

AN
ORATION

PROVINCIAL AND RUTLAND

FOURTH JULY.

1826;

BEING THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,

AND THE

YEAR OF JUBILEE.

~~BY R. C. MALLARY.~~
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ORATION.

FELLOW-CITIZENS:

THIS day can be enjoyed by intelligence alone. It approaches like other days. The same sun illuminates. The same atmosphere surrounds us. No Czar or Pontiff has commanded us to rejoice by ukase or edict, while the heart is torn by unseen sufferings. This day can be enjoyed by those alone, who know its great associations. Thanks to heaven, but few can be found reposing under the broad protection of our institutions, who cannot well understand and warmly feel them. !

Half a century of national existence is now completed.— We have ascended to an elevation, which overlooks a wide, and expanding prospect.

If the way-faring stranger climbs the Egyptian pyramid, and surveys with pleasure, the surrounding scenery of blazing sands, humble villages, the moving majesty of the Nile; if the traveller winds his path along rocks & crags and precipices towards the summit of the Andes and looks abroad, with delight, over the giant works of nature, while mighty enginery below is heaving the tumultuous mountains above; if the calm adventurer lingers along the Thames, the Seine, the Po or Gaudelquiver, and revels amidst the beauties of enchanting landscape, how much more enlivening to the generous, cultivated, capacious mind, must be the views of an empire, owned by freemen, enjoying in peace and tranquility, the best gifts of a kind Providence.

As we look back to events, receding from memory, but rising higher and more luminous on the page of history, we are arrested by the momentous events of the revolution. Every day presents them in more conspicuous relief, although the period of their achievement assumes the silvery hue of an-

tiquity. A few only of the survivors of the day, that first smiled on American emancipation, can now grace its festival. A few scattered remnants only of the once solid ranks of freedom, can now meet the new generations, receive their homage and bestow a patriot's blessing. They are daily departing, like heralds, to the spirits of their fellow heroes ~~in eternity, to bear the tidings of their country's continued greatness and prosperity.~~ The last errand will soon be conveyed.— Whether glorious to the fame of our Republic or degrading to its character, will depend upon the continued patriotism of its people, the wisdom of its government.

Allusions to the struggle of the revolution can never be omitted, on an occasion like this. I wish I could describe, when and where, every soldier of that period, first shouldered his musket and buckled on his knapsack; could trace his light or weary footsteps over plains or mountains, advancing or retreating; could point out every spot, where a patriot fell; every sod, that marks the last and long embrace of a hero's dust with its mother earth; it would produce a deeper interest and loftier excitement.

Research into the progress of intellectual improvements may explain some of the remote causes, which produced our separation from the parent country. It may discover some faint knowledge of the rights of mankind breaking forth at the time, when the mighty monarch over mind first startled at the voice of reformation. It may discover, here and there some faint traces of moral and political light descending down to modern times. Still, we cannot sufficiently admire the discernment, the talent, and genius of the great men, who gave the first onward movement to the revolution. How they could have conceived such vast designs, how they could have so fearlessly ventured upon their frightful execution, must always be viewed as a signal triumph of love of freedom over oppression, of intrepidity over danger.

The liberties of Greece and Rome were reposing in the tomb of centuries. Despotism was waving its drowsy banner

over the ruins of the best and greatest republics. They seemed to exist in history, only for the purpose of warning mankind to shun the dangers of freedom, to teach the world, that to tyranny alone, belonged the mastery over nations.

Europe held out no encouragement to resistance. No kindred republic rose among her nations to stay the sword, that was drawn against young freedom, on our shores. Rebellion against the authority of the mother country was considered wild infatuation, execrable treason, by the advocates of passive obedience. Nations, claiming the western world, foresaw the downfall of their own colonial grandeur to follow the accomplishment of our independence.

England was standing superior among the nations of Europe. She was first in wealth, first in high and daring spirit, first in military skill, power and glory. The thirteen colonies numbered less than three millions of people. They were dispersed over a boundless territory. The influence of the maternal government held thousands, rich and powerful, firm to the throne. The country was disjointed by separate governments. They were administered by men, who paid homage to their royal master. The colonies had been stripped of their resources. They were unprovided with the means of warfare, except sinewy arms and solid hearts. The line of maritime frontier easily approached by the whole naval power of the enemy. An obedient colony on the north, opened wide its gates to the flood of invasion. On the west was a dark, unfathomed wilderness. Its border was alive with savage fury.

But the occasion does not allow the detail, which belongs to history. One and all must feel sensible, that every thing, which wisdom and greatness ever did or could do, was performed. Every thing around us bears renewing testimony to the noblest achievements of man. The revolution becomes a deep moral and political fountain for present and future generations. It gives strength and energy to the weak, arouses the slumbering, refreshes and invigorates all in the cause of manly and virtuous freedom.

“England, with all thy faults, I love thee still,”

was a sentiment warm from a heart devoted to its native country. He, who has no affection for the land of his birth, will be a vagabond every where. If every place is alike to his feelings, he is unfit for any. The Norwegian thanks heaven, that he was cradled in the tempestuous regions of the north. The Highlander has his affections chained to the rocks and glens of Caledonia. The soul of the noble Greek is fastened to the first classic ground of antiquity, though ravaged by the scimitar and demoralized by the Koran. While pursued a fugitive by the shameless coalition of the cross and crescent, while the heavens are illuminated with the conflagration of villages, towns and cities and the gates of the seraglio surrounded with the horrid trophies of Turkish cruelty, Greece, Greece reigns triumphant in his bosom. The savage exults in havoc, carnage and desolation. But when he is driven from the sepulchres of his fathers, his iron bosom heaves a sigh, his stern eye drops a tear.

Americans may well be devoted to *their* country. They may indulge in a generous glow of satisfaction, when they observe its advancing greatness, its power and fame respected. They may speak of it in language of love, of admiration, of enthusiasm. If this, by some, may be considered a foible, it surely can be no offence. To be proud of one's country, gives evidence of feelings allied to solid patriotism, of feelings, which spring from warm hearts. The admirer of his country has an enjoyment, which the cold, philosophical cosmopolite never felt.

To enable us to observe the changes of half a century, the more distinctly; to empower us to see the length and breadth, the height and depth of those changes in the moral, political and even natural world, we may be allowed to imagine our condition had we remained peaceable, unresisting colonies to the present day. All must be familiar with the pretensions of England. She claimed of us unquestioned allegiance and submission. She exercised the right of unlimited taxation.

without our consent. She controlled our trade and commerce with herself and all the world. We could not build a boat, or manufacture a pin, without the consent of parliament. As our country improved, it would have been parcelled into baronies and dukedoms for her nobility and princes of the royal blood. It would have been divided into vice kingdoms, for shadows of legitimacy to play little majesty, on subaltern thrones. The people, serfs and vassals to petty tyrants, rapacious in proportion to the distance of the power, that pretended to control them. The fruits of honest, hard dusty labor, gathered up and carried away, to be squandered in the capital of the empire, while those, who earned them, would be left to starve, like Irishmen and Hindoos.

It may be said, that the neighboring colonies are yet flourishing, and that the burthens, imposed by the mother country, bear lightly on their shoulders. The Canadas are valuable to England. They afford a great market for the products of her industry. They give activity to a vast amount of navigation. They afford a place of refuge for her population, restless at home. But above all they give England a strong position on this continent. They are supposed to hold the United States in check, while through them, we are assailable. Should they be emancipated, it may be feared they might add to the power of our confederacy. To keep the Canadas obedient, they must be treated with lenity and kindness. The consequences of one revolution are too near and too well remembered, to give any needless occasion for another.

Ireland, wretched Ireland, is a colony of England. The show of union is but vapor. Could the colonies of America have been more favored than Ireland? Should we have been excused from British rapacity, four thousand miles distant, while Ireland is ransacked and plundered of her last potatoe, at the very windows of her mistress? Look at India. Her collected tears would swell the Ganges beyond its banks. Her sufferings under British dominion, if distributed among the present human family the world all over, would make the

whole turn pale with horror. What would have been our condition, had we remained colonists, this assembly may well imagine.

To enumerate a few of the most prominent events of the last half century would seem to be proper. To the revolution I have, already, made a feeble allusion.

The formation of our political institutions occupies a conspicuous portion of our annals, for the period just closed. Altho' our pilgrim forefathers brought enterprize, courage and unappeasable hatred to tyranny, yet their knowledge of free governments must have been limited. Such charters as the pleasure of the sovereign would bestow, they were compelled to receive. Some contained the substance of monarchy; some were enlivened with more liberal provisions; all, however, resting on the throne, as their common foundation.

When therefore Americans had decided upon resistance to British authority, no forms of government existed, adapted to the condition of the people and affording security to their political rights. Former habits of submission to royal power, were calculated to divert the mind from those great and liberal institutions, which provide for the protection of individual freedom. For a time, it is true, surrounding dangers were often a sufficient bond of concert and union. Old colonial charters were at times revised and valuable provisions retained. Self government having devolved wholly on the people, they manifested a foresight, prudence, wisdom never surpassed. They applied their principles to practice. They attentively observed the operation. Experience, the kindest of all teachers saw her porticos crowded with disciples, listening with profound attention to her precepts and executing her commands with undeviating fidelity.

Nothing presents a more interesting view, in the political world, than the formation of the various governments of this union. Almost every former government, whether despotic or republican, sprung from intestine commotion. If republican, it was the immediate conquest, over domestic

tyranny, by the sword. If despotic, it was established by some daring usurper, at the head of his legions. In Greece and Rome, important changes were generally accomplished in the tempests of civil war. Among the nations of Europe, the creation of new governments, or the alteration of old ones, has been usually effected in blood and desolation.

In our country we are strangers to such spectacles. Not a single constitution of the union or a state was the offspring of violence or warfare among the people. Not even a proposition was ever adopted or rejected by threat or menace. If the form of government is to be changed or a new one established, an appeal is made by one portion of the people to the other, or it springs from a spontaneous movement of the whole. The most solid and exalted talents, age and experience are called into exertion. Turbulence, faction, even the ordinary parties of the day, are silent. Coolness, deliberation, grave reflection, have always marked the character of our conventions, appointed to consider fundamental laws. Our state governments must confer a lasting honor on their framers and on the character of the people, by whom they were adopted. That great assembly of Statesmen, who gave form to the constitution of the union, will rise higher and higher on the column of virtuous fame. That state of intelligence, under which it was ratified by the nation will be considered as one of its proudest eras.

So far, has our country prospered and triumphed under its guardian influence, in every condition of national existence. It has sustained us in peace and war. It has risen superior to every exigency, for which any government under heaven was provided. It is esteemed by the enlightened and liberal, as the master work of human wisdom. God send it a safe deliverance from the visionary spirit of innovation.

Nor let us pass over, in silence, the purity of the principles, the spotless integrity, by which, the early statesmen of our country were guided. When it was free, when it was pouring out its gratitude for their great achievements, when it reposed

in them all the confidence, that admiration bestows on virtue, they still continued engaged ardent as ever, to improve, enlarge and secure the rights of the people. No hereditary ranks, no odious distinctions were created, to give a specious dignity and splendor to their institutions. Republicanism was the cloud by day, the fire by night, in the storm of danger, in the calm of security.

We may again allude to the history of our political institutions. When the experiment of free governments was about to be made, many, whose habits and opinions had been formed under the parent country, were fearful of its failure. The most sanguine in favor of equal rights were unable to establish, with certainty, the boundary line between freedom and restraint. To vest in a government all necessary and salutary power, and at the same time leave that power under the superior dominion of those, upon whom it was to be exercised, might at first seem an absurdity in politics. The experiment was made, triumphantly made. As we have advanced, instead of any further restraints being made or required over popular rights, it has been found especially in the older states, and under the earlier governments, that equity, justice and sound policy demanded an extension. It has been found true as demonstration, that the dangers of licentiousness, discord and faction, did not proceed, so much, from rights and privileges allowed by government, as from excluding from their enjoyment, a portion of the people. No man is more dangerous to society than one, who is degraded by his fellow men. When a portion of society is deprived of privileges, which the other enjoys, you will be sure to find discord and disaffection, if not treason and rebellion. This has been apparent in every state, where political discriminations have existed. When, therefore, changes have been made in our state constitutions, qualifications to the exercise of political power have been enlarged and the happiest consequences have never failed to follow.

Other nations have been watching our progress with sleepless anxiety. Nothing belonging to the United States

has escaped the envenomed shafts of transatlantic calumniators. Our governments have been considered wild, democratic theories, evanescent as moonshine. Our people a degenerate, licentious mob. Benumbed in intellect, paralyzed in exertion. Society fast receding to the dark shades of the aborigines. The soil and climate blasted by the frowns of heaven. The vegetable world pale and sickly. The race of animals had lost their true European size and energy. But we have reached a period, when we may venture a comparison.

Of what has Italy to boast for the last half century? What are her improvements in the means of human happiness?—What has she done to exalt the human character? She has the same institutions for church and state, which, for ages, have pressed, heavy as the Appenines, on the bosom of Society. She has the same lazaroni in her cities, the same bands of robbers in her mountains. Often overrun by invasion and held in subjugation by foreign bayonets. The works of ancient science, art and taste decaying, without an effort to arrest the ravages of time.

Spain. Will the revilers of the United States now resort to the kingdom of Charles the fifth, of Ferdinand and Issabella to prove the blessings of legitimacy superior to the benefits of self government, by Americans? It may seem cruel to hold up, to public view, such a sovreign as the modern Ferdinand and the sufferings of ten millions of people, who are ashamed of his weakness and abhor his character. It would seem unpardonable, especially for republicans, to describe the fallen ruins of Spanish greatness, of Moorish magnificence, did not self defence often compel us to draw a parallel.

Place Austria with her sub-kingdoms, Bohemia and Hungary, Russia, Prussia and Poland, by the side of the United States. Let monarchists, pensioned monarchists too, decide upon the results of a half a century. It is true, something may have been done to mitigate corporeal sufferings of boors and peasants, to make them more profitable slaves, but, what has been done to cultivate mind, to raise the countless multitude

from the degraded valley of ignorance, barbarism and servitude, through those boundless regions! Palaces may have been built, cities adorned, triumphal arches erected, to gratify the pride of monarchs; but what have they done to make their subjects, *men*? They may have encouraged the arts and sciences, endowed universities, bestowed a gracious smile on literature, but how small the value, when not one in a thousand tastes the fruits, or enjoys the benefits. In the estimation of many, it may confer glory on a sovereign to patronize a hundred, a thousand philosophers, mathematicians, astronomers, sculptors, painters and poets, although twenty-five millions, out of thirty, of his subjects, can neither read nor write.

France has made improvements within the last fifty years. The great mass of her people, previous to the revolution, were but little advanced before Italians and Germans. They enjoyed a genial soil, a happy climate, yet feeble were the rays of intelligence, that penetrated into the lower regions of society. That great event, like a tornado, swept away the altar and the throne, in a storm of blood. If the awful spirit, which directed her affairs, prostrated all the ancient land marks of society, it was still attended with alleviating benefits. It did inculcate eternal equality in the natural rights of mankind.— It did give an energetic impulse to intellectual power. It did teach the shameless profanity of the pretended divine right of kings. It did send abroad the rays of light and knowledge, although mingled with degrading errors. The most licentious, however, were soon exploded, although the medium, through which they were conveyed, was preserved. The distribution of lands, which had been accumulating for centuries in the nobility and priesthood, enabled almost every Frenchman to become the owner of the soil he cultivated. It opened wide the door to genius and talent, whether born to the coronet or wooden shoe. In the midst of the tempest, Napoleon ascended the whirlwind and directed the storm. He calmed the troubled elements, while he preserved their energies. France flourished, while his ambition was in mid-career. She was

improved, though bleeding at every pore. She will long remember the benefits conferred by that wonderful man, though the torpid Bourbon may demolish the sculptured bronze and marble. Whether her people will relapse again into the kindred darkness of her surrounding neighbors, must be solved by the next half century.

Changes in the condition of England are not as distinctly marked, as those of France. There has been a freedom, an independence of character, enjoyed by Englishmen, long before any great improvement, moral or political, was perceived across the channel. Periods, not remote from each other, from the first of Elizabeth, have been rendered memorable by military and naval achievement. Every part of the world has laid at her feet the memorials of her triumphs. In relation to Europe, her power, influence and glory were never more conspicuous, than at the end of 1761. The conquest of North America was complete. The question of naval supremacy was settled between her and her only rivals. France and Holland were chased from every ocean. In both Indias her arms were victorious. Since that time, if she has sustained her fame by sea, it was by conquering again those whom she had often conquered before. She has mingled defeat with victory, since the commencement of the last half century.— She lost America, although she marched the conqueror over Spain and gathered the laurels of Waterloo.

Beyond the limits of the Island of Great Britain, there has been but little progress in human improvements, of which a nation might be proud. They cannot find it in India. There misery, desolation and her power have marched shoulder to shoulder. Her western colonies, excepting Canada, are descending from their former prosperity. Ireland is as miserable, as under her native chieftians.

If England, within herself, has improved in some things, she has been stationary or suffered unfavorable changes in others. Defects and errors in her government and laws are, daily, becoming more palpable. The original design of the popular

branch of her constitution is almost wholly lost. Representation is as unequal, as the election is often corrupt. A criminal code, bloody as Dracos, continues to degrade the nation. Her ablest and wisest men have long made strenuous, but unavailing efforts to adapt it to modern ages and more enlightened times. Pauperism, which half a century ago, was scarcely seen or felt, now counts millions in its shivering, starving, houseless ranks. Expences for its relief surpass the revenues of our Union. The national debt, that sullocating incubus, has increased beyond the dream of redemption.—Almost all the relations of society are artificial. They are perplexed and tangled by endless regulation. Touch one part, a vibration is felt over the whole, in a moment. If the price of corn rises a shilling in a bushel, if a bank stops or limits its discounts, if a crop of barley fails, or a courier hurries across the continent, with some secret errand; farmers, merchants, manufacturers and stock jobbers take the alarm. So bound together, interwoven, dovetailed by enactments of government are all the employments and interests of that country, that the misfortunes of one branch spread terror and dismay over the whole. Another great cause of that feverish excitement, so frequently suffered, must be found in the enormous amount of taxation. Two hundred and fifty millions of dollars are levied on every thing and collected of every body. It never returns back to those who paid it. It is gathered up from the whole surface, it is sent abroad in unequal streams. The tendency must be to create greater and greater irregularity in all employments. It must remove the higher and lower classes of society to an immeasurable distance from each other. The poor will be retained in poverty; the middle classes reduced, by degrees, to indigence. One portion of the nation will continue to roll in wealth and splendor while the other writhes in misery and despair.

But, while the government has remained unchanged, while the civil and ecclesiastical codes are disfigured with harsh and barbarous features, the energy of public sentiment, in

some degree, controls their operation. It holds in check the arbitrary designs of the crown; it tempers usages introduced in times of unlettered tyranny; it diminishes, in effect, the murderous list of felonies and misdemeanors, which stand on the grim page of the statute book.

Useful arts and sciences have advanced and are advancing. But, whether the present race of critics, reviewers, novelists, travellers and poets have surpassed the productions of the great Augustan age of British literature, is not to be finally decided by the present generation.

Institutions and associations, devoted to the promotion of moral improvement at home and abroad, are zealously and powerfully supported by wealth, influence and talents. In no country under heaven, has the cause of benevolence and humanity more able or more faithful friends. But, while England contains objects, great and good, she feels the pressure of unnumbered evils. If her power is boundless, it is sustained by unmitigated distress. While her government wields its influence from pole to pole, it presides cold and cheerless over millions. If it holds out the hand of relief to Africa, it gives up Asia to plunder and rapine. While the efforts of the best of men are employed in the cause of human happiness, turbulence, depravity, and crime, keep the field, with unbroken front. But, there yet remains a real greatness in English character. History is full of illustrations. It is strong, solid, unshaken, though often grappled by the strongest dangers.

You have not forgotten the formation of the self-styled holy alliance. The promotion of peace, virtue, and religion, was the pretence. Ruin to free governments, the object. The improved institutions of Italy and Spain soon felt its crushing tread. The radiance of the western world was, also, becoming too intense for the vision of legitimacy, though oceans rolled between. No shutters, no curtains, could exclude it. Had one more nation joined that monstrous league, our country might have been safe, but it would long have remained.

the only republic. The streams of South American blood would have flowed in vain. England with her army, her navy, her resources, was invited to co-operate, but firmly refused. She was urged to aim her mightiest blow against self government, by independent nations, but sternly refused.— Had England yielded and suffered, even all Europe to guide her policy, her individual greatness would have been swallowed up and forgotten. The four confederated empires, propping and bracing each other, appear with far less dignity, command far less respect from the enlightened world, than England, by herself.

In glancing over our own country for fifty years, numberless objects, exalted in character, blooming as youth, vigorous as manhood, cluster around us. It would inflict ample vengeance on our transatlantic revilers, who pretend, that, heaven curses what legitimacy abhors, to compel them to learn what a free people have done and can do. Show them, first, our condition, when the colonies were required to shout "God save the King." Let them keep well in mind that condition, had we remained colonies still. Let them begin their observation on the sea-board. Explore the coast from Eastport to the Balize. Observe our rising cities. See our navigation crowding every harbor, bay, and river, for nearly three thousand miles. The broad space, where sky and ocean meet, whitened with departing and returning sails. In fifty years, that navigation has become second to one only, and England must speed faster, or she is destined, before the end of the next fifty years, to spread her canvass in our wake. We have already challenged her to a peaceful competition, on her favorite element. But England, proud England, the boasting mistress of the "mountain wave," declines the trial. They may observe, also, the wooden walls of America showing their stormy sides. The recent contest proved, that they proclaim no empty threat, no unmeaning menace.

Turn to the interior of the country. Follow the early emigrants, step by step, into interminable wilds. Observe them

feeling their dark and trackless way, where sleeping solitude had never been disturbed by the voice of civilized man.— Hundreds around me well remember when they left the paternal roof, parting in tears, and followed by kindred benedictions, as if separating forever. The axe for the forest, the trusty rifle for defence, were their only companions. They well remember the spot they first chose for a future home, fresh from the hand of nature. They can now point out the place where they raised the first rude shelter, where the first tree fell. Kind Providence smiled, and the wilderness blossomed like the rose. Within a few short years, thousands passed beyond. These again were left behind by multitudes pressing still further on. They reach our northern limits.— They scale the Alleghanies and descend into the immense regions of the west. The wave of emigration is still rolling forward. Heaven alone can tell how wide it may spread, during the next half century.

Follow the Hudson, the Delaware, the Susquehannah, the Potomac, the Mississippi, the Ohio. Observe the improvements on their banks, springing into view, like the offspring of enchantment. But the only enchantment, is the labor, the industry, the enterprize of our people, protected by institutions, long contemned by ignorance and malice. Let those, who feel warm in the ray of a diamond, when it sparkles from a crown, survey this scene also. Let them pass along the Tagus, the Rhine, the Danube, the Don, the Wolga and then tell us, where fifty years have been the best employed. Observe also the magnificent communications, by land and water, finished and progressing through our republic. They surely, are not the effort of feeble minds, of nerveless hands.

The acquisitions of Louisiana and Florida are great events in our recent history. The peaceful purchase proves the true character and policy of our government. It will never seek aggrandizement by sanguinary contests. It is only, when our right is assailed, that we appeal to the last resort of nations. Louisiana embraces territory sufficient for an empire. Its

destinies are rapidly unfolding. It is rescued from a foreign master. The last roots of monarchy are extirpated. The principles of our government are spreading their cheering influence to its remotest limits. The foundations of civil and religious liberty are deeply laid. The millions of coming ages will bless the generous policy, which bestowed on them the name and attributes of American citizens. Here too, is presented a happy illustration of the benefits of self government. Louisiana has made greater advances in wealth, population, intelligence, during the last ten years, than it ever made, as a colony, since its first discovery.

Florida, long chilled under the frosty sway of Spain, springs into life. The native Spaniard arouses from his lethargy.— He is already sensible of the wide space between the capricious rule of a Viceroy or Captain General and the liberal, steady, generous care of the government, to which, he is inseparably united. Already he begins to exercise the privileges of a freeman and enjoy the blessings of his new condition. In a short period, the territory will disappear and Florida will be introduced among the sister states, equal in rights and powers with the oldest.

The magnanimous policy of our country is here placed in a brilliant light. Extensive regions are annexed to the ancient domain, not for the purpose of colonial aggrandizement, but to be possessed and enjoyed by freemen. Already two states have come under the shield of the constitution. They have committed their future welfare to its guardian protection.

Look, fellow citizens, still more deeply into society, for the last fifty years. All the attendants of civilization, are spreading with the emigrant. Every minute subdivision of this immense country provides the means for infancy to acquire the first rudiments of knowledge. Institutions, for the advancement of more elevated science are every where sustained by the fostering aid of governments and liberal patrons. Ten thousand altars, consecrated to overruling wisdom form, sustain and consolidate the moral character of every part of the Union.

Every where, the people are calmly engaged in the vari-

ous occupations of life. All orderly, peaceable, industrious. All can reach, with ease, the comforts of life. Affluence and wealth rewarding more enlarged exertions and enterprize.— Social and domestic virtue smiling at the door of almost every habitation. Freedom in politics seldom degenerating into licentiousness. Toleration in moral and religious opinions, yet morality and religion held in profound respect. No heavy burthens on the people, yet the operations of government, mild, uniform, energetic. If vice, immorality and crime are the sure inheritance of mankind, since the first frown of the Almighty in Eden, we have full confidence, that our country is as free from their ravages, as any part of the world. We have an Argus-eyed moral police, in the love of order among the people, which is seldom eluded by the most artful offender.

The mild and gentle spirit of benevolence and philanthropy never shone a with purer lustre, than in our own country, at the present day. It supplies numerous wants in human affairs, which lie, far beyond the reach of government and laws. It applies itself to those springs of moral action, which lie too deep, which are too delicate and refined for the control of legislative provision. It begins its kind offices before active guilt invades the tender bosom, and erects around the heart substantial barriers against approaching vice and immorality. The friendless, the fatherless, the world abandoned orphan, are the favored objects of its kind attention. It introduces its youthful charge to the care of civil laws, prepared for a virtuous obedience to their mandates. It spreads the light of truth and knowledge in every clime, in every habitable spot, obscured by the sable cloud of intellectual darkness.

Nor, fellow citizens is the review of half a century to be confined within our own boundaries. We are allowed to observe the effects produced by the great example of our revolution, the influence of our political institutions, in other parts of this hemisphere. You already bring to mind the young nations of the south.

If we had an oppressive mother country, how can we describe their. If we suffered humiliation, how degraded must

have been their fate. From the first conquest by Spaniards, led on by Cortez and Pizarro, aided by bloodhounds, less ferocious than their employers, a cold, avaricious, blasting policy was adopted by the conquerors. All intercourse, political and commercial was reserved to Spain alone. The wealth, resources and condition of her colonies were hidden from the world, with the secrecy of the grave. To preserve her authority, the strongest arm and sharpest sword were employed. To arrest the faintest ray of intelligence on its way to a single mind, to spread the mantle of bigotry and superstition from sea to sea, papacy lent its silent, dread, mysterious power.

The authority of Spain had been gradually weakening, before she was thrown into the grasping arms of France. The colonies refused their allegiance to a new master. Napoleon had other employment for his legions, besides attempting their subjugation. Self government was naturally demanded by their condition. Intercourse with other nations began. Communications between them and the United States became frequent. Spanish Americans visited our country. They learned what our fathers had done. The bright example of our revolution was held up to view. They saw the freedom and security of our people, the sources from whence they were derived, and by what they were sustained. They returned with greater riches than their oppressor ever gathered from Potosi. By degrees intelligence beamed upon the dark surface of South American mind. It was first caught by some great and generous souls, whom heaven always prepares for the glory and benefit of the human race. They spread the sacred light wider and wider, until every eye sparkled in the general illumination. The struggle for emancipation began. Severe the contest, glorious the result. On the ramparts of Callao, Spanish despotism presented the last hilt to freedom. The bands of social order, long severed, are rapidly uniting. Governments in strong resemblance to our own, securing the rewards of a thousand victories. They are now triumphantly pursuing the way to that high elevation, which belongs to nations of freemen. They are taking their station among the

great family of republics, to which they are welcomed, three welcomed, by the American people.

How pleasing, fellow citizens, is the retrospect of half a century! It affords a vast, transporting view, to a patriot mind. The friends of freedom trace, with bounding hearts, her shining footsteps, from Lexington and Bunker-hill, to the immortal fields of Ayachuco, to the fortress where the remaining ensign of tyranny waved its last, and descended forever.

While Americans are faithful to themselves, they may remain secure spectators of Europe, of the world. Let Frenchmen hold an antiquated Bourbon on the throne. Let Spaniards endure the domination of foreign arms, or agonize in tortures prepared by native bigotry. Let holy alliances stamp down reviving light and knowledge, and crush liberal ideas and opinions like vipers. Let them remain unmoved, while christian Greece is imploring christian aid, and indulge in the barbarous hope, that the country of Solon and Aristides may bow to Mahomet, sooner than be free. All this will neither endanger our safety, nor create any painful alarm for the solidity of our freedom and independence.

Still our relations with the governments of Europe will be interesting. Our commercial and social intercourse, with that part of the world, will require us to observe their movements. We shall take a deep interest in the retarded or accelerated march of enlightened principles.

Our policy towards foreign nations has long been distinctly marked and firmly established. It is that of strict, honest, firm, neutrality. To allow the people of other countries to establish their own political systems, is also one of its predominating traits. It exempts us from jealousy, discord, and contests. It deters others from engaging in our concerns.—It gives calmness, dignity, and stability to our national character. The example of our government, the steady, peaceful step of our people towards the best and highest attainments, carry abroad a surer spirit of regeneration, than a million of armed crusaders.

Centuries may be required to solve the great question, whe-

ther civil and religious freedom will triumph on the European continent. While nature is true to its own character, while it acts in obedience to its own laws, we may rejoice in the hope that the cause of truth and freedom may finally prevail.

Does reason and philosophy teach us, that a cause resting on the base of eternal right, can be conquered, subdued, annihilated, by persecution and vengeance? Did the oppression and persecution of Jews and Romans, stop the progress of Christianity? Did oppression and persecution arrest the progress of reformation begun by Luther and Calvin? The power of England was unable to control the spirit of republicanism in her former colonies. The sanguinary effort of Spain to extinguish the rising flame of freedom in South America, has given new life to the progress of emancipation. It is an aged maxim, that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." It must apply to every cause of light, knowledge, and truth. If Christianity could march triumphantly against a world combined against it; if the reformation could make a stand, could advance against the power of the Vatican; if our revolution could safely dare the lowering front of Britain; if freedom could keep the field victorious against the bayonet and wrath of Spain, what can finally stop the bright career of enlightened opinion? If mankind were created equal, if their rights and privileges are derived from a higher origin than a fellow mortal, is it not in decided warfare with the laws of nature and nature's God, to maintain they shall forever quake and quiver in the presence of self-created tyrants?

The enjoyments of the day are augmented by the reflection, that not a cloud is seen around our political horizon, portending danger. With the continent of Europe our relations are pacific. The known character of our government, its just and liberal policy, as well as its power to chastise a violation of its rights, secure for it, continued respect, although its principles may be held in abhorrence. To the new republics, we are bound by the strongest ties, that the best feelings of our nature can create. They have been colonies, so has our country. They have felt oppression, so did our fathers. They have engaged in a long and arduous conflict for self government and freedom, and were victors. In their history, we read, even more than our own. Cold indeed must be our hearts, if we did not offer our friendship, our admi-

ration. They have followed the example of this republic. They hail the founders of our governments, as the pioneers of their own. To them, the recent acceptance of their invitation to a conference, on the great interests of this hemisphere, will testify, both our confidence and respect. The congress of Panama will bring together all the great national affairs of the western world and if guided by wisdom, will lay the foundation of durable tranquility. It is a measure in full accordance with the wishes of a vast majority of this nation. A refusal, on our part, would have been fatal to any administration. The charge of hostility to republicanism, then, would have been sounded from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, against the present chief magistrate and his cabinet.

The preservation of our civil and political rights demands the sleepless vigilance of the fabled guardian of Hesperides. That spirit, which gave them existence must be maintained with sacred fidelity. The freedom of the confederacy will never again be assailed by hostile fleets and armies. It is from among ourselves, we must hereafter look for its most dangerous enemies. When disappointed ambition is grasping at the reins; when public servants are no longer "judged by their measures;" when the union is thrown into commotion to gratify any man, or his confederates, the syren song of freedom and love of the constitution allures, but to destroy.

When allegiance to the mother country was dissolved, the several colonies became so many separate and independent nations. No one submitted to the control or direction of any other. A sense of common danger produced united exertions against a common enemy. The first compact between them, more resembled a treaty of alliance offensive and defensive, than a national government. The States, as independent sovereignties finally devised and adopted the existing constitution of the confederacy. It was a work of liberal, patriotic compromise. The interests of the large states, small states and slave holding states, were all consulted and the political powers of each adjusted. If the schemes of change, for fancied evils, once succeed, there is an end, a total dissolution of the whole fabric. If we attempt a new adjustment of rights and powers, every fastning is cut loose. The members of the union are disjointed and scattered and no hand save that of Omnipotence, can hold back interminable ruin. To the union and its long tried, long approved constitution, let us adhere with firm, unshaken devotion.

The rights and privileges of the States are also objects of the highest regard. From them we derive almost all the rules, which govern human conduct in society. They give constant occupation to political vigilance and activity. The

people daily see and feel their administration. They become acquainted with the science and practice of government by constant experience. States are also, the nurseries of republicanism. The dangers of usurpation, by the union, are avoided by a firm preservation of state independence, in its proper sphere. The people are thus combined. They can act in concert, all their energies can, at once, be brought in array against encroachment by the confederacy.

But while we watch and defend state rights with a rigorous vigilance the people do not require the fair unquestioned powers of the general government to be administered by a narrow, pinching policy. We look to it, as possessing all useful national authority. We look to it, as combining and sustaining an undivided national character. However commanding may be the reputation of a single state, it is mingled with the united greatness of the whole. However small may be the means or confined the objects of a state, its people equally participate in the glory of their common country. All take pleasure and pride to see their government distinguished by those acts, which improve and adorn the nation. In proportion to the widening extent of the republic and its vast accumulating population, must be the views and policy of its administration. The promotion of the solid interests of such a country and such a people affords the amplest field on which to display true grandeur and magnificence.

One word to the ancients of the revolution. Allow me, venerable men, to dedicate my humble efforts, on this occasion, to you. Time diminishes your numbers, with a still, but unsparing hand. Yet, the few who are permitted to assemble, give a weight, a dignity, a moral splendor to the day.—The emotions which this great period awakens in your bosoms, are known and felt only by yourselves. You are surrounded by new generations. You are regarded by every eye, as the brave remains of freedom's chivalry. Manhood, youth, and beauty, all unite in presenting you sincere respect, undissembled gratitude. We are all conscious, deeply conscious, that we have inherited in peace and tranquility, the price of life, blood and scars. You have now reached an eminence where truth cannot flatter, where neither malice nor envy can tarnish your fame, nor objects of earthly ambition disturb your repose. You can calmly survey the changing scenes through which you have passed, honorable to yourselves, glorious to your beloved country. You, I trust, enjoy a richer view than fancy ever painted to youthful minds. warm, ardent, enthusiastic, in the mighty cause, you so gallantly espoused. You have lived to see that country great, flourishing, and happy. to receive the benedictions of grateful millions.