

James Paine

AN

ORATION,

PRONOUNCED

Before the Students of Brown University.

AT THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL MEETING-HOUSE

In Providence, July 5, 1813.

IN COMMEMORATION

OF THE

Anniversary of

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

BY EMERSON PAINE,
MEMBER OF THE SENIOR CLASS.

*“ They bawl’d for freedom in their senseless mood,
“ Yet still revolt, when truth would set them free ;
“ Licence they mean, when they cry Liberty,
“ For who loves that, must first be wise and good.”*

MILTON.

PROVIDENCE :

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SIR,

BY the unanimous vote of the Students of Brown University, we are requested to return you their thanks for your truly appropriate and patriotic Oration this day delivered, and to solicit a copy for the press.

JOHN THOMAS,
AMHERST WIGHT,
ZECARIAH ALLEN, } *College
Committee.*

MR. EMERSON PAINE.

Brown University, July 5, 1813.



GENTLEMEN,

THE Address this day delivered, I submit to your disposal.

*I have the honour to subscribe, Gentlemen,
with much respect, your obedient servant,*

EMERSON PAINE

Messrs. JOHN THOMAS,
AMHERST WIGHT,
ZECHARIAH ALLEN.

Brown University, July 5, 1813.

ORATION.

WE are assembled on this occasion to commemorate an event illustrious in its nature, and important in its consequences, to the political, the moral, and the religious world. The independence of a great nation is an event in which the whole civilized world is interested. Our independence was not confined in its consequences to this Western Continent, nor were its effects to be limited by the confines of Great Britain, or the boundaries of the European world. It has given a new and glorious æra to the nations of the whole earth. The cause of liberty is the common cause of man. And it is common cause of joy to all the nations under heaven, when so great and fair a portion of the globe as these United States, with one undivided effort, shake off the chains of a despot, and shout to the world that they are free.

The voice of Freedom is heard to the world's remotest bounds. It is an omen betokening good to the nations—It lights up a smile in the countenance of woe—Like the electric spark, the sympathetic emotion, with instantaneous transit, pervades every bosom—Every heart rejoices in the common joy—A cheering ray of hope darts along the gloom, and glitters on the mantle of that cheerless night which forever hangs brooding over despotic lands—The tyrant totters on his throne, and trembles for his sceptre—The victims of lawless power,

almost forgetting that they are slaves, with half-despairing joy, respond to the music of Freedom's voice, and "shake their chains in rude harmony"—Such were the effects, when our fathers, inspired with love of liberty, and indignant at the wrongs of the oppressor, broke their bonds asunder, and told the world, that they were free. Such is the glorious æra we this day commemorate. With what sentiments should Americans celebrate an event so important, so illustrious, and so conspicuous in the annals of the world.

We are not assembled to commemorate the coronation of a despot, or the birth-day of a Royal Infant destined to hold in his bloodstained grasp the destinies of the nation, and to scourge liberty from the abodes of men. Nor have we assembled to celebrate with impious mockery the day on which a Corsican Usurper reared a hideous despotism in the nation—But the day we commemorate is that, on which was declared, "freedom to the oppressed, and liberty to the captive."

On this anniversary it has been the custom of many to rehearse the long catalogue of wrongs that the American Colonies suffered under the British dynasty, and to embellish with all the flourish of rhetorick, the valour, the patriotism, the love of liberty, that inspired our countrymen, and led them on to victory. But the whole disastrous tale of aggression is familiar to this audience. Nor can it have escaped your minds by what means we obtained that independence which gave to America a distinguished place among the nations of the earth.

It is not my design to call your attention this day to the causes which induced resistance to the British Government, or to eulogize the achievements of our revolution—It is sufficient to say, that our cause was just, and

the issue glorious. God shielded the patriot's breast in the day of battle. "He taught our hands to war, and our fingers to fight." And we have, on this day, the greatest reasons for gratitude to that Almighty Being, who holds the sceptre of the Universe, who rules among the kingdoms of men, who has been the God of our fathers, and by whose munificence, we possess this land of liberty, distinguished by the favours of the Most High, above all the nations under heaven.

But it is in vain to us, that our fathers had correct principles, if we their children forsake them—It is in vain, that the patriots of the revolution fought upon the threshold of their country, to repel the invading foe, if their posterity want energy, wisdom, and virtue, to defend and maintain that liberty and independence which they procured. And what shall the reflection profit us, that the Most High defended our fathers, if we forsake the "perfect way," tread not in the footsteps of those venerable dead, and provoke the Almighty to say "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone?"

As we have assembled to commemorate that day which gave birth to our independence, and on which we took a name and a place among the nations, let us inquire—not into the wrongs that occasioned our revolt—Those wrongs have been avenged; and we have no cause to visit the tombs of those heroes who fell in battle, disturb the ashes of the sepulchre, and call up the prophetic dead to instigate us to avenge aggressions diluted by the lapse of years, and shrouded with their perpetrators in the silent vault death.—But let us inquire how we have improved that rich inheritance which our fathers purchased with their blood, and transmitted to their sons. Let us inquire into the principles and meas-

ures which have been adopted and pursued, and take a view of some of their most obvious consequences. A free people have a right to discuss the political principles, and canvass the measures of their Government. This is a right which ought to be ever dear to Americans—It should be exercised on all proper occasions, to check a too forward administration, to prevent the growth of a formidable faction, and to wither the first hopes of dangerous ambition.

The responsibility of rulers to their subjects, is a principle that ought to be asserted and maintained at every hazard. In this principle is contained the very essence of Civil Liberty. Let a nation once renounce this principle, and there is not one step between their condition and slavery. Let the government of any nation be invested with power uncontrouled; let the people transfer all their power to the government, subscribe to the doctrine of “passive obedience and non-resistance,” and they are at once reduced to the most abject slavery. For where is that virtue to be found in any Government, which will secure the people against the most wanton abuses, when they have lost the power of resistance? A disposition to abuse power is a striking feature in human depravity. There is in the heart of man a haughty malevolence which prompts him to aggression and abuse. Man possesses a wantonness of disposition which, when uncontrolled, induces him to gratify his selfish passions by the degradation and misery of his fellow-beings. Let such a being become absolute, and where is the subject in his realm that shall not become a slave? This is no exaggeration—It is a plain unvarnished tale. History, experience, and the common observation of men confirm this truth. If

history did not record the infamous deeds of a Nero, a Caligula, and a Bonaparte; if history were silent respecting the wanton atrocity of Despots; if the archives of human infamy were blotted out from under the face of heaven, and the abominable deeds of antiquity effaced from the records of the world; our own observation would furnish us with plenary evidence, that it is in the heart of man to abuse whatever power he possesses. We need not recur to history for the truth of this remark. We need not cite for proof, the infamous records of Eastern despots—We need not rehearse the deeds of a Robespierre, or a Murat; nor point the modern sceptic to the fell tyrant of France—We have examples at home—The records of our own degradation render the position doubly lucid. Turn, then, with indignation, from that maxim in the new-fangled code of French politics, which offers you the doctrine of “passive obedience,” the correctness of which they prove by the cogent reasoning of the Guillotine.

A free people should be tremblingly alive to their liberties, and “jealous” for their sacred rights.

On this anniversary what more proper theme can be selected, than a review of the past transactions of Government, and the present aspect of our political concerns?

Our present *form* of Government is, beyond a doubt, more favourable to the enjoyment of rational liberty, than any which has been previously adopted. That form of government only, which effectually secures rational liberty, and the rights of all classes of the community, can be esteemed perfect. The form of government constructed for these United States, was, undoubtedly, the best that could have been adopted in this coun-

try. It is seldom, that virtue sufficient for the adoption of a perfect system of Government, exists in any nation. At the time of the adoption of our Constitution, there was no small portion of French Principles, in America. Already had the morbid effects of a French faction become apparent. The multitude had already become giddy by the fumes of licentiousness, and French Philosophy, that bane of republics, that deadly foe to Civil Freedom, that pest engendered in night, that "abomination which maketh desolate," had been swallowed in maddening draughts, and the infuriated faction had joined in the "hue and cry" of trans-atlantic regicides. It was in the midst of these growing evils, that a form of Government was presented to the American people for their adoption. And, though not the best that could have been devised, yet it was, probably, the best that could have obtained.

The unexampled prosperity of the Union during the first twelve years after the adoption of our Constitution, evince the superiority of our republican form of government over all other governments of the earth. Twelve years experiment in the most critical period our republic ever witnessed, was sufficient to exhibit the true character of our political institutions. And the form of government was found to answer the most sanguine expectations of its authors. Under the administration of Washington, the prosperity of the Union was unexampled in history. It was unequalled in the proudest days of Greece. And Rome in the zenith of her glory could not vie with America, in the golden days of our republic. Smiling Peace waved her olive branch over the land, and plenty crowned the cheerful board. Success attended the labours of every class of citizens. The wealth

of the mechanic increased, and enlivening prospects cheered him through the labours of the day. The husbandman was animated in his toils by the hopes of a sure reward. Commerce was encouraged and protected, and scattered opulence through the nation.

“ Full were our cities with the sons of art,

“ And trade, and joy in every busy street

“ Mingling were heard.”——

The nation prospered notwithstanding the efforts of that faction which had now become formidable, and ready to seize with unhallowed grasp upon our “goodly heritage,” and pollute the sources of our prosperity. And when their political Pallinurus, roused from Utopian dreams, and philosophic reverie, was called to the helm of government, with an “overflowing treasury,” he found the nation in the “full tide of successful experiment.” These facts evince, that our form of Government is calculated to insure a high degree of national prosperity, under a just and wise administration. The present embarrassments of this nation, the evils which have lately burst upon our heads, and overwhelmed us in disgrace and ruin, result not from any defect in our Constitution. They have not resulted from any new “attitudes” of the belligerent nations, which required the policy that has been pursued. No new evils in foreign relations have arisen, since the days of Washington, which demanded a different course from that which was pursued in the “golden age” of our republic. The disastrous state of our affairs, the degradation and ruin of our country, can neither be attributed to our Constitution, or to the novel “attitudes” of foreign powers. To what cause, then, are we to refer these evils? That evils do exist; that we have sunk into the nethermost

abyss of degradation and disgrace ; that this nation is— not “balancing on the point of her destiny,” and “tottering to her fall”—but already fallen, already taken her place in the ranks of infamy, impotence, and humiliation, are facts too obvious to be questioned. The sun of glory which formerly irradiated these Western shores, has sunk beneath the horizon, and withdrawn his last setting beams from mortal ken. Liberty is preparing for her departure—She is waving her hand in token of adieu—She has embarked in that fatal boat of Gallic Philosophy which lands her ill-fated passengers in eternal exile—She will soon be wafted on the “wizard stream” of Democracy, a returnless distance from our shores. Whence these calamities? Whence this so sudden downfall? To these questions, a cursory view of facts will afford satisfactory answer.

A slight recurrence to the Constitution will evince, that the protection of commerce was one grand object contemplated by the navigating States, which induced them to enter into the political compact. While that policy was pursued which favoured the commercial interests, and which was contemplated by the Constitution, notwithstanding the embarrassments occasioned by an opposing faction, and though our means were inconsiderable, when compared with those possessed by the “powers that be,” before they commenced their outrage on commerce, the nation had no rival in prosperity. It was the policy of Washington, whence we derived our prosperity and glory. With such illustrious examples before his eyes, regardless of the best interests, and neglectful of the most obvious good of the nation, what visionary theorist, bewildered in dreams, “in wandering mazes lost,” could have been expected to pursue a

policy directly opposite to that, by which we had acquired our opulence and glory? One would have supposed, that in this path of glory and national prosperity in which Washington trod, straight as that path which leads to the courts on high, and effulgent as the ecliptic road, a "way-faring man, though a fool, could not err."

But strange to tell! Blind to the interests of the public weal, as if their optics were rendered dim by the heavenly light that encircled the head of Washington, an infuriated faction, opposed to commerce, smitten with love for the regicide republic of France, restless and fond of change, impatient to realize the golden visions which played about the head of their Philosophic Leader, imagining, that while deprived of that Elysium which the Sage of Montecello and his Quixotic disciples held out in prospect before them, they were deprived of the sovereign good, and having forgotten, or never known, that "to innovate is not to reform," rejected that counsel which had taught them the way of peace, reared to sovereign power the idols of Democracy, and shouted to the astonished populace, "these be thy gods O Israel!"

This, this was a triumph indeed! "As the last peal of thundering heaven" it shook the tottering base of this Western world. It burst across the deep, and its echoes were heard along the Gallic coast—The well known voice was recognized, as it echoed from camp to camp along the ranks of Democracy—Infernal joy danced in the hearts of Frenchmen, and a ghastly, malignant smile was kindled in the grim visage of their gloomy Despot—Europe felt the shock. The votaries of Civil Freedom had heard of the achievements of Washington—They had heard, that Americans were free—Their hearts had responded to our joy, and they had chaunted the carols

of our liberty—They had turned their eyes on America as the abode of Freedom, and an assylum for the oppressed—They had beheld our glory as the star that guided the Eastern Sages to Bethlehem—And to them it was likewise a token of salvation.—But suddenly, wild uproar is heard “with pale affright”—“Uproar such as heard on earth, till now, was never.” The discordant sound breaks from the Apalachian Mountains—It bursts on Snowden’s peak, and echoes along the heights of Cheviot—Britain starts from her repose—The sea-embosomed rocks that sustain her soil receive the shock, and from their hollow caverns inly groan—Europe’s free-born sons hear the portentous sound, and betoken resistance—For it is the rude huzza of Democracy—The sound is prophetic—It is a paralytic stroke to Freedom—It presages triumph to France—Their fairy visions vanish like the golden dreams of day-break, when the matin song disturbs the slumbers of the pillow.

The men who were now chosen to direct the public concerns of America, were Democratic—They were hostile to commerce—They had imbibed that fierce, licentious spirit of regicide Freedom, which had revolutionized France, and now menaced the whole civilized world. They were enthusiastic admirers of French Liberty—They were ready to make common cause with France, in revolutionizing the Empires and Kingdoms of men.

When this fell cause triumphed in America, well might every lover of man heave from his labouring bosom a prophetic sigh! Where was the patriot whose heart did not bleed? Where was the man who feared the God of Heaven, and whose heart was warmed with Christian benevolence; whose eyes were not dim with weeping at

that portentous moment, when the Powers of Darkness shouted triumph? What lover of rational Freedom could behold without emotion the fair fabric of American Liberty demolished in one evil hour by the polluted touch of Faction? What man among us was that who beheld this wreck of freedom, who saw the American Republic dashed against the rocks of the Gallic Charybdis, who heard the winds of heaven, when first they swept through the wreck, mutter a boding sigh, and foretell, in piteous accents, the future destinies of America? Where is the man among us, who *witnessed* this scene, whose ears have heard of it, or who has read it in story? And what were his emotions? Had he drunken of that Circean cup which the French Sorceress has given to the nations? Had he listened to the Syren notes of Gallic Freedom, which were chaunted to the evening breeze, and infected with spells and incantations the very breath of morning? Did his heart respond to the carols of Frenchmen, when they sung the triumphs of Darkness, and led up the death-dance of Democracy? And does the distant echoes of this infernal jargon, even now, sound delightful in his ears?—Then let him retire from this hallowed place, this day consecrated, and sacred to the cause of Freedom! His heart cannot be in unison with our cause—He is enlisted under the banners of Frenchmen—He will here find no nutriment—Truths ungrateful to his ear may this day be told—He hears the warning voice—Let him not disturb the devotion of this consecrated place, nor utter a discordant note to interrupt the harmony.

Suffer me, then, briefly to allude to some of the leading measures of the Democratic administration, notice the design of these measures, and call your attention to their effects.

Commercial restrictions are among the most prominent in the reign of Democracy. From the well known politics of the men now in power, their election to office justified the suspicion, that the policy they would pursue, would prove destructive to our commercial interests. Whether the "Chief of Montecello" had matured his plan of commercial restrictions, in the recesses of Philosophic retirement, or whether it was suggested, afterwards, by the "new attitudes" of France and Great Britain, are questions which I shall leave, to be discussed by the curious. As it respects the *issue* of this commercial warfare, the difference cannot be material, whether the system was matured by the Hero of Carter's mountain, while he philosophised in his cave, or by the Knight of Quixotic renown, in his more famous lucubrations of the Palace. Whether the pretexts for these restrictions were foreseen by the prophetic ken of our Illustrious Seer while they existed only in the regions of possibility, or whether they were contemplated no sooner than their *real existence*, they were siezed with an avidity which justifies the conclusion, that the Embargo—though of apparent Mushroom growth—did not start up into mature life and being, like some unwholesome productions of nature, in the silence and darkness of a single night—That it was not, for the first time, contemplated in the "secret Session" of the national legislature. But on this I shall not insist, because it is of minor importance.

That in *some period*, our Government has decreed the destruction of commerce, their mode of proceeding and their avowed hostility to trade permit not the most sceptical to doubt. When a five years "experiment" of commercial restrictions has harassed our trade till the

national revenue has sunk from seventeen to two millions and an half, and, to complete the climax of outrage, a War with Great Britain has swept every remaining vessel from the ocean, where is the man who will hazard the expression of a doubt, that the extinction of our commerce has been *somewhere*, and at *some time* decreed?

But why destroy commerce? Can it be supposed, that the destruction of American Commerce is the *leading object* in the political career of our administration? Can this be the *ultimatum* in their long and zigzag course of political legerdemain? Or shall we consider the destruction of commerce as a *secondary* object, a mean to facilitate some higher and more distant acquisition?—These are questions which interest Americans.

No one can believe, that the destruction of commerce was contemplated by our government, as an object in itself desirable, or beneficial to the nation. Commerce has been the source whence flowed our most distinguished blessings in the better days of our republic. This fact could never have escaped the sagacity of Mr. Jefferson. Nor did it lie beyond the ken of his philosophic brethren, who at the nod of the executive waged the unhallowed war against commerce. The fact is conspicuous to every eye. Like the light of heaven it stares those school-men in the face who deny its *real* existance. This policy, then, was to promote the acquisition of some far other object. Commerce is not deemed—even in the mid-night cabals of Democracy—an *evil in itself*: But an evil, only, as it forms a barrier to their dark designs. This barrier must be removed—Hence their enmity to commerce.

But what mighty theme, big with consequences of eternal moment, do they contemplate? What scheme so fraught with everlasting concernment to our republic, what object so vast, what design so involving our dearest rights, and most important interests? Is it a co-operation with France, in her project of universal conquest? Has the American Government leagued with that hideous Despotism, and conjointly with the fell Tyrant of Corsica, commenced a war against the liberties of the world? Upon no other principle can we account for those commercial restrictions which have figured so conspicuously in these "latter days" of darkness and error. What other principle induced that neglect of preparing a naval defence? This neglect was indicative of their hostility to commerce. Without a naval protection, what commercial nation can long be secure? If Government had favoured commerce, would they not have made provisions for its defence? If commerce had been favoured, would that little navy which fell into the hands of Democracy have been reduced by selling (or giving away) a part to France? What induced the Sage of Montecello, in one of his fitful hours of "trying experiment," to think of drawing our navy into a dry dock? Why was an "overflowing treasury," instead of being appropriated to the navy, squandered on a paltry fleet of Gun-boats, the purchase of Louisiana, and Torpedo experiments, of no use, except to drain the public chest, and prevent the increase of a navy, that, when France should enforce those decrees, to effect her continental plan, and Great Britain should retaliate, our commerce might be defenceless? But why leave commerce defenceless? that it might be destroyed? But why destroy commerce, the life of this republic?

“ *It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul ;*

“ *Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars ;*

“ *It is the cause !*”

We will pass in silence over that policy which has for twelve years past regulated our foreign relations. We will not inquire why a *foreign despot* has been suffered to dictate in our councils, and point out the measures which our government should pursue. We will not inquire for what reasons the *same power* has been suffered, with impunity, to heap insults, abuses, and outrage, upon this nation—We will not ask the reasons why millions of the property of our merchants have been confiscated under the iniquitous decrees of the *Imperial Robber*, our merchant vessels burnt upon the high seas by *Gallic* freebooters, without provocation, without pretext, and our mariners confined in loathsome and pestiferous dungeons, famished by hunger and disease, while no measures to obtain redress have been taken by our government, no resistance to the haughty invader of our rights, nor even a remonstrance, or complaint, worthy the broken spirit of a *Genoese* gally-slave, and while the utmost that the *Executive* of a nation, *proud* of her independence, could find it in his heart to do, or to say, is to name the burning of merchant vessels as “ the most *distressing* of all the modes by which the belligerents exercise power contrary to right.”

We will not inquire for what reasons a British treaty was rejected by the Executive, and why principles, because they were inadmissible, have been made a “ *sine qua non*” to adjustment with the British government. We will pass with indignant silence, over the chicanery of Faction, the tricks, the impositions, the exaggerations, the official colouring and rant of factionaries, to protract

a disagreement with Great Britain, excite the war-tone, and prepare the people for a declaration of hostilities.—The reasons for such a policy cannot be mistaken—They are apparent as the light of heaven—They need not be named.

The superficial observer—unlettered in the dark designs of cunning, guileful men, unversed in guilt, himself, and a stranger to the thousand arts which treachery has invented to involve and betray the unwary—may be easily duped by the artful, nor suspect the baseness of his betrayer, till he is led to the threshold of infamy, and all the horrors of destruction burst, at once, upon his astonished senses.

Those unhappy and destructive prejudices to which human nature is subject in this state of frailty and ignorance, not unfrequently occasion mistakes ruinous, and fatal, and involve the deluded victim in infamy and crime. Charity for our fellow-citizens induces the belief, that from such sources, thousands in this nation, have received their bias, and become the dupes of Democracy. Their zeal in that unholy cause may arise from honest intentions. With such, the lovers of Civil freedom may expostulate. Let them see their mistake—Let them learn the character and motives of their betrayers—Remove the veil from their eyes, and expose to their naked vision, the dark designs of Democracy—Uncover to their inspection the arcana of abominable deeds, and let them *know* the “proofs of a conspiracy,” they will turn with abhorrence from these paths of guilt, and lend their willing aid to arrest and stop, in their mad career, the betrayers of their country. In the ears of such men, speak in a voice that shall be audible; and with a tone that shall gain admittance to the soul, re-

hearse the black catalogue of causes which have obscured our glory, impeded our prosperity, and brought us, at length, to the very threshold of infamy and ruin. Let them hear, till the disastrous tale is familiar on their tongues, *why* we are engaged in a war with Britain, and *why* this nation is compelled to drink of that cup of ignominy which the Murderer of Europe has offered to the world. To this audience, it is unnecessary to rehearse the *causes* of our disgrace, or to mention the *designs*. *Why* we are forced into this war with Great Britain, and with what *design* the government of these United States bows obsequious to the nod of a foreign Usurper, is familiar to every mind. And that proud spirit of independence which acknowledges none but rightful sway, need not be incited by persuasion, or urged by additional motive, to contemplate, with righteous indignation, the sufferings, the ignominy, and the future destiny of our country.

Suffer me, however, to remark on the *nature* of the present war, as it presents itself to the *moral view*. A moral people will view, with sentiments of horror, those measures of their government which, though conducive to pecuniary interest, are calculated to corrupt and demoralize, and provoke the displeasure of the righteous Governour of the world. Such a people will inquire into the *justice* of public measures, and condemn, and deprecate, not only, such measures as tend to disgrace, and the ruin of their dearest interests, but such as are, in their nature, indefensible on the principles of justice and sound morality. That the design of this war is to aid a transatlantic despotism which aims at universal dominion, we shall not attempt to prove, because it is too obvious to be mistaken. Without some other reasons for this war,

than those adduced by its advocates, these hostile measures would indicate an imbecility of mind by no means comporting with the known character of the Administration.

If the *design* of this war be to aid the policy of France, it requires not the spirit of prophecy to foresee the issue, should the plan succeed according to the wishes of its projectors. We may safely presume, however, that the end contemplated by the ruler of France, that indefatigable enemy of the human race, will not be accomplished by this war with Great Britain. The feeble efforts which we can make towards the extinction of that maritime power, will only increase her superiority by reducing her enemy. She is invulnerable to our attacks. Her sea-girt Isle bids defiance to the united forces of the world, and her bulwarks can never be battered down till the high hand of heaven is uplifted against them. Like the awful genius of the deep, she sits collected in her own strength, and poised upon her own greatness. She is not, like the empire of France, of ephemeral growth, bloated to gigantic bulk by the heat of civil discord, blown to elevation by a sudden gust of chance, and depending on accident for a precarious being. Her power is the gradual growth of ages. The foundations of her greatness are laid deep and firm on the everlasting principles of a wise and well-directed policy. On these principles, her increase of power has progressed—Mass heaped on mass, and consolidated by time, has arisen by firm and cautious gradations, till a towering, magnificent, and mighty *whale* has been formed, which smiles at the feeble assaults of her foes, bids a proud defiance to the mouldering touches of time, and will remain immovable as her sea-embosomed rocks, when the Apocalyptic Drag-

on shall have long since ceased to envy her glory.— Against this nation, the powers of Europe have for ages unsuccessfully fought. She has beheld, without dismay, nation after nation fall into the ranks of her enemy.— Fearless of the assaults of the gigantic Despot of the Continent, she sits a calm spectator of his ravages; and while he tramples upon the necks of vanquished Europe, and riots on the spoil of kingdoms, she hears his proud menaces without emotion. Her navy rides on every sea—The pinions of her power stretch from Mississippi to the Ganges—She holds “ten thousand thunders” in her grasp, and the terrors of their burst are felt from the rising to the setting sun. What maniac politician will augur the down-fall of such a power? But *should* she fall, from the same æra might we date our own dissolution—The same hour should we fall into the ranks of the Corsican Despotism.

If there existed a probability, that, by the present war, the down-fall of Britain would be effected, our fears might be alarmed for the safety, not only of America, but of the civilized world. But since she remains, and probably, will ever remain, impervious to her foes, it is useless to contemplate the evils that would attend the catastrophe.

Let us then consider some other features of this war—features which, as a moral nation, should more immediately interest us.

The invasion of Canada, viewed in its *moral nature*, cannot fail to fill the breast of every *good man*, with horror. Are the British provinces involved in those crimes of which we affect to accuse the British government? Have *they* infringed upon our rights? Have *they* impressed our seamen? Have *they* co-operated?

with Great Britain in her System of Blockades, and assisted in executing her Orders in Council? This is not pretended—They are no more concerned in what is called “British aggression,” and no more guilty of any iniquitous act of that government, than are the inhabitants of Malabar, or the fabled giants of Patagonia. Before the late unrighteous attack on Canada, they were peaceable provinces, in friendship with the United States, disposed to amity, and mutual commerce. They are a kind, social, hospitable people—Their interests, as well as those of the Northern States, were concerned in that state of peace and friendly commerce which had long subsisted between us.

But these provinces are nominally under the Government of Great Britain: and this is our pretext for invasion. They are subject to the “proud Mistress of the ocean;” and this is their crime. For this, we arm our legions with implements of death, and commission them to slaughter and devastation—For this, recruiting-officers are commissioned to enlist that depraved, and worthless tribe of beggarly factionaries, who inherit British hate as their only patrimony, “Sons of Belial flown with insolence and wine,” the restless and discontented, sweepings of jails, and wretches prepared by familiarity with crime for every desperate deed—And, having congregated this polluted group of desperadoes, (an execrable banditti,) they lead them forth to Canada, for the purposes of plunder, havoc, and destruction.—Will not an inhabitant of a Christian land, pause as he reads the disastrous tale? And, pausing, will he not inquire, if the rude ages of Feudal barbarity have burst the fetters of Death, shaken off the festering ceerments of corruption, and resuscitated from the slumbers of a thousand years?

Why is it, that we are engaged in such a war? It will be answered, "to injure Great Britain:" "This is the only place in which she is vulnerable." But is Canada a part of Great Britain? Are those provinces the British nation?—They have no other concern with that nation than being nominally under her protection. Let it be conceded, that it will injure Great Britain to loose those provinces. And does this justify our attack? While we injure the British nation, which alone has been accused of crime, do we not involve an unoffending province in unutterable calamities? While we strike a feeble, cowardly blow, at the interests of the British nation, which, after a lapse of a few years, she will not feel, those peaceable, and unoffending provinces are involved in ruin—are dashed, and broken in the whirl-pool of our ambition and cupidity. Were these possessions of Great Britain a howling wilderness, from which she obtained supplies for her navy; were these provinces inhabited only by herds of cattle and wild asses; were her treasures of gold and silver deposited in the mountains, and pearls scattered upon the shores; the war would bear another complexion—But these provinces are peopled with *human beings*—Our neighbours, our friends, our brethren are there—Their wives, their daughters, their "little ones" have their habitation there—The sheep of the pasture, the cattle upon the hills, the forests, the cultivated farm, the stately dome, the humble cottage, the wealth, all that they possess, belong to individuals. In the prosecution of this war, thousands of this devoted people will shed their blood in defence of their liberty, and their possessions, dearer than life itself. Unhappy victims! They bleed in vain. Their brutal invaders are deaf to the

....." *widow's wail,*

" *The virgin's shriek, the infant's trembling cry.*"

Widows and orphans will be multiplied in their streets—Their fairest possessions will be pillaged—The poor man, driven from his cottage, will behold his wife and children, houseless wanderers, perishing with cold, and famished with hunger; or, sent himself to an untimely grave, leave the wife of his bosom with her helpless offspring, within the hazard of a merciless banditti—The rich will see their wealth plundered by the soldiery, and their wives and daughters exposed to the cruel insults of brutal ravishers. A fair portion of the continent will be laid waste, ravaged and destroyed. And that wretched portion of the inhabitants which may survive the tempest, and outlive the wreck, will have lost all that was dear to them in life. Happy, "thrice, and four times happy," had they nobly fallen beside their fathers and their brethren, while they fought for their country, for their liberty, for their parents tottering under the infirmities of age, for their wives, their children, and their paternal inheritance! These are some of the effects that will be realized, should the war terminate with that success which is contemplated by its authors.

When these invaders of the rights of man shall have accomplished their unhallowed designs, when they shall have drenched the plains of Canada with human blood, when they shall have strewed their cities and their pleasant fields with the corpses of their slain, glutted their own rapacity with the spoils of the vanquished, and appeased their frowning *idol* across the Atlantic, let them see, that they be able to answer it, to a wounded, bleeding country, a violated conscience, an offended God.

But it is time, that we turn our attention to some of the effects produced in this country by the policy that has been pursued.

The present is the most gloomy period which America has ever witnessed. The dreary gloom of mid-night darkness is not *cheerless* to the bewildered traveller, if a ray of hope dart across the dismal waste, and point his utmost ken to some hospitable cottage. In our revolutionary struggles, the justice of our cause, and the alternate successes of battle, inspired the constant hope of a happy and glorious termination of the contest. When our independence was acknowledged, it was a time of joy and gladness of heart to Americans, a day of triumph to the sons of Freedom. There was, indeed, a period, before the adoption of our Constitution, when darkness overspread the land—Clouds obscured the prospect for a moment, but were soon dispelled. A bright and cheerful morning was ushered in, and through a delightful summer's day we basked in the sunshine of uninterrupted prosperity. But how precarious are fortune's smiles! The sun of glory, by whose invigorating beams the nation had been blessed, was, at length, obscured in clouds, and a tempest fraught with fate, lowered dark and terrible in the distant horizon. By degrees it burst upon us, till the land became inundated with the odious flood—It was a tempest of Democracy—It was generated by pestiferous exhalations from the Gallic Coasts. While this storm was gathering in the political atmosphere, but few were aware that it was laden with the magazines of fate. Many who viewed it as portentous, were still disposed to hope, that the impending blackness would be soon dispelled. And when its malignant contents had even fallen in torrents upon the land, and we

had seen the face of nature blighted by the withering touch, hope, falacious hope still looked beyond the clouds, and descried the face of heaven smiling and serene. We have been always willing to believe, that though we endured the evil for a time, our deliverance was sure. We have indulged in idle visions, and fed the fancy with unreal prospects—But now, ye delusive hopes, ye fond, but empty dreams, ye vanities,

“Ye ever lying, ever cheating train,

“Where are ye now, and what is your amount !”

But turn your eyes on the distracted condition of our country, and the gloomy scene which presents itself to your view, is a sufficient comment on the policy that has been pursued. It was a consequence naturally, and justly anticipated by the adherents of Washington, that the policy which commenced in eighteen hundred and one, if pursued, would terminate in the ruin of our country. The policy of Washington, as the history of our prosperity evinces, was calculated to secure the best interests of the American republic. By fair analogy of reasoning, the reverse of this might be anticipated from an opposite policy. And the present state of our national affairs proves, beyond controversy, that such reasoning was correct, and the inference just. Our navy has been reduced, our commerce destroyed, our national revenue diminished almost to nothing, our national Debt increased, and the nation precipitated into a war, unprepared to meet the enemy, and without resources to maintain the contest. The neglect of naval preparations has left our navigation, and our extensive sea-board defenceless—The deviation from that neutral path which Washington pursued, has terminated in open hostilities with Great-Britain—Our defenceless seaports are now exposed to

invaders; and the period of their plunder and conflagration will be protracted only by the delay of the enemy.

The project of foreign conquest has commenced; and Canada is invaded, without competent forces to insure success, and without means to support the chivalric few who, like the Knight Errant of romance, have attacked forts, log-houses and wigwams, not doubting that these are the Giants which must be vanquished, or the Lernean Hydra that demands their Herculean strength.

This policy has withered the strength, blighted the prosperity, and blasted the fairest hopes and the brightest prospects of the nation. The destruction of the revenue has destroyed the credit of our General Government; and individuals deem it unsafe to relieve the exigency of the nation by loans. The people must be loaded with taxes to support the government in the prosecution of foreign invasions. Ill prepared are our citizens to be burdened with enormous taxation, at this period when the great source of their wealth is cut off.

Commerce is destroyed; and with it the means of support are withdrawn from thousands. Our ships dismantled, and rotting at the wharves, remind every beholder of our calamities. Divested, abandoned, and wasting by the loosening touches of decay, they present a scene, gloomy to contemplate, as demolished temples, and the ruined heaps of cities, depopulated by pestilence, or ravaged by invaders. The cheerful huzza of sailors is no longer heard in our ports—No longer do you find them at their accustomed task, furling the sail, and unlading the bark—But, destitute and hopeless, you behold them reclining on the wharves, or strolling the streets without an object.—The workshops of the mechanic are shut, and the sound of the hammer scarcely

assails the ear.—Our merchants are thrown out of employ, and many of them ruined—Landed property is reduced, and the heartless husbandman no longer anticipates the reward of his toil—Civil Discord rages, and an overgrown faction, poisoned with French Philosophy, fills with dismay the mind of every patriotic beholder—This is the scene presented to our view, whenever we turn our eyes upon the condition of our country.

Was it for this, that our fathers faced the enemies of their country, and repelled the invading foe? For this did they nobly defend their liberties, and shed their blood to transmit freedom and independence to their children? Was it for this that Washington fought, and Warren and Montgomery bled? Did those heroic spirits, those venerated patriots of seventy-six, who told the world by deeds of valour, that “these United States are, and of right, ought to be free and independent,” perform those illustrious achievements, deliver their country from the dominations of a foreign tyrant, that they might leave a goodly heritage to the rude hand of domestic usurpation, and the polluted touch of Faction?

A faithful few remain, true to that sacred cause which warmed the hearts of our patriotic fathers. A faithful remnant, true to the interests of our bleeding country. With this band, is deposited the ark of American safety. Let them form a phalanx round the sacred deposit, and defend to the latest hour, this our paternal inheritance. Let them watch with an eye that never sleeps, and guard with a zeal that never tires, the inheritance of Columbia's free-born sons. On this Anniversary, sacred to the memory of that day which gave birth to our liberties, let us renew our vows to maintain our freedom and independence, and defend our dearest rights from

the invasion of every foe. Though the prospect is gloomy and almost hopeless; though thick "clouds and darkness, are round about us," we may not despair. The friends of liberty will not desert the cause in the hour of peril.

Let those who would rescue the American republic from the inundations of Democracy, step forth in these times of rebuke, and form a barrier against the odious flood. Let them tell the sons of Gaul, that the fierce spirit of American liberty is not yet broken down and subdued. Let them tell the minions of the Corsican Despot, that Americans have sworn, and are determined to be free. Let them tell the worshipers of the French Dragon, that neither they nor their sons will ever wear a Gallic chain. Let the sons of freedom announce in thunder to the betrayers of their country, that they will never aid a trans-atlantic Despotism in schemes of conquest, plunder, and devastation.

The only means to preserve our country from the deadly ruin which impends, are the dissemination of truth, and the propagation of sound principles. Could all the vehicles of falsehood in this nation be destroyed, I will not slander my country by saying, that there is not virtue in her sons sufficient to preserve the Republic. Men have naturally a predilection for truth, and an abhorrence of falsehood. And desperate is the depravity of that man who hears the voice of truth, recognizes her heavenly form, and loathes to obey her mandates.

Let *truth* be known, and *sound principles* prevail, and our Republic shall emerge from that gulf in which she is sinking; and instead of beholding the melancholy prospect that now meets our view, we shall soon hail with rapturous delight, the returning days of our Pros-

perity and Glory. Falsehood will retire to his own native dominions, and Errour to his shadowy domain. The principles of the "Terrible Republic" shall no longer prevail in the councils of the nation, and all that shall be seen of Democracy, will be her deadly and polluted ruins. Civil and Religious Liberty shall find a lasting residence in our Republic, and Peace shall wave her downy pinions over united America—For the Palladium of our Liberty shall be secured from the rude grasp of the Gallic Diomedes, and the Ark of our Covenant shall be returned from the house of Dagon.