

AN
ADDRESS,

PRONOUNCED AT WILTON,

BEFORE THE

FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION,

AT THE CELEBRATION OF

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,

JULY 4, 1828.

BY JONATHAN LIVERMORE.

DUNSTABLE, N. H.
PRINTED BY THAYER & WIGGIN,

1828.

MR. JONATHAN LIVERMORE,

SIR,—At a meeting of the Committee of arrangements, held this day, it was voted, that the thanks of this committee be expressed to you, for your very impressive and eloquent address, delivered this day, and that a copy of the same, be requested for the press.

S. HOPKINS, Secretary.

Wilton, July 4th, 1828.

SIR,—In compliance with your request, the following address is submitted to your disposal.

With esteem and respect,

Your most obedient servant,

JONATHAN LIVERMORE.

S. HOPKINS, Sec'y.

ADDRESS.

My respected Fellow Citizens,

THIS day opens on us the 52d Anniversary of American Independence. An event which will stand preeminent in the annals of History.

We have not met to pay homage to a usurper. We are not compelled reluctantly, to acclaim long life to a military despot. We have not to lament over abrogated laws, which once shielded our inestimable rights and privileges. We mourn not over unwarrantable desolation, spread by a Military Chieftain, sitting at helm.—Blood-stained banners wave not within our country.

That superintending Power, who “holds the nations in the hollow of his hand, has given us peace in our borders, and plenteousness in our habitations.”

We have, this day, convened to celebrate with grateful hearts, and songs of joy, this national jubilee.

On this occasion, it is not unappropriate to look back to the early history of our country. The first settlement of New-England was effected, by a little band of Pilgrims, who had become wanderers from their native country, to escape ecclesiastical intolerance. Here, liberty displayed her golden sceptre. Here, Martyrs had not suffered cruelties and death, for conscience sake.

Wisdom extended to them her voice, in melodious accents, saying, come eat of my bread, and drink of the

wine which I have mingled. Severe were the sufferings and privations of these tenants of the forest. They had bid a last farewell to the luxuries and delights of their native country to encounter the perils and sword of the wilderness. But to them these things were of small moment, compared with religious freedom. That sustaining Power, whose "banner over them was love, was to them, as a shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

By the hand of cultivation, the wilderness soon blossomed as the rose. Stately forests were superseded by verdant fields and well watered gardens. Wild beasts fled from their coverts to give place to numerous flocks and herds. Rural simplicity rose, as it were, spontaneously from the haunts of savage cruelty and uncivilized barbarism. The shackles of pageantry, were here unknown. Simplicity, industry and economy, were sedulously maintained. Friendship and domestic tranquility smiled in the humble cottage, and morning and evening incense arose to the King of heaven.

The fame of this new country soon spread over the old world. Emigrants from every kingdom, flocked to this land of freedom.

More than one and a half century had rolled away while New-England and other provinces, continued colonies of Great Britain. At length, acts were passed in the British Parliament, which they deemed oppressive and burthensome. With a noble enthusiasm, they resisted indignities; and on the ever memorable 4th of July, 1776, the American Congress disannulled a foreign allegiance; and declared the colonies, free, sovereign and independent.

Seven years of desolating war ensued, subsequent to the commencement of hostilities. But favoured with a patriotic leader, whose glory was that of his country; who desired to reign only in the hearts of the people, to whom all eyes were turned with unwavering confidence; America came off victorious. The joyful news

of peace was proclaimed. The army were at length disbanded ; and their noble General, laid down his arms, and became as one of the people. He required no splendid libations, poured forth in honour of his deeds of chivalry. Had he possessed a lawless, imperious spirit, then would have been the moment for him to have assumed the prerogative of Emperor or King.

The country was now without an efficient government to defend, and support its individual and combined rights and privileges.

Articles of peace were signed in November 1782, by which Great Britain acknowledged the sovereignty of our States ; and the following year ratified by a definitive treaty. From this time, until the formation and establishment of our present constitution ; commotions and collisions spread a devastating influence. Anarchy advanced in frightful array ; and the olive branch of peace began to fade, almost ready to droop and die, ere it had attained its noonday vigour.

At this important crisis, a delegation from the States of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Penn'vania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, convened 25th of May ; and ended 17th of September, 1787. The result of the deliberations of these illustrious sages, over whom Washington presided, was that political code, the professed object of which, was "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." This code is equally binding on, and equally salutary to, rulers and ruled. No haughty tribune arrogates to itself immunities, which depress a shackled nation. No imperious patrician, triumphs over the imbecility of the oppressed plebeian. Each one's rights and privileges are protected. Testimonials of its wise provisions are too valid, to admit of farther corroboration. Amongst these, is that pro-

vision within itself for amendments and alterations. It is true, in the hands of the ignorant or designing, it might be exposed to the pertinacious mutilations of political Jugglers. But let no such gloomy apprehensions overshadow this cheerful Festival. Those provisions, which in the hand of a despot might spread a deleterious influence over our political horizon, when wielded by able philanthropists, who approach near the standard of rectitude, will beam with bright effulgence over the whole extent of our Union.

The immortal Washington, who, long since removed from this limited sphere of action, to join "the spirits of the just made perfect," gave an impulse to the public mind, diffused far and wide the principles of patriotism; cultivated with untiring vigilance, the tree of civil and religious liberty, the wide spreading branches of which, overshadow our land. While we venerate his name and his character, we would not pass in silence, his able coadjutors, without bestowing on them, a humble panegyric. To their wise, judicious, and disinterested counsels, we owe our present freedom. Though they, one after another, have retired from this transient life, and gone to join the "general assembly and church of the first born," their names and characters, still live in the hearts of every true American.

It is by no means the least, amongst the peculiar excellencies of our Constitution, that it bestows its immunities on every individual, eligible to public office. Its peculiar catholic spirit, is the wonder of the age in which it was originated. While other countries and governments, were casting over their subjects an imperious thralldom, too recently had our fathers escaped from their toils, to have the origin of their emigration forgotten. To guarantee then, to every individual amenable to its laws, the privileges of liberty of conscience, is one of its primary principles. Thanks to heaven! These ennobling privileges, still remain unimpaired.— When the civil arm, meanly stoops from the eminence

for which by nature it was designed, to assert controul over the consciences of its subjects. It may make men abject hypocrites ; but never will it make them loyal, and enlightened citizens.

It is true, since the commencement of our political career, systems and measures like the gourd of Jonah, have risen “in a night and perished in a night ;” and without party names, and party distinctions ; we consign them to the shades of oblivion. The fantastical vagaries of the visionary theorist, have passed away.—Reason has resumed her throne ; and waits to honour and bless her willing votaries.

In our country, the present state of things is peculiarly auspicious. The man who now presides over us, has given sufficient evidence, by the able manner in which he has discharged the duties of his present station, and of various other departments, which he has occupied, that he is a patriot, and philanthropist. In the Court and the Cabinet, at home and abroad, we find him the same fearless advocate of right, the same judicious statesman and civilian.

The weak attempt of the enemies of the present administration, who have a knowledge of facts, to pervert the minds of the ignorant and uninformed, by telling about a bargain between President Adams and Clay, with other unjust insinuations and aspersions, has resounded, through the whole extent of our Union. Not only the youth, untaught and unskilled in civil policy, or the momentous subject of rightly executing the laws ; but the aged veteran, whose country’s rights are dear as his birthright, has become the dupe of the artful and designing. From the opprobrium cast on the character of Mr. Clay, we believe he is honourably exempt. His ability of address, and rectitude of principle ; relative to the conduct of a lawless aggressor, toward a foreign power, well accord with his more recent decision ; yet the unhallowed tongue of slander has been busy in heaping on him bitter reproaches. We pretend not to as-

scribe perfect rectitude to the individual opinions of any one. Local practices and prejudices, may so unduly influence the mind, as to suffer the strongest advocates for truth and justice, to overleap those bounds of meekness and forbearance, which constitute the peculiar excellency of the Christian. But when a man's public acts, which come within the public ordeal are irreproachable, let truth assert her right to put to silence the voice of calumny.

We recriminate on our assailants, the aspersion of a degrading coalition. We advocate not men and their measures, on the futile ground of nominal distinction. To such, and such only as are skilled in the great science of jurisprudence and legislation, we would lend our suffrages. Actuated by such laudable motives, we heed not the efforts of an unprincipled cabal, who have endeavoured to call back that slumbering spirit, long since obliterated, which had well nigh rent the fair fabric of our nation.

A word to office seekers. The path to glory lays not through the territory of a distracted populace. Expect not, if you obtain promotion by means of the clubs and conventions of a faction, that the laurels entwined for you will escape the electric shock, which shall tear from your brows these fading devoirs.* Have you judgement? Will you sacrifice it for the sake of promotion? Will you become the minions of the ambitious and unprincipled, who would climb to offices of honour and profit on your shoulders? You may expect they will shower down their benefits on you. But be assured, they will prove to you like the contents of the box of Epimethius.† Lay down then the weapons of your warfare. Become pea-

* The laurel of the ancients used as emblems of victory and triumph, was considered invulnerable to the shafts of lightning; and therefore denoted favour and preservation.

† Pandora was a fabulous personage of the ancients. Also, said to be the mother of Deucalion, who sent a box to Epimethius, filled with all kinds of evils, who opened it, and out they flew, and filled the earth with diseases, and all other calamities.

ceable citizens. If you desire office, study to qualify yourselves to fill honourably those stations to which you aspire, and you may rest assured, that your qualifications will not remain unregarded, by a discerning public. Even should this be the case, console yourselves with the assurance, that the honors and emoluments of public office, are more than counterbalanced, by its anxieties and cares. Add not then to the weariness and toil of those who discharge faithfully their duty, by villifying their character, and condemning their motives.

Friends of the present administration, To us this day is peculiarly auspicious. The little cloud that darkened our political horizon has almost vanished. The salubrity of the benign atmosphere of peace spreads its influence over our country. Our Commerce, Agriculture and Manufactures sustain a due equilibrium. Our ships go and come, laden with the commodities of our own, and other countries. Our professional, and literary institutions, are in high repute. Not only is the field of science open to those who sustain offices and professions; but the Agriculturist, and Mechanic, have become scientific men.

When we look to a foreign country, and see fields and villages pillaged and depopulated, and all the gloomy desolations of war. Language is inadequate to draw the contrast. The alarm of war calls us not from our peaceful habitations. Our swords are converted into ploughshares; our spears into pruning hooks. Wherever we turn, the hand of industry and cultivation has spread a cheering influence. Our manufactories have turned almost every secluded village into a mart. Trace our rivers to their sources, where, in the wild waste, they poured their lone waters, to the echo of the neighbouring rocks and hills, which seemed only witnesses of the power of the great Creator. Our astonishment is excited, by the stupendous works of art. Formidable

beds of granite, the dread of the cultivator of the soil, by the hand of art, are formed into pillars, to add permanence and splendor, to the increasing palaces which adorn our cities and villages. Where they had lain in undisturbed repose, ever since the day the ark rested on the mountain of Ararat; they have been torn from their base, and by the hand of the architect, risen into magnificent structures, where thousands of our citizens are reaping a valuable stipend, for their laudable application and industry; and where issue from the hand of American genius, fabrics, which may vie in elegance and durability, the products of the foreign artist.

Mighty rivers, which lost their waste of waters in the fathomless ocean; now, contribute from their inexhaustible stores, to supply the smooth canal. Navigation flourishes in the interior of our country. Not subject, alone, to wind and tide; by the improvements of science, our vessels are wafted in security from one port to another.

Venerable soldiers of the revolution, When the sword was without, and terrouer within; you girded on your weapons; believing, that yours, was the cause of truth. "Out of weakness you were made strong, waxed valient in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." While we venerate your valor and intrepidity, we would not forget the day, when you left your homes of peace and domestic quiet, for the labours and hardships, the anxieties and watchings, of the fortress and the camp. When you heard the alarm of battle, had you in a cowardly manner shrunk from your duty, and hid yourselves in caves and forests, we might, this day, have borne the galling yoke of servitude. We highly commend our national government, for the little they have done, toward rewarding you for your eminent services; and only regret, that their liberality has not extended to every individual, who served in the revolutionary war. You are entitled to the gratitude of a free and enlightened people; and in no better way, can this be evinced, than, in grant-

ing every individual a small annual compensation. Your silvery locks, and the infirmities of age testify, that a little while, and your days here will be numbered and finished. We rejoice that you have lived so many years, to share in the rich fruit of your labours. May the remainder of your days be happy. As the sun of life shall descend, may its mildest rays beam on your departing moments; and, when called from the important services of this life; may you receive an immortal crown.

Fellow citizens in arms,—Rejoice that your time, is a time of peace. Your decorated habiliments, and the implements of war which you bear, denote that you are preparing yourselves to forsake, at your country's call, your dwellings of retirement, your kindred and your friends; to maintain her rights. Rejoice then, that no imperious monarch wields his sceptre over you, that no arbitrary despot manages our national concerns. Keep constantly in mind, that agreeably to our wise Constitution, and the undeviating law of rectitude, Military is, and ought ever to be, subject to civil authority. Be assiduous to sustain such men in office, as will so manage our foreign and domestic affairs, as to give no cause for foreign aggression or internal commotion. Be cautious, that you lend not your support to any candidate for high office, who might vainly think to grasp at the power of the usurper, and acquire the glory of the lawless conqueror; without experiencing the indignation of injured freedom, which would at length collect her scattered forces, and rebound on his deeds and his character, eternal infamy and disgrace. Study to be peaceable citizens. By your promptness to discharge faithfully the duties of your station, you afford an example of imitation to other orders of society. Should you in a just cause be called to the field; never, in a lawless manner inflict a needless pang, on the defenceless.—Make no depredations beyond the limits of your duty. Remember Him who can gird you with strength, in the

day of battle. Remember that should we lose our freedom, through your imbecility, you must bear the reproach, of having degenerated from the fortitude and patriotism of your fathers.

To the young men of this assembly, we would remark. Every year opens on you new scenes in the great drama of life. You are not to stand as idle spectators of the events of the day. But recollect, that on the purity of your morals, and integrity of your character, depend, in no small degree, the happiness of individuals, and of society, to an unknown extent. Abundant means of information and improvement are in your power. Avail yourselves then, of these resources. Be guided by temperance in all your pursuits. Form not hastily, and without proper deliberation your political creed. There are those, who have attempted to call back from its repose, the spirit of political party. Carefully avoid a party passion, which indulged, would supplant all order in society. "When party rage takes possession of the mind, it breaks through all ties, natural and civil, counteracts the most sacred and solemn obligations, silences every other affection, whether public or private, and transforms the most gentle natures, into the most savage and inhuman. Be careful to trace events to their sources. Be not guided in your opinions, by a discontented party, too often composed of a heterogeneous mass of office seekers, and those who are wandering in the devious path of local prejudices. Neither be guided in your opinions of men and their systems, by the libellous statements of a newspaper. For a perfect model, by which to form your political and moral character, we would refer you to the example and precepts of the illustrious Washington. Be guided by them, and you cannot err. In his farewell address, when about to retire from public life, you will find a summary of those principles of rectitude, on the firm basis of which, he built his purity of morals, his excellence of private

character, and his splendid acts of glory. Next to the laws of inspiration, make this a standard by which to form your lives and conduct. This incomparable effort of human workmanship, understood and practiced in its true spirit, will form your characters for the greatest usefulness here, and happiness hereafter.

Ministers of the everlasting gospel,—To your precepts and example we look for direction in the path of virtue, of wisdom and piety. We expect from you living examples of the doctrines you inculcate. We rejoice that our government imposes on you no prescribed limits, for the guide and direction of your faith. Were this the case, we should look to you, with a suspicious eye, lest for preferment or gain, you would sacrifice your principles. Or rather, while we felt assured of your integrity, apprehend with dismay, the impending gloom of religious intolerance, and dread the moment, when you should be violently separated from us, to become the victims of the Au-to-de-fe.

Imbecile indeed are all attempts to bind in fetters the human mind. We nope this species of tyranny will be done away, with the follies, and superstitions of darker ages. We regret that any degree of religious intolerance, should disgrace the free and enlightened people of America. But, to our spiritual guides we look with an anxious expectation. We trust you will not widen the breach already made, in our churches. We hope, and trust, that you better understand the principles of christianity, than vainly to attempt to controul the consciences of those, committed to your charge. If there are any such, we entreat them to lay aside human systems, and creeds, and study the scriptures. If there are any, who, in “simplicity and godly sincerity have their conversation in the world,” but suffer reproach for conscience sake; such, we congratulate. No man can take from you, your crown.” “You shall be pillars in the temple of God, to go no more out.”

Fair Daughters of America,—This period is to you an eventful period. Look back to the days of your mothers, and grand mothers, and draw a contrast.—Savage foes and foreign invaders spread round them all the gloomy presages of destruction and war. Beside bidding a sad, perhaps a last farewell, to those dear to them, by the ties of kindred and friendship; they were left to the arduous task, of guiding those affairs at home, which in a time of peace, came not within their province. Often were they in “perils in the wilderness. In weariness and painfulness. In watchings, and hunger, and thirst. In fastings often, in cold and nakedness.”—Even in times of peace; how did our early matrons brave with fortitude, the hardships and toils inseparable from those, whose magnanimity led them to penetrate farther and farther into wilds and forests. Compared with theirs, your days are days of ease, and luxury.—The arts and improvements of the present time, abundantly facilitate your comfort and improvement. You have vast sources for mental acquisitions, which came not within the reach of your ancestors. Estimate then, duly, your privileges. Spend not your time, as the people of Athens once did “either to tell or hear some new thing.”

To you is committed the guidance of infancy and youth. Are you careful that your sons and daughters are early taught principles of virtue and industry? On you in no small degree depend the future destiny of our nation. Be not unmindful then, of your high responsibility.

The christian religion has given you a standing in society, unknown in barbarous and heathen nations.—Pervert not then this invaluable blessing. You are not ignorant, that, notwithstanding our national prosperity, dissension has sundered many of our churches and societies. Have you in this unholy contest, been careful to adhere to the admonition of a learned apostle, to

learn in silence, with all subjection? Or, have you thrown aside that meekness and humility peculiarly becoming your sex; and like wandering stars, lost yourselves, from your families and societies, where you were wont to worship? Be entreated to think of these things; and weigh in your own minds, the consequences of such unhallowed steps. Are your infant sons and daughters taught to despise and reject the counsels, and opinions of their fathers and religious teachers? Such example and precept, from you, will not only teach them to be zealous partizans; but, self-willed and imperious. We rejoice with you, that no Romish Pontiff, or Spanish Inquisition, takes cognizance of your private opinions. But we lament, that you imbibe so much of the disposition which our free government, and an enlightened age have discarded.—When those who are now learning from you, the first principles of religion and science, shall be called to take distinguished parts, in guiding the affairs of a nation. Wonder not, should they exert their power, to establish a national religion. Anarchy, and every direful consequence might then ensue. How would you then lament, that you had been accessory in involving yourselves, and all you hold most dear in one common ruin. Return then to the fold from which you have strayed. Christians here, and the spirits above, shall hail your approach with more cordiality, than that of those, who have never wandered, and future generations to remotest ages shall rise up, and call you blessed.

To Conclude, let every class, age, and profession, study peace. To this end, knowledge must be diffused. To this end, our civil, literary, and religious institutions must be respected, and supported. The history of past ages has taught us, that in proportion as ignorance prevails, or the means of information are widely disseminated; in equal proportion, tyranny advances, or the fair tree of Liberty flourishes.

We attribute not, the wars and rebellions that have

desolated the world, so much, to an uncontrollable destiny, or the grouping contagion of a blind fatality ; as to the contaminating influence, of strong passions and prejudices ; suffered to originate, in the uncultivated minds of youth. If they are neglected, our country may revert to a state of barbarism.

Let the patriot then, arouse his energies, not girding himself with sword and spear, but with the armour of light, and prepare himself to fight valiantly for the truth.