturer was hurried into adventures by a contemptible and infamous tantalism little suspected. And we saw with regret, a continued and alarming emigration, which threatened to depopulate this respectable state. I cannot contemplate on the *manner* in which the war has been prosecuted by the government with any pleasure, although my bosom will ever thrill with delight when I think on the virtue, the bravery of my countrymen, and their military achievements during it. I could, indeed, run along the disgusting climax of the wrongs and insults we have received from foreign powers, mark their specific enormity, and scan the ineffectual mode we have seen adopted to bring the reparation due to a brave, a worthy, but insulted people. But, I forbear, and observe, that whatever be the mode hereafter resorted to, to

effect so important a purpose, we have little to apprehend of its efficacy if we have *wisdom* at the head of the nation, and are *united*. Let us, *if possible*, be united; we have seen the bitter consequences of disunion in nations and states. Divide and conquer, is the insulting motto of every tyrant, in designs against the liberties of a free people. So certain is it that union is the ark of their only safety. Washington, in the pathetic language of a kind parent, has charged us to be *united*. Let us follow his counsels, if it be possible. He loved his country. Let *us* love it. He toiled at labour, more dangerous and continued than that of Hercules, and proved to the world it was the *labour of love*. Here, suffer me to dwell for a moment on the actions of this *great* and good man. He shone, the *designating star* in that bright *constellation* of heroes, which rose in our political horizon, during the tremendous dark night of our revolution, and, which brightened in glory and increased in magnitude, and gave this perfect day of our country's freedom. Other warriors may have gained more brilliant battles, but none closed so glorious a campaign. Other warriors have fought to *enslave*; but Washington, to *give freedom*. The Roman Cæsar saw so many charms in a crown, that he thought nothing too great to hazard *for* one. Wealth was nothing; moral honesty was nothing; the peace of his country was nothing, when a crown was to be had by the hazard or sacrifice of either or all of them. But, with Washington, a diadem had no such charms. His throne was based on the hearts of his countrymen; while the glory of his actions formed a brilliant crown of never fading lustre for his head. Who is not proud to belong to the country which gave him birth? Who does not delight to contemplate his virtues? And who of his countrymen does not feel

grateful for his matchless services to his country? Let us show our regard for him by listening to his counsels, that on the future returns of this anniversary, posterity may not be mantled in grief, and circle the cypress round their drooping heads;—bid their minstrels hang their harps on the willows, or play a mournful dirge for departed liberty and glory;—that they may search in vain for the name of America on the catalogue of unworthies who sold their liberties to a despot. Here, in Massachusetts, the children of liberty, in the hour of danger, first dared the stern tyrant; and here will liberty still find her faithful defenders. And should tyrants league to drive her from the world, as the mountain has ever been sacred to her, let her *last flight* be seen from the apex of her mountain sanctuary in Massachusetts. There will her sons rally round to defend her till the last, encouraged by the hope of retaining her in *this world*; for her *next flight* will be soaring to the celestial regions, from whence she descended to bless the race of man; while the voice of our "*fathers blood cries from the ground*" to animate them, "My sons, scorn to be slaves."

THE END.