

*From his Friend J. Hazen*

AN

# ORATION,

DELIVERED IN HAVERHILL, MASS. ON THE

*Fifty-first Anniversary*

OF

## AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,

JULY 4, 1827.

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BY NATHAN W. HAZEN.

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HAVERHILL:

PRINTED BY A. W. THAYER...1827.

Haverhill, July 4, 1827.

Dear Sir,

*At a Meeting of the Subscribers to this day's Celebration, we were appointed a Committee to express to you their undivided thanks for your eloquent Oration delivered this day, and to request a copy for publication.*

*We are very respectfully,*

*Your obedient servants,*

RUFUS LONGLEY,  
WARNER WHITTIER,  
JAMES H. DUNCAN.

Mr. N. W. Hazen.

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Haverhill, July 5, 1827.

Gentlemen,

*I have received yours of the 4th inst. communicating the request of the Subscribers to the Dinner, for a copy, for the press, of the Oration delivered on that day.*

*I shall cheerfully comply with this request, as the allusions in the performance to the early history of this town may tend to recall times and men whom it is honorable to commemorate and dangerous to forget.*

*I am, gentlemen, with true regard,*

*Your most obedient servant,*

To

N. W. HAZEN.

Dr. Rufus Longley,  
Warner Whittier, Esq.  
James H. Duncan, Esq.

# ORATION.

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FELLOW-CITIZENS :

**WE** have met together to rejoice in the light of this day. The plough stands still in the furrow—the tool of the artisan is silent—the noise of business has ceased, and all ranks have gathered about the altar.—Age here remembers the gloom of its morning, the toils and dangers through which it passed to glory—mingles its praises and thanksgivings, and listens to the grateful expressions of its sons. Manhood rekindles the flame of patriotism from the bright example of Age, and traces back the history of its country to the sources from whence is derived all that makes its possessions valuable. Youth here learns its lesson of society, while its bosom swells with a noble emulation of the deeds of its ancestors.

Well might I shrink from the responsibility which this view of the assemblage around me imposes. How can I give utterance to the emotions which the return of this day can never fail to inspire ! So numerous and so sacred are the associations brought with it ; and so deep the interest they awaken in every bosom, that no expression may equal their intensity—no sentiment correspond to their elevation. There is an eloquence and poetry of feeling which words must always chill and depress.—They are deep and mysterious as the seats of life. The soul has an incommunicable language suited to its own ethereal

nature. In scenes like this it discourses with its highest inspiration, and vain is the hope of the speaker to rise to the pure regions where it dwells and expatiates, or to body forth its bright creations. His task is performed when, "Guide of the path, companion of the way," he holds an equal flight.

We are assembled where we are wont to render praises for social and private blessings, to offer our thanksgivings for the glory and the prosperity of the Republic; to recall the events from which they sprung; and to commemorate the men whose daring spirits conceived, whose stout hearts and great talents achieved our country's independence. We can never recur to these times, and to these men, without being made wiser and better. Like the precepts of that holy religion, by whose auspices they were controlled, they shed a hallowed influence around them. They cherish the purest virtues—they provoke the noblest purposes. Their memorials rise on every side. Man in all his relations received new dignity in the era of their existence. History has erected a column to every event and devoted a niche to every chief. Eloquence has added the Corinthian capital, and conferred the appropriate wreath. We come to add no new strains to those that have yearly ascended in grateful memory of the Heroes of the Revolution. We need raise no new notes to swell the full chorus of their fame. We can bring to the temple no new gift. A long train of genius and learning have gone up before us, bearing in their hands the choicest fruits of every clime; the richest spoils of every age, moulded to a new and brighter existence by the workings of their own immortal minds. They have left their offerings shining in ceaseless splendor on the altar. May our hearts be lighted from their fires; and may they burn as brightly, as inextinguishably as the flame that was kindled at Faneuil Hall. May it never expire;—may it glow in every assembly where freeman meets freeman, each with a noble consciousness of his rights and responsibilities.

Thus may we learn their generous impulses without sharing in the same school of affliction. Our sentiments may be the same as guided and governed them, though they may never be called into action by the same causes.—And so shall we be

taught the lesson the example of our fathers ought to inspire. Their hearts agonized with indignation under the wrongs of the oppressor. Does not this make us value our security at a higher rate? Menace and proscription were the palms awarded to distinguished talents and public spirit. Who would not be so distinguished? They met in the midst of peril—an armed force watched them; spies and traitors lurked around the hall of their deliberations. Who is he that looks around on our peaceful and happy assemblage, and while he glories in the contrast, does not feel that a great trust has been committed to him—a solemn duty has devolved upon him?

Heaven has marked this day with no ordinary incidents. On it was promulgated the first genuine declaration of the rights of man. Then, for the first time on earth, the government and the people responded in the same language—the true dialect of liberty. On this day, from being dependant colonies of the mother country, we became an independent nation. On this day the germ of freedom which the puritan fathers brought in the *Mayflower*, when the little band ventured on their perilous voyage across the Atlantic, burst into certain existence. It took root deep and strong in the American bosom, and found there a congenial soil. It luxuriates in intelligence, and gains strength from union. Already its head towers among the nations. May it arise until the oppressed every where behold in it the beacon of hope. Already have its branches spread wide. Let them spread.—Let them extend until they shelter all the nations of the earth.

But the Declaration of Independence was a crisis to which events had long been tending. A chain of causes and effects unites it with the past and with contemporary events. Bold as the measure may be regarded standing alone, other daring enterprises had led up to it, until it became a necessary step in the progress of affairs. The meetings and deliberations of a General Congress, disclaiming to be controlled in its decisions, by any other power, were regularly held. An organized army was in the field, and hostilities had been carried on for more than a year. The British King had opened his Parliament with a speech most hostile to Americans. And it had been promptly

answered on this side the Atlantic by raising, for the first time, the striped banner. Then first did American soldiery behold, waving over them, the signal of victory—the omen of triumph. If this symbol of freedom can be more endeared to us, let us love it more that it cheered the hearts of these devoted men. They needed something to brighten their hopes. Their courage, nothing physical could increase, and no sufferings—no privations could impair. It was a portion of their nature. It alone could fit them for the part they were to perform. The British Ministry had just discovered that they had sent to the Colonies “too many troops for peace, and not enough for war.” Fifty thousand men were soon to be arrayed on our shores. Eighty ships of the enemy hovered upon our coasts, to prey upon our commerce and harrass the towns and villages on the seaboard. Then an American Navy first courted the ocean, and as it lay on the bosom of the Delaware, seemed only to await its destiny from the gigantic rivals that prowled around.

Adams, Quincy, Otis, Hancock, and the patriots of their days, sometimes gave direction to public sentiment, and at others, so prompt and intelligent were the people, they did but echo it. The light of liberty was fixed, like the north star above our horizon, and the eyes of every citizen were turned anxiously to watch it, as the dark and angry clouds of the coming tempest hurried furiously across it. Let us gather the spirit of the times from a glance at its progress in this town. So early as 1765, the subject of providing security for public liberty was discussed in a public meeting.\* In 1770, the town pledged itself to support the agreement entered into by the merchants for the suspension of commerce. And a committee was chosen “to detect and expose,” in the language of the resolve, “to shame, contempt and infamy, any person who should be found using or selling any British imported goods.” Any such person was declared “incapable of being chosen to any office of trust or honor in the town.” Again, in 1774, resolutions to the same effect, expressed in still stronger language, were adopted. And a solemn engagement was entered into on the part of the town, “that they would abide by any determination, the General Congress, then about to assemble, might adopt to prevent all

\* Note A.

trade with Great Britain ;” and the terrors of public opinion were again fulminated against “any person who should be so lost to every feeling of humanity and regard to posterity as that they should continue to counteract the same.” At the same meeting measures were taken for providing arms. This is genuine love of country, when men are willing to sacrifice private rights like these to the general good. Noble, generous men ! Your sacrifices were not made in vain. Your own valor crowned them with success. While America has virtue enough to merit your exertions, to be worthy your self-denial, she will not cease to be grateful.

But they did not stop here, though the rays of tyranny began to dart fiercely upon them. Like the course of some majestic river which the fervors of a tropical sun cannot exhaust, dispensing richness and fertility, and rejoicing the vegetation upon its banks even amid the meridian blaze, truth grows fast in the heats of persecution. Their zeal thus aroused, anticipated the Declaration of Independence. They saw that the exigencies of the times demanded it. A bill had passed the British Parliament, declaring that all American property, whether floating upon the sea or stationed in the ports, should be legal prize in favor of the officers and crew of vessels of the king ; that the men taken in American ships should be compelled to serve indiscriminately as common sailors on board those of England ; finally, that commissioners of the crown be empowered to grant pardons to such individuals as should appear to deserve them, and to declare a colony in whole or in part in a state of obedience ; in which case these commissioners might exempt them from the rigor of the laws and restore them to their original condition ! Here was a declaration of war to which the annals of nations can furnish no parallel. It was made too against a people in whose tribunals, justice was administered in the name of this very crown ; whose temples constantly resounded with prayers for the health and preservation of this very prince. This was a tyrant’s reply to humble petitions for redress of grievances ; to the most earnest protestations of willingness to submit to just obedience. National animosity may slumber in the grave, but we must erect above it a monument of gratitude to the memory of our fathers.

Thus had the union of the colonies and of the mother country been shaken until it could never again be cemented. The colonies must arise and stand alone, or sink, and the government that had oppressed, would float above them. The evils they had suffered were scarcely a prelude to most that would follow. Lawless bands of soldiery would swarm over the land and be quartered in every dwelling; an impoverished nobility would be sent to glean wealth from our spoils; every shadow of right would be swallowed up in exactions; the blood of our young men would have fattened the fields of Europe in the wars of royal ambition. What then would have been American glory? An American ship in the battle of the Nile, or an American corps to share in the honors of Waterloo! But the energies of this broad continent were reserved for a loftier destiny. Events tended rapidly to its consummation. An awful chasm was produced between the two countries, and sounds of war and defiance were wafted across it. The citizens of America did not linger on its brink, they threw first their fortunes and then themselves into it, not like the Roman Curtius, that it might close, but to make their treasures and their bodies the wedges to hold it back from re-union.

The courage and spirit of the people arose with the occasion. In two successive meetings held by the inhabitants of this town, in January, 1775, it was voted, "strictly and firmly to abide by the Association of the General Congress." Another step only remained, and they hesitated not to take it. They openly and fully met the proposition for independence when it had not long been avowed by the boldest. And on the 25th of June, 1776, it was voted, "that if the honorable Congress for the safety of the United Colonies shall declare them independent of the Kingdom of Great Britain, this town do engage with their lives and their fortunes to support them in the measure."\* This was not the effusion of a popular effervescence. It was an obligation entered into amid the sober realities of a war, where the question debated was, "*freedom or death.*" And well and truly did they redeem their plighted faith. Strictly and fully did the dire necessities of the times compel them to the very letter of their bond.

\* Note B.



If these considerations of the necessity and natural result of the event we celebrate diminish our admiration, they raise our national pride and glory. In tracing the causes, we discover a whole people moved by one sublime sentiment, and united in the same great purposes, the good of their country and of mankind. Other ages exhibit individuals, swayed by the same motives, striving with tyranny or struggling through the mists of superstition. Their names remain to adorn the pages of history. Memory points to them, as the martyrs, philanthropists, or benefactors of their age, as fortune favored or defeated their enterprises. Their virtues began and ended with themselves. Still they are exalted to the highest rank among men, and with the strength of intellect and the power of virtue, seem to draw human nature upward to their own elevation. It was reserved for the colonies of North America to present the spectacle of a great community, spontaneously rising in arms at the noble impulses of insulted virtue and outraged rights; not merely to avenge wrongs; not to dethrone one master and set up another; but to raise themselves and their posterity in all coming ages, above the reach of oppression.

Whether it was the intelligence of the nation or the policy of the leaders, it matters not much to inquire; but certain it is, that through the whole progress of the contest and in every stage of it, the glorious reward that would follow its successful termination was always before the people. They never lost sight of the object of pursuit. They took care to shape the end, at the same time they furnished the means. Here was no blind devotion, no party, no bigot zeal. Let the steadiness and consistency with which the inhabitants of this town followed up their first patriotic resolutions be our example. In 1776 a committee was appointed to attend a convention held "to consider of some method by which they may obtain an equal representation, by every man's having a like voice in the legislative body of the colony." A short time after, in the same year, it was voted that "the House of Representatives and the Council may enact such constitution and form of government as on the fullest and most mature deliberation, they shall judge, will conduce most to the safety, peace and happiness of the State in all

after successions and generations." When the Constitution as adopted by the Legislature came to be considered by the people, they had no difficulty in deciding upon the civil part of it; here their experience was full and explicit; but it is most curious and interesting to trace the doubts and hesitation that arose on the article providing for the support and maintenance of religion.\* They were alive to its importance. It had not escaped them that it was to something of this question that they were indebted for the first settlement of the country. They were divided between their respect for ancient usages, their jealousy of freedom, and their reverence for religion. Long and deeply did they debate it. Some of their views of it are happily preserved, and they are worthy of perpetual remembrance. Thus they remark, that "the subject of national establishments in religion is extremely delicate, and attended with considerable difficulty. It appears to be right that in forming public communities, some care should be used for preserving and advancing religion; but how far this care should extend and what steps ought to be taken for this purpose, is a nice and intricate question. Certainly great prudence and wisdom as well as humanity and a hearty concern for the true interests of mankind are absolutely requisite in conducting an affair of this kind in any suitable manner." In all this the struggle was yet to follow.—The rights thus sedulously weighed—thus carefully ascertained, were yet to be contested against a disparity of force, that it seemed more of rashness, than courage to combat. These rights, so equally parcelled out, yet gave ornament to the sceptre, and strength to the throne of England. They glittered among the brightest jewels in the diadem of the British monarch. When the hardy colonist dared put forth his hand to pluck them away, a thousand spears were levelled at his bosom.

At this day we can conceive but faintly the cost and privation of the contest that ensued. Devotion to the cause was so universal that it was constantly showing itself by individual enterprises where those engaged in them either perished unknown, or their fate and their deeds were soon forgotten in the rapid succession of events. Among a multitude of similar instances, let us turn to that of the brave and unfortunate Hale. He was

\* Note C.

a youthful officer in the American army, and on some pressing emergency volunteered to obtain information from the enemy's camp on Long Island. He was there recognised and arrested. No less amiable—no less accomplished, than the often lamented Andre, he shared the same fate! How many Americans who have wept over the mournful end of the British officer, know not that Hale ever lived! Every day has been opening to us some new scene of suffering—has been adding another, and another to the long account of sacrifices of home, of safety, of wealth, of life, and still the half has not been told us. We read of battles and of their fatal consequences; we picture to ourselves the blood and horror of the deadly strife, and then estimate the courage and patriotism that would lead us from our firesides to embark in such dangerous toils. But we thus do injustice to the men of '76. In this very war there were employed by the barbarous policy of England, seventeen thousand Germans, who fought for what they never saw, the price of their blood paid to their native princes, and they fought so bravely that it was the boast of our fathers to conquer them. The true glory of the revolution consists not in its battles. Chivalrous and gallant as they were, still they made but the pageantry of the times. They were but a part, and a small part of the machinery by which the revolution was accomplished. We should look rather to the deep and prevailing sentiment of devotion to the cause, which pervaded as well the citizen as the soldier; yes! which more than this, swallowed up the distinction, and in the exigency of the moment made the soldier a citizen, or converted the citizen into a soldier.

The history of this town is yet pregnant with examples. At the commencement of the Revolution, its militia was divided into four companies. By the requisitions made on one, some estimate may be formed of those made on the whole. From the records of one, which have been fortunately preserved, it appears, that from that company alone, there were drafted at different times, between 1775 and 1778, one hundred and fifty-nine men.\* Many of these were carried on short expeditions, from whence they soon returned; but it was always to encounter peril. Call was iterated upon call, and still found them ready.

\* Note D

Scarcely less were they at the post of danger in their workshops and in their fields, than when within the lines of the camp. Most of us remember the effect of a single draft in later times. But their patriotism was not stinted to personal services. Nearly all the produce of their intervals of labor was laid at the feet of their country. From this little community there was raised in 1778, to defray the expenses then incurred for continental soldiers, six hundred and fifty pounds, lawful money, and one hundred and twenty-five pounds, to pay the soldiers which the town was to supply the same year. Other necessities of the government, in military stores and provisions, were answered to an extent that seemed beyond all proportion to their means.\* All these besides the ordinary civil expenses, when the productions must have been much less and the resources much fewer than at present. And summer after summer for seven long years did they submit without a murmur to these heavy burthens. They imparted with equal liberality to the service of the Commonwealth, their goods, their treasures, their flocks. This was the spirit that supplied the mainspring of action. The rulers of such a people need no lictors to guard their persons or enforce obedience. As leaders, they obtain their elevation by superior wisdom; their equal zeal and keener foresight to the best interests of the state insure their reverence and authority. It was a thirst—a love for liberty fanned into a flame, against which England had to contend, and if she conquered, her triumph would only be complete, when death smothered the last spark of it, in the bosom of the last patriot. She must make a desert before she could call it peace.

Little as we know of all the hardships of the Revolution, we may yet learn enough to bind us by the strongest ties of gratitude to cherish the memories of those who participated in them. Perhaps I have dwelt too long on the recollections of our own community. But it is only by tracing it in this manner up to its fountain, that we learn how elevated was the contest for American Independence above the popular commotions of other countries and other times. We are bound to the remembrance of the men whose exertions in that good cause have shed such lustre on the place of our birth. As often as this day returns, let

\* Note E.

the names of Sargent, of Redington, of White, of Webster, and the host of their co-patriots, be freshly remembered!

The incidents of a few past years have done much to reanimate the scenes of this memorable war. The arrival of the "Nation's Guest" on our shores seemed to recall them and their actors from the grave of oblivion, into which they were rapidly sinking. Few only of the men survived to receive their late honors. The long delayed bounty of their country came at last. But how many had died in obscure and chilling poverty before the little pittance of a nation rich and prosperous, nay, indebted for its sovereign existence to their labors, found their wretched abodes! How many lingered through years of houseless misery, after tossing so long in the storms of war, denied a home in the land smiling beneath a peace purchased by their dangers! How many proud spirits that spurned at a foreign yoke, were compelled to submit to a social dependance, and driven to desperation, fled to the boundaries of existence, reckless of the path they followed! These are sad recollections to mingle with a festivity; but they belong to the season, and if they sadden, they hallow our emotions. We stand, the connecting link between the past and the future. It belongs to us to transmit to posterity with the observance of the day, all its associations.

Amid all the anxieties of the struggle that led to freedom, public provision was made for the support of the wives and children of absent soldiers. We have now gazed long on summits glittering with military glory, let us turn our eyes and contemplate this less dazzling, but more beautiful prospect. The soldier's thoughts of home are pleasant and peaceful. He learns new love for the country where the social ties and charities of life are adopted as duties of the state. A little remnant of this glorious race of men is yet among us. They can yet meet with us, to witness that their sons are not unmindful of them. Each year may be the last that our hearts will be gladdened with beholding their venerated forms. They stand like the rocks on some sea-worn shore, the angry surges rush between them, their relations are all cut off, the white foam gathers on their heads, and the rising tide will soon shut them from our view.

Such then was the glory of the whole period of the Revolution that it might nearly be feared that this day would be lost in the splendor of those connected with it. The mind as it contemplated them, might well be uncertain where to render its homage. As if then this day had not been marked strong enough to be forever remembered above all days, it was yet to be distinguished by one of those wonderful coincidences, that fasten on the memory and arouse the imagination with a power that mocks at time. We have witnessed the consummation of its glory. We have seen it gather up the honors of the two great counsellors of the Revolution, and the mighty statesmen of all after times. It holds them in its grasp and presents them for our homage. They are united with it by a link of mystery, which years cannot unclose, and which no understanding can trace, until the hidden ways of Providence shall be revealed.

It has been a part of my object to illustrate that the honor of the first American war belonged to no party—to no set of men—to no leaders alone. Its glory is on the people. Each acted nobly at his station. One soul animated the whole. What was concerted in harmony, was executed in strength. Jefferson and Adams moved in the highest sphere; they filled the seat of intelligence. Having infused abroad the living fire of patriotism through their native states, we soon find them foremost in the Provincial Congress. A magic hand has drawn the curtain, and disclosed the interesting scene presented by that dignified body, as they debated the momentous question of Independence.—Adams is its zealous and powerful advocate. With an ardor and confidence, such as inspiration would impart, he promises success, and paints the rising glories of the future. “Hope elevated, and joy brightened his crest,” as through the vista of coming years, his prophetic vision lightened on scenes like this.

To Jefferson it was given to inscribe the characters of his own immortality, deep and lasting on our country's institutions. When we turn our eyes to other nations, and measure their difficult but progressive march towards freedom, we rejoice in the anticipation that before another century has rolled away, these illustrious patriots shall be hailed as the lawgivers of the world!

Through the whole arduous contest we see them acting side by side. The whole strength of their mighty minds was given to the cause of liberty. Often did they render services without which it would have been wrecked. They had embarked on no tranquil sea; they must be vigilant, or the billows of revolution that rolled with threatening gulfs on every side, would overwhelm their frail vessel. With unshrinking fortitude they resisted; with matchless skill they overcame every obstacle, and brought their charge to a port of safety at last. Love of country was their master passion. No claims could impair it; neither the terrors of martyrdom or the glittering flatteries of a court. When the British King, surrounded by his nobility and all the imposing grandeur of royalty, congratulated the inflexible Adams, that in him, as the first American Minister, he should receive one who had no prejudices in favor of France, his natural enemy—his reply was, and let it be re-echoed by every citizen to the latest times—“I have no prejudices but for my own country.”

After rendering the most important and disinterested services to the state in many exalted stations, they were successively elevated, by the natural transition of such talents and virtues, to the highest offices in the nation. In their private lives, a cloud for a time obscured the pure sunshine of friendship and peace, they had so long enjoyed. But it was not such an one as filled the horizon in the morning of their existence. It was gloomy, but it betokened no storms or violence. Their souls soon rose above it, and again lightened upon one another with pristine purity and brightness. We must nearly count all our national blessings before we can reckon the benefits of their lives. Adams and Jefferson were among the foremost in framing all our institutions as they now exist. Their influence was felt on every national question. Each in his own state was at the head of almost every enterprise of great public utility. As years stole upon them, they sought retirement. Rich in honors and great in fame; their minds stored with every variety of knowledge, and their experience the wisdom of an age; dispensing instruction, and receiving the glad homage of respect, surrounded by the tenderest household relations, they patiently

awaited the end of all their labors. Time rolled on, and all the events incident to a government were daily and yearly testing the firmness of the political edifice they had so essentially contributed to erect. Fifty years had now elapsed in the history of Independent America. This is one of those periods at which mankind agree to pause and contemplate the past, before they rush on to the future. These men saw that morning arise on their country and find it prosperous and happy. The jubilate anniversary of American Independence found them lingering on the shores of existence. They were in remote sections, exposed to no common danger, suffering under no painful malady, but watched with the most anxious solicitude of the tenderest affection. They were feeble and faint under the infirmities of age. Their thread of life continued to be spun out, and there were no indications that the silver cord would so soon be loosed. Genius has studied how best to express the shortness and frailty of man's abode on earth. "Life is a vapor," faint as the wreath that just appears on the mountain side; it may vanish in a sunbeam, or the lightest breath of summer may bear it away. The career of Adams and Jefferson was eventful, and much of peril mingled in the vicissitudes of their active lives. They escaped all these, and then succeeded the decay of old age. They lived up to the very pitch of glory, and they lived no longer. A nation's tears, and the tribute of a nation's eloquence, have mourned their deaths. They died in the fulness of their honors. Their departure on this day has hallowed it with a new solemnity. Piety now demands its celebration. The naked hand of Heaven has been stretched forth to impress it with the same seal of immortality that is fixed upon creation.

The foundations of our government rest on virtues like theirs. We rejoice that we have the means of preserving the same schools in which they and the men of their generation were nurtured. We have yet among us the spirit of the pilgrim fathers; it remains, softened indeed of its most rugged and stern features; we hail it in the deep interest of education, and in free inquiry of religion. It spreads itself to the remotest bounds of population. It has been carried by the tide of emigration to the pleasant banks of the Ohio; it dwells on the fer-



tile shores of the Mississippi, and keeps pace with enterprise as it penetrates the deepest recesses of the western wilderness. No sooner is the rude cottage erected from the rough and unhewn materials that grow around it, than there spring beneath its shapeless roof, all the social sympathies, ties and habits, that adorn our splendid and costly habitations. There flourishes the same love of learning; there grows the same respect for religion. There, too, must we look for the physical hardihood, the resolution of purpose and the patient endurance of toil, which make a part of the character of husbandmen every where, but which belong emphatically to those who first lay the axe to the roots of the forest, and seek to convert its dark and solitary shades to cultivated fields and verdant landscapes. Thus, much of the same scenes that followed the landing of the Puritans on the shores of New-England, is daily acting. Thus, on the very borders of our country is perpetuated the spirit that chose rather to abandon all the delights of home, to break all the sacred ties that we express by love of country, than submit in their native scenes to the arbitrary restrictions, which are the offspring of the unnatural union of Church and State.

But there is wanting, to complete the comparison between the first settlers of New-England and the pioneers of these days, one trait of danger. Where are now the Aborigines who once traversed this wide continent? Where now is the brave and hardy race of men who once had their homes beneath the lofty forests that waved over these hills? The deer and his hunter, and the shades that covered them, have disappeared together. The light of the council-fire no more gleams on the darkness of midnight. The shouts of triumph, as they return from the successful chase, laden with the rewards of their dexterity and toil, resound no more. The warrior no longer wins his dusky love by deeds of arms. The streams that now give their tribute to us, once yielded it only to them. Their hunting grounds are now our cultivated fields. The plough sometimes turns up the mouldering bones of their burying places. Shells, bleached and whitened in the rains of many summers, and here and there a fragment of their rude pottery, or the flint head of their fatal arrows, alone mark the spot, where, on the banks of our rivers,

once stood their simple wigwam. These are all the monuments of a once brave and happy people. They and our fathers were enemies, and often met in the battle strife. Hardly a settlement that has not its traditional tale of violence and bloodshed. Scarcely is it beyond the age of some who hear me, when a fierce inroad was made upon this village, and its beloved pastor fell a victim to the fury of the war. A door in this house now bears the pathway of the unerring bullet that was to him the messenger of death. Sainted shade of the venerable Rolfe! we recall not thy fate to awaken one emotion thou wouldst not approve! we bury in the same spot, Indian cruelties and European wrongs. Let the sons of the forest survive in the memory of their rare and stern virtues! There was something in their character that may serve for example; something that with all our pride we well may emulate. They had an eloquence, which it has been the study of every enlightened age to obtain; the only true eloquence, the language of nature and passion! They had a system of education rude indeed, but exactly fitted to their institutions. They had a religion pure and simple.

As the current of years bears us along farther from the event we this day commemorate, we look back upon it through a truer medium, as experience and contrast with the progress of other nations teach us its value and importance. It is the peculiar glory of that era and the men of it, that the splendor of their fame grows not dim with age; but their influence brightens as it extends, and it refines and improves in a progress of illimitable perfection, every heart and every community where their principles are received. Man has a love of improvement closely allied to emulation, that often leads him to mistake the dreams of speculation for the lessons of experience. This is the temper that prompts one nation to follow the career of another, precisely in the same path and by the same steps; to reach at the same end by the same means, with no allowance made for difference of laws or variety of character. The ingenious researches of naturalists have discovered prostrate and decaying on the plains of France, an extensive forest of palm trees. No palm trees grow there now! None ever can be produced there

until the whole physical condition of the soil and climate is changed. Liberty may be carried there by some violent convulsion, but it will not thrive until the manners and intelligence, the religion and civil polity of the state, have been fitted for its reception. There sprung a Bonaparte; here grew a Washington.

If we turn to other countries, they teach us the same lessons of reverence and love for the habits and principles of the puritan fathers. The voice of freedom has been heard in Spain; but it is hushed in the stillness of despotism. There the cowl covers the diadem, and the pusillanimous prince holds a crucifix for a sceptre. The wretched people kneel at the sign of the cross, and know not that it is the base humiliation of a secular tyranny. We look with deeper emotions to ill-fated Greece. Her cities are depopulated, her islands redden the sea around them with the blood of their slaughtered inhabitants. The cheek of humanity shall never cease to glow with indignation at the name of Scio. A little remnant of the band of liberty alone survives! famine is among them! they fly from place to place, and the foot of the destroyer presses closely behind them. The Grecian cross scarce lifts its head, while the Turkish crescent still towers aloft on the dome of St. Sophia. The condition and prospects of our sister Republics in the Southern Hemisphere excite a deeper sympathy. Liberty dwells there in disgrace. Her violated form is cheated with the false adoration of secret ambition. Her name has been but the pretence for a change of tyrants.

“ Yet, freedom! yet, thy banner torn, but flying,  
Streams like the thunder storm *against* the wind.”

Clouds and gloom hang over these fertile provinces; but we devoutly trust, the beams of peace shall yet revisit them, and that from the tops of the Alleghany to the summits of the Andes, notes of joy and freedom shall ascend.

We too had difficulties to combat after the hostile foot of the foreigner ceased to mark our shores. The wise and happy balance of the national and state sovereignties was not obtained without fearful vibrations. The Union was at length accomplished. Since that time, our country has marched in a course of prosperity unexampled in the history of nations. Its adversities

have been converted into blessings. They have given confidence to the people, and stability to the government. The fierce tumults of party have agitated the land and shaken all but the constitution itself. But its turbulence has been stilled, and long and deathlike may be its repose. We have a nobler rivalry. We seek to make our country the first in arts, the first in science, the first in every thing that gives grace to society, or elevation to human nature. Our progress in all these has been most honorable. The growth of the nation has held an equal pace. A population of four millions has increased to twelve. Agriculture has grown rich in the produce of a generous soil. Commerce has explored every sea, touched at every port, and brought to our coasts the produce of every clime. Manufactures have clustered about every waterfall, and flourishing villages have sprung up around them; *Liberty and Law have marched together*. We have brought to a glorious termination, a second war of independence. Learning has flourished, and religion has not decayed. Yet the Republic, though saved, is not safe. It is in continual danger. The enemies of liberty without, and the devotees of ambition within, leave no season of repose to those who wish well to their country, to their children or mankind. On every citizen there rests a load of responsibilities great as he can bear. If he shrink from it, the Republic suffers. Duties throng and press around him, numerous as he can discharge. If he fails to perform them, the expectations of the country are betrayed. Let no man suppose, that, because he fills the humble walks of life, no share of the interests and prosperity of the country rest on him. It is our boast, our distinction, that here every shoulder reaches up to the support of the government.

Foremost among our obligations is that of deciding and acting upon correct information. There will always be men among us whose interests it will be to deceive. This is the character of faction. If they can succeed in deluding the people, it will follow that they must be elevated to power. Public opinion founded on truth, and supported by public virtue, will present an impregnable barrier to their assaults. Thus have we been protected—thus may we be forever. It is the testi-

mony of a great statesman,\* that he “never relied in vain on the good sense and justice of the American people.” It is you—it is the people, more than the government, that must be virtuous. When you elevate men, they act under new emotions. They then feel the aspirings of ambition. The integrity and intelligence of the people will compel them to purchase their honors with services to the state. Cherish, then, no fears for the corruption of the government. That will always take its character from the people. While you are virtuous, your government will be pure.

Much as we have lingered among the recollections of departed greatness, the noblest monument yet remains to be contemplated. It is of adamant, and can receive no grace from the chissel of the sculptor. It stands in the simple majesty of nature. The seeds of dissolution are not among its elements. It bears no inscription. As the American beholds it, the name of WASHINGTON bursts instinctively from his lips. Let our eyes be often fixed upon it. Let it remind us of the great example of his life, his services to his country, and the treasures of wisdom he has bequeathed in his writings. While America obeys his precepts, she shall inherit the blessings he conferred to the latest generations. Firm in union and fixed in principle, the waves of time shall bear past her unharmed, the wrecks of other empires. Secure in the virtue and public spirit of her citizens, America shall forever look abroad on futurity as it opens and brightens before her, with joy and hope.

\* JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

# NOTES.

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## A.

This year it was resolved in town-meeting, that "we esteem it our indispensable duty to pay a due regard to all the legal injunctions of our King and Parliament; and to resent all arbitrary impositions: We declare that we think the Stamp Act to be unconstitutional; and that the extensive powers lately granted to Courts of Admiralty are great infringements upon our rights and liberties." And Col. Saltonstall, the Representative for that year, was instructed "to exert himself, to the utmost of his power, for the recovery or preservation of our just liberties, hoping that what has been, and may be done by the several Colonies in America, will convince those who preside at the head of affairs in our mother country, that the Stamp Act and such exertions of power, will not only ruin the Colonies, but greatly affect and distress trade and manufactories in England." He was also instructed to "use his influence, that there be no Excise on Tea, Coffee, &c. for the future."

## B.

In January, 1778, "Hon. Judge N. P. Sargent, Brig. Gen. James Brickett, Major Enoch Bartlett, Samuel White, Esq. Mr. Joseph Haynes, Capt. Samuel Merrill, Mr. James Duncan, Dr. William Bachellor and Dea. Ezra Chase" were chosen a Committee "to peruse the Articles of Confederation, and give their Representative instructions concerning them." On their report it was voted, "That a Union of the Thirteen Independent American States is a matter of the greatest importance for the defence and protection of this and the other American States." The Articles of Confederation were mostly approved, though in some respects alterations were wished. It was given as the opinion of the town, "that the larger States in the Confederacy ought to have votes in Congress in, or near, the proportion of

the taxes they pay for the common defence." And the Representative was instructed "to confirm and establish this Confederation or Plan of Union, with such alterations and amendments as the General Assembly may think necessary."

### C.

The Form of Government was publicly read, and "the first and second articles again read and proposed to the people, for their approbation and acceptance; and by a unanimous vote agreed to." The third article was a subject of considerable debate and no vote was tried upon it. The meeting was adjourned. At the opening of the next meeting, some time was spent in debating the same Article, when it was voted 'to suspend the consideration of it for *one hour*; and they proceeded to act upon the subsequent Articles. All these, except the 10th, which was carried by a large majority, were unanimously adopted. The consideration of Article 3d was now resumed; it became the subject of much altercation, and considerable time was spent in arguing it. It was voted 91 to 85, to have it stand as published by the Convention. This vote was reconsidered; on the second trial, 40 only, voting for the Article. Two plans were proposed, one by Hon. N. P. Sargent, and the other by Rev. Hezekiah Smith. For that of the former, there were 79, and for the latter, 66 votes. The Meeting adjourned until the next day, when the Frame of Government was considered and almost unanimously adopted. On motion, it was voted to consider further the 3d Article in the Bill of Rights; and the next Thursday was assigned for that purpose. After all that was done had been reconsidered, Rev. Mr. Smith offered an amendment, which was accepted by a majority of 69. It was then voted, that, though the town have proposed some amendments and alterations in the Form of Government, yet they do consent that the whole be established, rather than returned to the people, as that would occasion delay.'

The same difficulty that occurred here relative to the provisions for the support of religion, was felt in all its force in framing the Constitution. Such was the idea of John Adams in relation to the "perfect religious freedom," it was thought necessary to secure, that when he drafted the Constitution, he declined drafting any article on this subject. We have been permitted by a friend to make the following extract from a letter, addressed to him by a distinguished citizen of Boston:—"In May, 1820, I asked Mr. Adams who drafted the Constitution of Massachusetts? He replied in his usual decided manner, "This right hand, Sir! There was a great Committee appointed to sit

during the recess of the Convention, which accordingly adjourned for some time. This Committee appointed Mr. Bowdoin, Samuel Adams and myself a Sub-Committee. These gentlemen insisted on my taking the papers to Braintree, where I then resided, and making the draft. This, I accordingly did. I completed the whole, excepting the Article relative to Religion. This I found I could not sketch consistent with my own sentiments of perfect religious freedom, with any hope of its being adopted by the Convention. So I left it to be battled out by the whole body. This was the case. The other parts were adopted as I drafted them, with some alterations." "

### D.

In April, 1775, there was, by order of the Provincial Congress, a Company raised in this town, of about 60 men, which were denominated Minute Men, commanded by Capt. Sawyer, and marched to Cambridge. This company served 8 months. In June, 1776, by order of the General Court, 43 men were raised, destined for Ticonderoga. In July, of the same year, and for the same destination, there was a draft of every 25th man of the militia of the town. In the same month, another draft of every 25th man was made, destined for Dorchester Heights. In September of the same year, a draft was made of every 5th man. In December following, another draft was made of every 25th man, destined for New-Jersey. In January, 1777, orders were received, to draft every 7th man in the town, from 16 years old and upwards, to serve three years in the Continental Army. In April, 1778, orders were received for a draft of 15 men, to serve nine months. In the same month, another draft of 10 men was ordered, to serve eight months. In June, of the same year, a draft of 12 men was ordered, to serve seven months. In the same month, a draft of 6 men was made. In September, same year, a draft of 9 men was made, to serve four months. Besides the drafts here enumerated, several other requisitions were made, and promptly answered, the records of which being imperfect, prevents a particular statement.

### E.

Since every undertaking of the Provincial Congress led to some requisition on the people, while the country was without revenue or funds, scarcely less than a history of the whole war would enumerate the supplies furnished by the town. In the general they were great, and in their particulars, they evince a foresight, promptitude and caution, which, few governments of



whatever kind, have excelled. In 1775, the town gave 50*l.* lawful money, to two enterprising individuals, to encourage them in the manufacture of Salt-petre. In the same year thirty dollars were raised to pay some suitable person for instructing the militia in the *Art Military*. In 1777, the sum of 155*l.* was paid for fire arms and lead. Twenty-eight men on an enlistment for three years, were required from Haverhill, in 1780. In this and the succeeding year, nearly 250 barrels of beef were furnished for the use of the Army. Some of the resolves for raising money, &c. are accompanied with a proviso that no one shall be compelled to pay his share.