



KENNEDY'S

Oration.

A N
R A T I O N,

DELIVERED IN
St. PHILIP'S CHURCH,
BEFORE THE INHABITANTS OF
CHARLESTON, SOUTH-CAROLINA,
ON THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1801;

IN COMMEMORATION OF
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,

By CAPTAIN JAMES KENNEDY

OF THE SOUTH-CAROLINA
STATE SOCIETY OF CINCINNATI,

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THAT SOCIETY,

AND ALSO OF THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION SOCIETY.

Hac olim meminisse juvabit. ——— Virgil.

CHARLESTON, (South-Carolina.)

PRINTED BY T. B. BOWEN.

Page 4, l. 2, insert a comma after Patriot.

Page 5, l. 5 from the bottom, instead of harship read
harasship.

Page 22, l. 18, dele *the*.

Page 26 and 27, place "whilst we were yet unen-
tangled with any foreign treaty" in a Parenthesis.

Page 29, lines 12 and 13, for morral read moral.

Page 32, l. 19, place the comma after "of" instead
of after "Parling er"

Page 33, l. 16, dele the comma before "Franklin".



O R A T I O N.

FRIENDS, COUNTRYMEN AND FELLOW-CITIZENS,

AMONG the greatest and most respectable nations, both ancient and modern, it has been a custom to celebrate & commemorate at stated intervals of time, certain great events, interesting to them generally as a people, and to recognise the achievements of their Patriots and Heroes; thereby stimulating the rising generation to emulate their glorious deeds, and venerate the institutions and laws of their country.

The Chinese have their anniversary to venerate the plow and the culture of the soil, at which their emperor does not disdain to preside. The ancient Ægyptians annually honored the overflowing of the Nile, the source of their plentiful harvests. The Græcians had their olympic games, and the Romans, as well as they, celebrated, on particular occasions, the memory of their benefactors, legislators and warriors, under the symbol of Gods. Ceres, Bacchus, Hercules and a host of others under mythic terms had their stated and appropriate honors; and amongst moderns there is scarce a nation but have annually some

interesting event to solemnise, or the actions of some Patriot Hero, or Statesman, publicly to commemorate. In these United States, connected either with one society or other, the Citizens at large, as it were by sympathy, have selected the present day, as their great Anniversary, to celebrate the birth of our National Independence, and first taking rank, as a sovereign people, in the line of nations of the earth; and with none has this custom been earlier or more uniformly observed, than by the societies with whom I have, on this occasion, the honor of participating. When I retrospect on the eloquence and abilities of the gentlemen who have preceded me, both in the Revolution and Cincinnati Societies, nominated agreeably to their customs, to deliver on their behalf an Anniversary Oration, I confess I feel a very great diffidence of my qualifications to succeed them; and particularly so as the absence of the learned and honorable member of our society, for whom this task was originally designated, devolved it on me at a later period than usual, when much and anxiously occupied by my own domestic concerns, and being at the same time unaccustomed to speak in public, much less before so respectable an audience, on an occasion of this sort. I must therefore bespeak all your indulgence and candor, and hope, that instead of criticising, you will only consider my well meant

meant intentions, and not denominate that presumption, which was the reluctant acquiescence of an individual to the call of a society, to which he is attached by the strongest ties.

To so enlightened and well informed an audience as I have the honor of addressing, the principles and progress of our late Revolution, in which many whom I see around me were virtuous and conspicuous actors, must be well known and perfectly understood, but, as it forms the basis of our anniversary, a short recapitulation of events connected with it, will not I trust be deemed improper.

Commercial enterprise first occasioned the discovery of Columbia's shores to the sons of Europe, and religious zeal and intolerance promoted the colonization of the territory we now inhabit.

Our forefathers, to enjoy freedom of opinion, forsook their native homes, and with their families traversed the vast atlantic ocean, and on these shores, then the abode of numerous, untutored, and fierce tribes of Indians, or the haunts of the roaming beasts of the forests, fixed their residence and under countless difficulties maintained their ground; for indeed they had every hardship to encounter that could assail the heart, or stagger the fortitude of man.

In the infancy of their settlements the different British colonies were but little noticed,
but

but their rapidly increasing population, and accumulation of property, by unremitting industry, both in agriculture and commerce, soon made them objects of attention to the mother country.

Although they in their more advanced state submitted to have their trade regulated by the British cabinet, and their manufactures restricted at her will, by which a great portion of the products of their toil, labor and enterprise flowed into the British coffers; and although they furnished their hardy sons to fill the British legions, and fight the battles of the empire, their astonishingly speedy growth and strength began to create jealousy in the parent state. Instead now of stretching out the fostering hand of a fond mother, Britain spoke to them with the chilling breath of a cruel stepdame, and seemed to dread a rival where were only dutiful and affectionate children.

Few nations have terminated a war more to their advantage and glory than that which the British empire carried on against the United Powers of France and Spain, and concluded by the treaty of Paris in 1763; and although the colonies from their connection with Britain were deeply involved and had their full share both of danger and glory in it, yet in that period we may trace the buds of that jealousy and distrust, which in its progress corroded the political ties that bound them together, for
 ever

ever separated the colonies from the British empire, and laid the foundation of the sovereignty and independence of these United States. In carrying on that war she had an opportunity of more intimately viewing them. She saw that their condition at that period was remarkably and strikingly flourishing; their trade had prospered in the midst of all the difficulties and distresses of a war in which they were so nearly and immediately concerned; their population continued on the increase, notwithstanding the ravages, devastations and murders committed on them in almost every direction, and they abounded with spirited, active and intelligent individuals of every denomination. All these were sufficient motives to have induced Britain to treat them as a part of the empire whose friendship and good will were highly to be prized, and which were to be retained by wise and temperate measures only. But flushed, as she was with victory and success, she disdained to listen to the voice of reason and moderation, and from thence commenced the exercise of a system towards us, highly vexatious and irritating. She was willing to have the benefits arising from our being her colonies, but would not admit us to participate in the privileges of Britons. In the plenitude of her power, bent on checking our rising importance, and keeping us in unconditional subordination to herself, she declared that

that

that we should be bound in all cases whatever by the will of her parliament; by men who were not our representatives, in whose election we had no vote, who had an interest directly opposite to ours, and over whom we had no controul. Such a degrading situation did a nation, boasting of her own superior freedom, attempt to place us in, forgetful of the claims of justice, deaf to the voice of argument, and unmindful that our ancestors, whose undegenerated sons still trod this land, had here sought an asylum, under every difficulty and in the teeth of every danger, rather than submit to oppression on their natal soil!

In vain did we remonstrate, to no purpose did we respectfully and humbly petition!—Our remonstrances were treated with scorn, and our petitions left disdainfully unanswered! Proud of her successes in a war in which she had triumphed over the two most potent monarchies of Europe, Britain confidently presumed that the dread of her power, and the terror of her arms, would supersede all ideas of disputing her commands, and that whatever she thought proper to order would be implicitly obeyed. In this fatal presumption she essayed the condescension of America, forgetting that it was already stretched to its utmost bounds. She passed acts of parliament, for levying taxes in the colonies without their consent, for abolishing the trial by jury thro' a considerable

a considerable portion of the territory they occupied, and for carrying (supposed) delinquents in America to be tried in Britain; to tear a man, a free born American, away 3000 miles across the seas, from his family, (to be tried for an offence of which at last he might be found innocent, but for which by this mode of trial he is made previously to suffer) remote from his natural friends and connections, destitute of support and advice, to be delivered into the hands of power, and tried by a jury of strangers, perhaps under its influence; and to crown all she sent her choicest legions to overawe us into submission to her mandates.

But Americans were not thus to be degraded. Bred from their infancy in sentiments of political equality, and taught by example to repel every encroachment on their property or personal privileges, educated in habits of hardiness and activity, they did not hesitate or pause between unconditional and abject submission, or spirited and vigorous resistance.

From the confines of New-Hampshire to the remotest shores of Georgia they rose in opposition to these despotic attempts of Britain, and as it were with one mind resolved to sacrifice all present ease and convenience for honorable perils in defence of their rights and privileges, and gloriously resolved to bury themselves under the ruins of their country rather than survive its freedom. Discarding
all

all local prejudices and jealousies of each other they with a generous confidence that was never abused, of course never withdrawn, entrusted the vindication of their Rights and redress of their grievances to delegates, whom each colony elected to meet in Congress. Here I might proudly challenge history to produce in the pages of its records a public body, in the best or most experienced government, excelling or even equaling them in sagacity, political integrity, disinterestedness and patriotic firmness; or a people who more implicitly and orderly were guided by the councils, or obedient to the resolves, of this representation of themselves, armed only with the good opinion of their constituents, and clothed with no power but their exertions for the public weal.

Whilst great Britain was preparing to enforce her decrees by dint of arms. America was making ready to resist them in the same manner, should that alternative be imposed on her. The unanimity of Congress, and the resolution with which that body was animated pervaded the whole of the colonies, who were determined to do and suffer every thing sooner than yield to the authority that was claimed over them. In this sentiment all denominations equally concurred. Poor and rich vied with each other, who should encounter hardships and mortifications with most constancy. Planters, Farmers, Mechanics, Merchants,
Lawyers

and Physicians were all emulous in their country's cause, and the venerable divine was not hindmost in the glorious career.

A great and powerful diffusion of public spirit was created by the difficulties in which America was now involved, and a noble strain of generosity and mutual support was universally exerted throughout her borders. Thus influenced they prepared for the worst, without overleaping those bounds of moderation, which they had adopted in their declarations, and within which they were resolved to keep, until compelled to act otherwise. Pursuant to this intent the Militia were trained every where with the greatest assiduity, and all those parts of military exercise were peculiarly taught them, which by their best judges in those matters, were esteemed the most essential. A regular form of correspondence was settled between Congress and the Provincial meetings, by means of which the measures and motions of all the colonies were universally directed.

A succeeding Congress, composed mostly of the same members, met at Philadelphia, animated by the same sentiments and pursuing the same line of moderation and firmness.—Although provoked by a series of acts of the British parliament, unjust in their principles, and cruel to extremity in their operations, they reiterate the most reasonable petitions and mild remonstrances in vain. Every act of
their

their oppressors plainly evinced that they only sought a pretext to commence hostilities against them, and they tauntingly attributed, what was magnanimous forbearance, to pusillanimity, and want of personal courage.

The storm at length began awfully to thicken and burst aloud. On the memorable 19th of April 1775, the British commander threw aside the mask, and drew the ruthless sword of civil war, which was to be dipped in the blood of thousands, who had been accustomed to look on each other as brethren and friends.— A strong detachment of British troops was sent from Boston, with a view to seize the persons of some influential members of the provincial meeting at Concord, and to destroy the military stores that were collected there; and at Lexington on their way thither, they wantonly fired on some militia who happened to be exercising on a green adjacent, because they did not immediately throw down their arms, and disperse, at the haughty command of the British leader. Filled with just indignation, they returned the fire on the British detachment, and the events of that day gave ample proof that Americans did not, as they were contemptuously represented, lack personal courage, and that their antagonists had no other superiority over them, than what arose from greater experience and discipline.

The battle of Bunker's Hill which followed
soon

soon after, and in which the British were also the aggressors, will forever remain as a record in history, of what can be achieved by gallant, though raw and undisciplined troops, indifferently armed and provided, when fighting from principle, and in defence of their rights, against the bravest veterans, led by the most skilful generals, and amply furnished with all the most destructive apparatus of war. The declaration of the British historian fully corroborates this assertion. In speaking of the fire from the Americans on this occasion, he says "the execution it did was terrible: some of the bravest and oldest officers declared that for the time it lasted, it was the hottest service that they had ever seen. General Howe stood for some moments almost alone, the officers and soldiers about him, being nearly all slain or disabled." Here the Americans had to lament the loss of the intrepid and patriotic Warren, who fell gloriously, at the head of his men, whilst pointing to and reminding those about him, of the appropriate and animating mottos inscribed on the American colors, planted on their works. Congress had still refrained from any open declaration of hostilities until after this second attack of the British troops.

At length forbearance became exhausted, and in proclaiming to the world the justice of their cause, and integrity of their views, "we fight"

fight" they announced, "not for glory or for conquest; we exhibit to mankind the remarkable spectacle of a people attacked by unprovoked enemies: They boast of their privileges and civilization, and yet proffer no milder conditions, than servitude or death.— In our native land, in defence of the freedom that is our birth-right, for the protection of our property, acquired by the honest industry of our forefathers and our own, against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms, and shall lay them down, when hostilities have ceased, on the part of the aggressors, and the danger shall be removed—and not before."

Congress made yet a second appeal to the people of Great-Britain, as to men bound by one common rule of affection and friendship.

"Friends, Countrymen and Brethren, said they, "by these and every other appellation that may designate the ties which bind us to each other, we entreat your serious attention to this our second attempt to prevent their dissolution. Remembrance of former friendships, pride in the glorious achievements of our common ancestors, and affection for the heirs of their virtues, have hitherto preserved our mutual connection; but when that friendship is violated by the grossest injuries, when the pride of ancestry becomes our reproach, and we are no otherwise allied than as tyrants and slaves; when reduced to the melancholy

lancholy alternative of renouncing your favor, or our freedom, can we hesitate about the choice? Let the spirit of Britons determine.” Fruitless and in vain were all attempts at reconciliation; the British ministry were determined at all events to bring us to unconditional submission, at every hazard of blood and treasure, and their measures were carried by a great majority in parliament. Their language was “The British thunder must go forth, America must be conquered!”

After making every arrangement therefore for drawing forth the resources of the colonies, it became a matter of indispensable necessity for Congress to unite the troops which were raising and training in each, more effectually together, under one head, by appointing a commander in chief. Here the good genius of America presided over her affairs, and pointed to the (now departed but) immortal Washington, as one destined by heaven to lead her armies, as well as to preside at her future councils. His military skill, and gallant behaviour, displayed, even when but a youth, in a former war, his political sagacity, modesty and disinterestedness of conduct; his penetration into the character of others, and firm but conciliating temper, marked him out for supreme command. In the language of the poet “his life was gentle and the elements so mixed in him, that nature might stand up and
say

say to all the world, this is a man." Entering on his command he found himself opposed to the veteran, disciplined troops of Great-Britain, commanded by brave and skillful officers, furnished abundantly with all the munition and implements of war, and aided by a powerful and well appointed navy. To withstand these, he was placed at the head of troops greatly inferior in number, but little inured to discipline, led by officers of great courage indeed, but little experience, and many of them even untaught in the very elements of their profession, and without any regular or adequate supply of military stores, clothing or provision. Yet with all these disadvantages, through an arduous war, he ably vindicated the honor of his country, and piloted her safe into the harbor of Independence and Sovereignty. The compulsive evacuation of Boston by the British, under the auspices of General Washington; his extricating the American army from Long-Island, after their defeat; his retreat through the Jerseys with the fragment of an army borne down with fatigue, sickness, nakedness, watching and hunger, and crossing the Delaware without loss in the face of a powerful enemy, flushed with success, commanded by brave and skillful officers, and supplied with every necessary; his recoiling upon and capturing nearly their whole detachment at Trenton with their artillery

tillery; his subsequent elusion of a greatly superior force, at the same place, sufficient to have completely hemmed him in on all sides, and falling upon their rear near Princetown, making prisoners of a considerable number of them; retiring in safety with these to the heights of Morrifstown, and there with very inferior numbers and those chiefly raw troops, for months in the midst of winter beating up the quarters of a superior enemy and capturing their detachments, will always be considered by judges, as masterly performances in the military art.

The capture of Crown-Point and Ticonderoga, by a few partizans under Colonel Allen, shewed early traits of enterprise. The invasion of Canada by new troops penetrating in an inclement season and climate through a wilderness never before explored by civilized man, displayed a perseverance and hardihood seldom to be met with, and has been compared to, and even ranked before, the justly famed passage of the Alps by the renowned Hannibal.

The capture of Chamble, St. John, Montreal, and the brave, though unsuccessful, attack on Quebec, place the American character, for courage, enterprise and perseverance as high as that of any nation in history. In this last action fell lamented, even by his gallant foe, the American commander, general Richard Montgomery, with his aid McPherson
and

and a host of generous youths who scorned to survive their heroic chief, and mingled their ashes with those of the renowned Wolfe and Montcalm. In the short space of time he acted under the authority of Congress, no man of his rank rendered them services of more importance, or did their cause more honor by the magnanimity of his conduct.

The British ministry stung with indignation and fired with resentment at the resistance made by the Americans, whom they stiled and treated as rebels, left nothing untried to collect and send to America such a force, as would, in their opinion, enable them effectually to crush, and bring the colonies submissive to their feet. Germany was traversed by their emissaries, and the treasures of Britain held out as an allurements to her petty despots, to sell their hardy, patient and laborious vassals to assist in destroying the Americans; to them at least not affording even the color of an offence. In this base traffic, it is, for the honor of human nature, to be lamented, they too far succeeded, and brought embattled to these shores, in a cause not their own, tens of thousands of the brave soldiers of Germany, never more to return.

Russia was resorted to for mercenaries, and even Holland was applied to for the foreign troops in her service. Large drafts were made from the garrisons of Gibraltar and Minorca,
and

and replaced from the military establishment in the electorate of Hanover. In fine all the military forces within the resources of the ministry of Great-Britain were arrayed against us. Even the savage tribes on our frontiers were subsidized, to tomahawk and scalp our defenceless women and children. In the meantime successes did not too much elevate, nor adversity improperly depress the steady spirit of the Americans, and, whether victorious or defeated, all idea of relinquishing the cause they were so nobly engaged in, was unknown.

Virginia and Carolina's hardy sons, soon discomfited the then British allies, the tawny warriors of the forests, and taught them, by a severe chastisement, the impolicy of intermeddling. Dunmore with his ruffian, motley crew, was disgracefully drove from Columbia's shores, and, in North-Carolina, McDonalds force of Highland emigrants and lawless regulators, withered and fell before the gallant militia of that state.

Various encounters with various success trod upon the heels of each other; but in none was the character of the American arms more justly elevated, in the opinion both of friends and foes, than by the very gallant and successful defence of Fort Moultrie on the 28th of June, 1776. The venerable hero who commanded on that occasion, being president of our society, forbids my enlarging,

D

and

and I will content myself with a short quotation from the British account of that action.—“Never,” says their historian, “was attack made with more intrepidity, nor defence with more deliberate valor. Those who had been in various encounters of this sort, concurred in declaring that they had never been witnesses of so resolute a resistance.”

Our force at sea, though not consisting of large ships, yet from their numbers, enterprise and captures they were continually making, shewed that, even on her own element, where Britain rode the sovereign, we were an enemy not to be despised.

They distressed her trade in every latitude; the West-Indies swarmed with them; on the coast of America hardly any vessels could escape them, that did not sail under convoy: They infested the Mediterranean, and they ventured even into the Bay of Biscay and the British Channel.

Americans beheld both with regret and indignation the imperious necessity of their situation. Notwithstanding the different military encounters between them and the British forces, they had still fondly hoped that an accommodation might take place, consistent with their claims of equal rights, and of the same privileges as the people of Great-Britain; but when they found the British Cabinet, not only mustering all their own force, but hiring mercenaries

mercenaries, not only of Europe, but of the savages on our frontiers, wherever in their power, to destroy them, they were compelled to consult their own safety by disclaiming all political connection with a government, thus rancorously bent on humiliating them before the shrine of despotic rule.

The 4th of July 1776, the anniversary of which we now celebrate, was the memorable, the glorious day, on which our delegates in Congress declared the, then, thirteen United Colonies, to be free and independent States; and solemnly abjured all allegiance to the crown and sovereignty of Great-Britain, holding them as they held the rest of mankind, enemies in war—in peace, friends. “WE,” said they in that celebrated declaration, penned by the enlightened, dignified and patriotic Jefferson, and advocated by the firm, honest and sagacious Adams, “WE, the representatives of the United States in general Congress assembled, appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved;

solved; and that as Free and Independent States they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things, which independent States may of right do; and for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”

This declaration of independence was adhered to by Congress and the people of America with unabating firmness, in the most gloomy periods and adverse events. The disastrous defeat at Long Island, when dismay and despondence might naturally be supposed to have assailed even the most resolute, did not prevent them from rejecting with disdain ~~the~~ the insidious proposals made by Lord and General Howe.

Articles of confederation had been heretofore entered into between the Colonies, but they were temporary and conditional, and still looked forward to a reconciliation with Great-Britain: but, now that they were erected into independent States, it became necessary to form a permanent confederacy, suited to their new station, abstracted from all ideas of political subordination and which would enable them to call forth all their strength and resources.

On the 4th of October following the new
articles

articles of confederation and perpetual union between the States were agreed on, and solemnly ratified and signed in Congress, at a time when their fate was yet in suspense. So much resolution and constancy displayed at so dangerous a crisis, when their armies had been overpowered by numbers, when they, standing alone, had not only the British troops and their European auxiliaries to contend with, but also a powerful confederation of the Indian tribes on their frontiers, hired and instigated by British agents, was a matter of astonishment and surprise to all Europe. It well entitled them to be compared to the ancient Romans when almost vanquished by Pyrrhus, and who in the midst of the severest defeats and losses, never submitted to despondency, but continued to bid him defiance.

The unfortunate defeat of the flower of our troops at Long-Island, the battle of White-Plains, the capture of Fort Washington, the gallant but unsuccessful defence of Fort Lee and its evacuation, the possession of New-York, the Jerseys and Rhode-Island by the enemy; our losses in Canada and on the Lakes, all followed in succession; and to any but men fighting from principle, for every thing they held dear, these events would have been sufficient cause of despair. Our main army was reduced to a mere handful; scarcely 3000 remained embodied, and those worn down with
severe

severe service ; yet still this remnant, with their patriotic leader, remained undismayed, nor did Congress or the people of America despair of the Republic.

However well disposed towards us some of the European nations might feel, and however anxious others might be to curtail and diminish the gigantic power of Great-Britain, yet hitherto none were hardy enough openly to espouse our cause or publicly to stretch out the helping hand. America, notwithstanding, single and defeated, upheld the mighty contest. She presented a firm front to every foe, and gallantly faced around to every danger.—Notwithstanding the inclemency of the season and the reduced state of the American army, the resources of its chief, and their own unconquerable spirit, soon gave their enemy abundant cause to respect them, even when overwhelmed with difficulties and distress.—The capture of the Hessians at Trenton by the troops immediately under General Washington, his checking afterwards at the same place and eluding a force sufficient to have captured his whole army, falling upon their rear near Princetown, making prisoners of a number of them, and retiring with these in safety to the hilly country of the Jerseys, gave the most critical turn to the affairs of America, reflected the highest honor both on officers and men, and placed the character of their general in a
 very

very conspicuous and elevated point of view.

In these times which tried mens souls, such numbers of the hardy, intrepid sons of the neighbouring states now voluntary flew to the defence of their country when they found her in danger, that general Washington was soon again at the head of a formidable body of men, that enabled him in a short time to recover the greatest part of the Jerseys, and continually to harrass the enemy and straiten their quarters.

It would take up more time than can be spared on this occasion, to recount every military event, or trace all the political movements in this contest.

The hard fought battles of Brandywine and Germantown, and the gallant defence of Mud-Fort, Red-Bank, of Fort's Montgomery and Clinton, will be dwelt on by the American historian with honest pride. The brave defence of Fort Stanwick, the spirited and unremitting attacks at Bennington, Stillwater and Saratoga, which compelled the famed Burgoyne, with a large and well appointed army, to surrender to the American arms, under the skillful, the generous, the patriotic Gates, led to one of the most interesting events in our revolution, and were pledges of ultimate success.

The amazing and unexpected recovery of America so repeatedly from losses and defeats,
and

and rising as it were like the phoenix from her ashes; her recoiling, alone, with redoubled force and animation on her astonished foe, and capturing by wholesale one of her best appointed armies, led by a commander of acknowledged military skill, seconded by officers of experience and bravery, confirmed the confidence of her friends both at home and abroad, and shook the creed of those who either wished or feared, that she would sink in the contest.

France had not heretofore openly entered into any treaty with us, or formally acknowledged our independence, although numbers of her young nobility and other respectable individuals, and amongst them the gallant, the generous, the amiable La Fayette, had entered with ardor into our service; the news however of the convention of Saratoga satisfied her court that we were in earnest, and that as we then stood, nothing short of our Independence would end the conflict with Britain.— Exclusive of the hereditary national inveteracy of the French and English to each other, the policy and interest of France led her to wish us separated from Great-Britain, and thereby divide and lessen her power; and perhaps she might have apprehended that this event, so disastrous as well as unexpected to Great-Britain, might prompt her ministry to offer such terms as would bring about a reconciliation and new political connection with us, (whilst
we

we were yet unentangled with any foreign treaty,) that would not militate with our Independence. Be this as it may, the Court of France immediately took the resolution to act an open and decided part, and shortly afterwards a reciprocally liberal treaty was concluded and signed between France and the United States, to the great satisfaction of both parties. It stipulated that in case Great-Britain, in resentment for the connection formed between the French and Americans, should proceed to hostilities against France, or interrupt its commerce with America, they should make it a common cause, and assist each other against Great-Britain to the utmost of their respective abilities; and it was declared that the essential end of this treaty of alliance was to maintain effectually the sovereignty and independence of the United States of America. In the notification given by France to Great-Britain of this treaty, great candor was used by the French; it stated the declaration of Independence on the part of America, and their actual possession of it, as a sufficient ground to recognize it.

The first effect of our treaty with France was the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British, under an apprehension, that whilst they might be straitened and hemmed in on the land side by the Americans, their passage to sea down the Delaware might be obstructed

E

by

by a French fleet. This produced the warm and spirited action near Monmouth between the Americans and British, in the retreat of the latter through the Jerseys to New-York.

In every direction America had still some new danger to face, some sudden disaster to repair, or some cruel act of their enemy to revenge. The destruction, about this period, of her fine settlement at Wyoming on the Susquehannah, and the treacherous and savage butchering of the garrison and inhabitants by the barbarous bands under colonel Butler excited in every feeling mind sensations of indignation and horror. The gallant Clarke with a few hardy back-woods-men did not think it much to march 1200 miles, and penetrate a great part of his way through uninhabited wilds to teach the British Governor at Kaskaskias and his Indian allies that no distance or impediment could screen from American retaliation; and captain Willing at the Natches shewed to the British settlement there that enterprize and humanity were not incompatible.

Neither prosperous nor adverse events; neither threats nor promises, could shake the firm determination of America to forego the independence she had assumed, or to swerve from her treaties entered into in consequence. She resolutely refused to treat with lord Carlisle and the other British commissioners previous to Britain's acknowledgedment of her independence

pendence and the withdrawal of her fleets and armies.

The capture of Savannah, the failing of our new allies from Rhode-Island without having effected any of the objects of their mission, the rising of the loyalists in North-Carolina, the defeat of general Ash at Briar-Creek in Georgia, and the appearance of general Prevost before the lines of this city, made no other impression on the public mind than to stimulate to new exertions. Our troops shortly after, under the brave, the moral, the humane Lincoln, with much spirit and vigor attacked the British in their entrenchments at Stono, and although repulsed, taught them to respect us, and seek for a place of more security. On this occasion fell the gallant, scientific disciplinarian, colonel Roberts, in his last moments pointing out the path of honor to his son; and many other brave officers and soldiers at the same time sealed their attachment to their country's cause with their precious blood.

In the northern states a succession of variously marked events rapidly followed each other. The brave, but unsuccessful defence of Fort Fayette, the sacking and burning of Fairfield, Norwalk, and Greenfield in Connecticut, the disasters at Penobscot, and the devastation committed at Portsmouth in Virginia, by the British, were checkered by the
storming

storming of Stoney-Point by the Americans under their intrepid leader Wayne, and the surprize of Paulus Hook under the enterprising partizan Lee ; and the successful inroad of the American army under the brave, skilful and persevering Sullivan, into the country of the Mohawk Indians, and the entire destruction of their towns and settlements taught them and their refugee adherents a lesson not easily to be forgotten.

• In the southern states our fortunes were for a long time eclipsed. The unsuccessful attempt by the Americans, and their confederates under Count D'Estaing, to storm Savannah, and his early retirement from the American coast, was a subject of great mortification. The brave and obstinate, though unsuccessful defence of Charleston under the command of general Lincoln will long be remembered by its defenders with pride, and spoke of by its captors with respect ; and an article in the subsequent capitulation of lord Cornwallis was inserted by the American commander in chief in compliment to their feelings.— The destruction of our cavalry, and defeat of general Gates near Camden, laid open the states of Georgia and South-Carolina entirely to the enemy, and left no force embodied sufficient to make head against him. Yet still the spirit of our countrymen continued undiminished. Their perseverance was equal to every
trial

trial, and their resolution seemed to increase in proportion to the endeavors that were made to overcome it. Losses and defeats, instead of despair, only occasioned additional efforts to frustrate them. Notwithstanding the losses of the Americans and the superior force of the British in Carolina and Georgia, still their partizans galled them in every quarter and harassed them in every movement. The conduct of Sumpter, Marion, Mayham and Pickens at this gloomy period will long be held in respectful remembrance by a grateful country.

The defeat of the famous colonel Ferguson at Kings-Mount, by a fortuitous assembly of militia, gave a decisive blow to the progress of the British arms in that quarter; and the subsequent brilliant achievement at the Cowpens by the intrepid cavalry and gallant infantry, under the auspices of that enterprising partizan colonel Morgan, was severely felt by the enemy during the remainder of the campaign.

That able officer and valuable citizen, general Green, took command of the Southern army under a choice of difficulties. His extraordinary resources of mind, and the good conduct of his officers and men, amply compensated for the greatest defect of military supplies. He eluded the enemy when too powerful to be attacked, and beat them by detail when they ventured to detach. He captured most of their (chain of) fortified posts,
and

and the fruits of the well fought battles of Guilford, Camden and Moutons, by the Americans immediately under his command, without the splendor of victory, gave to his country all the solid advantages of it. His conduct and the operations of his army forced lord Cornwallis, instead of turning his arms southwardly from Wilmington, where he had retired after the battle of Guilford, to make his way into Virginia, where he finally at York-Town, after every effort to be expected from a brave and experienced commander, was compelled to surrender to the forces commanded by General Washington, composed of Americans and their brave allies under the gallant Rochambeau and De Grasse.

This last event, in which we certainly received essential aid from France, was the harbinger of, and eventual seal to our Independence, and laid the foundation of the ensuing peace.

When we look back on the complete attainment, at a period earlier than the most sanguine could reasonably have expected, of the invaluable object for which we contended, against so formidable a power, we cannot but be inspired with sentiments of gratitude to the supreme disposer of events, and acknowledge the hand of an overruling Providence.

The times and the cause brought forth from every quarter patriots and heroes, and developed

loped talents, which might have lain dormant in tranquil seasons, or, like the rose in the wilderness, have bloomed unheeded and cast their fragrance unnoticed to the winds. The Americans, like the founder of the Russian greatness, learned to draw victory out of defeat, and acquired the art of war from their invaders; and in politics the principles of government and rational liberty were never expounded with more perspicuity, or enforced with more energy and argument than by their patriots and legislators.

To enumerate the eminent characters that appeared on the stage during the revolution would swell a volume. The wise statesman and deep philosopher, Franklin, the active and firm patriots, Rutledge, Henry, Hancock, Laurens and Samuel Adams, will long give celebrity to their country.

The irresistible eloquence of the gallant Mifflin has oft, in times of peril, excited his countrymen to the field of honor, and the venerable Putnam in the decline of life, led his younger countrymen to battle and shewed them the way to glory in the ensanguined field. The gallant Mercer was slain nobly fighting for his country, in the vigor of his years and in the arms of victory; and the hoary Wooster at the age of 80, fell covered with wounds and glory, whilst leading his fellow citizens to oppose their country's foe.—

the

The gallant Nash fell a victim at the battle of Germantown, but lives in the affection and recollection of his countrymen. Scammell, Campbell and Parry fell gloriously, to obtain advantages for their country, which it was not their lot to live to participate in.

The noble Pulaski fell contending for that liberty in America, which he in vain fought for in his own country, and freely gave his blood as the proffered price; and the disinterested and gallant De Kalb fell covered with wounds in a cause not his own; in the last moments of his glorious life bearing testimony to the courage of the troops he had commanded.

The southern states furnished their full share in this harvest of Patriots and Heroes, many of whom laid down their lives in vindication of their country's cause. The spirit of chivalry seemed to have been revived in the heroic, enterprising and generous colonel Laurens, stripped of its superfluous and unnecessary paraphernalia. No Græcian was better calculated to have defended the straits of Thermopylæ, or been a leader at the battle of Marathon, than he. His talents as a statesman were conspicuous, and his private virtues as a man of the highest and most delicate cast. Yet the bulletin of death arrested him in his military career, and laid him in the silent grave, at a time when the halyards of
the

the staff that was about to display the flag of truce between Great-Britain and America were already in motion.

The brave, the liberal Major Huger, the gallant Neil, the intrepid Captain Moultrie, who all left domestic ease for the perils and hardships of a military life, fell in the defence of this city.

The disinterested Gilbank, the persevering Mitchell, the volunteer Templeton, and the lamented colonel Parker fell in the same cause. The refined, the sage, the resolute Hyrne fell a victim in peace to an incurable wound received in the honorable conflict. Wise, Rutherford, Motte, Doggett, Joor, Simmons, Donnom, Defaussure, Hume, Cleiland, Ancrum, and Gray, with thousands of others, nobly sacrificed their lives on the altar of Independence. Wilkins, Shepherd, and many other brave officers of the militia freely shed their blood in the varied warfare.

Peace to their shades, may the turf lay lightly on their remains, and the dews of heaven nourish only laurels near their tombs!

Were I not restrained by motives of delicacy towards those of my compatriots of the revolution still surviving, many of whom are here present, I could amply descant on their talents both in peace and war. I could point out the venerable patriot and the enlightened statesman, the skillful and spirited diplomatist

F

blended

blended with the veteran and experienced soldier.

In celebrating this glorious and auspicious day I would be a detractor to truth, to candor, and to my own feelings as a man and a soldier, were I to pass over in silence the conduct of my fair, beloved countrywomen, during the arduous conflict. With the heroism of Spartans, but with manners softer and delicacy more refined. they met every danger and difficulty with patience and submitted, without repining, to a deprivation of the luxuries and even conveniencies and necessaries to which they had been accustomed from their infancy. They inspired their husbands, sons and lovers, to achieve deeds of patriotism and valor; and although they did not wield the cutting scymetar or point the murdering cannon, they poured balm into, and bound up the wounds of their gallant countrymen, and cheered the war-worn soldier with their approbation and smiles. May they and their beauteous daughters never lack tender husbands, gallant protectors, or generous lovers! And may they be the nurses of numerous patriots and heroes, whose glorious deeds will fill the future pages of Columbia's story!

The very important scenes that have lately been, and are now, exhibiting on the European stage and dependencies, would naturally on this occasion draw the attention and call forth
some

some remarks, did time permit. But as we are now happily at peace with all the Principals on that theatre, and are called on by no treaty to participate, nor prompted by the liberality or justice of either towards us, or urged by our own interest, to thure in their contests; and as we are locally far detached from the great contending parties, I shall only respectfully recommend to my fellow citizens, not to quit our own, to stand on foreign ground; nor by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace, in the coils of her ambition, interest, rivalry or caprice. Let us conduct ourselves to all nations with impartiality and respect, and abstain from all illiberal invectives, or irritating expressions towards any. Let us keep strictly within the line of neutrality, as far as a sacred regard to treaties will admit, and first seek mildly for redress of any accidental injury offered us, but stand prepared to repel, or even revenge, any meditated wrong.

Let us sedulously avoid party dissension: It sharpens the spirit of revenge, too prevalent in the human breast, and often meanly traces the footsteps of retiring merit with calumny, and bites its heel with the tooth of slander.— It is the bane of patriotism and canker-worm of virtue, and leads to domestic despotism and foreign influence. Let us promote institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge; for,
inasmuch

inasmuch as our free government gives force to public opinion, it becomes the more essential to have that opinion enlightened.

Let us, particularly, without differing about the epithets, Republican or Federalist, preserve unimpaired and in its true and genuine construction, as far as in us lies, that palladium of our liberty, and safeguard of our Independence, our National, Federal Constitution, the production of the wisdom and experience of our best tried patriots and statesmen adopted by a great majority of the enlightened freemen of these States. In this sentiment, we ought to be "all federalists, all republicans." Let us rally round it as our political tree of life. Let us water its roots and cherish its growth, until the large leaves and flourishing branches thereof, shall extend to the rising and setting sun, and its trunk reach the SKIES.

FINIS.
