

# AN ORATION,

*Delivered at Woodstock, July 4, 1809.*

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*Friends and Fellow Citizens:*

UPON this anniversary of American Independence, strikingly important are the reflections which crowd upon the mind. We look back upon the situation of our country before the rank of Independence was attached to the American character.— We pass in remembrance the prominent features of our revolution, and the difficulty and danger which attended that noble enterprize for liberty. We contemplate our present respectable rank among the nations of the earth, and the invaluable rights and privileges we enjoy, and those of which we are deprived by the injustice of foreign nations. We do not stop here: we anticipate with joy and satisfaction the unrivalled greatness to which America is progressing, and which, in prospect, has already excited the jealousy of foreign powers. Amid this tide of reflections let us search for some instruction which may be useful to us as members of that community which affords us protection, and of which we glory in being called citizens. You undoubtedly have come together in the exercise of a fond hope that you shall be edified in some of those things to which the day naturally calls our attention. In this you will not be gratified, unless some light should be offered to aid you in discovering your respective duties in society, and the interests which claim your protection: or unless there should be brought to view some motives for your activity and perseverance in the performance of those duties, and the protection of those interests. It may be difficult to accomplish either of these objects without some recurrence to the first and most established principles of our government. And, permit me to address you in the full belief that you are all deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of our Independence to our national felicity. That you duly appreciate the blessing of its achievement, and the necessity of its preservation. Otherwise you cannot participate in the joys of this day. Other-

wise we can recur to no first principles of our government, on which to raise an argument satisfactory in your esteem. Men cannot rejoice at an event which they deplore, nor acknowledge the weight of an argument founded on premises which they consider unjust and fallacious. But the children of Israel could with joy observe the feast of unleavened bread in memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, because that deliverance was to them a source of unspeakable joy. So can we, fellow citizens, and every true American, with equal joy and satisfaction, observe this anniversary of an event the most auspicious to the people of America of any that ever did happen or that can hereafter be expected.

To you, then, may be addressed those self-evident propositions on which our forefathers predicated their right to be absolved from all allegiance to their then mother country, Great Britain, and form for themselves a free government, which secured to them those inherent rights, which as a Colony they could never enjoy. The DECLARATION of our INDEPENDENCE, which has now been read, exhibits these propositions in that interesting language which was dictated by the spirit of the times.—How widely different this from the language of monarchs! How opposite, when contrasted, are the two situations of the American People, reckoning them before and after this declaration! Before were disseminated those absurd and degrading principles, that the King could do no wrong, that he was omnipresent in his dominions, that the People were dependent on him, not only for protection, but for property, and even for that property which they acquired by their own industry; that they held all of him; that he had an absolute right to their services on all occasions when he demanded them; and that he had such a right and control over their persons, that they could never, by moving from his dominions and becoming inhabitants of other coun-

titles, or citizens of other States, or in any other way whatever, cease to be his subjects. He even claimed the right to force such emigrants back to his dominions, as the People of America would compel their cattle which had strayed to return to their pasture, and the more implicitly the People believed in and practised these degrading ideas, the more fit objects were they of the Kings beneficence. But at and after this declaration of our Independence, were inculcated the more noble ideas that "all men are created equal," that is, with equal rights: That among those rights some are unalienable, such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness: That no control over these can of right be assumed or maintained, not even by the consent, and much less against the will of the possessor: That governments are instituted among men to protect, not to curtail these rights: That in all legitimate governments, the rulers derive their just powers from the consent of those who are governed: That when these principles are perverted, and government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and establish a new system which they deem calculated to ensure their safety and happiness.

By the adoption and establishment of these principles, mankind become elevated to their native dignity. The mind unshackled from the depressing power of Monarchical dependency, stretches itself along the regions of literature and philosophy, disdains the groveling walks of ignorance and superstition, which are the pinions of despotism, and hails that empire of reason and equal rights which is the richest gift of an earthly nature from God to man. It disdains and deprecates that thirst for domination which Monarchs feel, and which stimulates those wars of conquest which deluge the world with blood. It rejoices in the prospect that ere long a state of universal peace will be the happy lot of mankind.

These just, benevolent, and dignified, principles are the basis of the government which we now enjoy. Through the successful exertions of our fathers, in a seven years conflict, against the prejudices of this world, against principalities and powers, against the opposition of many of our own citizens, who either did not believe in or could not relish the blessings of a free government, there is confirmed to the people of America, the right of legislating for themselves without the sanction or negation of any foreign Potentate; the privilege of enjoying

the same individual rights which others around them possess, rights which are protected by a government of their own choice; and a constitution which points out the plain and simple course which our Rulers must pursue, in the discharge of their several functions, and guards, like a flaming sword, the liberties of the People. Our constitution begins with a recital of the primary objects of its formation. It begins thus: "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America." It then proceeds to regulate these several and important objects in a way perfectly conformable to those principles of equal rights, or true republicanism, which of old were unknown among us; but which became gloriously triumphant by the success of our revolution.

Here then, we find a key with which we can unlock the mysteries of duty appertaining to each individual in society—we find that our fathers, with immense blood and treasure, laid the foundation for a free government. Justice, equality, liberty and social order were the corner stones thereof: Union was its cement: Peace and happiness were its objects. The superstructure was well calculated to effect those objects. Those objects it will effect so long as the basis is preserved entire by the virtue and the assiduity of the People. The duty, therefore, of every citizen to watch, protect and support those foundation principles of our government, becomes obviously manifest. We ought to be instant in season and out of season, lest some part of that foundation be sapped unaware: Lest some enemy of our freedom should occupy the avenues to its destruction. Surely all who value this comely edifice, all who do not wish to barter our liberties for our primeval bondage, all who wish to transmit to their posterity the inheritance they have received from their fathers, will become voluntary and perpetual sentinels around this fortress of our safety, this bulwark against the inroads of despotism. They will be careful to maintain the principles of justice with each other and with foreign nations. They will avoid arrogating to themselves rights which they will not yield to others under like circumstances. They will so use their own, as not to infringe the rights of others. They will use all the reasonable exertions in their power to

promote unanimity and order, to the building up and strengthening of the whole community. They who do these things have already discovered, they practice, their duty.

This subject, thus seemingly brought to a point, yet wants further explanation, lest it should leave every one justifying his own proceedings, and condemning the conduct of those who walk in different paths. For surely no one upon mature reflection will controvert these premises. Every one will exclaim, "you lay down the principles of our government, and point out the duty of citizens, correctly. I am a firm supporter of those principles; I endeavor to practice those duties. I glory in our Independent free government; and would not barter it for all the monarchies in the universe." All profess to agree in these sentiments, these groundwork principles; and yet the people of the United States are divided into two great political parties.—These parties agree not at all together in the sentence they pronounce upon the measures of government. They are as widely apart upon measures, as they could possibly be upon principles. It is therefore necessary to investigate the subject still farther: To search for some criterion by which the individual of candid inquiry can discover his duty in particular cases, independently of the opinions and assertions of political partizans. Perhaps the inquiry will prove neither party to be right. If so, let us willingly stand or fall as our conduct will bear the test of those principles which we all deem correct.

If then we agree that the principle of equal rights is incorporated into our system of government, the next enquiry will be, what acts will be a departure from this principle? I answer, whatever tends to create a monopoly of property, or a monopoly of influence, aside from the weight of correct information, is an obvious departure from this principle.—Men who rank with the mediocrity as to property are usually the most firm supporters of a republican government. They are too independent to be enslaved by the rich: they are not sufficiently independent to enslave the poor. They are too rich to embark their possessions in the visionary projects to a disaffected partizan: they are too poor to attempt a project of their own for the destruction of government. They are not so rich as to despise industry, nor are they able to live without it. Not accustomed to the extremes of inequality among the different members of the community, they have no inclination to introduce them. This class of

people usually neither envy the rich nor despise the poor. They have no interests which they wish to maintain at the expence of the rights of others. Having the same rights as others, in general, and claiming the same protection, they are willing to embark with the community for strength and defence. Satisfied with those privileges which they enjoy, and which render life happy, they are anxious for the protection of them, rather than the acquisition of others which at best may be of uncertain operation. Possessing no ardent zeal for power, they are willing to leave the interests of the nation at the disposal of the freemen—while on the other hand, the extravagantly rich calculate much upon possessing power proportionate to their riches. If they fail in this calculation they grow dissatisfied. If they cannot bind the people around them in a state of dependency and under their controul, they impute this failure to some defect in the administration of government. They know that the natural tendency of great wealth is to create power and influence in the affairs of government, and they are anxious to realize it in themselves.

So far as property creates dependency, it gives the owner of that property a degree of ascendancy and controul over the minds of the persons who are dependent. In England, the Lord of a manor with one hundred tenants under him, is sure to carry with him their hundred votes; and a similar influence is every where to be expected from a similar source. Every act, therefore, of Government, which tends to foster this inequality of property, which establishes in one man or a set of men, rights by which property can be obtained, and which are not common to the citizens at large, is clearly a departure from this principle of equal rights. Under this head may be named all acts establishing private corporations with exclusive privileges. These all create interests adverse to those of the people at large, and ought not to be established but with great caution. The object of them generally is property. If they succeed in this, they create a dangerous inequality of property. If they fail of this success, still they create a mutual and combined interest among the members of those corporations, for the extension of their privileges, which will never cease to haunt the legislature till their ends be answered. There may, without great danger, be some temporary exemptions in favor of infant and useful factories, and of expensive and necessary roads and bridges: but this ought to be indulged in those cases only where a great public good would result from the exemption.



And this should be attended to with a jealous care, for a pretence of public good will always attend petitions for private grants, which, if made, would stand in competition with the public good; and the moment these grants become so numerous that the interest thereby created is general in its operation and influence, it becomes dangerous to liberty. Those actuated by this interest and influence will naturally seek their own, not the good of the public.— Hence those laws which affect the right of property ought ever to be general, and leave that right equally in the reach of all the members of the community. This alone will preserve unimpaired that principle of equal rights for which we contend.

Equally a departure from this principle would be a law depriving certain individuals of rights which are left in the power of others under similar circumstances. But this can seldom be expected; and there is so little motive for its existence, and so obvious an impropriety attending it, that naming it is sufficient for the object now in view.

The establishment, in some of our sister States, that a man must possess property to a certain amount before he can exercise the right of voting as a freeman, is a most dangerous departure from the principle of equal rights. It contains two palpable absurdities. 1st. It supposes the right of property more consequential to a man than all other rights put together. For surely the poor man possesses the right of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, as much as the rich, and with as much plausibility claims from society the protection of these rights: and ought equally to have some voice in the election of those rulers to whose care these sacred and unalienable rights are committed. 2d. It punishes a man for poverty, which can surely by no one be called a crime. It is a misfortune, but one for which the subject is not always blameable. It may be the effect of inevitable sickness, or losses by fire, or innocent miscalculation. It to be sure, is frequently the effect of folly. But it never did, it never can merit the severe punishment of disfranchisement. Moreover it furnishes a strong motive for the rich who wish to possess power, to bear down the poor and keep them in perpetual poverty, in order thereby to avoid the weight of their suffrages. But, as the constitution of this State has happily rendered it unnecessary for a freeman to possess any qualifications except to reside in the State one full year, be twenty-one years of age, and

of quiet and peaceable behavior; further time need not be occupied on this point.

The duty of citizens resulting from the principle of justice of which we speak, ought to be well understood, and practised with punctilious care. Men usually consider less those consequences of their conduct which are indirect and remote, than those which are immediate and direct: And acts of injustice to government are frequently so remote and indirect in their operation, that the consequence is not always realized till the act is done. An injured individual can search where the mischief lies and seek redress. Not always so of government.— The mischief creeps upon government imperceptibly, operates gradually, mixes with other causes to produce its dire effects, and swells to a great flood, the particles of whose waters can never be retraced to their respective sources. If injuries, done by an individual to government, do not amount to crimes, government can effect no redress. It must leave them to the mercy of public opinion: and unhappy indeed it is, when the virtuous and the patriotic part of community are heaping on that deserved contempt which is the only redress in the power of government; unhappy indeed if the vicious band conspire to encourage a repetition of the injury.— If the injury amounts to a crime, and the offender can be detected with evidence for conviction, government can punish him. But this usually falls far short of reparation: it is calculated in this country rather as a preventative, by reforming the offender and making him an example to others. The operations of justice between two independent governments are always reciprocal. When their interests in any degree clash, either strict justice is done to both, or one receives more than justice, and in the same degree is the other injured. To this injury either the injured nation must submit, or it must be repaired by the provisions of a treaty, or redress must be sought by inflicting the calamities of war. When a controversy between them exhibits a prospect of war, any conduct of individuals which tends to impede the adjustment of that controversy by negotiation, is an incalculable injury to both those nations and to the cause of humanity: and every mark of approbation by the citizens of one nation, of the unjust conduct of the other, does tend to impede such negotiation, and heightens the prospect of war: and should war ensue, the blood of whole nations may lie at the door of those who thus transgress.

Every unjust slander heaped upon the rulers of our government is an injustice not only to those rulers, but to the whole nation, who are interested in the measures by them adopted. Those citizens, who give credit to the slander, feel less respect for the rulers, and are less willing to support their administration: and this, among the multitudes who have not the opportunity or the disposition to investigate every subject for themselves, operates a great national injury. It often progresses from disrespect through distrust and dissatisfaction, to those divisions which threaten the very existence of the government. The effects of this are not confined to our own country: they are extended to foreign nations. They, observing this disrespect, calculate upon our consequent divisions, and become the less apt to respect our sovereignty and the more bold to infringe upon our national rights. Similar to this is the operation of disunion among our citizens, from whatever source it springs, with regard to giving effect to measures from time to time adopted by government. This can scarcely fail to embarrass our councils, weaken our strength, excite domestic insurrection, invite foreign invasion and endanger the whole fabric of our free government.— Our citizens, then, cannot be too assiduous in the respect they pay to the principles of justice in all their possible operations, either upon private citizens, upon rulers, or upon the whole nation.

If all the members of the community adhere perseveringly to these principles of justice and equal rights, liberty and social order cannot fail to be the result. They are the natural fruit of those heavenly vines, which fruit will never blast or wither, so long as the vines shall flourish.

But, as all men cannot think perfectly alike, even with the same means for information, and much less without those means, it becomes necessary that something be said with regard to the course to be pursued by individuals to keep alive that union which is thus connected with the principle of justice, and which is the cement of our free government. There never was and there never will be, upon this subject, but one rule which can ever be reduced to practice without the most certain destruction of the government. The rule is this: Let those, whose constitutional right and duty it is to act upon any matter, undertake, investigate and decide that matter, and let the decision of their constitutional majority govern all concerned. Let all who like and all who dislike that decision, equally

submit to it: so long as it remains in force; or until it be altered by a like constitutional board. To this rule there is no possible exception. A refusal to practice this rule, is a direct refusal to be sheltered by the banners of a republican government; or to submit to any thing short of absolute despotism. It is throwing aside all order, and reducing civilized society to a state of anarchy. Contemplate for a moment the scenes of confusion which would result from a dissolution of this rule. Our national or state legislature pass a law by the vote of a clear majority; a minority, great or small, vote against it, and refuse to be bound by it. The dignity and the safety of government require their obedience. Their persevering resistance must end in a civil war, in which will be enlisted the advocates and the opposers of that law throughout the government. A parallel case may be found in town meetings, in those of smaller societies, and even in our courts of justice; where every decision in which the members of the court should not perfectly agree, would be but the tacit sign of war between the parties and their respective friends. But let all the members of the community practically subscribe to this rule, let the decision of the majority be with them a decision of the whole, and government becomes a blessing; peace and quietness can dwell within our borders; and our union, that strength of the nation, finds support from every citizen.

This particular explanation of duty may, at first view, appear calculated for legislators and men in office, but its application to every citizen is easy and plain. If you know how your legislators and rulers ought to conduct, in their official capacity, you will give your suffrages for men that you are confident will so conduct. If you wish to support the principle of equal rights, you will not vote for such men as would sacrifice that principle to a rage for private corporations, and dangerous monopolies, but you will vote for men who are determined to support that darling principle of our government, and shield it from all the attacks of its enemies. If you wish to support the principles of justice, liberty, and social order, you will not vote for men who are willing to trample those principles under foot, and daily disrespect the rights as well as the honor of our rulers and our nation, but you will vote for men whose lives and conversation evince them to be real lovers of justice, liberty, and social order: men who will not falsely speak evil of dignities, nor willingly excite the disrespect of foreign nations. If any errors whatever creep into the system through

the neglect or misconduct of rulers, it is the province of freemen by their suffrages to correct those errors. But here let me observe, we must first be satisfied that those errors exist, and that they are charged upon our rulers, and for this we must not too hastily trust the assertions of men who show themselves interested to effect a revolution. We ought to look at the official conduct of rulers, carefully compare it with the principles by which they ought to be governed, and candidly judge for ourselves whether their misconduct occasioned those errors. If we find that they sprung from another source, we ought to reward those rulers with our continued confidence, and spurn contempt upon the man who thus would blast their reputations.

I am unwilling to close this part of the subject without adding, that, whenever we discover the duties we owe to government, or to ourselves, in view of protecting our rights and liberties, no considerations, no interests of a private nature, ought ever to interfere and prevent the strict performance of those duties. We are too apt to imagine, each that his vote will not affect the elections which are taking place at a given time, and for causes comparatively trivial, withhold our suffrages. Brethren, these things ought not so to be. If we have interests worth protecting, they are worth voting for, at least; and if we trust others to do this voting, in neglect of our own duty, we must not be disappointed if others ere long bear off the rich prize of our independence, and leave us groveling beneath the iron rod of despotism.

Thus far, fellow citizens, I have endeavored to show what our conduct ought to be, without attempting to show what it is: and I will hazard the presumption, that the principles of our government thus delineated, and our respective duties resulting therefrom, as now described, would, in times of political tranquility, gain the assent of every citizen—No one, surely, will contend that a republican government can exist at all, who will not readily acknowledge that the principles and duties now pointed out would furnish that government the most undeviating support. If correct when no political feelings divide the nation, they are correct now and ever will be so. Men, by departing from principle, may conduct differently at different periods; but the first principles of our government never vary. Though neglected for ages, they still would remain the most unerring pole-star to guide the path of the statesman. The duties immediately resulting from those principles are equally unalterable: They

are, and will be, the same in all ages. A change of those principles and duties would be itself a change of government.

Now, fellow citizens, if we wish to determine which of the present political parties in America has the interest of our country most at heart, which endeavors to build up, and which to destroy that interest, our course is plain and easy; for by their fruits we must know them. We have no test, by which to judge of their intentions but their conduct. Then let us compare their conduct with these principles. Let us examine candidly whether either of those parties have departed from those principles by which alone our liberties can be supported. And if we who bear the appellation "republicans" have thus forsaken our first love and gone on regardless of its virtuous impulse, let us, with the penitence of the prodigal, return, confess our fault, and embrace and steadily pursue those principles for which our fathers bled and conquered. To forsake our errors denotes candor and a willingness to render ourselves more useful in life; but to persevere in those errors after the light of conviction has shone upon us, denotes that want of candor which renders us more than useless members of society. But in whatever particulars we shall find ourselves to have acted, not only conscientiously but in conformity to these important principles of our government, in them let us persevere. Let not even the desire of harmonizing with our political opponents compel us to forsake these principles. In such case, that harmony would cost too much even to be desirable. Let us not ask our political opponents a greater share of candor in submitting their conduct to the test of principles, than we are determined to exercise with regard to our own conduct. Should we, in this way, all pursue one principle and become actuated by one interest, soon would our political animosities subside, & domestic tranquility be perfectly restored.

I would not, at this time, attempt a very particular designation of those occurrences which appear to me a departure from correct principle. Every man who is attached to the knowledge of political affairs will easily recollect them. However, I must name a few, and those the most prominent within my recollection.

The first in point of time was the attempt of Hamilton, Pickering and others, heads of department under the administration of Mr. Adams, to introduce a military despotism, with that system of de-

pendency which I hope ever to condemn as you have now heard it condemned. Those scenes are familiar to your recollection. They became so disagreeably familiar to the freemen of that day that they exerted their power of correction and reposed the interests of government in the care of republicans. And here I would observe that the late President Adams, in the Memoirs of his warfare with those heads of department of his appointment, shows them to have been guilty of the base motives and conduct, to enslave our country, with which they have heretofore been charged.

I would next notice that unceasing slander unjustly heaped upon the whole administration of Mr. Jefferson. That his administration has uniformly been reprobated in all the newspapers of the opposition, you already well know. That the reproach has been very unjust I have endeavored to show you on former occasions. It has been shown from the falsehood of the accusations, and from the great prosperity which, under God, has crowned his exertions to promote the general welfare.—The base report of his sending two millions of dollars as a tribute to Bonaparte, has been proved false by unequivocal testimony. It never was believed by its authors; but their designs were answered, for they caused many a simple, but honest man, to believe it. The same might be said of the charge of French influence. If further proof were necessary of the impropriety and injustice of the general reproach upon that administration, I am bold to say that the authors of that reproach have virtually, but indirectly acknowledged its injustice. They tell you that Mr. Madison has done well; that his measures are correct; that he is doing great things for his country whereof they are glad. They rejoice in his accession to the chair of state. And, so be sure, I tell you the same things. Here we find a very important point in which we are all agreed. But here let me tell you that not a punctilio can be selected from the proceedings of Mr. Madison, but what is a strict pursuit of the system adopted by Mr. Jefferson. To Mr. Madison was made the offer of a settlement of our differences with England, but the minister who made that offer, Mr. Erskine, expressly says that it was made in consequence of the non-intercourse law, which was enacted while Mr. Jefferson was in office; and Mr. Madison in his message to Congress, in speaking of this happy issue of our public affairs, expressly says, "he can do no less than refer to the proposal heretofore (meaning

last August) made by the United States, for a like restoration of our suspended commerce, as a proof of the spirit of accommodation which has at no time been intermitted." He also, like his worthy predecessor, recommends such laws as will protect and foster manufactures. If, then, the administration of Mr. Jefferson went upon the same principles as that of Mr. Madison, the point is clear that the late encomiums upon the latter are virtually an acknowledgment of the injustice of their reproaches upon the former.

After the affair of the Chesapeake was a little over, the writers in the newspapers of the opposition were full in their justification of that wanton cruelty and murder. Their arguments upon that subject would even cause an Englishman to blush. The British government, among all their backwardness to repair that injury, have never pretended to justify it. Yet many of our own citizens have done much to render it unpopular for our Government to demand a reparation. They have done much to convince the British Government that they need not make such reparation. Judge ye, how far this comports with the notion of justice to our Government.

The same set of men, with equal impropriety, have urged upon our citizens the belief that the suspension of our commerce and our consequent embarrassments, were all to be attributed, not to the injustice of foreign nations, but to the misconduct of Mr. Jefferson, and our national Legislature. For proof that they are wrong in this, I refer you to what was addressed to you upon that subject a year ago; and will only add, that all our late communications with France and England, and all the information from those countries, tend to prove that the embargo was a wise, a prudent and a necessary measure for our Government to ward off the injustice contemplated by those powers.—As a proof of the injurious operation upon our government of this misconduct of our citizens, by encouraging Great Britain to continue her orders in Council, I will refer you to the speeches of Grenville, Whitbread, and Tierney, in the British Parliament. They show conclusively that the ministerial party there have placed their strongest hopes upon our divisions here, and the probable success of the federal party in our late elections, as favorable to their views of rendering us again colonial, or at least tributary; and that they prolonged their injustice to give full scope to the power of opposition exercised by our own citizens against our government.



What excuse can possibly be framed for those of our citizens who thus have demeaned themselves? Let the errors of youth be forgotten; let the mantle of charity cover the sins of the aged penitent, but never again put confidence in those men who have perseveringly led on the injustice and the opposition which have put in jeopardy the independence of our country; yet fall not cordially to embrace the man who frankly owns that he has been deceived by designing men, & who now comes freely to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

We ought here to remember, that the disappointment of Hamilton, Pickering and others, their associates, in carrying into effect their designs upon our liberty, which were thwarted by the accession of Mr. Jefferson to the chair of state, has instigated this huge mass of abuse and opposition, which, for these many years, have kept our villages and our whole country in an uproar. The leaders in that abuse and opposition seem to possess the most fertile ingenuity for invention. When one pretext for leading the populace fails them by a detection of its falsehood, they have another at their command. Thus they exhibit a succession of novel inventions, by each of which in its turn, they play upon the passions and allure the attention of the people. But, by their last resort, I conjecture their resources are about to fail them: for, of all the base ingratitude, and all the self contradicting pretences that were ever beheld by the universe, the most malignant is their arrogance upon the subject of our late negotiations with England. After they have strenuously opposed every measure projected or adopted by government, during the late critical emergency; after they have encouraged foreign powers to believe that our internal opposition would wholly defeat those measures; after they have in many ways prompted our citizens to a breach of the embargo laws; after they have violently opposed the non-intercourse law, the very measure which Mr. Erskine tells us produced from Great Britain the offered settlement; after all this, they would have the people believe that they deserve all the merit of the happy result of those negotiations. But, I forbear, and leave them to possess that silent contempt which cannot fail to be showered upon them by a virtuous people.

Now, fellow citizens, after all these improprieties, with many others, practised to the injury of government, in order to restore that mutual confidence among the different members of the commu-

nity, which alone can be productive of social harmony, those who have advocated and practised this injurious conduct ought publicly to retract their errors, publicly to condemn such injurious proceedings, and thereby furnish some pledge against their repetition. And if men who express a wish to bury all political animosities, and walk in harmony with us in the affairs of government, if these men still persevere in justifying those injurious proceedings which have long threatened the independence of our nation, we ought to consider their professions of harmony to be but the Syren song, to decoy our attention from the care of our sacred liberties.

Let us dwell a moment upon the pleasing scene of a great majority in all the departments of our government, stemming the torrent of opposition, and navigating our national ship against wind and tide, amongst rocks and whirlpools, yet with safety, to its desired haven. We greet, with joy, the lately interrupted, but again renewed, prospects of the restoration of our commerce, upon terms consistent with the independence and the honor of our nation. While the great and rival powers of Europe are jealous of our influence in their perpetual wars, let us carefully avoid any, the most minute interference with either; and vigorously protect our rights of neutrality. Then the interests of America, in the exercise of the carrying trade, will even profit by the disasters in Europe. Let all the people of America, in this and every age, respect our national sovereignty; let them venerate our sacred rights and liberties; let these be guarded and protected by a strict adherence to the principles and duties now delineated:

Then shall we walk as brothers, hand in hand  
Supporting every dearest right; and blessings  
More than mortal shall descend and crown  
The labor of our hands; then shall the tree of liberty,  
That tree which our forefathers rear'd  
In fair Columbia's soil; which cost  
The richest blood that all our land could boast,  
Which spreads its branches forth and casts  
The heavenly shade of peace, and asks the stranger home  
To share the plenty of its fruits; then  
Shall that tree flourish in immortal bloom  
Until "the sun grows dim with age  
And nature sinks in years."

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