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AN
ORATION,

DELIVERED ON THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,

at the request of the "Society of Friends of the Revolution," in the Capitol in Richmond,
and published also at their request.

By GEORGE HAY, Esq.

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ORATION.

FELLOW-CITIZENS !

From the year 1776 to the present time, the people of America have consecrated the 4th day of July, to joy and gratitude : joy, for the assertion, of our national Independence ; and gratitude to those, by whose wisdom, patriotism and valor, it was effected. The anniversary of that day, on which the representatives of the people of the then British colonies of North America, declared their constituents to be a free and independent nation, and assumed, for them, among the powers of the earth, that station to which "Nature and Nature's God" entitled them, has again come round. And it has come, like the day on which our fathers met, finally to decide on the future destiny of their country, while our ports are shut, our coasts invaded, our towns laid waste, and our frontiers exposed to all the horrors of a war, in which cunning, cruelty and murder in cold blood, have usurped the place of courage. If then we are here met together, to pay the annual tribute of our unfeigned respect, to the statesmen, whom time has sunk into the grave, and to the warriors, who fell for us, in battle, let us make the offering in the way, which they, if they could be now consulted, would most approve. Let us emulate their spirit : let us be governed by their precepts ; and following their high example, **UNITE** as they did, and encounter, difficulty, privation, danger, desolation and

death in every form, rather than submit, longer submit, to oppression and degradation. Let us attend to the valedictory admonition of him, who has been emphatically called the saviour of his country: let us shew that his memory is dear to our hearts, and that his precepts are held in our grateful remembrance, by resolving to be, and to continue to be, one people. Let us attend to him, and not to those false prophets, whose coming he foretold; men, who under the sanction of his venerated name, preach a doctrine, which he abhorred. "Union," he tells us, "is the main pillar of the edifice of our *real* independence: the support of our tranquility at home, of our peace abroad; of our safety; of our prosperity; of that very liberty which we so highly prize. It is the point of our political fortress, against which the batteries of *internal* and *external* enemies, will be most constantly and actively, (tho' often covertly and insidiously) directed. Frown therefore, indignant-ly frown," he continues, "on the first dawning of every attempt, to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties, which now link together its various parts." To this hallowed spirit, speaking, from the tomb, the prophetic and inspired language of truth and patriotism, I conjure you, and all the people of this nation, to attend; to attend with reverence. The enemy, by a discrimination, both military and commercial, between the belligerent and non-combatant States, is endeavoring to undermine this great pillar of our independence, while some of our own citizens from the phrenzy of party spirit, co-operate with him, by attempting to alienate the people of the East, from their brethren of the South and of the West. At this very moment, when the enemy is upon our Atlantic and inland frontier, when

all the energies of the government and of the people ought to be directed to the public safety, when the men of Kentucky and Ohio, undismayed by past calamities, go forth to battle to support the cause of their country, and to avenge the death of their murdered friends, a sullen neutrality in the East is observed, and questions deliberately settled by the best and wisest men of this country, with Washington at their head, are revived and strenuously pressed upon the public mind. Questions which have slept during five and twenty years of peace and prosperity, are now, in the hour of difficulty and danger, clamorously forced upon our notice. Why is this done now? Why is this done at all? These are questions which I will not stop to answer: but there is one point in which we must all concur. We must all agree, that the effect, as far as any effect can be produced, is not only to encourage the enemy, but “to alienate one portion of our country from the rest, and to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together its various parts.” But this detestable plan can never succeed. “The people of America, have too much good sense, to enter into the gloomy and perilous scenes, into which the advocates for disunion would lead them. They will not hearken to the unnatural voice, which tells them, that knit together, as they are, by so many cords of affection, they can no longer live together, as members of the same great family: can no longer be the mutual guardians, of their mutual happiness: can no longer be fellow-citizens of one great and flourishing empire.” Admonished by the most distinguished advocates of the existing confederation, “they will shut their ears against this unhallowed language — they will shut their hearts against the poison which it conveys. The kindred blood which

“flows in their veins, the mingled blood which they
 “have shed,” (and are now shedding) “in defence
 “of their sacred rights, consecrate their union, and
 “excite horror at the idea of their becoming aliens,
 “rivals, enemies.”—Such, fellow-citizens, is the elo-
 quent and pathetic exhortation of the triumvirate,
 who in the year 1787 endeavored to impress on the
 hearts of their countrymen a belief of the vital im-
 portance of union among the States—May this uni-
 on, the offspring of liberty and truth, be like the
 first, glorious, like the last, eternal.

Let us not only emulate the spirit, but follow the
 example and pursue the policy of the founders of
 our republic. The memorable Congress of 1774
 invited the Canadians, to consult their own glory
 and welfare, and to unite with them, in the great
 compact, which they had formed. Your province,
 said they, is the only link, wanting to complete the
 bright and strong chain of the union. But, accord-
 ing to an English historian, the spirit of liberty
 was too faint and feeble in Canada, and the aristo-
 cracy and priesthood too powerful, to admit of any
 considerable effect from this address. But *this ef-*
fect was produced. The Canadians declared that
 the quarrel was one in which they had no concern,
 and in which they would take no part. As soon as
 this disposition was known, the invasion of Canada
 was projected, and the expedition confided to the
 gallant, but unfortunate Montgomery. Such was
 the policy, such was the conduct, of the men to
 whose wisdom and firmness we are indebted for the
 revolution. They knew that the Canadians were
 not their enemies, but they also knew that Canada
 formed a part of the dominions of their oppressor—
 a part essential to the repose & security of the Union,
 and they wisely determined to take it, if they could.
 They did not whine and rant, as some of their de-

generated offspring have done, about the innocent Canadians; about the unchristian wickedness of making war upon a harmless people. They were not hypocrites. The exclusion of the enemy from this continent was the great object which they had in view, which we ought to have in view, now, and which during this war or the next, will be inevitably accomplished. This idea is sanctioned by the opinion of Washington himself; and yet those who have formed a society, under his name, insult his memory, the memory of Montgomery consecrated by a glorious death, and that of all whom this day brings to our proud and grateful recollection. by declamation, as insolent as it is puerile, against our invasion of that province.

Let us remember, though we have not followed, the example of those, whose wisdom, virtue and valor, we are here assembled to celebrate. Our fathers did not wait until the oppression, which produced the war, was actually felt. They opposed the unjust pretensions of G. Britain, at the instant at which they were announced. The British government asserted a right to tax the Colonies. This usurpation was strenuously opposed. The contemplated tax was trivial in itself—and might have been paid, without diminishing a single comfort, which our citizens had been accustomed to enjoy. But the people of America, happily for themselves, for us, and for the world, decided, that they would not submit to the slightest imposition. They opposed a principle, which they knew would lead to unlimited dominion. The British ministry endeavored to silence this opposition, by a commercial regulation, which, while it asserted the principle, made the tax itself entirely nominal. They took from the export duty in England, a sum precisely equivalent to the duty exacted here. But

this miserable subterfuge did not succeed. The founders of our revolution disdained to make those pecuniary calculations, which have been of late so common. They scorned to weigh gold and silver against principle. They knew not how to estimate money, as the price of national degradation and slavery; and they required that the claim of a right to tax them should be unequivocally surrendered. But our remonstrances were treated with scorn; our opposition was declared to be rebellion; Washington himself denounced as a traitor; our trade was annihilated; our cities destroyed; and our country ravaged, by the veteran armies of our oppressor, aided by hired murderers from the continent. But the spirit which dictated the Declaration of Independence was not subdued; the flame of patriotism was cherished with more than vestal vigilance; "the chain of union was bright and strong;" and the surrender of the British army, in this state, produced a reluctant but final acquiescence in our claim to National Independence.—Such was the conduct, such were the sufferings, such was the success of those, whom we are now assembled to honor, and who are most worthy to be honored.

Have we, animated by the spirit of '76, followed this great example? Have we united, and risen up to oppose insolent and unjust pretensions, as soon as they were announced? Have we had wisdom to foresee the mischief, which acquiescence in foreign usurpation must always produce, and firmness enough to resist it, from its commencement. No! we have not had this wisdom. We have not displayed this firmness. The hand of oppression was laid upon us; and though we murmured, we did not resist.—We have been insulted and injured at home and abroad, and though we complained, we never struck a blow in revenge. The spirit of

our fathers slept. We have indeed been patient. Patient! Let me speak the truth; we have been abject. Under a pretended devotion to peace, we have concealed our love of gain. We have been corrupted by high prices for produce & for freight, the miserable profits of a despised and despicable neutrality: and in our ardent pursuit of wealth, we have stooped and crept and crawled, until we had almost lost the power to become erect, and we have been oppressed and trampled, until not only every feeling of shame, but all sense of pain appeared to be extinct. Our commerce had been for years piratically plundered, our ships taken from us by force, or consumed by fire, upon the ocean; our cities insulted, our citizens murdered, our flag dishonored, our seamen made slaves, and our national character become the scorn of nations. All this we have seen, and yet our patience was not exhausted. For seven long years, the very period during which our fathers encountered all the miseries of war, in repelling a claim which was never carried into actual operation against them, then willing subjects of the British empire, we, a free people, possessing twice their strength and wealth, have submitted to every species of oppression and insult. But thanks be to God! the citizens of these U. States have been at length roused from the stupor and lethargy into which they had sunk. The spirit of our fathers was not dead. We have asserted our indisputable rights, we have declared war to support them: and they will be supported. The badge of slavery which we have worn so long, will be removed, and the chain by which we have been bound and galled, will be broken into pieces on the heads of our oppressors. The feelings excited by this day, consecrated to departed worth and patriotism, will insure our final triumph.

For I trust, that you have not come here in quest of amusement, or to indulge an idle curiosity. I trust that you have not ventured to approach this holy National Communion, unless your hearts are purified by love of your country, zeal for its rights, indignation for the wrongs that have been heaped upon us, and a firm resolution to resist those wrongs forever.—Feelings like these, belong to this sacred day. Possessing them, we may look back without shame, and forward without apprehension. Engaged as we are in a just Cause, the blessing of Almighty God will be upon us. If we are firm and united, we shall prove to the belligerents of Europe, that we will not be injured with impunity, and we shall ourselves learn, that insolence and rapacity, must be opposed at their commencement, as they never fail to increase in proportion to the patience, with which they are endured.

This subject of our wrongs and humiliations deserves our most serious notice. I will present it distinctly to your view. It will afford us a salutary lesson. It will teach us to follow with firmness and perseverance, the steps of those who have gone before us, or to forbear the celebration of virtues, which we have not the courage to imitate.

It is obvious, that during a war between France and Great-Britain, the U. States, if neutral, must derive great benefit from a commerce restrained only by the law of nations, concerning contraband and blockade. For a time this benefit was enjoyed, our trade increased, and our tonnage became nearly equal to that of Great-Britain. The commercial jealousy of this unfriendly power was excited, and her ministry availing themselves of her naval supremacy, determined to embarrass, if not destroy the rival commerce of the United States. Of this plan, history assures us that they will never

lose sight ; and if we have peace this year, in the next, we shall be exposed to new wrongs and outrages, unless we are prepared to do that by force, which reason, justice and humanity, never can effect.

The first measure adopted by the British Government, was to declare a large portion of the French Coast to be in a state of Blockade. This idea was as novel, as the measure itself was injurious to the United States. We remonstrated, complained, negotiated—but the grievance continued, and the trade of the United States suffered incalculable losses. It is true, that this principle has been since abandoned, and paper blockades are admitted to be illegal. But this admission was not made, until a new principle had been adopted, which occupying a broader ground, made this surrender of no consequence to neutrals. How much we suffered by this lawless exaction, it is impossible here to ascertain ; but they are recorded in the books of the admiralty of England ; a court which under the pretence of securing to the mariner the reward of his valor in the spoil taken from a foe in arms, distributes among pirates the plunder, of which they have robbed a defenceless and friendly neutral.

In consequence of the naval superiority of Great Britain, the French Government, opened for neutrals, the trade between the colonies and their belligerent parent. That trade which had heretofore been confined to the ships of France, was now carried on by the neutral American. The British government, not satisfied with the destruction of the carrying trade of France, determined that no neutral should enjoy what France had lost. They soon promulgated a doctrine fitted exactly for the occasion. They declared a trade opened to neutrals by a belligerent in consequence of a war, to be illegal,

and seizures and condemnations to the amount of millions, followed the declaration. Again we remonstrated; again we negotiated; but our grievances were not redressed.

The American merchant, to avoid the mischief of this usurpation, imported the productions of the belligerent colonies into the United States, as they had done before the war, and then exported it, or sold it to those who exported it, to France. — For this state of things, a new principle, precisely such as the convenience of Great Britain required, made its appearance in the Courts of the English admiralty, and was cordially received as a part of the law of nations. It was decided that an importation into the United States did not interrupt the continuity of the voyage, and the work of plunder and piracy continued as before. American vessels, loaded with American property, going from an American port, were seized on our own coast, by the power, and condemned by the rapacity of Great Britain! This too, we bore.

To render our situation still more deplorable and humiliating, British ships were stationed off our coast for the express purpose of intercepting this colonial produce, and our vessels, engaged even in domestic trade, were ordered to come to, and state what they were, and whither they were bound. Disobedience was death. But the murder of Pierce aroused for a time the torpid spirit of the country. A sentiment of shame and indignation pervaded the continent. Remonstrances and complaints were pressed from all quarters upon the government. — Those from the trading towns merit peculiar notice. Never were rights more accurately described; never were wrongs more eloquently denounced; never were assurances of support and co-operation more solemn, or more strong. But our pa-

tienee was not yet exhausted, and new losses and humiliations were soon to spring from another source.

In January, 1807, before the fate of the treaty of December 1806, was known in Great-Britain, her ministry had issued an order interdicting the commerce of neutrals from one port of France to another. Of this usurpation we had hardly time to complain.

In June, 1807, a British ship, in the Bay of Chesapeake, attacked an American frigate unprepared for battle, killed some of her men, forced her to strike her colours, and impressed several seamen from on board. Yes, Fellow Citizens, the flag of these United States, which never knew disgrace before, and which has seen nothing but glory since, descended, sunk, became prostrate, within the limits of this insulted country, upon a deck wet and stained with the blood of our murdered countrymen. I do not mention this outrage, as cowardly as it was savage, as a cause of war. The British ministry disavowed the act, and we have accepted the reparation, such as it was, which their pride permitted them to make. It is only stated to shew the insolent and hostile spirit of that nation toward us. But, thanks be to God, this dishonor has been wiped away: the nation has been avenged: the flag of the United States has waved in triumph over the naval standard of Britain: and honored, forever honored, be the men, who have bestowed this glory and happiness, on their country.

There was yet more of misery, and more of humiliation in store for the people of America. Encouraged by our patience, and still more by our divisions, and stimulated at once by rapacity and by pride, Great-Britain, in November, 1807, issued her Orders in Council, interdicting all neutral

trade with France and her dependencies. This gave the finishing stroke to almost all our commerce except with herself. It was the death-blow to neutral rights. It was the open unqualified assertion in the face of the world, of that principle which has been so adroitly developed, that Great Britain is authorised to maintain its naval superiority against her enemy, at the expence, not only of that enemy, but of neutrals. A principle more lawless and more oppressive was never asserted by the Arab of the desert, or the Pirate of the Mediterranean. This, however, is the real principle on which G. Britain has acted, and on which, rest assured, she will continue to act, as long as her tyranny shall be endured. Her naval supremacy, bottomed on commercial monopoly, is the object of her warmest affection; its display gratifies her strongest passions, her pride and her avarice; and it will be cherished, not only at the expence of her enemy, but of all the neutrals of the world.

A single fact, will exhibit these orders in their genuine colors, and shew the source from which they sprung. After G. Britain had issued her imperial decree, commanding the nations of the Earth, to abstain from trading with her enemy, she herself, meanly and sordidly carried on with that enemy, the very trade, in which neutrals were forbidden to engage!

It is true, that these orders have been repealed. But why were they repealed? Was it because G. Britain had at length become sensible of the injustice which we had suffered at her hands? No! Did she offer to indemnify us for the millions of which we had been robbed? No! Was it then because France was believed by her to have repealed her Berlin and Milan decrees? No! Such is not the fact. The repeal was produced by the clamors of the British people, who felt the interrupti-

on of the American trade to be a national calamity.

The excuse that has been offered for the outrage inflicted by these orders, is as insulting, as the outrage itself was excessive. They were bottomed, it was said, on the principle of retaliation. The people of America, submitted, said the British orators, to the oppression of the French decrees: We will *retaliate* by oppressing *them* with our orders in council. Such is the reasoning of power, stimulated by avarice and by jealousy!

To complete the degradation of this country, the British claim the right of impressing their seamen from American ships on the high seas. This alleged right they have long continued to exercise, and in the pursuit of it, have taken thousands of our native born citizens, and by chains and stripes, forced them to serve on board their navy—to fight their battles—to assist *before* the war in plundering their own defenceless countrymen, and since, in combatting against a flag, in defence of which they would be proud to lay down their lives.

To shake off this yoke, is now the principal object of the present war; an object which must be obtained. The Government of America can never lose sight of it. It cannot be so base and abject. To sanction by treaty, a claim which brands this nation with shame and infamy, would be treason against humanity—a cowardly, a sacrilegious surrender of that equal station among the powers of the Earth, to which the great men, whose merits have brought us this day together, declared, that “Nature and Nature’s God, entitled us.”

It is not my intention to enter into the discussion of this subject. Enough, and more than enough, has been said, to shew the fallacy of the principle on which the claim is made to rest, and the duty on

our part to resist its practical operation, even if that principle were true. My object now, is merely to state a fact, which will shew, more completely, than any thing yet stated, the degraded condition to which, as a nation, we have been reduced. Great-Britain has never once deigned to complain to the government of the United States of any violation of her rights in our employment of those whom she calls her seamen. Her ministry knew, that British seamen, as well as other British subjects, left their native land, in search of freedom, or of bread, and found them in America. They knew, that the former, when in our ports, have been employed in our ships. Yet they *never* condescended to complain. They never stated to our Executive, that their seamen *were* thus employed, that they had a right to their service, that they claimed that service, and that the American government was bound to remedy the evil. They disdained to ask redress. *They took it.* Content to assert their claims, in opposition to our complaints, they stopped our vessels on the Ocean, carried from them by force the native as well as the foreigner whom, they thought proper to select, and left the residue exposed to the mercy of the elements.

All this we bore, until June, 1812; and yet there are persons in America, men in the councils of the nation and of the states, who say, that we ought still to have been patient, and that the war in which we are engaged, is wicked and unjust. If this be true, let us disperse, in sorrow and in silence. Let us speak no more of the statesmen who planned the revolution, or of the heroes who conducted us thro' it, or fell in its support. The revolution was folly, the war was wickedness, Washington a traitor, our government usurpation, & that independence which we have here met to celebrate, the shame, and not

the glory of America. We have felt for years the hand of oppression; our fathers would not suffer it to touch them even for a moment. If we are unjust and wicked, what were they?

Thus before the war, the conduct of Great Britain was in direct opposition to all the laws and principles established among nations for their government, in relation to neutrals. Since the war, it has been equally irregular and offensive. She has deluded the drunken Savage of the North West into an alliance, which she knows must eventuate in his destruction. She has turned him loose upon our frontier, and even brought him to fight by the side of the British soldier, though taught by experience, that he will rush on a defenceless captive, and murder in the fort, the enemy, whom in the field he was afraid to face. G. Britain knew that this mischief could not be prevented, and yet she has formed this infamous alliance. I thank God, that the Government of the United States disdained to employ the hand of the murderer, in maintaining the sacred rights of this nation.

But this is not all. The British, not content with combating men, armed for battle, have commenced a brutal war, on those, whose sex claims and receives, at all times, and under all circumstances, from every man worthy of the name, sympathy and protection. A licentious soldiery have been let loose, in our own state, upon matrons and maidens, and purity and innocence have sunk and perished in the infernal struggle. Fellow-citizens, you are all sons, husbands, fathers or brothers—you have mothers, whom you venerate—wives whom you love—daughters who look up to you for safety—sisters whom you are bound by honor and affection to protect;—you have the hearts of men, and you must feel this unexpected blow;—you have

arms, and you must avenge it. The hour of retribution will come ; but it must come when you are in the field. The only retaliation to which a magnanimous people, however insulted or injured by individual excesses, will ever resort, will be shewn by patriotism and courage against an enemy in battle. And when this enemy shall abandon his mean and sordid system of desultory, plundering and licentious warfare, when he shall advance upon our soil, where its defenders can meet him in the face, he will find that the terror with which he has inspired one sex, has only inflamed the courage of the other. "Hampton" will be the word, that will pass from rank to rank, and along the line of our patriot army ; and the pollution which we have sustained, shall be washed away in the blood of the unmanly miscreants, by whom it was committed.

Here let me ask, what is Great Britain to gain by this miserable policy ? What is she to gain by this infamous alliance, by shutting our ports, by pillaging our coast, by burning defenceless towns ? or by a shameless violation of the laws of decency and humanity ? She may expend one hundred millions more ; she may add to the weight of that debt, which has already made every 7th man a pauper ; she may employ ten years in the work of death and desolation and pollution ; and after all, she will find, that our population has increased, "that plenty waves upon our fields ; that opulence glitters in our cities ;" that our manufactures are prosperous, that our union is confirmed, and that experience has taught us never again to submit with patience to insult or oppression. Do you not believe that the British ministry must be sensible, that they can gain nothing in this war by conquest ? They are sensible of it. They know it. They feel it. Why then do they not listen to our complaints, and surren-

der the claim of impressing, if we surrender, as we have proposed to do, the right of employing British seamen? Why will they not accept terms of accommodation, which we are not bound to offer, and which are offered only from a love of peace? I will tell you. Their hope is, that we shall not be united. This war is waged against our Union. This is the point of our national fortress, against which the "external enemy now directs his battery." His hope is to disgrace our republican government—to expose it to the scorn of the world, and to our own contempt. If he can make one part of this nation, feel exclusively the pressure of his power, and neutralize the other by keeping at a distance the calamities of invasion, he trusts that we may be weak and wicked enough, to quarrel with each other, and to pull down the temple, which we have consecrated, to union and to independence. Then, divided, miserable and weak, we shall be exposed to the pelting of that pitiless storm, which he will soon cause to burst in thunder, on our devoted heads. If this scheme shall fail, his next hope is, that the people, harrassed by the war, may change the administration, and bestow the powers of government, on men whom he supposes to be more friendly to his views. In this hope, too, he will find himself deceived: there is no party in America, which would dare to surrender to G. Britain, the right to regulate our trade and to impress even British seamen from our ships.

Yes, my countrymen, rest assured that the union will be preserved, and that our rights will be maintained. The people of America are well aware of the glorious destinies which await their country. They look forward to that time, which some here assembled will live to see, when 50 millions of people, in the full enjoyment of freedom

and abundance. will occupy the fruitful plains and mountains and vallies which extend from the Atlantic to the head waters of the Missouri—from the gulf of St. Lawrence to the mouth of the Mississippi: a people bound together no less by interest than affection. Even then we shall be rapidly advancing in wealth and strength. The nations of Europe, exhausted by the calamities which the ambition of Princes never fails to bring upon their subjects, will respect our rights, because they will fear our power. The navy of the United States will be the guardian of our repose, and the future Decatur, Hulls, Jones's, Lawrences and Bainbridges of America, will stand centinels over the rights and honor of their country!

The ministry of Great Britain have not shut their eyes upon this splendid prospect.—They see a new power rising in this western world, whose commerce and whose navy, if the States remain united, are irrevocably destined to surpass their own. What then is the course of policy which Great Britain may be expected to pursue? The question is already answered. She has endeavored to ruin our trade, and to destroy our union.—Of these objects, rest assured, she will never lose sight. If by her machinations in peace, or her policy in war, she can divide the people of America, her object is attained. The victims of faction at home are the predestinated prey of foreign power.—If seduced by the spirit of party, we forget the precept of Washington, and cease to be one people, the sun of American glory, just rising in beauty and splendor above the horizon, will sink to rise no more.

Fellow-Citizens! This is a great crisis: important not only to us, but to the world.—The war in which we are now engaged, ascertains the strength and value of our republican institutions. The polit-

ical experiment which we have made has been hitherto successful. Our government secures our happiness in time of peace, and cannot subvert our liberty. Let us shew that it is competent to our defence in time of war. If it be so, our destiny is fixed, and all the powers of earth cannot disturb it. If it be not thus competent, if the measures required for Common Defence and General Welfare can be impeded or baffled by the spirit of party, and the clamors of opposition, if in fact, the whole force of the Country, cannot be put into operation, for the protection of all, the alternatives are obvious. We must either, adopt by common consent a government which *can* afford us protection in time of war; or, such a government will be forced upon us, by the ambitious leader of a victorious faction; or we shall fall a prey to the arts, & power of that nation, which shall first be able to direct all its energies against us. Thus while we are now engaged in the defence of our rights, of our persons, and of the Soil on which we tread, we maintain and invigorate and give character and credit to that system of Government, which may have conceived to be fitted only, for the season of prosperity and peace.

Fellow-citizens! Have patience yet a moment. You will have patience. It is Washington who speaks. “Citizens by birth or choice, says this illustrious man, of a Common Country, that Country has a right to concentrate our affections.—“The name of American, which belongs to us in our national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, we have the same religion, habits, manners and political principles, with every commanding motive which interest can furnish for guarding and preserving the Union of the

“whole.” Let us then, my countrymen, hold it to be a sacred duty, to regard all the States as one Country, and all the people which inhabit them as our brethren. That narrow and sordid and selfish spirit which, shall lead the people of one State, to view with jealousy or envy the prosperity of another, it is folly, it is wickedness, to indulge. But still more detestable, is that feeling which induces the inhabitants of one Section of this Country, to exult at the dangers to which others are constantly and inevitably exposed, or at the calamities which invasion may produce. Let not your Souls be blackened by such pollution. Tear from your hearts every root and fibre of sentiments like these. But why do I give this admonition? My Countrymen, I know that you need it not. But it may not be “wasted in the desert air.” It may fall where it will be felt. I say with confidence that you do not require this admonition. I judge your hearts and minds by my own, and I say for you that you rejoice in the wealth and industry of the Eastern States; in the rising greatness of Pennsylvania and New-York, and in the increasing power and population of the States on the western waters. The prosperity of the States is the glory, and their strength, is the strength of the nation.

One more remark, and I have done. The enemy by his late movements seems to have selected the state of Virginia, as the peculiar object of his vengeance. Be it so. The people of this commonwealth are proud to be thus distinguished. They have never, by a senatorial resolve, deprecated his wrath, and so help them God! they never will — Their fathers met him in the field, and led his army into captivity. We will emulate their spirit, and endeavor to follow their great example. Our officers may want experience, and our soldiers may be defi-

cient in discipline. But they will learn their lessons in the field of battle, and men who bravely fight in defence of their sacred rights, and of the best and dearest objects of human affection, will soon know how to conquer in the service of their Country. My countrymen! my respected countrymen! brave and generous Virginians! when this storm shall pass away, when an honorable peace shall be acquired by your patriotism and valor, when you, or such of you as may survive the conflict, shall meet again, in the full enjoyment of peace and of the rights for which we now contend, what will be your feelings? How pure will be your joy? How proud your triumph? You shall "read your history in a nation's eyes." Yes! you shall stand on the right hand of your grateful country, while those who have encouraged the foe and deserted *her* in the hour of danger, shall call on the mountains to cover them.






APPENDIX.



ENORMITIES OF THE BRITISH AT HAMPTON.




**** With a view of establishing the assertions made in the Oration, respecting the conduct of the British at Hampton--the following articles, which rest upon undeniable authority, are respectfully submitted to the attention of the reader.--They carry conviction to the mind of every American.*




*Extract from an Official Letter, addressed by Maj.
Crutchfield to Governor Barbour, dated
York County, Half-Way-House,
June 20th, 1813.*

“To give you, sir, an idea of the savage-like disposition of the enemy, on their getting possession of the neighborhood, would be but a vain attempt. Although Sir Sidney Beckwith assured me that no uneasiness might be felt in relation to the unfortunate Americans, the fact is, that on yesterday there were several dead bodies lying unburied, and the wounded not even assisted into town, although observed to be crawling towards a cold and inhospitable protection. The unfortunate females of Hampton who could not leave the town, were suffered to be abused in the most shameful manner not only by the venal savage foe, but by the unfortunate and infatuated Blacks who were encouraged by them in their excesses. They pillaged and encouraged every act of murder and rapine—killing a poor man by the name of Kirby who had been lying on his bed at the point of death for more than six weeks, shooting his wife in the hip at the same time, and killing his faithful dog while lying under his feet. The murdered Kirby was lying, last night, weltering in his bed.”



Extract of a letter from Capt. Cooper, of the Cavalry, to Charles K. Mallory, Esq. Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia.

“I was yesterday in Hampton with my troop; that place having been evacuated in the morning by the British— My blood ran cold at what I saw and heard. The few distressed inhabitants running up in every direction to congratulate us; tears

were shedding in every corner—the infamous scoundrels, Monsters, *destroyed every thing* but the houses, and, (my pen is almost unwilling to describe it,) the *Women were ravished by the abandoned Ruffians!* Great God! my dear friend, can you figure to yourself our Hampton females seized and treated with violence by those Monsters, and not a solitary American arm present to avenge their wrongs? But enough—I can no more of this.

“They have received a reinforcement of 2000—in all 6000 men; and Norfolk or Richmond is their immediate aim. Protect yourselves from such scenes as we have witnessed. They retired in great confusion, leaving behind 3000 wt. Beef, Muskets, Ammunition, Canteens, &c. &c. &c. and some of their men, which we took.—It is supposed that they apprehended an immediate attack from 6000 of our men which caused them to retreat so precipitately. My Friend, rest assured of one thing: that they cannot conquer Americans—they cannot stand them—if we had had 1200 men, we should have killed or taken the greater part of them.”

From the same to the same, dated, Armistead's Mill, near Hampton, July 10, 1813.

DEAR FRIEND,

“Your favor of the 7th has just been received through the politeness of Major Crutchfield, who had it forwarded to me at this place. I am surprised to hear that you have among you a man who would endeavor to apologize for the unprecedented villainy and brutal conduct of the enemy in Hampton. Be assured of one fact, that that which I informed you of in my last, was strictly true.

“You request me to make known to you a few of the distressing particulars in a way which will

force conviction upon the minds of the incredulous. I will attend to it, my friend. that you may be enabled to confound such with positive proofs. At present you must content yourself with the following, and believe it as religiously as any fact beyond denial.

“ Mrs. Turnbull was pursued up to her waist in the water and dragged on shore by 10 or 12 of these ruffians who satiated their brutal desires upon her after pulling off her clothes, stockings, shoes, &c.—this was seen by your nephew Keith and many others. Another case—a married woman, her name unknown to me, with her infant child in her arms (the child forcibly dragged from her) shared the same fate. Two young women well known to many, whose names will not be revealed at this time, suffered in like manner. *Doctor Colton, Parson Halson and Mrs. Hopkins have informed me of these particulars. Another in the presence of old Mr. Hope had her gown, &c. &c. &c. cut off with a sword and violence offered in his presence which he endeavored to prevent, but had to quit the room leaving the unfortunate victim in their possession who no doubt was abused in the same way. †Old Mr. Hope himself was stripped naked, pricked with

* The former of these gentlemen acted as Surgeon to the detachment lately stationed at Hampton, and is a young gentleman of the first respectability—the latter is President of the Academy at that place, and stands deservedly high in public estimation—Mrs. Hopkins also, is a lady of very high respectability, and of the most unquestionable veracity.

† This worthy old gentleman is bowing beneath the pressure of age, being near 70 or older: has a numerous family, most of them sons, now in the service of their country.

a bayonet in the arm and slapt in the face ; and were I to mention a hundred cases in addition to the above, I do not know that I should exaggerate."



EXTRACT from a Report made to major Crutchfield by Thomas Griffin and Robert Lively, Esqrs.

dated YORK. 4th July, 1813.

“ Upon reaching Hampton, a scene of desolation and destruction presented itself—the few inhabitants we found in town, seemed not yet to have recovered from their alarm—dismay and consternation sat on every countenance—reports had reached us of the violence and uncontrolled fury of the enemy, after they obtained possession of the place—their conduct in some cases being represented such as would have disgraced the days of Vandalism—our feelings were much excited, and we deemed it our duty to pursue the enquiry as far as practicable, & are sorry to say, that from all the information we could procure, from sources too respectable to permit us to doubt, we are compelled to believe that acts of violence have been perpetrated, which have disgraced the age in which we live. The sex hitherto guarded by the soldier’s honor, escaped not the rude assaults of superior force, nor could disease disarm the foe of his ferocity. The apology that these atrocities were committed by the French soldiers attached to the British forces, now in our waters, appeared to us no justification of those who employed them, believing, as we do, that an officer is, or should be, ever responsible for the conduct of the troops under his command.”

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ENQUIRER.

SIR,

Having just returned from Hampton, where I made myself acquainted with all the particulars of British outrage, whilst that place was in their possession, I am requested by many persons to communicate thro' you, to the public, the information I have given *them*. I do this with no hope or expectation of satisfying those who required other testimony than Major Crutchfield's or Capt. Cooper's.—I too well know there are those among us, who will still doubt or pretend to doubt.—But as I believe this class to be few in number, and insignificant in the public estimation; as I firmly believe that a large majority of all political persuasions, are open to conviction and feelingly alive to their country's wrongs; I cannot withhold from them the facts, whose simple recital will, according to their different temperament, inflame them with rage or fill them with horror.

My name you are at liberty to give to the public, or only to those who inquire for it, as you think proper. I have reason to believe, that those who know me, whether Federal or Republican, will know and acknowledge that I am incapable of publishing a falsehood—and I aver, that every statement inconsistent with the following, no matter on whose authority it is made—is untrue—in proof of which I solemnly undertake before the world to establish every fact contained in it, provided any *Gentleman* will sign his name to a denial of either of them.

I went to Hampton with a determination of enquiring minutely into the truth of Reports, which I *hoped*, for the honor of a soldier's profession and of human nature, to have found exaggerated. In the investigation I resolved to depend on the second-hand relation of no one, where I could mount to the

original source of evidence—but since in some cases this was impracticable, I feel it a duty, carefully to distinguish the one class from the other.

That the Town and Country adjacent was given up to the indiscriminate plunder of a licentious soldiery, except perhaps the house where the headquarters were fixed, is an undeniable Truth. Every article of valuable property was taken from it. In many houses not even a knife, a fork or plate was left. *British Officers* were seen by Dr. Colton in the act of plundering a Mr. Jones's store. His house, although he remained in Town, was rifled and his medicine thrown into the public street just opposite where many Officers took up their quarters, who must have been eye-witnesses of the scene. The church was pillaged and the plate belonging to it taken away, although inscribed with the Donor's name. The wind-mills in the neighborhood were stript of their sails. The closets, private drawers and trunks of the Inhabitants were broken open, and scarcely any thing seemed to be too trifling an object to excite the cupidity of these robbers. Several gentlemen informed me, that much of their plunder was brought into the back-yard of Mrs. Westwood's house where Sir Sidney Beckwith and Admiral Cockburn resided. But I had no opportunity of seeing this lady, who it was said would testify to the fact. In short, Hampton exhibits a dreary and desolate appearance which no *American* can witness unmoved. Dr. Wardlaw and Mr. John G. Smith, of this city, visited it in company with me; and their indignation was equal. They, and every one, who saw and heard what I have stated, united in execrating the monsters who perpetrated those enormities; and political distinctions, if any existed, were lost in the nobler feelings, of pity for the sufferers, and a generous ardor to avenge their wrongs.

Here it may be necessary to notice a publication I have this moment read in the Alexandria Gazette of the 12th, where among other things, it is said on the authority of a "Gentleman who was in Hampton the day after the evacuation by the enemy," that it was believed there "that nearly all the plundering was committed by the negroes;" and that he saw many "articles brought to the Magistrates which had been secreted in negro houses." — That *some* plundering may have been committed by the negroes who (as I was told) were embodied and paraded through the streets, is probable enough — that the expression of *such an* opinion may have been heard in Hampton, is likewise probable — but I do utterly deny, that it is believed there, by any person worthy of credit, that "nearly all the plundering was committed by them." Let the gentleman, then, who gives this account, state from whom he derived his information. Let him give the names of the Magistrates who received the plunder thus found, and his own; and let him declare, what were the main articles he saw brought in. I will not directly hazard the assertion, but I am very much inclined to believe, there were no Magistrates in the town at the time spoken of, unless Parson Holson, Dr. Colton or Capt. Wills are Magistrates; and with all these gentlemen I conversed, and heard not a whisper countenancing the statement in the Alexandria paper. How it is known that the Negroes "had the address," first to impose on the British Commanders, and then on the American Troops, which "induced them to retreat to York," and leave Hampton to be plundered by these artful rogues, that gentleman is left to say — but that the American Troops did not retire to York, in consequence of such information, is undoubtedly true. Nor is it less true that Captain Cooper's Troop arrived in time to prevent any plun-

dering of the least consequence, after the evacuation—and in time too to prevent—what many gentlemen there believed to have been a plan concerted between the black and white allies—The firing of the Town.

That “Admiral Warren expressed his regret that the inhabitants of Hampton had not all remained, as in that case no plundering would have happened,” is possible enough; since it admits the fact of the plundering, and is conformable with the answer given to capt. Wills, who complained to Calkburn and Beckwith of the destruction of his private property. “Why did you quit your house?” said these honorable men. “I remained in my house,” answered Doctor Colton, “and have found no better treatment.”

That Kirby, who for seven weeks or more had been confined to his bed, and whose death the savages only a little hastened, was shot in the arms of his wife, is not denied. Those who wish for further confirmation, may go and take him from his grave, and weep, if they can feel for an American Citizen, over his mangled body. They may go to his wounded wife, and hear her heart-rending tale, and then they may turn to the account of the Gentleman and derive consolation from the excuse (which I never heard) “that it was done in revenge for the refusal of the Militia to give quarters to some Frenchmen who were on board a barge that was sunk by our troops who continued to fire on the almost drowning men, when making for the shore.” This vile slander on our Troops, will, I have no doubt, be met in the proper manner by the Gallant Officer who commands them at Norfolk.—But the worst is to come.

I conversed with a Lady, whose name is mentioned in Capt. Cooper's letter, in company with Parson Holson, Doct. Colton, and Capt. Wills. Her

story was too shocking in its details to meet the public eye. When I had convinced her of the object I had in view in visiting her—that it was dictated by no impertinent curiosity, but a desire to know the whole truth—to enable me on the one hand, to do justice even to an enemy—or on the other, to electrify my countrymen with the recital of her sufferings—she discovered every thing which her convulsive struggles, between shame and a desire to expose her brutal assailants, would permit. This Woman was seized by five or six ruffians—some of them *dressed in red and speaking correctly the English language—and stripped naked.*—Her cries and her prayers were disregarded, and her body became the subject of the most abominable indecencies—She at one time made her escape, and ran into a Creek hard by, followed by a young daughter; whence she was dragged by the monsters in human shape, to experience new and aggravated suffering. In this situation she was kept the whole night, whilst her screams were heard at intervals by some of the Americans in town, who could only clasp their hands in hopeless agony.

Virginian! American! Friend or Enemy of the Administration, or of the War! go as I have done to this woman's house, and hear and see her. See too her young daughter on the bed of sickness, in consequence of the abuses of that night! and your heart, if it be made of "penetrable stuff," will throb with indignation, and a thirst for revenge, and your hand instinctively grasp the weapon for inflicting it.

A Mrs. Briggs related to us, that a woman who had come to Hampton to visit her husband who was in the Militia, was taken forcibly from her side by four soldiers in green, and with her young child, which one of them snatched from her arms, borne to the Hospital, in spite of her screams. They had

previously robbed them of their rings, and attempted to tear open their bosoms. A Mrs. Hopkins, who was not in Town when I was there, obtained the assistance of an Officer, and rescued the woman from her ravishers; but not until one of them had gratified his abominable desires.

I was told by the Gentleman who accompanied me, that Mrs. Hopkins confirmed this statement, and would swear to at least two other cases of a similar kind, without however giving up the names, of the *young and respectable* women who suffered.

Doctor Colten and Captain Mills, assisted by an officer, rescued another Lady from the greatest of all calamities.

Old Mr. Hope, aged as he told Major Crutchfield (in my presence) 64 or 5 years, was seized by these wretches and stripped of all his clothing, even of his shoes and his shirt. A bayonet was run a little way into his arm behind, as if in cruel sport; while several were held to his breast. In this situation he was kept for a considerable time, and would probably have been another victim of their rage, if their attention had not been diverted to a woman, who had sought refuge in his house. They followed her into the Kitchen, whither she had run for safety. Mr. Hope made off amidst her agonizing screams, and when he returned to his house, he was told by his domestics that their horrid purposes were accomplished—This I had from him.

How far this violation extended, will never be known. Women will not publish what they consider their own shame; and the men in Town were carefully watched and guarded. But enough is known to induce the belief of the existence of many other cases, and enough to fire every manly bosom with the irrepressible desire of revenge.

I am not disposed to tire the public patience, or I could tell of enormities little inferior to the above.

But the enemy are convicted of Robbery, Rape and Murder—and it is unnecessary to add to the catalogue of their crimes.

Men of Virginia! will you permit all this?—Fathers, and Brothers, and Husbands, will you fold your Arms in Apathy, and only curse your despoilers? No, you will fly with generous emulation to the unfurled standard of your country. You will imitate the example of those generous Spirits, who are even now in crowds, tendering their services to the Commander in Chief; who are pouring from their native mountains; and soliciting to be led against the enemy wherever he dares to show his face. You will prove yourselves worthy of the immortal honor, that the Enemy has conferred upon you in selecting you as the object of his Vengeance. You will neglect for a time all civil pursuits and occupations, and devote yourselves to the Art, a knowledge of which the Enemy has made necessary.—You will learn to *command*; to *obey*; and with “Hampton” as your watch-word—to *Conquer*.

P.