

AN

ORATION,

PRONOUNCED AT

DOVER, NEW-HAMPSHIRE,

IN COMMEMORATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDANCE,

ON THE

FOURTH OF JULY, 1808.

BY MOSES HODGDON, Esq.

DOVER, PRINTED

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1808.

MOSES HODGDON, ESQ.

SIR,

The undersigned Committee of arrangements for the celebration of the anniversary of the 4th of July, do by desire of the Company, who attended the same, hereby request your permission that the elegant, and patriotic Oration by you this day pronounced, may be published, and that you will furnish us with a copy for the press.

WM. K. ATKINSON,
OLIVER CROSBY,
WM. HALE.

DOVER, JULY 4, 1808.

GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE,

I HAVE no pleasure greater, than in complying with the request of those friends, on whose judgments I can place confidence.--- Considering your application flattering, though ascribing to me more merit than I deserve, I will cheerfully furnish the copy you request.

With respect, Gentlemen,

I am your humble servant,

MOSES HODGDON.

DOVER, JULY 5, 1808.

ORATION.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

AS a humble advocate of free principles, I rise to address you—Let me appeal to the dignity of your minds, to the sensibility of your hearts, that I may rouse the spirit of liberty, which once dwelt in our land, and produced prosperity and happiness; which enlivened every countenance, and gave joy to all, who felt an interest in the honor and glory of our country. Is our nature changed, that we cannot relish the delicious pleasures which flow from independence and good government? Or is the mind so enthralled by its own inactivity, that it will not aspire to enjoy such a noble boon? I rejoice and congratulate you, my fellow citizens, upon the glorious effects of that eventful period, we now celebrate; and in the fervor of my heart, I would return thanks to that God, who holds the fate of empires, that we are permitted to assemble on this occasion. Since the last year many of our fellow citizens, who were wont to enjoy the pleasures of this anniversary, have paid the last debt to nature; have gone to the silent mansions of eternal rest.

Can we contemplate the day, in which our nation was bro't into existence, without feeling the most lively emotions of gratitude; and bestowing a tribute of praise upon the virtue and heroism, which were displayed by the illustrious patriots of that time? The feeble efforts of an ordinary genius cannot do justice to such distinguished merit. The ardor of their minds increased, as the magnitude of their difficulties progressed. They were ready to encounter the distressing embarrassments, which grew from the peculiar circumstances of the scene; they were strenuous to remove all obstacles that could impede the accomplishment of their wishes. With their arms they fought our battles; their blood stained our streets, their magnanimity prompted them to spend the last farthing of their substance, and their courage urged them to lay down

their lives for their country's good. The powers of fancy, aided by the glowing touches of superior art, cannot paint to the imagination an object more interesting, and dignified than the one before us ; a nation led by a little band of heroes, emerging from slavery to freedom ; the light of reason diffusing itself through a whole country ; intellectual vigor increasing with such rapid force, as to break the shackles, which restricted the freedom of thought, and kept the mind involved in ignorance. Can we dwell upon a subject so important to ourselves, so interesting to human nature, without feeling the raptures of enthusiasm ? Can we look back on the time, when our ancestors struggled with misery and distress, to obtain for us liberty and independence, without feeling conscious, how much we have neglected to preserve what they so dearly bought ?

Ours is not the task to travel through the dreary scenes of a revolution and establish a free government ; but one more arduous ; we have to contend with all the conflicting passions, incident to human weakness, to preserve and maintain that, which the experience of aged Statesmen, upon wise deliberation, taught them to adopt. Every fibre of our frame would strive to give the first accents of praise, if we could realize the blessings that might result from such collected wisdom. Ambition in every form rises around us to prevent it ; the experienced and ignorant pretend equal claims to confidence ; perfidious policy takes the place of sound principles, and virtue and honesty are not considered among the qualities necessary to form legislators and Statesmen. A government founded and administered upon true principles of liberty, is scarcely to be found in the annals of history. To behold a portion of the human family enjoying happiness, that would arise from the operations of such a system, would excite admiration in every mind, that was not lost to benevolence, and calloused by corruption. It has been a theme on which philanthropists and philosophers have dwelt, in sprightly strains, of transporting eulogy, from the earliest times to the present day. They have in their closets when agitating the theory and principles of a free government, been raised to the highest point of pleasure, of which their nature was susceptible. But virtue and nothing but virtue, was what they inculcated to support it. Without a nation is virtuous, it cannot be free, without

freedom it cannot be happy. To administer the affairs of a republican government, in a manner which will prevent the growth of corruption, and secure the first principles of liberty, requires the utmost skill of great politicians, and the best of men. The complexedness of its nature, makes it difficult to arrange its various parts; nothing but nice perception and acute judgment, can prepare them for harmony. The delicacy of its texture requires a firm and steady hand to keep all the powers in a proper balance. Want of energy, want of honesty, or want of talents, will introduce disorder into a system so complicated, and the pernicious effects of either will never be attended to, till they are brought to act upon the necessities, or wishes of mankind.

Since then, my fellow citizens, we have transmitted to us a government formed by the wisdom of our fathers, upon principles of true liberty, let us examine what measures, we shall take to preserve it and transmit it to our posterity. Never let it be said that we do not value liberty as we ought, nor that we have been remiss in our duty to preserve it. Let us bring the force of our minds into action, and exert the strength of our nerves, to discharge every duty incumbent upon us, as free citizens, and members of an independent government. Let our diligence and activity be such, that reproaches of conscience, or the horrors of imagination, may not disturb us, when seeking tranquillity and retirement. If we advert to the page of history for information, we shall find that free nations have risen and fallen by their own hands; that so long as they cultivated virtue and considered honesty a good quality in a citizen, they enjoyed liberty and happiness. But when corruption advanced, liberty and happiness retired. Wicked men arrived to power by wicked measures, and to preserve their power they resorted to such means as reduced their fellow citizens to slavery. And thus we see, the virtue that once expelled a Tarquin, and re-established liberty in Rome, was too weak to rise upon the ruins of Cæsar. Remarkable it is, I appeal to history to prove my assertion, that whenever a free nation lost its liberty, they lost it by the machinations, and treacherous policy of those very men, who came forward as champions of freedom, and defenders of the rights of mankind. With professions of patriotism, they gained the confidence of their fellow citizens, and converted it to their own ambitious

views. With the cry of liberty they sowed the seeds of corruption, and anarchy; and with a species of policy at first doubtful, they established themselves upon the ruins of their fellow citizens. Under the mask of economy, they would enrich themselves at the public expence; and under the pretence of benevolence and humanity, they would destroy the happiness and take the lives of thousands.

I will now turn your attention to the time, when our present government was established. The blood that was spilt and the toils that were endured in the revolutionary war, did not of themselves produce a government; they only laid the foundation for one. It is easy to conceive how alarming the crisis of public affairs was at this time; people worn out with the fatigues and hardships of a long and doubtful war; many were reduced to abject poverty by the enormous taxes imposed upon them. Others were mourning the loss of some dear connection, and found themselves destined to spend the remainder of their lives in poverty and wretchedness. Besides these, there were a numerous train of soldiers, who had with patience and patriotism, travelled through and surmounted all opposition, not yet paid a farthing for their services. A foreign and domestic debt pressing on every side; and no means pointed out how money was to be raised to pay them. These were some of the many evils that existed, when it was necessary a general government should be established, or our independence was gone forever. A poor people, a discontented army, and ambitious demagogues, all tended to embarrass measures about to be taken for the new government. Unanimity could not be expected upon a subject so complicated and important; difficulties immediately arose from diversities of opinion. Some of the most prominent features of our federal constitution met with decided opposition; at first, those who objected to particular parts professed to admire the remainder. But opposition increased with warmth, as the time approached when this new constitution was to go into operation; and finally many discontented, and ambitious men, impatient of any government; each condemning his particular part, arrayed themselves into a powerful opposition, and openly resisted every measure that was calculated to give our new government a fair experiment. This alarmed the

friends of the constitution, they knew the troubles of anarchy, and dreaded the time, when Americans were to be again without government. The greatest wisdom and talents inclined to support it ; arguments and sound reasoning were resorted to, to shew the necessity of a general government, and how well this was adapted to the genius and habits of the American people. Here, my fellow citizens, we behold the origin of two great political parties in our country ; the friends of the constitution assumed the name of federalists ; those in opposition stiled themselves antifederalists. Since that time the former have uniformly supported the appellation, they at first assumed, and endeavoured to maintain the principles of our government in their original purity. But how was the case with the latter?— They disliked the title that was assumed by themselves ; it had in itself a strong semblance of hostility to the constitution ; to palliate appearances they have since assumed a more specious name, that of republicans.* What were the characters of the leading men in these parties, when they first rose in opposition to each other ? The federalists, my fellow citizens were men of sound and enlightened understanding, attached to virtuous and regular habits ; their knowledge of both men and governments was great and practical ; they knew how to preserve liberty and restrain the excessive and turbulent passions of the wicked part of society. On the other hand, how different ! many of the antifederalists in their knowledge were speculative, in principles licentious, and in character desperate. Religion they treated as mockery, and virtuous habits were ridiculed as nothing but the effects of superstition. Soon did the malignant and licentious principles of the opposers of our constitution shew

* This may be ascertained by recurring to the proceedings of State conventions on the constitution of the United States ; that those who were antifederalists are universally republicans, I do not pretend to assert, that they are generally so, is a fact as notorious as any in history— Mr. Jefferson, George Clinton the present Vice President, Munroe, Dawson, Gerry, Governor Sullivan, Benjamin Austin the author of *Honestus*, and many others were distinguished antifederalists, who are now distinguished republicans. North Carolina was wholly antifederal, and Rhode Island. The Boston Chronicle was decidedly an antifederal paper, and is now as decidedly republican. It is sufficient for me, that the President and Vice President were antifederalists.

themselves, in their attacks on the federalists. Those men, who were among the first in our revolution ; who fought our battles, who expended their little all to support our independence, were charged as guilty of the highest crimes known in society ; because they volunteered to defend the constitution and support the government of their country. Treason and a design to establish monarchy and destroy the liberty of the people were among the multitude of these enormous charges. When at the same time the antifederalists represented themselves as friends of humanity, jealous of liberty, and advocates of the only true rights of the people. Will any candid man who has ever read, or heard of a free government, who knows what are the principal characteristics of it, say that one, who is honestly devoted to the constitution of the United States, is an enemy to freedom ? Every feature of it is republican, and every principle that of liberty. And will any man, who is acquainted with the tenacious obstinacy of human prejudices, be so hardy as to declare, that one, who conceived an early prejudice against our constitution, who applied the most violent measures to oppose it, can ever be so reconciled, as to be cordial in his attachment to it ? I trust they will not. Among the most serious charges against the federalists, was an attempt to form a consolidated government by making the small States equal to the great ones in the senate. This charge was supported with great abilities and violence ; and had the supporters of it succeeded, the little States, of which New-Hampshire is one, would have lost all sovereignty and influence in the councils of our nation. Some of the proud Virginians*, elated with the idea of belonging to a great State, thought they had a right to dictate what they pleased to the nation ; and had the vanity to believe, they could erect such a government as would suit themselves, and maintain it against the wishes of all the little States. I hope the pride of New-Hampshire will never stoop to defend a policy that tends to destroy her sovereignty, and importance. In spite of opposition, we find the federalists established a government and put its various branches into operation. And what was the consequence ? A nation before without a

* See debates in Virginia convention on the constitution of the United States.

character assumed a dignified rank among the powerful nations of the earth. A nation without commerce soon rivalled the most commercial nation in Europe. Without a cent of revenue, the trade of our country was turned into such channels, as to enable the administration of government, to meet the exigence of the times. The war worn soldiers received an ample compensation for their services, and officers were allowed to retire to their homes with confidence and dignity. Even the earth itself seemed to be changed; agriculture assumed a new appearance. The labors of the farmer were crowned with a plentiful harvest, which when carried to market found a quick and profitable sale. These were some of the happy effects, which resulted from the establishment of our federal constitution; and these continued as long as the same spirit actuated the administration, as actuated those who established the government.

An event in the political world, extraordinary in its nature, now presents itself to our view; the unparalleled revolution in France. Strange it is, but truth bears testimony of the fact, that internal commotions of one nation, should have such powerful effects upon others, most remotely allied to it. Liberty could not find a resting place in Europe. The sparks, which emanated from our revolution, kindled a fire that seemed to threaten destruction to the human race. Frenchmen strove with eager haste, to fan the flame, which in other climes, they saw producing greatest of blessings. But too late, they found the temperament of their minds would not allow them to enjoy the products of a foreign soil. What at first was introduced as a blessing, soon proved a scourge to mankind, and destroyed those who introduced it. No sooner had liberty erected her standard in France, than fury seized the nation; thousands fell a sacrifice to the prevailing policy of the times. Treachery and conspiracies raised factions and tumults; the ingenuity of the powerful was tortured to invent means, by which the weaker could be deprived of life, with little trouble to the executioner—Neighbour slaughtered his neighbour; lisping babes could find no protection in their innocence; in the most brutal manner they were murdered to satiate the vengeance of an enraged populace, because they bore the name and cherished the blood of their parents. The convulsions of France shook Europe

to its centre. Kings and potentates looked with astonishment upon these tremendous scenes; they trembled at the thoughts of becoming victims to French liberty. Like lightning the spirit which seized France, pervaded every body in contact with her; like poison it destroyed the vital parts before its effects were seen upon the surface. Politicians stood a far off and wondered; moralists blushed and confessed their ignorance when they treated upon the passions of man, and found how much beyond what was ever known before the depravity of our nature could carry us. Yet however melancholy and unfortunate were the effects of this revolution, it was natural and laudable for America to feel favourably disposed to a cause, that had liberty for its object, and the happiness of a nation. France avowed her intention was to be free and we believed her. Our hearts beat with joy, to hear that America had become an example for other nations, and our eyes beheld with delight the cause of liberty successful in a foreign country. Humanity and benevolence taught us to wish, that all our fellow creatures who were in bondage, should rise to the dignity of freemen. But before we could digest our hopes, and give direction to our expectations, the scene was changed. We feasted upon the delusion of a moment; our prospects vanished like a twinkling meteor, and soon we discovered that Frenchmen were not worthy of freedom. In language of contempt and ridicule, they discarded religion and morality. The name of liberty was used alternately by their leaders, as an engine of destruction; they were tossed to and fro, by the blindness of credulity, to gratify ambitious and cruel demagogues; till one more arch than all the rest, seized them and bound them fast. And now with cringing adulation, they adore the man that restored to them the rank of slaves. Many of our fellow citizens, early anticipated the consequences of French liberty; and what they anticipated, was soon realized. The zeal which caused the revolution took a new course and left no hopes for the moderate or doubtful. Instead of liberty France wanted power; rage for universal empire was discovered in every Frenchman. The discipline and valor of her armies ensured success wherever they wished to strike a blow.—Countries after countries, were marked for conquests, as

they were marked so they were conquered. After the disposition of France was clearly developed by her actions; after every rational hope of her being a free nation was obliterated; and the more discerning part of our countrymen saw that French liberty was only another name for tyranny; that our government could be saved only by resisting the intrigues, and influence of their spies, and agents; we find, that some of our leading men* were secretly aiding the cause of these agents, and endeavouring to turn the popular opinion against those who administered our federal government. Many distinguished characters, who opposed our constitution in its early operations, who afterwards pretendedly approved it, now seceded from the federal party, and resorted to every means to destroy its influence. They took advantage of feelings excited by French enthusiasm, and represented the federalists as hostile to French politics, and consequently enemies to liberty. Among these seceders were our present president, and many others who now compose the administration of our national government. Mr. Jefferson with disgust, retired from office in a manner that left no doubt which way he would steer his course. In a simple garb peculiar to some antient republicans, he fed the hopes of grovelling ambition; and preferred being considered the leader of a faction, to holding an honorable office in the federal administration. By talents calculated more to destroy, than to build up and preserve, he managed the passions of his party with great success. By his appearance of moderation, many believed him impartial; by his professions of patriotism he attracted the attention of the credulous; and by his opposition to English politics, and pretended antipathy to monarchical institutions, he served as an anchor on which the disappointed and ambitious laid hold to execute their wicked intentions. At the same time, he would express himself a warm advocate for the happiness of his fellow creatures; and with philosophical indifference, afford his assistance to vilify the name of Washington.† Mr. Jefferson's efforts were not the effects of momentary vanity; he had

* See Jefferson's letter to Mazzei, and the writings of others, who advocated the conduct of the French ambassador, when he appealed from the decision of Washington to the people of the United States.

† See J. T. Callenders writings and confessions.

system; he had sentinels to watch the motions of his opponents, and heralds to proclaim through the country, that Jefferson and liberty were the same thing. Such were the flattering prospects held out by him and his adherents, to doubt that we should realize them was unpopular; to deny it was a crime. Every measure was devised, that the power of ingenuity could devise, to create a change in political sentiments; after a long and arduous struggle it was effected. Mr. Jefferson was raised to the first magistracy of our nation, behold in a moment, the antifederalists, who opposed the constitution in every step of its progress, were converted to good republicans, and professed friendship for the very thing they before had wished to destroy. Is it safe, my fellow citizens, to intrust ourselves with a known enemy, though in a moment of reserve, he should declare himself our friend? This change formed an important era in our national administration. Federal measures, which Washington and Adams adapted, were denounced by Jefferson and his party, because they tended to aristocracy and monarchy. Shouts of applause were heard from one end of the continent to the other, with mutual congratulations, that Americans were so happy, as to bring republicans and the true friends of liberty into power. People were led to believe, the earth would produce food without labor, that liberty was secure. that taxes were nothing but effects of federal policy, and never more would be known in this country. How fallacious! nothing changed for the better, the earth requires labor to produce food, and taxes make their annual visits. These representations were charming to the ear, and pleasant to the taste, but their effects have palsied the whole system, and produced a stupor that must end in violent convulsions; or the death of liberty.

To prove that Jefferson and his party are true republicans, and friends of liberty, requires more evidence than can be found, by recurring to the measures of their administration. They have given strong marks of principles hostile to those they profess to follow—Their actions have uniformly tended to the same point; to depress England and the federalists; to aggrandize France and their own party. Some few years since, they were lavish of encomiums on the French, because they were rising to

freedom and a republican government ; now they admire them, for what ? not because they are republican or free, but because they are French and enemies to England Mr. Jefferson hailed the day, with official greeting, when one of the blood of Napoleon, erected a throne and established a system of tyranny in Holland. States that were before free and governed by republican laws. Who can cast his eyes upon Europe, and survey the different empires and countries, which are subservient to the views of French ambition, and compare them to the state in which they were twenty years since, without feeling horror and pity ? Tyranny is established from one end of the continent to the other. England the only spot except America, now known, where a single trace of liberty can be found, is an object, on which all the neighboring powers are summoned to wreak their vengeance. Napoleon has marked her for destruction ; too bad to relate, many of our countrymen, who profess to admire free governments, pray for success to his enterprize. The powerful States of Europe, how are they ? Russia is paralysed by the seductive influence of French diplomatic agents — Prussia has lost her power, sunk in poverty and disgrace, by the effects of temporizing policy. The proud house of Austria is humbled to the dust ; stands with tame submission to receive and execute the terrible commands of the master of Europe. Italy, once the land of wealth and science has been stripped of her ornaments, and in common with other States now groans in slavery — Where are the wealth and the free States of Holland. The wealth has gone to adorn the imperial diadem of Napoleon ; and King Louis with despotic powers, is appointed guardian of Dutch freedom — Spain trembling, with her arms stretched forth, is imploring mercy, to avert the dreadful blow, which now threatens her destruction. And how has been America ? My judgment must guide my answer. Devoted to the interest of the lawless tyrant of France, and crouching to receive what burdens he has thought fit to impose upon her. How is she now ? writhing under tortures inflicted by her own hands. Pardon me, my fellow citizens, for speaking so freely of the country, that gave me birth. To think a moment of our oppressed situation, with our ignorance of the cause of it, would arouse indignation in any one, who

ever breathed the air of an independent country. I do not mean, in a wanton manner to impute wicked motives to any mortal on earth ; it is a matter of no consequence to us, whether our distresses are effects of wicked intentions or weak measures. While charity requires that I should spare the motives of our present national administration, my duty requires that I should deal freely with their policy. I do not rely upon opinion, or prejudice to support me in my assertion, I have incontrovertible proofs, of what I advance. If I can prove a single instance in which Mr. Jefferson and his party, have committed the honor and dignity of our nation, have acted a part unworthy of a free and independent administration, to gratify the wishes and views of the great Napoleon, they ought to lose the confidence of the people, and by the voice of their constituents be driven from office. I will appeal to the journals of Congress for instances and facts, the truth of which cannot be doubted, to shew that I am correct in saying, this country has been devoted to the interests of the French government. In the senate of the United States in the year one thousand eight hundred and six, Doctor Logan a distinguished member from Pennsylvania, and one who goes heart and hand with the President, introduced a bill interdicting all intercourse with this country and the Island of St. Domingo. It met with a manly and spirited opposition by those who felt for the commercial prosperity of their country. By the laws of nations, and the acts of the French government it was proved to a demonstration, that we had a right to trade there. Those who perceived the degrading tendency of the act, and the motives, that produced it, felt the honor of their country insulted, and used every argument possible to prevent its passage. But the noble Doctor “unmasked the bill. In his great zeal he told them, that they had already tampered too long on the subject ; that France had then demanded the measure of us, and its adoption had become a matter of necessity on our part. Degrading idea ! where then was gone our national honor, and our boasted independence ? What was this but to tell us, that such is now our humbled state, when France commands we have no alternative, but obedience ; and that even to deliberate is dangerous” ? With such reasons, and for no other the bill

passed ; the trade to St. Domingo was interdicted. The honor of an independent nation was insulted through the weakness of a timid administration, and the interest of our citizens, was sacrificed to satisfy the wishes of Napoleon. Were I permitted to hazard an opinion, I should say that this was the time, and the most proper time, for our government to have made a stand against France. Had the spirit of our independence actuated the administration at that time, or the firmness and magnanimity of Washington had the least influence, that bill would have never passed ; and in human probability, we should this day, have enjoyed the pleasures of a neutral commerce, and an independent nation. The only way to conciliate a tyrant, is to resist his first encroachments. But instead of making a firm and manly stand against the first demands of France, Mr. Jefferson and his friends, with a meanness becoming only the tools of ambitious tyrants, tamely submitted to grant the insulting request. What was the consequence? France had carried her point, she felt the pulse of our nation, and they beat in her favor. She knew where to apply for other favors of more importance. The fact of our administration's obeying the wishes of France, by interdicting the trade with Saint Domingo, is proved by such powerful evidence, taken in connection with other facts of the same nature as well proved, can leave no doubt on the minds of impartial men, that our country has been devoted to the interests of the French nation. What did Randolph say, one of Jefferson's own party? That Madison, who is the great premier of our administration, who is held up as a candidate for our next president said, we could not settle our difficulties with Spain, because France wants money ; and we must give it to her. Is a nation independent, is an administration correct, that says we must pay money to one not a party to the controversy, before we are allowed to treat with another? How mean the thought, that a secretary of State should descend so low, as to consent to give money for the privilege of making a treaty. I wish my countrymen would think on these things, and say where is our independence. Are we not, my fellow citizens, in danger of invasion from France? Her invariable policy has been to secure the friendship of a certain part of

the community ; cause divisions and factions, and then conquer. That was the case with Holland, Italy, Germany, and Prussia. Have we not as much to fear as they had ? Could we resist the force of a French army, powerful and disciplined, when one half of our citizens were advocating French politics, and opposing with all possible strength the exertions of the other ?

Although I could notice numerous instances, where from perception alone, I could prove the partiality of Jefferson's administration to the french nation, I will pass them over, and call your attention to the measures of our last congress. There we find despotism in disguise. The advocates for liberty and free government, destroying the rights and property of people at one blow. Passive obedience and non resistance, was the only principle inculcated. Mr. Jefferson with a magic art never before known in our country, took a peep into futurity, and saw what would happen ; and his duty as a patriot urged him to legislate against any particular events. He recommended an embargo law, without limitation ; the politeness of congress forbore to ask for reasons, and in the belief of executive infallibility they passed it. They perceived immediately, they were responsible to their constituents, and enquired for reasons to justify what was done. And what were offered ? A decree of the French Emperor, that was issued many months before ; and British orders of council the existence of which, was not known in this country, till several days after this famous law was enacted. Absurdity itself would smile at such flimzy reasons. The object, as was pretended, was to secure our ships and seamen against capture from either of the two great belligerent nations of Europe. And that was the only object. A law was passed, which seemed to embrace the whole subject in view, prohibited the sailing of vessels on foreign voyages ; and answered, so far as the nature of such a law could, to secure our ships and seamen. But this did not suffice, our embarrassments were too small, we could enjoy a free intercourse among ourselves ; supplement upon supplement were added to this law in the nature of non intercourse bills, till every avenue, however small, which led to commerce was completely choaked. Happy times ! how great our blessings ! the laurels of independenc^e

are unfashionable, and we will not wear them. Was ever a people so favored before? We have the glorious liberty of purchasing a barrel of flour and eating it, if we are so fortunate as to procure a recommendation from Governor Langdon, that we deserve it, and a special licence from Mr. Jefferson that we shall have it. Laws are simplified and decisions speedy. We are not driven to search the numerous volumes of civil and common law, to find reasons to support an argument; nor are we put to the useless trouble of summoning witnesses and collecting evidence; we have a law superior to all that. It empowers a collector to decide the fate of vessels and cargoes, by authority of his own suspicion. This, my fellow citizens, is liberty divested of all its superfluities; the pure effects of a republican administration. Next comes the marvellous; the keen discernment, and magical philosophy of Mr. Jefferson, discovered a strong connection between the trade of Vermont and Canada; and the security of our ships and seamen. Our ships and seamen, would not be safe till all intercourse between these countries was interdicted; and that was immediately done. Could trade to Canada endanger our ships and seamen, or injure the citizens of Vermont? In moral certainty it could not. Could an interdiction of it injure the Canadians? It most surely would. When we consider how complaisant and ready Mr. Jefferson was to interdict the trade to St. Domingo, because France requested it; how desirous Madison was to give money to France for the privilege of treating with Spain. When we consider the bold steps and powerful exertions of Napoleon to destroy the commerce of England; and how absurd and unnecessary it was to pass the numerous supplementary non-intercourse bills of the embargo law, to secure our ships and seamen; how totally distinct they are from the subject of the first bill; it does not require the aid of malice or prejudice to justify us in saying the motives assigned by the administration for laying the embargo, were not those by which they were really actuated. By fair and logical deduction we should be authorized to say the numerous embargo acts were dictated by French policy, in order to destroy English commerce. Could any person before have believed, that America would suffer the privations and dis-

trials it now suffers, to gratify the wishes of speculative politicians, by trying what they term a patriotic experiment? Never since we had a government, has there been a time that executive influence went so far as it now goes; never before this, would any president dared to exercise measures so arbitrary. Look into Rome and Greece the most powerful and corrupt nations of antiquity, and see if you can find an instance, where their rulers ever assumed a power, like that assumed by Mr. Jefferson, in giving exclusive privileges to selected citizens, to buy or sell the most necessary article of subsistence. For one hundred and fifty years past, had a King of England attempted such a thing, he would not have worn his crown one month. Napoleon, whose government is a perfect system of tyranny, has not gone so far. His subjects dare not cut a tree suitable for timber without his leave, but they were never deprived of the right of buying and selling bread and flour, especially to each other, unless some famine or general scarcity had visited the land. But like criminals we are doomed to fate worse than is allotted to the subjects of despots.

As a nation, our prospects are gloomy, our fates doubtful; we are oscillating between hope and despair; on one side threatened with a ravaging war; on the other subjection to the tyrant of France; our produce wasting for want of a market; our ships rotting for want of employ. Laboring men subsisting upon the charity of their neighbours; mobs rising to oppose the execution of civil power; taxes to pay and no resources to pay them. All these evils to a political certainty originated from the measures of our present national administration—Yet; yet; I pause for shame! a majority of New-Hampshire legislature, like deluded enthusiasts, or political madmen, have applauded, without discrimination, in a style of fulsome panegyrick, these destructive measures. In this servility has outstript itself. Arrogance and confidence have triumphed over the pride of patriotism; the dignity and honor of legislators, are lost in the pettish insolence of party spirit, and vanity has erected a throne upon the follies of those, who stooped to approve of this degrading deed.

