

AN

*Imp.*

# ORATION

ON

## COLUMBIAN INDEPENDENCE,

*DELIVERED IN MINOT, (ME.)*

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THAT MEMORABLE DAY,

**THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1818,**

BEING THE FORTY-SECOND OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE U. S. A.

BY SIMEON PERKINS.

*"Postquam discordia tetra—*

*"Belli ferratos postes portasque refregit."—HORAT.*

*Printed by Thomas D. ...*

1818

# AN ORATION.

---

THE disposition of man naturally tends to liberty of principle, thought and action ; a privilege, he esteems sacred, intimately connected and interwoven with his nature. The mind of man wills to be free, unshackled and unincumbered by restraint ; he aspires at unbounded latitude for the exercise of his corporeal and intellectual faculties ; he aims at universal and unlimited freedom in the pursuit of objects of pleasure and grandeur. Aloft on the soul-enchanting pinions of mental liberty, he expatiates uncontrolled through the boundless regions of immensity. To range at will the wondrous works of creation ; to survey the beauties of nature ; to participate in her treasures and productions ; to enjoy the pleasures of terrestrial glory and magnificence ; to live undisturbed in his possessions, to partake of the common benedictions of Providence without restriction—these are the characteristics of the free-born mind. Debarred from the free use of these natural blessings bestowed by the Grand Author of our being for the benefit and happiness of all mankind, he considers it an encroachment on his legitimate rights, and an usurpation of power unsanctioned by the Divine Legislator. Slavery, the independent soul of man shrinks at with abhorrence ; he recoils with disdain at the hand that dares the abridgment of his liberty ; a spirit of opposition and resentment vibrates in his breast, against the tyrant that presumes to reduce to thralldom, the mind created free. This is the natural disposition of humankind with regard to the propensity of his will to liberty, uncontaminated by the corrosive canker-worm of slavery. It does not relate to those who were born under the dark domains of bondage ; who never beheld the sense invigorating splendor of the sun of liberty, and were ever enveloped in the maze of insensibility ; and, on whom fair science never cast her mind-reviving charms ; and whose breasts were never ravished with that independent patriotic flame that inspires the soul with ardor. Those, whose nature has been thus degraded, whose energy and fortitude has been thus benumbed by the torporiferous influence of slavery, are rendered wholly unambitious and unaspiring. This is the class of men over whom the clanking chains of tyranny find complete control ; they become, without resistance, the sport and gewgaw of any petty tyrant that glories in the degradation of man. When prosperity has, for a succession

of years, accompanied the efforts of a nation and augmented their wealth, their numbers and their resources, pride and ambition are sure to follow : they grow with their growth, and strengthen with their strength. Thirst for popularity and national honor cramp the feelings of humanity, and check the principles of justice and benevolence ; a just regard for the laws of nations and the rights of mankind, is absorbed by the lust of power and martial renown. Relying upon their strength and the abundance and magnitude of their resources, they become indifferent to the distribution of justice to neighboring States or Kingdoms : soon they burst asunder the bonds of reason ; blinded by ambition, and intent on conquest and foreign domination, they presumptuously invade the dominions of a foreign power, for the sole object of military fame and national aggrandizement. Then commences a scene of bloody war and devastation. The nation whose rights are thus insulted and trampled upon, though vastly inferior to the invading foe, yet they will not quietly submit to foreign usurpation, and tamely knuckle to the ambitious aggressor. No, far from this would be their conduct, especially with an enlightened people, who were accustomed to breathe the pure air of liberty, and to bask beneath the smiling brow of Minerva. On the dawning of a disposition to usurp their liberties, or violate the laws and immunities of their country, they feel the insult, they are aroused from their slumbering security, and array themselves beneath the standard of their country. The justice of their cause enkindles in their breast a firm resolution ; the dormant powers of the mind are brought into action, and inspire them with perseverance to meet the pending storm, and to stem the tide of war ; they gather the scattered energies of their country, and boldly stalk to the field of battle—the one, relying upon the justice of their cause and the approbation of Heaven to lead them to victory ; the other upon the number and superior discipline of their troops. But, soldiers, transported from the land of their nativity to some foreign region and unhealthy clime, are not only impaired in their corporeal powers, but, also, that energy of mind which only ensures victory in the field, is in a great measure rendered inactive. They possess not that unconquerable intrepidity to face the cannon's mouth and bid defiance to the engines of death, that distinguishes the patriot nobly contending beneath the banner's of his country ; who, amid the roar of cannon and the din of arms, feels a martial ardor, a cheering consolation, and a glorious prospect. What signal victories have been won by the patriot ! What deeds of heroism, what noble exploits, what feats of valor, what triumphs of patriotism are we presented with in the annals of antiquity ! History teems with such instructive lessons. With what astonishment, intermingled with pleasure, do we read of the triumphant victories of a little band of patriots over an almost innumerable host of veteran invaders ! Shall I bring to mind an ambitious Carthage, a marble-

walled Genoa, a towering Thebes with her hundred gates ? Shall I invoke the name of immortal Rome ? Shall I bring to recollection a Greece with her illustrious cities, Athens and Sparta ? Shall I recall again the name of Leonidas with his band of heroes at the gates of Thermopylæ ? The name of a Holland and a Maurice will ever raise a new impulse in the mind of a patriot. Reflection darts back to scenes of antiquity and lives the lives of former generations, and opens the perspective of things which were. But, hush thou babbler of ancient fame ! thou prater of wornout stories ! check the current of retrospective thought and give us themes of later date. Why should we rummage the nostrums of antiquity, when modern times are the topic of our observations ? If the recital of ancient deeds of heroism and martial enterprize, at so remote a period, afford us any degree of pleasure, will it not excite in us more interesting emotions, when we commemorate events of greater importance, and in which our nation was deeply concerned, transacted in these modern days, and which are now doubtless fresh in the memory of some American hero who now hears the sound of my voice ? Ye grey headed patriots, you have witnessed scenes of importance and magnitude ; deeds that stamp with immortality that glorious era of the world ; deeds that a Grecian would admire ; deeds that a Roman would look upon with surprize ; deeds that a Spartan would behold with approbation. Brought to pass in a quarter of the globe, hidden from the knowledge of the ancients in the arcanum of futurity : a region unknown to the conquerors of Europe, unpolluted by Roman ambition, and unstained by Grecian conquests, they were kept in reserve to be unfolded by the investigating researches of modern ingenuity. To Columbus is ascribed the honor of discovering this western hemisphere. Let us consecrate one dear reflection to his memory ! This important discovery opened a new scene in the drama of political concerns. Floods of emigrants poured forth from every part of Europe ; fleets navigated by enterprising adventurers, were dispatched to explore the undefined regions of a new world ; to colonize an inhospitable wilderness, a land whose productions were unknown to the learned European. Oppressed in the land of their nativity, by the cruel chains of tyranny and ecclesiastical power, they relinquished their paternal habitations and sought an assylum on the unknown and untried shore beyond the foaming billows of the broad Atlantic.

But the vast waters of the Atlantic afforded no barrier against the hand of oppression ; she stalked across the sea, and with a ghastly smile she alighted on these western shores. Ah monstrum horrendum ! She shook her pestilential locks and the contagion spread like the swarms of flies in Pharaoh's palace ; like the torpedo's shock, she blunted the sensibility of the human heart ; like the Lethal waters, she drowned the benevolence of

the soul in oblivion! Thou unwelcome visitor—we hail with much joy thy sudden departure from this propitious clime. Thou oblivion, open wide thy yawning hiatus, and receive this guest, this enemy of man, into thy silent abodes of eternal forgetfulness. We hail with emotions of pleasure, that most glorious period, when the votaries of liberty, with the firmness of Achilles, and with the voice of Stentor, spoke liberty and independence to Columbia's sons. Ye martial veterans of the revolution we have assembled this day, to commemorate an event big with consequences of the greatest importance not only to past, but to future generations; an epoch that reflects immortal honor upon you the heroes of '75—receive, this day, our sincere gratitude. Ye advocates of Columbian independence, I congratulate you on the return of the anniversary of that era which illumed this western hemisphere with the effulgent beams of liberty and independence; when the dawning splendor of the morn of freedom shed abroad its cheering brightness through America's land, and dispersed the darksome shades of the night of tyranny, which, like the morning vapor before the furious blasts of bustling boreas evanished from our sight. Let us, on this occasion, extend our views back to that mournful crisis, when these verdant realms of fair Columbia, were convulsed by the horrors and devastations of war and civil commotion; when our fields and our forests were overspread with slaughter and the wrecks of vanquished armies; when the insatiate sword was snatched from its scabbard and bathed in human blood; when fair nature's face was encrimsoned with the blood of Columbia's sons. Weep humanity their untimely fall! Why was this vast sacrifice at the altar of Mars? why this effusion of blood? this destruction of lives and treasure? Answer—to eradicate the portentous growth of tyranny, to check the mad career of cruel ambition, to frustrate the hostile designs of an insidious nation, to establish the rights of man, to ensure protection to the oppressed, to overthrow the fountain of bigotry in this country and to erect the standard of independence on its ruins. These were the objects that induced our ancestors to gird on the shield and buckler, and to face the thunders of Mars. Britain, as early as the close of the French war, in 1762—3, began to exhibit an unfriendly disposition, and a spirit of haughtiness towards her American colonies. She viewed our prosperity, the rich productions of our fertile soil, the great variety and abundance that crowned our board, and our increasing popularity, with a sort of envious fear. She eyed the bravery and policy of the provincials during the French campaigns. These excited in her disagreeable apprehensions, whenever she took a peep into futurity. Britain plainly saw, that if her colonies were suffered to go on unmolested and unbridled in the same manner as they had done, attended with the same prosperity, they soon, very soon, would become too potent to be kept under their mother's thumb. She set herself to work contriving some method to

impede their progress, and to check, (what she called) that aspiring spirit. But, it is worthy of notice that she suffered herself to indulge such preposterous sentiments with regard to the American people. Britain concluded that they were aiming at nothing short of independence; in this she was greatly mistaken—the colonies 'tis true were watchful and tenacious of their chartered rights, yet they aimed at nothing farther; their rights they were resolved to have, and such vigorous resolutions received a wrong construction. Therefore to undermine such ominous prospects she sought in a slow and artful manner, gradually to impose on us a green-made yoke, one that our ancestors never bore, and one that their offspring never would consent to. In laying snares for others she tumbled headlong into the pit herself. Having for a long time been very fortunate in preceeding wars, her territory was enlarged, and her naval and military forces were augmented and strengthened, both at home and abroad, and she felt an unusual degree of importance, which greatly accelerated her own disasters and made her misfortunes the more aggravating. Had Britain only conducted herself with candor and moderation; had she been more condescending, and solicitous to investigate the primary cause of our complaints; had she listened with reason to a true detail of facts, and promptly administered the needful remedy; I presume to say, that no people on earth would have been more attached to their king and government than the British colonies. But Providence had otherwise determined. "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." Our complaints did not arise through dissatisfaction or opposition to the form of government, but to its administration. All governments among civilized nations are instituted for the good order and happiness of mankind. Happiness is not ensured by any particular form of government; but, that government is best, which is best administered. The British officers, both civil and military, carried a lofty head and a pompous stride; they disregarded the laws of justice and humanity, as well as the civil law of our land. They interfered with the rights of our citizens, and made unlawful requisitions on the inhabitants—and in short, our laws soon became insufficient for our protection from insult. Not only circumstances of a local nature had a tendency to arouse the latent sparks of indignation, but also, our chartered rights were, in a great measure, abridged, and rendered ineffectual to the preservation of our lives and property. Notwithstanding, the numerous petitions signed by the first characters in the country, setting forth their unequivocal declarations of faithful allegiance and loyal attachment, and a firm adherance to them, and that they wished for nothing more than the continuance and security of their chartered liberties; and that some method might be taken to defend them from the insult and abuse of those transatlantic tyrants—all these were unheeded and unredressed by king or council. Instead of

alleviating the burthens already imposed, she redoubled the draught and changed wormwood for gall ; new acts were passed, and laws to enforce them. Hordes of revenue officers were pushed across the Atlantic, soaked in *tea*, and starched up with *stamped paper*, holding the flaming steel in one hand, and in the other submission. These repeated grievances were endured with a sullen patience—till hope was driven to despair, and all expectation of favor wrecked on the shoals of disappointment. What resort was now left, what method could be taken ? It was indeed a time to try men's souls ; to take up arms against their native country and shed the blood of friends and brethren—it truly was trying ;—brother against brother, son against the father, and father against the son, hurling the weapons of death—sad sight !

The magazines of wrathful war were now about to explode, and light up a conflagration replete with pending miseries : sparks of vengeful passion began to create in the breast an enthusiastic ardor to meet the invading foe, like the tremendous eruptions of towering Etna, when she unlocks her ports and envelopes the surrounding region with smoke, fire and endless ruin. Thus Britain, with hearts glowing with warlike zeal, poured forth her hostile legions to go forth from conquering to conquer ; to force her rebellious colonies to repent in dust and ashes for demanding justice, and justice only. Ye continentals of '76, say, did not your hearts glow with redoubled ardor to grasp the fatal musket and gird on the helmets of war, and rush to the scene of action ; at that eventful day, did not your very nerves revive with fresh vigor and give new springs to your soul ? Methinks I see you forcing your way through the thick ranks of your enemies, amid the clashing of arms and the whizzing of bullets, and strewing the field, heaps on heaps, of armed *red coats*.

Let us on this occasion commemorate those eventful scenes that ushered in the dawn of that Independent Millennium that now stands smiling on this western hemisphere. Scenes that interested the attention of a gazing world ; scenes that stamped with unfading lustre, those heroes who so bravely surmounted and prostrated every object that dared to oppose their career to independence and glory. Is there a breast within the sound of my voice, so degenerated as not to feel a degree of that impulse of patriotism that actuated our ancestors in the field of battle to face the cannon's mouth, and bid defiance to the thundering legions of proud Albion, when she sent forth her martial phalanxes, like a West-India tornado, overwhelming houses, forests, ships, and fruitful fields with devastation ? Elate in martial pride, they had confidence in themselves ; emblazoned in the warlike pomp and glitterings of arms, adroit in all the manœuvres, and evolutions of tactics, expert in the field, inured to all the hardships and privations

of a campaign ; accustomed to death, slaughter, and all the horrors and devastations of war. Her resources were immense, and she was powerful in arts and arms ; skilled in the policy and enterprize of conducting wars ; and her officers were trained up to the exercise of the camp, and to all appearance nothing was wanting but the word of command, and victory was theirs. While on the other hand, nothing but rude unpolished and unarmed nature, to oppose the mighty torrent of nature, art and science combined. Unskilled in the science of human immolation, ignorant of the rules and regulations of military discipline, and unaccustomed to the hardships and dangers of cruel war. But these were not all our disadvantages ; there were no deposits of arms and munitions of war, no arsenals, no manufactories, and but a very small prospect of foreign assistance. Such was the situation of our country at the commencement of that conflict which forever separated England and America. Notwithstanding these great deficiencies, between the two discordant powers, the resolute sons of this sylvan world boldly ventured out on the boisterous ocean of war, and undauntedly unfurled the banners of their insulted country. A nation conscious of the justice of their cause, and the approbation of Heaven, but poorly disciplined, will effect more in the field of battle, than the most experienced veterans in a bad cause. There is a certain sternness and gesture in the countenance of a resolute warrior, which, in connection with his armour, infuses a dread in his adversary, and abashes his courage. Though destitute of the implements of warfare, they bravely stepped forth to maintain their cause and to assert the rights of man : they rushed to the charge, they fought with spartan courage, resolved on victory or death.

At Lexington, April 19, 1775, the tolling curfew of war resounded forth its dire alarms, and fired the torch of battle. The obstreperous tocsin aroused the swain from his slumbers, and bade him haste to the scene of action. This audacious adventure kindled a flame, that spread like the presage of thunder, from Maine to Georgia—All things were in agitation. This event like the electric shock, aroused the dormant energies of the mind, and inspired it with an unconquerable vigour ; it implanted a passion as invincible as the soul immortal ; which, not the horrors of war, the din of arms, nor the British warriors could subdue. Our political atmosphere was overspread with darkness and all things assumed a gloomy aspect, without one ray of light to guide our course.—But lo ! to our unspeakable joy, at this critical moment, a light began to dawn ; soon uprose to our aid a resplendent luminary that gave new life and new lustre to the gloomy prospects of our country ; and pointed out the path that led to victory—WASHINGTON was his name—his countenance spoke courage to the desponding mind, and diffused valor, the inmate of his own bosom,



among his compatriots. He arose from the obscure land of *Buckskins*, to the very zenith of terrestrial glory. He marshalled the American phalanxes, and guided them through the crimson billows of the red sea, and shielded them from the Egyptian host. He not only aided them to the pinnacle of mount Nebo, to survey the land of *Canaan*, but also triumphantly guided them across the swelling floods of *Jordan*, and escorted them into the delightful land of Liberty. He sounded the trumpet and the lofty walls of tyrannical *Jericho* fell prostrate. He wielded his sword and the modern Ammonites were discomfited; like the Roman, he went forth from conquering to conquer; he spake "*veni, vidi, vici*," and victory was his own. Like the valiant Hector, he defended the walls of American *Troy* from the British *Grecians*. Like the prophetic youth on the walls of Jerusalem, he cried, *ouai, ouai, ouai*, to the invading legions of his enemy!

The name of Bunker-Hill portrays to our view a dismal scene. June 17, 1775—when those pompous battalions of veteran troops in solid column, sure of victory, moved forward to assail the American camp; ah, what was their fate! The syrtis of destruction, with impetuous recoil and jarring sound, opened full wide upon them; the ground was overspread with wounded heroes and the ghastly dead! again they essayed to storm the entrenchments and rout their stubborn foe—again they were repulsed with repeated disasters. The patriot band, like the Spartans at the gates of Thermopylæ, firmly maintained their post, and hurled the preludes of confusion, a coup de main, among their adversaries. The deficiency of amunition on our part, afforded the enemy the small consolation of a *second-crop-victory*. Long will that eventful day be a memorial of the first display of American prowess. Long will the recollection of Bunker-Hill, remind the enemy, that courage and valor are not the attributes of any particular nation or people. Long will the remembrance of that hard fought battle whisper the enemy, that he paid too dear for the whistle. It is not expedient, on this occasion, to enter into the detail of all the vicissitudes of that long and laborious war. The prospect on the part of America was frequently very trying and dubious; at times the situation of our country was truly alarming, and it demanded the most persevering efforts of its warmest advocates to preserve it from dissolution. But, on our part, the cause was glorious, though the struggle indeed was hard; many and obstinate were the battles between the two belligerents. At Trenton, Germantown, Walloomac, Saratoga, Princeton, White-plains, Cambden, Cowpens, Sullivan's-Island, Long-Island, Red-Bank, King's-Mountain, King'-Bridge, Crownpoint, Guilford, Monmouth, Jamestown, and Yorktown:—Here closed the grand drama of our polemical career; here terminated that long series of nearly eight years destructive war, that spread its horrors from

Maine to Georgia ; that drenched our fields with human blood, and overspread our country with poverty and desolation. Our cause was noble, it called forth the latent powers of the mind, and blended them to a point, and that point was directed to one invariable object, and that object was the deliverance of our country from oppression and usurpation.

A glorious prospect now began to cheer the desponding soul : smiles stood pending on Columbia's brow, and hope began to rejoice her drooping heart, and revive her gloomy thoughts. On the surrender of Cornwallis, victory was declared in favor of America. The striped flag now waved triumphant over the vanquished foe ; independence echoed through our country ; it aroused the slumbering muse, long, long, lingering in the silent shades to chant forth new strains, fraught with the fire of patriotism and love of liberty. Peace now spread her downy wings and bade the sons of Columbia to repose beneath their shade and crop the fragrant flower of domestic pleasure. But shall we indolently sleep beneath the tree of peace and thoughtlessly repose under the brow of liberty, and not be mindful of the cause from whence they sprang ? Shall we quaff amid the paradise of peace and plenty, and regale ourselves with pleasures and luxury, and disregard the purchase ? The privileges we enjoy were obtained with the price of blood, the blood of our progenitors, the blood of our friends and dear connections in life ! Here let us drop the tears of commiseration over the relics of departed worth ! Here let us manifest our lachrymations of sympathy over the ashes of sleeping heroism ! Many were the victims sacrificed at the shrine of Mars to obtain the rights of man. How many noble-hearted sons of America were snatched away to an untimely grave ! Thou gaping tomb how insatiate is thy cruel grasp ! Many a noble warrior resigned the enjoyment of terrestrial liberty for the more happy abodes of celestial beatitude. Humanity laments the loss of many brave Generals ; America deplors the untimely fate of a Warren, a Montgomery, a Mercer, a Wooster, a Scammel, with many others whose talents and virtues bid fair to become shining ornaments to the cause of freedom. Immortal heroes ! though your bodies now moulder in the silent mansions of the dead, yet your memory will endure as long as America is an asylum of virtue ! Who can enumerate the many brave soldiers who fell in battle and not recoil with dread at the vast amount ? I shudder at the thought !—Since our liberty was purchased at so dear a rate, it well becomes us to estimate it accordingly ; to consider its worth, and not to trifle with matters of such consequence. Let us not render ourselves unworthy of our ancestors by degenerating from their principles, and corrupting the immunities of our country. Let us preserve that unanimity of sentiments, that similarity of principles that characterised the heroes of the revolution ; that

united them in the bands of fraternity in one common cause—and may we duly consider, that, “united we stand, divided, we fall.” It is astonishing to consider what may be accomplished by a small nation if they are only united ; and on the contrary, it is as much so, to see, how easily a powerful nation may be overcome by disunion among themselves. There is no calamity that so much threatens to overthrow the liberties of our country, and so replete with ruin and misery, as the prevalence of faction and the promulgation and indulgence of seditious principles : they have a direct tendency to lead those influenced by them to entertain ideas of antipathy against one another, which, growing habitual and augmenting in their growth, at length form an insuperable barrier between the two discordant parties, till they become so prejudiced and obnoxious to each other, that nothing but the sword can decide. Then follows one of the most lamentable scenes that ever befel the human race ! To confirm these declarations, shall I call your attention to the history of a factious Rome ? The names of Cataline, an Antony, the Tullies, the Cæsars, and the Brutuses of that ancient nation, should be a memento for us to beware of the like in our own republic. Still further, to demonstrate the sad consequences of faction and civil commotion—shall I intrude upon the festivity of the day ? Shall I pollute the walls of this sacred fane ? Shall I disturb the heart of sensibility to bring the name of a France within these consecrated walls ? What bloody revolutions upon revolutions, what persecutions and political convulsions have shook this powerful kingdom and destroyed millions of human beings ! O reflection, how painful are thy emotions to the humane soul ! Thou busy meddling memory, drop thy curtain and veil these barbarous scenes in everlasting obscurity ! Let the shades of forgetfulness obliterate them from the view of mortals ! Let the fate of this devoted nation be a sufficient motto to us the people of America. It points out to us in glowing colors the sequel of disunion and effects of faction. Had the two political parties in this country, still continued to fan the flames of discord and animosity, with as much acrimony as they did a few years past, many, very many, who now hear the sound of my voice, would outlive the liberties of our country, if they were not buried in its ruins. We, my fellow Countrymen, contend about names, not principles ; we all (generally speaking) hold to the same principles of government, only we give them different appellations ; we hold to the same Constitution, only one wants it call'd Federal and the other Democratical.—It is folly in the extreme to make such a fuss about names ; if you wish to be called a Federalist, be a good federalist, that we may be confederated together ; then our confederation will perpetuate the preservation of our Independent Declaration, which will preserve our nation from foreign subjugation and domestic usurpation. Are you a Democrat ; be a good democrat, that your democracy may be subservi-

ent to theocracy and overthrow aristocracy. But, can a man be a Tory? (vetat Jupiter) then let him be a pure tory, that his toryfication may be evident to the nation, that he may have a quick expatriation, by a rapid transportation to some remote station, unfrequented by any nation, or any part of creation, and be allowed for his ration, all the humectation, that falls during the daily rotation; then he will not disturb the peace of his country by its immolation to some foreign nation. Let us but be united in faith, principle and practice to our own constitution, we have nothing to fear; no foreign power could be able to cope with the united bands of freemen. All the powers of Europe combined together against us, would not be half so dangerous as a civil commotion. Let the fickle Frenchman, the ambitious Briton, the courageous Russian and the stubborn Prussian, or the tawny Spaniard, dare to pollute our independent realms with hostile armies, havoc and destruction would be their portion; the soil which their ambition prompted them to invade would become their tomb—(may it never be put to the test.) Virtue alone can secure the permanency of such a government as ours, it is the very life and essence of Republicanism; and without a proper exercise of this in the minds of the people, we should gradually degenerate to a state of indifference and impotency, which would finally terminate in the annihilation of our constitution. Where the power emanates wholly from the people, they must possess energy, in order to carry the constituted laws into immediate execution; and there must be a primary self moved impulse to stimulate them to action, and this must be voluntary; and when that voluntary disposition, which causes a man to act with vigor, is extinguished, then that energy and resolution, which is essential to the existence of a Republican government, ceases to operate; then in such a case, absolute power is necessary to carry the laws into execution. Where governments are absolute and supported by a military force, there is no delay—the laws are carried into effect by irresistible force: Thus we may see what it behoves us to be, who live under a republican government.

We will now take a retrospective view of the progress and success of our nation since the close of the revolution. The fortunate result of the last campaign, which terminated in the capture of the British army, gave new life to affairs this side the Atlantic; cessation of hostilities soon took place between the two nations, which finally secured us an advantageous treaty and an acknowledgement of our independence. The golden age of peace and prosperity now opened to our view a cheering prospect. She unlocked her copious springs, and distilled upon us the heavenly manna. The age of reason now began to dawn with increasing splendor on this benighted land: she mounted her throne and triumphantly wielded her peaceful sceptre. During the former ad-

ministrations of presidency, especially of the immortal Washington and patriotic Adams, fortune seemed to cast an auspicious look on this western clime, and to distribute her gifts with a liberal hand; she bade the sons of freedom to knock, and the door of wealth should be opened to them: she freely imparted her treasures to the industrious, and said to the poor, be satisfied. All nature flourished in unceasing bloom and shone in verdant green. The wilderness was turned into fruitful fields and blossomed as the rose; the thorny wastes were changed into verdant plains, and overspread with flocks and herds grazing in peaceful mood; the axe-man's blows rebounded their echoes through the forest, and the lofty trees, in quick succession, fell prostrate. Smiling Ceres crowned the cultured fields in rich profusion: old Bacchus beholding the scene from his somniferous couch, seized his goblets and poured forth rivers of wine. Old Neptune, pleased with the delightful prospects, waved his broad trident to welcome the Columbian tars to 'tempt his aqueous domains with the oaken beak, to waft the spicy odours of the eastern realms to the western shore. The tall turrets of Minerva, now began to rear their towering spires, to invite the votaries of science to make their abode in her delightful mansions. From martial arts, the arts of peace diffused their enlightning rays, and opened the vacuum of the mind. The seeds of science began to germinate, and show fresh graces in this remote region; and all things conspired to render this one of the most prosperous periods that America ever beheld. *Commerce, Arts, Sciences and Manufactures*, grew like the corn, and flourished like the vine. But faction, that pest of governments, soon made its formidable appearance in our young republic; it seemed to check our harmony and prosperity in an alarming manner. Discord piped forth its shrill clangour in our councils and created prejudice between man and man. "French influence," one would boldly cry; "British influence," the other would reply. This had been the common retort in case matters were brought to the rubs. Far be it from me to decide which has been the most predominant in our councils; but thus much I will say, that if either of them has found its way to the hearts of our rulers or legislators, it is a dangerous influence; an influence of a menacing nature, and ought to be eradicated. Should I, an ignorant, illiterate youth, step forward and promptly declare, that it was foreign influence that involved us in the late untimely war that depauperated our country, should not I be thought preposterous indeed? Should I affirm point blank that this late destructive war was occasioned by ambitious motives and foreign partiality—should I say that it arose through desire of conquest and martial renown, to crop the laurels of fame from the brow of human sacrifice, would my affirmation meet your approbation? Shall I revive again the extinguished flame, and probe anew the healing wound? Here I must take the liberty, and I cannot

in conscience forbear, to mention many occurrences of the late war that reflected honor on the American arms; many circumstances tended to evince the bravery of our soldiers and sailors. The fate of the *Guerriere*, *Java*, *Macedonian* and *Frolic*, is a substantial proof of the expertness of our seamen, when brought in contact with a hostile force. Lakes Erie and Champlain will ever afford a subject of serious reflection to the British ear. The name of New-Orleans will ever yield an unpleasant sound to the ear of a Briton, and present to his view the sad consequence of presumption!

Peace at length succeeded another war, and hushed the rage of battle to silence. The martial car has now receded again from our land and left us to repose in quiet. Europe participates with us in the blessings of peace and tranquillity. She has delivered herself from the potent grasp of that disturber of nations, who desolated Europe with fire and sword, and shed torrents of blood to gratify his insatiate ambition. May his remote retreat give him an opportunity to reflect on the numberless miseries he has heaped on the human race, and open to his view the enormity of his past conduct. Now is the time to be up and doing, to exert ourselves in the cultivation of the arts of peace and public virtue, to check the progress of immorality in our nation, occasioned by the corrupting evils of war; to obstruct the spread of luxury and dissipation, so prevalent in our country, and so dangerous to the safety of government. We need not be idle, nor uselessly employed; we have a wide field for the exertion of benevolent purposes, and an extensive sphere for the dissemination of knowledge and morality. It is repugnant to our nature to set quietly down and slumber on the couch of indolence and inactivity.—Man is not an inactive being, he will either be employed in promoting the happiness of his fellow creatures and meliorating their condition, or in augmenting the miseries which he has already entailed, and inventing new engines of human woe. Intemperance and debauchery have of late made a prominent feature in our characters; they are dangerous evils, and every exertions of the noble mind and benevolent heart ought to be directed to the suppression of these growing vices. But, if these things are suffered to increase and become popular, if they are not checked by the noble efforts of virtue, political discord and the overthrow of our liberties will be the inevitable result. The benevolent arm of the philanthropist would in vain extend the boon of virtue to a corrupt people, overwhelmed in their own miseries. Scenes of amusement too often become the goal of licentiousness, prodigality and profanity. In regaling ourselves with innocent pleasures, we ought to be cautious not to transgress the bounds propriety.—But, we have a secret expectation that the cause of virtue will ultimately triumph; and when in the dawn of that millennial

day, man shall forget his brother man to slay, when virtue will mount her throne and call the world her own. We have a noble prospect in America—the face of Nature portends the near approach of an important period, and distinguished characters, who will promote the cause of virtue and humanity. Towering mountains, extensive rivers, spacious lakes, plains and vallies, undefined forests, together with the romantic aspect of the country, all combine to corroborate the expectation, that we may anticipate an important era, when America arrives at the zenith of her terrestrial glory. It would be an impeachment in the wisdom of its Author, to suppose that so vast a country as this should be void of beings of an equiponderant magnitude. Let these considerations inspire our hearts with new courage and with new hope, to suppress the mighty torrent of ignorance and bigotry, and to cultivate the principles of justice and humanity.

The rapid progress of literature and useful learning in our land is a source of congratulation to the friends of science and improvement. It affords a peculiar consolation to the advocates of humanity, to view the active exertions that are making to establish peace societies for the suppression of that barbarous and inhuman practice of war, which has for so many ages desolated the human family with its dire calamities. May success attend such laudable endeavors to bring to pass so desirable an object; an object if accomplished, of the greatest importance to the happiness of man.

Should however, the horrors of war again overspread our land, may another Washington and another Adams, phoenix like, arise from the ashes of the old, and come forth to aid our armies through the dangers of battle and triumphantly guide them to victory.

May the God of armies direct the councils of the nation, and forbid our rulers to engage in enterprizes unsanctioned by Divine approbation.

TYRO MINERVÆ.