

AN
ORATION,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

GLOUCESTER MECHANIC ASSOCIATION,

ON THE

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O R A T I O N .

GENTLEMEN OF THE GLOUCESTER MECHANIC ASSOCIATION,

In appearing before you on this occasion, allow me to express my sincere regret that I have been able to devote but so few hours to preparation for the duty to which you so lately invited me. It might savour of presumption to stand up and speak, almost extemporaneously, of topics which the ablest in the land have for these many years selected as the theme of animated and interesting discussion, and illustrated with some of the most brilliant efforts of their genius. Their thrilling words have sunk deep in all our memories, the press has seconded the living voice, and the associations ordinarily connected with the contemplation of American Independence have become established and familiar.

But, gentlemen, the day itself is eloquent. The occasion which calls us here brings with it its own inspiration. The mind cannot dwell upon it and not be quickened to pour out the spontaneous language of a genuine enthusiasm, and the tongue cannot utter it, no not in feeble accents, without awakening responsive echoes in every true heart. We cherish it because all sections, all interests, and all parties have a common property in it—we cherish it because it is the preeminent glory of the American people—we challenge for it admiration, as the brightest page in modern history, and we exult in it as our proudest title to the respect and wonder, and our noblest claim upon the gratitude and esteem of our fellow nations of the earth.

We have not estimated too highly the importance of the event we have met together to commemorate. It is not only a marked epoch in the course of time, but it is indeed the era from which the new order of things is to be reckoned. It is the dividing point in the history of mankind, it is the moment of the po-

litical regeneration of the world. Before it, came the governments of force ; after it, come, and shall come in long succession, the governments of opinion. They who wielded the sword had hitherto directed the fate of nations : the Fourth of July, seventeen hundred and seventy six, announced the principle of self government, and hereafter nations shall follow no guidance but the mastery of mind. It is not enough then to say that on that day a new empire was born ; let us extend our views over the earth, and through futurity, let us characterize that day by a more comprehensive expression of its consequences, and say that then a principle was ushered for the first time into avowed, and, as the event has shown, effectual action, whose operation shall change the destiny of man in all empires and forever.

Fifty seven years have rolled away since that auspicious hour when our fathers first resolved, and summoned the majesty of Heaven to witness the resolution, that they would live and die citizens of Free and Independent States, and on this cast they staked their lives, their liberty, and their sacred honor—pledges how nobly redeemed! The scattered population of the narrow belt along the Atlantic coast has filled and overrun its limits, and poured a broad current of emigration over the Western wilds. The hunter's fire and the woodman's axe, pioneers of civilization, are busy at their work in the fertile valley of the Mississippi ; the primeval forests through which the untutored Indian chased his game, bow their tall heads and are fast disappearing from the soil which they have sheltered for scores of centuries. The thirteen stripling colonies have grown to twenty four imposing sovereignties—the descendants of the three millions of the Revolution now number fourteen and a half millions, a quintuple population--over all the land, industry and enterprise have wrought magic transformations—hardship and poverty have given place to comfort and opulence—the sea board is covered with the accumulations of well rewarded toil, while, as at the waving of an enchanter's wand, cities have risen in the wilderness, and we scarcely hear of their existence before we find them rivalling in activity and in splendour our maritime marts of foreign commerce. Meanwhile the feeble remnant of the aborigines, once undisputed

lords of this fair hemisphere, having dwindled already into harmless insignificance, are melting away like frost before the sunbeams. Their final catastrophe may strike the imagination with melancholy, but sober reason will not regret that one lone wanderer of the trackless woods shall make room for a hundred families of a refined and social race, or that the untamable savage, with his few and simple virtues, falling a victim to instincts which cannot change to suit the change of circumstances, should be supplanted by innumerable successors trained in a more enlarged morality and endowed by nature with higher capacities for enjoyment. It is the law of their being and ours. As surely as the original growth of the soil must recede as cultivation advances, so surely must the red man give way before the white. It is the result of the constitution which their Maker gave to each of these two races when he created them. Their decay is the condition of our progress, their extinction is the condition of our existence on the vast regions they have occupied, and to mourn because they vanish where we approach too near them, were as futile a waste of our sensibility as to mourn that torrents flow downwards, or that a conflagration consumes its fuel. They for the most part have gone, and in their stead Providence has stretched across this immense continent our mighty empire.

Fifty-seven years have passed, and not only has a small people become a great nation, not only has the energy of freedom hurried us onward in a career of unparalleled rapidity, but the American principle of self-government has gained converts and acquired influence in countries where it was scarce heard of before, or if heard of, treated only as the speculation of some visionary theorist. It has been like leaven thrown into the mass, and lasting, wide, and increasing has been the fermentation. Let us cast a brief glance over the annals of the world since we have had an independent existence, and trace the progress of change in different countries.

The first peculiarity which we cannot overlook is the magnitude and appalling character of the events which have been crowded into the compass of this short period. Every line of the chronicle is a history, and years seem to have sufficed for

the work of centuries. France, the centre and the heart of the European body politic, whose throes are felt to the farthest extremities of that system, was the first to feel the influence of the new ideas, and was agitated with strange convulsions. Some of her most distinguished sons had taken part in our contest with the parent empire, and returned home with their bosoms glowing with the fire of liberty. They found their countrymen ripe for the reception of democratic principles, and their situation made them apostles of the new faith. Fenelon had declared to the corrupt court of the fourteenth Louis, while the great monarch was at the height of his absolute power, the uncourtly truth that kings were created to be servants of their people, and not the people for their kings. Rome was once pronounced to be a nation of kings by a barbarian visitor whom the august presence of its Senate overawed. Lafayette had just witnessed on this side the Atlantic the sublime spectacle of a nation of whom the people were sovereigns, and he was resolved, if it might not be so on his side of the river ocean, at least to make the experiment of a sovereign ruling in the interest of the people, and under their control through the medium of responsible ministers. In the castle of If, and in the dungeon of Vincennes, Mirabeau had had leisure to meditate on the nature of arbitrary power, and was disposed to lend his aid to remodel the government whose injustice he had felt, so as to protect his fellow citizens from the danger of similar oppression. With such leaders from the higher nobility, it is not strange that the commons rushed on eagerly to secure that share in the administration of affairs which was necessary to their well being and their safety, and which seemed so suddenly brought within their grasp. They anticipated, and plausibly too, an easy task, and a speedy deliverance. Under the mild reign of Louis the Sixteenth, with an imbecile and fickle ministry, embarrassed by an empty treasury, without means to fill it, resting for support on an aristocracy worthless and powerless as a body, while the few splendid exceptions to this general character, of which it might with justice make its boast, the possessors of almost all the virtue and almost all the talent, rare qualities in that degenerate caste, were to be found

in open opposition to its pretensions and fighting in the ranks of its enemies the people—in such a state of things we can easily pardon those who believed that the abolition of obsolete abuses was a work of easy and speedy accomplishment, that they had but to speak and it was done, and that establishing the regenerated government with the power of self preservation, with vital force enough to enable it to perform its proper functions, and well adjusted checks sufficient to prevent it from over stepping its proper limits was an achievement of equal facility, was indeed almost a consequence of course, that they had but to command and it would stand fast. Terrible was the disappointment of all these hopes. The privileged orders had lost the substance of power before the revolution, so called, commenced: the substance gone, the ensigns were soon wrested from their hands, and power both real and nominal fell into the possession of the people. But in the struggle to divide the glittering prize, the conquerors became animated with an epidemic fury and turned their weapons against each other's breasts. The French Monarchy which dated from its origin thirteen hundred years, the kingdom of France, properly speaking, which could claim an antiquity of nine centuries and a half, the royal house of Capet which for eight hundred years had reigned over that kingdom, crumbled into ruins—the throne and the altar were overturned and trampled in the dust; and king, noble, and priest, expiated with their blood the errors of their ancestors, and balanced the long arrears of popular vengeance. Discord stalked undisputed master of the field, anarchy let loose all her Titans to destroy, and law and order, religion and justice were the sport of their rage. Day by day, in the light of the blessed sun, grim murder, insatiate as Moloch and relentless as the grave, bared his red arm and laughed at punishment. Systematized carnage deluged the cities with the purple blood of human sacrifice, while confusion and desolation swept over the land in one broad cataract of blood and fire. The period is not misnamed “the reign of Terror.” It is too horrible for particularity on so cheerful an occasion as the present. We look back upon it as on some short revolting and unnatural drama, and can hardly help regarding

the actors in the different parts as unreal monsters created by a disturbed imagination. They pass before us like the figures of a moving panorama exhibited by torch light. The terrible energies of Danton, the fiend like ferocity of Marat, emerge from obscurity, glare fearfully for a moment, and sink into the surrounding gloom ; while Robespierre, Couthon and St. Just make but two strides across the bloody scene, the one from insignificance to the supreme power, and the next from the supreme power to the scaffold.

Though weary of her nine month's madness, though exhausted by paroxysms each more convulsive than those that had preceded it, there was no repose for France. In the lowest depth of her despair she beheld a lower deep wide opening threaten to devour her. She rushed on in her agony till she had sounded the last abyss of her woe, and then, when rest should have awaited her, she found herself thrust back by a continent in arms, and thrown again into the boiling whirlpool. Her frontier was bristling with the bayonets of confederate nations who had marched to war against the principles of the revolution.

The long and arduous struggle which ensued, with its various vicissitudes and absorbing interest, was fitted to form, as far as any circumstances could form, a character of controlling power. If nature had deposited anywhere the spark of a sublime genius, in such a crisis as this it must blaze out. Now, if ever, mankind might expect to arise one of those master spirits, who "ride on the whirlwind and direct the storm" of revolutions ; who sitting above, like Jupiter, scatter the thunderbolts of war, or wield the sword of destiny, and who smile upon the crash as the political world that is to pass away is shivered around them ; who touch with unerring hand the secret springs of change, and order all things after the counsel of their own will, while the ordinary herd of mortals stand aghast, gaze and admire below. One of this class appeared in the person of the man to whom the nine hundred millions of his contemporaries furnish no compeer—the child of destiny—the throne creator—the modern Mars—Napoleon. He lifted the curtain with his own red blade, and strode the stage like a Deity. He came like the

tenth Avatar, to destroy and recreate. The elements of commotion were still at his bidding, order was welcomed again after her long absence, and law resumed the reins.

The energy which the revolution had developed, his mind directed and concentrated against the enemies of France, and their daring was converted into dismay, the torrent of invasion was turned back upon them; opposition was but another name for defeat. The Eagles of conquest, issuing from the towers of Nôtre Dame, soared over the ancient capitals, successively, of nations who were astonished to recognize a foreign master; till the Emperor, in the plenitude of his greatness, wielded a more extensive sway than Rome could boast under the most powerful of the Cæsars. France was at that time mistress of the civilized world. Spain was her province, Italy a part of the same body politic, and Germany trembling crouched at her feet. When the fire broke out in Spain, Austria again ventured into the field—in vain—she was completely humbled, and the daughter of her monarch became the bride of Napoleon. To complete the climax of his happiness, a son was born to inherit these vast possessions, and his throne seemed to be established upon a solid foundation. But in an evil hour the South crusaded against the North, for the first time in the history of Europe, in defiance of the laws of nature, yet with an irresistible impulse. In two months and a half the Grand army arrived at Moscow, a distance of two hundred and sixty leagues. The Russian Autocrat abandoned his capital, but an ocean of fire rolled its devouring billows over temple and palace, the dwelling place of comfort and the store house of merchandize, and Napoleon's conquest was but a heap of ashes. The sanguinary battle of Borodino had shattered his strength, and now want of shelter and supplies left him no alternative but instant retreat; cold and fatigue, want and famine, hung upon his rear. The stars in their courses fought against him. The northern blast breathed over the fugitives like the angel of destruction. Horse and rider felt its benumbing influence, and strewed the ground with the dying and the dead. The passage of the Berezina represented but too faithfully the hosts of Pharaoh overwhelmed in the Red Sea. Of the countless multitude that had sallied from beautiful

France, full of hope and exulting in the confidence of success, only a few straggling detachments set foot upon their native soil again. The French territory did not remain inviolate. The recoil of vengeance paused at the frontier only till the pursuers could take breath. The war rolled back from the Kremlin, across the battle field of Leipsic, to the heights of Montmartre, and on the thirty-first of March, eighteen hundred and fourteen, the allies, who had leagued against him, entered Paris. The Emperor abdicated, and retired to Elba. Now was the time to satisfy the first wish of France, free institutions and a representative government. But no! The loathed and hated Bourbons were thrust upon the nation. That illstarred family had forgotten nothing, and had learned nothing—while the revolution had passed over France with its heavy levelling wheel and had crushed into the dust hereditary privileges, and distinctions not founded in merit or services—while the nations had been, for twenty-five years, in their great school of mutual instruction, imbibing and imparting the true fundamental political theory of government for the benefit of the governed. The prejudices to which they clung were of course more obsolete than at the era of their exile, and less in unison with the spirit of the age than before political ideas were diffused among all classes of the people. Their obstinacy in disregarding the lessons of twenty-six years, and the pertinacity with which they adhered to plans of conduct unsuited to the existing state of things, and adopted in contempt of public feeling, alarmed the lovers of Constitutional liberty, irritated the army, alienated their friends and exasperated their enemies; so that when the exile of Elba returned to claim the Empire, the nation received him with open arms. He came like thunder falling from a clear sky. He landed at Cannes, March first, eighteen hundred and fifteen, with a handful of men, and proclaimed that he would bring back Victory chained at his chariot wheels. His old companions in arms heard the well known voice, and flew to surround him. His progress resembled the welcome of some mighty conqueror revisiting his delighted subjects, his brows bound with fresh laurels gathered in the glorious campaign which is to terminate his wars. The gallant and unfortunate Labedoyere, the lion

hearted Prince of Moskwa, bravest of the brave, with tens of thousands of their veteran followers, the soul of the French soldiery, rushed with rapture to swell the train ; and in twenty days from his disembarkation the triumphal procession entered the city of Paris. The degenerate Bourbons, the obsolete noblesse, and the imbecile emigrants, who had pressed upon France like a deadly incubus, were hurled from their seats. They fled to the Low Countries, and their besotted partizans followed them. The professors of the doctrines of legitimacy, divine right, and absolutism, hid their diminished heads, and were silent as the obscene birds of night before the noon day sun. Buonaparte was a second time Emperor by the will of the French people. Here was again a golden opportunity, when France might well hope for a liberal Constitution, to limit the Imperial prerogative, and to guarantee individual liberty. The Emperor was not dazzled by the brilliancy of his first reception : he saw clearly all the peril of his situation. He felt the necessity of resting his power on that popular will from which it was derived ; and he promulgated a Constitution which imposed reasonable restrictions on the executive will, and secured a tolerable share of liberty to the subject, while it provided the means of consulting the nation on the measures to be pursued, and allowed it a direct influence in the management of affairs. By this Constitution, and in the liberal spirit which directed it, he solemnly promised that his administration should be regulated, and the conscientious Benjamin Constant, with other leaders of that patriotic band who had opposed the misgovernment of the restoration, lent him their cordial support. But the legitimate monarchs beheld in a popular sovereign their natural foe. He was outlawed by the Congress of Vienna, stigmatized as a wild beast to be hunted down, and Europe again took up arms against the principles and the man of the Revolution. He dashed across his northern frontier, trusting to the celerity of his movements, and attempted to annihilate by separate attacks the armies of Blucher and of Wellington. Fortune was faithless to him. The battles of Quatre Bras and of Ligny and the disastrous route at Waterloo closed the eventful drama, and swelled the grand total of the two millions of victims who had fallen in this protracted struggle. The second march on

Paris, the second abdication, ensued without an interval, and the hundred days were ended. France was transformed into a vast encampment, which the allied invaders filled with a million of heterogeneous troops of all nations and languages. Wild Cossacks from the Don and the Volga devoured and laid waste the harvests, and the hoofs of the Prussian dragoon horses profaned the Elysian fields. The barbarians of the north glutted their vengeance upon their downcast enemy; desolation stalked through her Provinces, and Plunder rioted in her Cities. The monuments of her victories were overthrown, her treasures of art torn from her capital, and that queen of cities drained to its dregs the bitter cup of humiliation. The greatest Captain of the age, when he found it impossible to reach the common asylum of the unfortunate in this home of liberty, threw himself upon the magnanimity of England, and was consigned to a barren volcanic rock in the midst of the Atlantic, swept by the perpetual trade winds, and alternately drenched by torrents of rain, or scorched by the fierce rays of the tropical sun. On this inhospitable isle he lingered out the sad remnant of his days, and that he preserved to the last his characteristic traits is witnessed by the fact that in the hour of his dissolution the dress of his battles covered him, the field bed of Austerlitz supported his sinking frame, and the sword which he had girded on at Marengo lay beneath his pillow. He is now resting in the bosom of that rock of the Ocean; the stone of his prison-palace is laid over his ashes; the Roman cement covers him who tamed the Roman Eagle. His fame will flourish in perennial youth, and like the Phoenix, rise freshly from his tomb as often as successive revolutions shall convulse the world. Peace to his parted spirit!

After the final effort of the great agitator had been baffled, and he secluded in his water-girt rock of banishment, the continent was quiet for a while; no more was to be heard of wars and commotions, and the potentates of Europe vegetated in undisturbed security on their paternal thrones. And now that France has been sufficiently humbled at the feet of her enemies, now that the confederate nations have shorn her locks of power, and have no longer cause to fear her restless ambition, is her ardent longing for liberty to be gratified—is she now, after these repeat-

ed disasters, after this calamitous issue of her desperate enterprise, to be blessed with free institutions, and a government of her own choice? Alas! Very far from all this—she is doomed once more to bow under the odious yoke of the Bourbon dynasty—rendered still more galling to her proud spirit from the circumstance that foreign arms have imposed it on her. These much loathed masters rule, as in a conquered country, a people which despises and abhors them. Force therefore compels obedience; and France is farther from the object of the revolution, an object she will never cease to keep in view, than she was during the period of the first restoration.

The disbanding of that army which had shed eternal glory over the annals of France; the execution, as traitors, of Labeledoyere and Ney, who had only acted as circumstances compelled them to act; the base submission of the French Government to refund to the allied sovereigns the expenses of their war against the Independence of France; the agreement that the troops of the allies should be quartered for years in the heart of France, and that she should hold herself bound to support the army of occupation, filled full the measure of universal detestation. To stifle the expression of this feeling, the censorship was instituted, the law of election was altered; prosecutions for political offences became frequent, and the more zealous *ultras*, in a treasonable correspondence, begged the allies to allow their troops to remain in France, when they were about to withdraw them. At the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle France was leagued with the Northern powers in their policy of legitimacy, armed intervention and stability—a policy more fully developed at Verona in 1822, and which it devolved on France to illustrate in 1823, by the march on Spain of one hundred thousand French troops for the suppression of democratic principles in the peninsula; so that it was not enough for this high-minded and chivalrous nation to be forced to relinquish with bitter regret the fruits of so many years of suffering, but she must be made the miserable and unwilling instrument in the hands of her masters to crush the rising hopes of liberty among a neighboring gallant and much abused people.

Louis XVIII, well-meaning but weak, died, and the crown

passed to Charles the X, bigoted and obstinate. The victory of Navarino lighted up for a moment the sombre gloom of his short and luckless reign, and the conquest of Algiers threw a gleam of transient splendor over the last days of the house of Bourbon; but the general aspect of his affairs was lowering and ominous. The last three ministries in the service of legitimacy, those of Villele, of Portalis and Martignac, and finally of Polignac, conducted the government to the precipice over which it threw itself on the day of the issuing of the three fatal ordonnances. The inconsiderate outrage that day offered to the genius of Democracy by an administration smitten with judicial blindness, "Unweetingly importuned

Their own destruction to come speedy on them,
So fond are mortal men,
Fallen into wrath divine,
As their own ruin on themselves to invite."

The intolerable provocation with which they dared to insult the enthralled Sampson, "despised and thought extinguished quite,

"His fiery virtue roused
From under ashes into sudden flame,
And as an evening dragon came
Assailant on the perched roosts
Of tame villatic fowl; but as an eagle
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads:
So virtue given for lost,
Depressed and overthrown as seemed,
Revives, re-flourishes, then vigorous most
When most inactive deemed."

The Revolution of July, eighteen hundred and thirty, must not be judged by itself, or by its immediate effects; but as the first of a new series of Revolutions. It is the beginning of the *débâcle*—the grand breaking up of the general congelation. It has sanctioned the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, and dealt a fatal blow to the absurd notion of passive obedience. For the first time, too, the foreign powers have forbore to interfere, for which quiescence they had doubtless two good reasons; first, the consciousness that their own armies and people sympathised with the insurgent nation and not with the overthrown dynasty; and that therefore it might be apprehended, if they should be marched into the infected region, that a sudden development

of their predisposition to liberalism would produce an incurable derangement of their steady habits of obedience : second, the recollection that the career of Napoleon had demonstrated that the South West of Europe holds the good military position against the Northern despotisms, and that in case of a rupture, France can make a foray upon either of the capitals of the holy allies, at her election. This is a great point gained ; the abolition of hereditary peerage is another, though it must be confessed that in most respects the change of masters has not been a change of system. The significant coldness with which Russia received the annunciation of the new dynasty left the French no room to doubt that if it was not prudent and convenient to resent their late exercise of the right to be pullers down and setters up of their own kings, still they were considered as on their good behavior for the future. The government looked for support and even for toleration from foreign despotisms only in proportion as it should disappoint the expectations of those who achieved the revolution, and it seems to have been anxious to deserve the forbearance of the self constituted regulators of the continent. The venerable Lafayette was shuffled from his post of commander in chief of the National Guards ; the office itself was abolished : unpopular nominations were made and persisted in ; the men and the principles of July were discountenanced ; Poland was left to struggle and perish unaided ; the projects of the movement party were disconcerted, and their policy scouted, and the rule of action seemed to be never to advance while it was possible to remain stationary. On the whole, it may be pronounced, that this experiment is conclusive of the fact, that either branch of the house of Bourbon is equally incapable of ruling an enlightened nation in a liberal spirit : and though we cannot expect such an event immediately, still, we are waiting for the occurrence of another, more effectual revolution, to be accomplished by moral means, and to finish the work of the last.

The Spanish peninsula, whose position recommends to it so strongly a perpetual neutrality, and whose colonial dominions contributed so much to estrange it from the internal order of Europe, has unwisely entangled itself in quarrels with which it had no concern, and has consummated its own ruin by unneces-

sary connexions and unnatural antipathies. With an intellectual, brave, ardent, passionate, heroic population,—souls formed of fire and children of the sun,—a licentious and bigoted court has neglected the advantages and wasted the resources which the national character afforded, and dragged her along the brink of frightful precipices to a melancholy but sure perdition. Hurried, against her interest, into the war of conspiring monarchs against the French republic, a war in which the lavish expenditure of her treasure, her commerce, her possessions, and her fame, led only to most discreditable results, she was left to conclude by an ignominious peace, those hostilities which she should have avoided before they were ventured on. Scarce was the treaty signed, when she foolishly entered into a contest with Great Britain, an enemy with whom she could never cope, and out of the series of losses and disasters which she experienced on this occasion she was brought by the peace of Amiens, chastised but not made wiser by her sufferings. When this short truce was broken, Spain purchased of Napoleon permission to remain neutral by the payment of a monthly tribute, and by secret reinforcements of seamen for his navy; an arrangement which England resented by the capture of her bullion fleet and the destruction of its convoy. Not content with this flagrant violation of the laws of civilized warfare, she proceeded to demand that the equipment of ships of war in Spanish ports should be forthwith suspended. The requisition was not complied with: His Catholic Majesty felt compelled to declare war against England. In less than a year Nelson annihilated her marine at Trafalgar, the crowning victory of his bright career; while shortly after Miranda excited the insurrectionary spirit in her American provinces, which four years later he instigated to break out again under more favorable auspices, and which slumbered not until her vast colonial possessions were severed from all dependence on the parent state. Under the guidance of Godoy, the infamous Prince of Peace, lured by the promised spoil of Portugal, Spain was but too deeply involved in the ambitious enterprises of Napoleon, while her royal family embroiled in domestic discords offered a tempting and an easy prey to the iron grasp of the conqueror. Whether it were his passion for aggran-

dizement, or a philanthropic wish to deliver a gallant nation from the miseries which a misgovernment the most preposterous was inflicting on her, or the undeniable necessity of making her resources subservient to his general system under a more energetic and efficient administration, or all these motives combined, the opportunity was too flattering to be resisted : he converted Spain into an appanage of his imperial family and delegated his brother Joseph to occupy the vacant throne. The throne was filled, the military posts were seized, the passes guarded, and the country seemed to be permanently subjugated before a blow was struck. To alleviate the bitter feelings which subjection to a foreign master never fails to excite, the new dynasty proposed to confer on Spain blessings of incalculable value. It tendered political regeneration to a people exhausted and degraded by the vile misrule of a despicable tyranny. It conferred and guaranteed a new constitution eminently calculated to draw forth her neglected resources : it abolished that antiquated restrictive system, which had there, as is its tendency every where, depressed agriculture and destroyed commerce : it provided more effectually for the protection of persons and property, a more equal and vigorous administration of justice, means for the education of the common people, equal toleration to all sects of religion, equal protection to all classes of industry. It swept away the tribunals of the infernal inquisition ; it cut off the exorbitant privileges of the aristocracy ; in a word, it emancipated the industry, persons, property and consciences of the people. In these intentions it was sincere, for Buonaparte's interests were identical with those of Spain. By raising her people from the permanent inferiority into which vicious institutions and the debasing influence of a corrupt, profligate, venal and perverse government had degraded it ; by exalting her in the standard of improvement to a level with the most civilized nations of modern times, he hoped to develop rapidly those immense resources which he was desirous to employ. But the haughty, headstrong Spaniard took little note of this, obvious though it might be to the obtusest intellect ; an infatuation possessed him, over which he has since lamented with many crimson tears. The blind fanaticism of the monks, natural enemies of an enlightened government, the brutal ferocity of a

crafty, cruel and vindictive people broke into open rebellion everywhere, and extraordinary, wild and anomalous was the manifestation of popular wrath which burst in an overwhelming hurricane upon the heads of the devoted French.

War to the knife and the knife to the hilt, was not only proclaimed by Palafox, but carried on by innumerable chiefs of bands of guerrillas. The uncontrollable fierceness of anger, and the long cherished tenacity of vengeance, which are characteristic of the Spaniard when provoked, exhibited themselves in deeds of ruthless cruelty. Officers and even civilians travelling in security were waylaid and shot; every straggling soldier that could be cut off from his detachment was butchered by the mob; the sick, the wounded, and the medical attendants were murdered without shame or remorse, and French troops who had surrendered themselves prisoners under a solemn capitulation were massacred in cold blood in the face of day. Treachery was employed to inveigle victims into the toils, and assassination wreaked itself on innocent and meritorious citizens as well as enemies. Yet these ebullitions must have subsided, this outbreaking of passionate enthusiasm would have died away from the excess of its undefined fury, had it not been fostered by British gold and British arms. Napoleon pushed forward several columns, each resting on the main army from which it radiated, and spread them over the peninsula, overpowering opposition as they went. But the directing head could not be everywhere at once, while he was settling affairs with Austria, the irresolution and incapacity of Savary and Dupont led to disasters which neither the daring intrepidity of Junot, the ever watchful activity of Soult, the fiery impetuosity and long tried skill and valor of Ney, nor all the sagacity and genius of Massena, the favorite child of victory, were sufficient fully to retrieve. During six bloody campaigns the tide of war ebbed and flowed, till Fortune and the elements drove back the child and champion of the revolution discomfited from the smoking ruins of Moscow, and then it was that the victorious Wellington, defeating them in one pitched battle after another, chased the survivors of that hard fought struggle across the Bidassoa.

Spain is now freed from a foreign yoke and her national inde-

pendence is secured ; is she to be freed from the yoke of that legitimate despotism which had dilapidated the resources, perverted the moral sense and debased the lofty character of the nation : is the individual independence of man to be recognized ; will a grateful king, not unmindful that the best blood of his people has been poured out without stint, like water, in his cause, respect their rights, accede to their reasonable requests, and ratify the constitution they have established in his absence ? Alas ! No. That constitution he annuls, the Regency and the Cortes, whose mistaking patriotism had preserved for him the throne of his ancestors, he arrests and punishes for the crime of having been faithful to him. He restores the Convents, recalls and reinstates the Jesuits and revives the Inquisition. The friends of the Cortes and Joseph are condemned alike, with their wives and children to perpetual exile. Officers who had aided in his restoration are executed as conspirators if they incur the dislike of the domineering monks, and his few honest counsellors, are banished or imprisoned because they dare to utter unpalatable truths. Meanwhile the privateers of the South American patriots cruised before Cadiz, cut up the commerce, and captured prizes within sight of the coast. Vast preparations exhausted the national resources, to attempt the chimerical project of reconquering the American insurgents, and the people were exasperated with extraordinary taxes, while the industry and property of the country were encumbered by heavy loans to supply the deficiencies which extortion could not satisfy. When this genuine Bourbon returned, and his people received him with open arms, he had pledged himself to grant them a liberal constitution, security of property and person, and liberty of the press : the perfidious monster fulfilled none of these fair promises, but committed instead all the enormities that have been described. Human nature could not long endure it. The very army, proverbially the passive instrument of despots, revolted against such an atrocious dereliction of good faith, and so execrable an abandonment of every principle of duty, gratitude, or honor. Riego raised the cry of liberty on the first of January 1820, and Quiroga, delivered from confinement, superintended the rising of an insurgent nation. Ferdinand abandoned by his troops swore to support the constitution

and summoned the Cortes. Now was the time to redeem his honor, and to repossess himself of the affections and confidence he had so justly forfeited. Let him be true to the oath he has sworn, true to the nation, true to the spirit of the age, and oblivion will close over his glaring and multiplied offences. A magnanimous people would forget their wrongs and remember only the redressor. The glory of the nation would illuminate his name with some portion of its lustre ; impartial history, looking only to final results, would deliver it to the remotest posterity with blessings and with eulogies, instead of handing it down forever to incur, what it now deserves and receives, the scorn, derision and contempt, malediction and anathema of the whole civilized world.

The spectacle of a free nation was not to be tolerated on the continent. France and her allied masters determined in their infernal conclaves the ruin and the misery of unfortunate, noble Spain. A hundred thousand soldiers crossed the frontiers, under the Duke of Angouleme, to tread out the last spark of liberty in Spain. Step by step, overcoming a brave resistance, he advanced through the country, the patriots unaided, were suffered to fall a sacrifice to their integrity ; for though British allies, arms and subsidies were furnished Spain for the defence of Spanish Independence against a benefactor who effected melioration forcibly, Britain could not spare a soldier, a musket, or a shilling to defend Spanish Liberty against foreign invasion when it came in the name of a legitimate tyrant to inflict on his miserable subjects absolutism and all its concomitant woes. On the thirtieth of September 1823, the absolute king left Cadiz and joyfully threw himself into the camp of his deliverers. From that fatal day when Ferdinand the ingrate again found in his grasp that iron sceptre with which from May 1814 to March 1820 he had oppressed a generous people, down to the present date, one continued system of persecution has been constantly pursued which surpasses in its iniquity and perfidy the vilest and the meanest acts of Nero and Caligula. From that day Spain has been blasted with the paralysis of this abhorred legitimacy. Her choicest sons, unrighteously condemned to suffer a frightful death as the recompense of their civic virtues, have sought, from the

free states of North America to the Despotic Empire of Morocco, a refuge from the atrocious injustice and fell pursuit of the modern Heliogabalus, who, ingrate and despot as he is, has succeeded by the aid of the legitimates of Europe in establishing a government as opposed to what the illumination of this age requires, as it is in harmony with the patricidal ideas of his brothers the late Autocrat of Russia, the Emperor of Austria and the rest of the cohort of the sovereigns of degraded Europe. But though freedom's sacred fire be scattered and trodden down, some lingering sparks must yet survive hidden and smouldering beneath the recent ashes. The misnamed holy alliance reposes in false security upon the bayonets of its mercenaries—but let it be ever present to their recollection, that not the least portentous of the wonderful phenomena, which our age, fruitful in wonders, has exhibited, was the spectacle of a nation whose mercenaries in a moment became freemen, and raised that cry of liberty which made them tremble on their thrones. That if Spain displayed this then unparalleled spectacle in the year 1820, a neighboring nation has repeated it in 1830, and it is impossible to say how far such an example may extend its influence before another decade of years has run its course. Tyrants have taught the people to be free, and to value the blessing for the price it costs, and the bliss it brings. Without Tarquin would Rome have been free? It is with great justice that Rousseau has styled THE PRINCE of Machiavel the text book of Republicans. The invasion of Spain by Napoleon, whether justifiable or unjustifiable, occasioned the wonderful impulse which European liberty finally received. The tyranny of Ferdinand prepared the public mind for the revolution of 1820, and the liberty then proclaimed, though overthrown, has left a germ in the Spanish soil which sooner or later must produce souls of a temper firm enough to undertake the destruction of that hydra of despotism which now proudly boasts that it has secured forever its reign of abomination and infamy.

Of the remaining portion of the Peninsula, it is necessary to say but a few words in the present connection. Fear and jealousy of her stronger neighbor, Spain, had naturally led Portugal to throw herself into the arms of Great Britain, of which latter

power she had been a mere dependency for more than a century. The Spanish Revolution of 1820 was imitated in Portugal in the course of the same year. Encouraged by France and Spain, the apostolics and absolutists, after incessant intrigues and rebellions with varying success, have at last subverted the constitution then adopted, though sustained by England under Canning's ministry. Since the counter revolution triumphed, Don Miguel, proclaimed absolute king, has run a mad career of usurpation and tyranny. Poison and the poignard, secret assassination, and public massacre in open day, the execution of the flower of Portuguese nobility, confiscations of the most tempting estates, the imprisonment of forty thousand of his subjects on suspicion of dislike to the despotism which had wrested from them their liberties and threatened their fortunes and their lives, the expulsion from their native soil of tens of thousands of its worthiest citizens—these are the means hitherto employed to perpetuate the withering curse of his domination over a prostrate, groaning, desolated kingdom—these are the proofs he has exhibited to an observing world, that a lawful sovereign, for as such the legitimates of Europe have recognized him, can overact the direst excesses of the foulest Jacobinism, and perpetrate deeds of unequalled enormity and baseness, without provocation or palliation, for the mere enjoyment of the spectacle of universal misery of his own creation. For five years helpless Portugal has been given up to him for a prey: this ogre has feasted his diabolical appetites in every modification of torture exercised upon her, which the ingenuity of malice could suggest to him, and has not yet supped full of horrors. We can only hope that a day of retribution sooner or later must come.

If we turn to the Italian peninsula, the prospect there is scarcely more exhilarating. Northern Italy, the richer half, pertains to Austria, a power impregnably strong, who holds it with a grasp not easily loosened. Southern Italy must remain subservient to England as long as she commands the Mediterranean. Italy, the garden of Europe, the home of ancient power and the cradle of modern civilization, if incorporated into one free nation, might again be independent, powerful and happy: but ferocious hands have torn her into fragments, and with all the elements of

greatness and of happiness, *excepting Union*, she is doomed to insignificance and misery. The Republics which started into being, full of hope, at the stormy termination of the last century, have passed away like a shadow and are forgotten : when Naples undertook to repeat the Spanish melodrama, the Holy Alliance precipitated Austria upon her ; and a hundred thousand bayonets enforced the practical application of the homily read to her by the Congress of Laybach.

Notwithstanding these untoward circumstances, and in spite of their ominous aspect, the maintainers of the righteous cause by no means despair. Good principles have in their nature a recuperative vigor. They may be hidden in silence and lie buried in obloquy, but though you pile on them mountains, they will rise elastic from beneath the pressure. You cannot wash away the fond devotion to their natural rights from the memory of a people whose hearts have once throbbled with the holy love of liberty, though you shed such rivers of their best blood as would the multitudinous seas incarnadine. It becomes an instinct and a passion which many waters of affliction cannot quench, nor all the billows of adversity overwhelm. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church, and the dying exhortations of innumerable patriots, victims in the great struggle between right and power, falling like good seed into good ground, have brought forth an hundred fold in the hearts of the survivors, unchangeable resolves to achieve their purpose, and steadfast hate against all who oppose its consummation. No longer a few solitary enthusiasts, of whom the world is not worthy, wander through the wilderness of peoples who acknowledge not their apostleship,—missionaries of liberty, yet despised and rejected of men,—moving among them, but not of them,—hoping against hope and clinging to their reliance on the immutable law of human progress when the advance seems least perceptible ; but the friends of their kind spring from every soil like the warriors of Cadmus from the scattered dragon's teeth ; they stand shoulder to shoulder, they close their ranks, and move in solid phalanx to the decisive onset. The cycle of events holds its course onward and right on : wo, therefore, to him who sets his shoulder against the wheel : it will assuredly

crush his idiot hardihood. Europe is full of firm, determined spirits burning for freedom, and no more fixed decree is written in the book of fate than that she shall be free. As sure as the God of heaven is a God of justice so sure SHE SHALL BE FREE.

And free she shall be by virtue of the popular volition, not by wading to the knees in blood. Paris need not fear another three days of sorrow and of joy, of shame and glory: her grand historical week has furnished a precedent decisive enough to settle similar cases hereafter without the cost of a trial. Slaughter shall never again hold in her streets her purple carnival. The moral revolution has anticipated the work of the physical. Wicked kings tremble in the transitory tenure of their thrones, and oppressed subjects wait in confident expectation for the earliest favorable opportunity to act together, to redress all their grievances and remedy all their abuses at once and with a word. The narrow calculations of purblind selfishness have given place to enlarged, ennobling views of the common interest, so that the watchwords of parties and sects are fast losing their magical influence; the good of mankind is becoming the general end and aim, and a handful of spoilers can no longer control millions of abler and better men by the skillful application of their ancient maxim, "divide and rule." The division walls set up by lords and priests are thrown down: we are no longer parcelled out into hostile clans, according to shibboleths of their invention, perpetuating causeless feuds for their benefit, though to our ruin. Oh, no! The race is uniting into one cordial brotherhood, and will no longer suffer itself to be defrauded or despoiled, not even under the specious pretences of religion, or social order, or national glory.

Oh no! ——— Divine Philosophy,
Her left on earth, her right foot on the sea,
Hath sworn there shall be time no more for bigotry.

Philanthropy at length hath won the day,
For Desolation's demons now are thought
But butchers as they are. Those erst the prey,
The unresisting prey of who'er sought
O'er prostrate right to hold despotic sway,
Claim and will take the sovereignty they ought.
Philanthropy hath won the victory,
Antwerp's bombardment spoke War's valodictory.
Apart from social intercourse, alone,
His body one great wound, his gashes streaming,

Muttering his thunders in an undertone,
 Seen by the conflagration's fitful gleaming,
 He seems to list the nations' funeral moan,
 And grins with diabolic glee as deeming
 The struggle not yet o'er: 'tis he—I knew him well.
 Foul fiend, avaunt! and seek thy native hell.

And dove like Peace begin her smiling reign,—
 Let Plenty crown with happiness the land,—
 Fair Commerce whiten with her sails the main,—
 Their equal rights let all men understand,—
 Nor Freedom's progress e'er be checked again—
 May Friendship animate each heart and hand—
 The God of Perfect Peace let all adore,
 And Discord's throat be silent evermore.*

But although such are our hopes and such our confidence in human Perfectibility in general, and in the future fortunes of Europe in particular, still it is not to be disguised that many obstacles intervene between her present situation and the ultimate fulfilment of that vision of felicity which these stanzas present to our view. These obstacles are the same which have hitherto prevented the suggestions of sages and the exhortations of patriots, though received with hearty acquiescence by innumerable multitudes of the wise and good in every country, from effecting any considerable portion of those desirable meliorations in the condition of the political world at which they have aimed. Let us review the picture we have sketched and see what are these obstacles, that knowing them we may know how to avoid them; that being preeminently fortunate in our exemption from their baneful operation, we may know how to guard and preserve to the latest posterity the invaluable prerogative. Let us look back and ask why such repeated defeats, such melancholy disasters? Why have the very experiments which seemed richest with promise proved blackest with disappointment, and the golden fruit, fair to the eye, only mocked the taste with dust and bitter ashes? Why have so many well meant, generous efforts of so many splendid capacities, of so many magnanimous hearts, undertaken under the most favorable circumstances, ended in grievous loss—worse rout—more miserable ruin? The answer to these questions, in which philanthropy is so deeply interested, may be comprehended in a single word—a word which speaks volumes of consolation

* Extracted (except the allusion to the siege of Antwerp.) from the valedictory poem to my classmates, delivered at Harvard University, July 18th, A. D. 1836.

and encouragement to ourselves. The great secret of all **THEIR** misfortunes, the fatal clog, the weight that hangs like a millstone about the neck of European Liberalism, is the absence of a real, substantial, national **INDEPENDENCE**. For this fundamental defect in their system they have as yet found no remedy, and probably none can be found till the doctrine of the right of interference is abandoned in practice by all, as most have already renounced it in theory.

INDEPENDENCE is the talisman which secures all our other blessings, among which **Peace, Prosperity and Liberty** are not the least, and it is to the **Federal Union** that we owe both it and them. Let us examine the evidence of this proposition and then we shall be prepared to appreciate the value of Independence, and recognize that the Declaration of the Fourth of July seventeen hundred and seventy-six, sanctioned by the treaty of seventeen hundred and eighty-three, gave us not the empty name of Independence merely, but a **REAL INDEPENDENCE**, the substance of the things that were hoped for—then we shall be prepared to feel the force of the sentiment, **THE FEDERAL UNION, IT MUST BE PRESERVED**, a sentiment worthy the lips of the illustrious chief who uttered it, and whose talents, energy and influence are all concentrated to the one grand purpose of preserving the Union.

When on the twenty-first of February seventeen hundred eighty-seven, a grand committee of which the Honorable **NATHAN DANE** was chairman, reported to Congress their entire conviction of the inefficiency of the Federal Government under the old confederation, and of the necessity of devising such further provisions as should render the same adequate to the exigencies of the Union, and strongly recommended to the different legislatures to send delegates to the convention at Philadelphia which formed the present Constitution, they not only felt the evils to which the want of a Supreme Federal head exposed the Country, while the bands of Union were so loose that we could not be entitled to the character of a nation—they not only perceived that the country stood upon the verge of ruin; divided against itself; all ties dissolved; all parties claiming authority and refusing obedience; sedition, though intimidated, not disarmed; ourselves in

debt to foreigners, and large sums due internally ; the taxes in arrears and still accumulating ; manufactures destitute of materials, capital, and skill ; agriculture despondent ; commerce bankrupt*—they not only saw and felt all this, I say, but they felt the imminent danger of still greater evils which as yet they knew not of ; they saw the combustibles collected ; the mine prepared ; the smallest spark capable of producing an explosion.— Their sagacity showed them in no distant future the fearful vision of the abyss of anarchy into which they must plunge when that explosion had scattered the crazy fabric of their government. Hanging over the precipice they gazed into the dark recesses beyond, and there beheld the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious union ; states dissevered, discordant, belligerent ; a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it might be, in fraternal blood.† The Congress who accepted that report knew well that a way of escape must be found from the perils that environed them, and they knew, too, that no other refuge remained than the possibility of erecting an efficient substantial and permanent government. They knew that a more intimate Union of the states must be established or the country must perish : every ray of hope that could light them on in any course but this was already extinguished. When Washington, in the same year, consented to serve in the convention called for that purpose, to assist in “ averting the contemptible figure which the American communities were about to make in the annals of mankind, with their separate, independent, jealous, State Sovereignties,” he was fully aware of the momentous import of the crisis and of the appalling weight of responsibility which devolved upon the members of that body. He looked forward to success in this final undertaking as to a welcome salvation from the vortex of ruin, and he looked upon the failure of this attempt, if it had issued in failure, as upon the wreck of American liberties and the catastrophe of Republican Governments forever.

It needed not the study of the Amphictyonic Council, or of the Achaian league, or of any of those ephemeral alliances which were continually forming and dissolving among the ancient

*Fisher Ames. March 1787.

†Daniel Webster. January 1830.

petty states of Greece, to impress upon his mind the solemn conviction of the reality of the view he then took of the posture of our affairs. It was not necessary to explore the annals of the German Empire, to peruse the chronicles of the unceasing and murderous struggles of the Italian Republics, to search the history of the restless cantons of Switzerland, or examine the records of the United Provinces of the Low Countries, no, nor to recur to any other unsuccessful experiment, ancient or modern, to be abundantly satisfied that the relation of free states, bordering on each other and not restrained by a common government, is a relation of fierce, relentless and almost unintermitted warfare. The circumstances of the times exhibited but too distinctly the prevailing tendencies; collisions were becoming every day more frequent and more violent; the fury of hostile passions was kindling fast, and, with a little more fanning would have burst into one universal, all-devouring conflagration.

Thanks be to God, America was saved. Under the guidance of Washington, and his illustrious compeers, she trod the path of safety, and her progress in it has been a career of unparalleled prosperity and glory. Her wise men erected the well proportioned edifice of a national government, upon which foreign nations could not look but with respect, under whose protection the several states enjoy securely all their reserved rights without encroaching upon each other's privileges or conflicting with each other's interests; beneath whose friendly shelter Agriculture, Commerce, and the Arts thrive and fructify. May its blessings be magnificent as its objects, coextensive with its influence, and its duration lasting as time; and when after a complete century shall have rolled over the continent, and two hundred millions of freemen calling our language their mother tongue, shall have peopled, but not crowded, our vast territory, may they as one united nation of brethren, look forward, through the distant and dim perspective of countless future ages, to the bright vision of coming generations, more numerous, wiser, happier, and better than themselves, successively, to the end of time, with the same confidence in the perfectibility of our race, and the same reliance on the overruling favor of Providence with which we now look forward to their destiny.

In these delightful anticipations we may indulge without fear of self delusion ; but had the relaxation of the Federal Government proceeded to its annihilation, had the Union been dissolved instead of strengthened, there are a thousand ways in which I might illustrate the miseries which must of necessity follow. Of these, the extent to which I have already taxed your patience will allow me to select but one—that to which I have already alluded, the calamitous course and disastrous issues of all the Revolutions in Europe since our own. Let us begin our investigations with the history of France, since in France the revolutionary volcano first broke out, and all the other revolutionary phenomena of the old world are but secondary explosions consequential upon that grand primary eruption.

Whence originated all those abuses in France which rendered the revolution unavoidable ? From war and from the liability to war to which the nation had always been exposed. The origin of privileged classes was in war and conquest. The Franks had conquered the Gauls, and the nation was for a long time composed of two classes : the invaders, the Franks, formed the nobility ; the subdued Gauls were the commons, the peasantry, *roturiers*, base-born. The aristocracy not only derived its origin from conquest : it supported itself by war. An immense military establishment was kept up, and to them belonged exclusively all the titles, honors, emoluments and influence of military command. The government was despotic, because a constant recurrence of wars made a very strong government necessary to develop the energies essential to the defence of the nation, and because the consequent superiority of the military class over the civil, and the concentration of the military power in the hands of the sovereign, had enabled the government, particularly during the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, to make itself even much stronger than was necessary, and indeed to monopolize all power in itself. The Court squandered away the treasures of the nation, because it is the natural tendency of a military life to beget a passion for splendor, pomp and profusion. The army,—I mean those who held military honors as well as those who served,—absorbed most of the resources of the nation, because it is the nature of that branch wherever it is suf-

ferred to grow, to determine to its own supply the best part of the sap of the whole tree. The church was rich, burthensome and overbearing, because it was the natural ally of the aristocracy, and propped up their usurpations to be by them maintained in its own. The nation was in debt because while the disbursements of the government were excessive, the military aristocracy and their religious allies had exempted their own property; no small part of the wealth of the country, from all taxation, and the revenue that could be wrung from the commons by taxing them to the utmost limit of sufferance, would not meet the current expenditures of the year. The taxes were exorbitant, because the people had to pay the expenses of the government, the profligacy of the higher orders pensioned by the government, and the interest of the odious debt whereby the industry of the country was mortgaged before it became available and made tributary for years to come to the support of these abuses—while the privileged exempts made it their business to spend all and contribute nothing. And so wherever the military principle decides the fundamental character of the government we may expect to find not merely an overgrown standing army of soldiers, placemen and pensioners, devouring the substance of the people, but its concomitants, an oppressed and overburdened people, a church rioting in luxury, a merciless aristocracy feeding upon the fat of the land, a court all-grasping and insatiable, yet with an always empty treasury, a debt hanging over its head which it would beggar the nation to discharge, and presiding over this whole prodigious system, a military executive, in other words a despotic ruler, no matter by what name, consul, director, dictator, protector, king, emperor, czar or sultan. I do not say that every article of this description applies to every government in which the military power makes a component part: that would be far from correct. But in proportion as the government is more or less military the description will be found more or less applicable. We can now see how our Union cuts up by the roots the main causes of misgovernment and despotism. The abuses that have been enumerated, grow up where a state of soldiery profess predominates; and this can only take place where war, or

the apprehension of war is perpetual. Where prudence requires great armies to be kept on foot and frontiers of neighboring rivals to be jealously watched and lined with garrisoned fortresses, popular institutions have never yet been able to maintain themselves. We have no rival nations on our frontiers, and as long as the Union lasts we can have none; we need no standing army that can excite a moment's apprehension; and our future wars, if we shall ever be so unfortunate as to have any, must be carried on principally through the instrumentality of navies, a species of forces less liable than any other to the objections that have been made against standing armies. Our Union then preserves us from the operation of those influences which have deprived most other nations of their liberty.

When France undertook in good earnest the reformation of all political abuses, what gave the controversy that ensued so malignant a character? The opposition of the privileged classes, using the power they derived from their situation, which had France been an island a thousand miles from an enemy they would never have possessed, to defend their pretensions. Their resistance stemming the torrent for a while, caused it to gather head and burst with greater force when it had accumulated strength to sweep before it all obstacles. When the National Assembly had extorted every thing it could ask from prostrate royalty, when a just revenge had stormed the Bastille, laid open its horrid confines to the light of day, and levelled its dismal walls; when the National Guard had been organized under the true hearted Lafayette, to prevent any disastrous surprise or retrograde movement, and to hold within the power of the people the advantages they had won; when the assembly had unanimously abolished all feudal rights, and the confiscated estates of the church had furnished the means of freeing the treasury from its embarrassments and at the same time alleviating the burthens of the people; when the declaration of the rights of man had been adopted, when a free constitution had been prepared, and the King of the French, proclaimed the restorer of French liberty, had sworn to maintain that constitution, perhaps in good faith, certainly without the means of breaking his oath; what point of support remained *in France* upon which the

aristocracy could fix any species of political machinery to shake the new order of things, or to make any even the most desperate attempt to recover their lost ascendancy? The acutest vision could discover none. But woe to nations situated in the midst of rivals and enemies.

A resource presented itself in *foreign intervention*, and the fallen noblesse eagerly embraced the opportunity of an alliance with the foes of the French people. Had there been no hope of foreign intervention, the nobility and clergy would not have emigrated, of course no emigrants would have returned in the van of invading armies. The revolution would have been accomplished, and after the tempest of so wild a commotion had had time to subside, France would have settled down quietly into the permanent enjoyment of a rational liberty. But the arming of the emigrants followed by the declaration of Pilnitz, by Austria and Prussia, drove the Legislative assembly to a declaration of war. Russia and the German Empire joined the coalition against democratic principles. The terror of the allied arms brought violent measures into favor with the people and gave the Jacobins the predominance in the assembly and still more in the convention which followed, and which was elected during the highest pitch of excitement. The infuriated passions of the populace, wrought up to phrenzy by the invasion of the Prussians, and emboldened by the victory of the republican forces at Jemappe, gave birth to the decree of the abolition of royalty; and afterwards compelled the Convention, but by a bare majority, to the condemnation of the unfortunate Louis. The allied invaders approached the seat of that ancient monarchy, only to hear the crash of its fall as it tumbled into ruins, and were driven back with utter discomfiture. The Republic offered fraternity to all people, and proclaimed war against all kings. The coalition against it became universal; while, fomented by foreign intrigues, a civil war arose in La Vendee to avenge upon the regicides the death of their sovereign. The cause of the revolution seemed to be lost: the people stung to madness vented their rage in savage and brutal excesses; reckless of all subordinate considerations they cared not by whom, or how, the government was administered, if it possessed, and exerted energy sufficient to

maintain the integrity and Independence of France. It was the vital struggle of the nation; and the people, in their despair, were indeed criminally indifferent what, or how many individuals were sacrificed, if the nation could be saved. The Republic armed itself with the weapons of terror. The ferocious and sanguinary Mountain seized the reins of Government, directed the fury with which they inspired all ranks successfully against the invaders, and ruled the nation with the guillotine. Who does not see that had France been situated *geographically* as we are, the atrocities of this period would have been impossible? Who can believe that the reign of terror could have continued for one week in Paris, had the Ocean rolled between France and her foreign enemies?

I might proceed with this review, after the fall of Robespierre, and through the whole period of the Directory, and show, step by step, the inherent impracticability of all the plans of liberty that were tried, or proposed, so long as it was necessary that the nation should clothe itself in panoply, and rush *en masse* to the frontiers, to defend the integrity of its territory, and its independent existence. While such questions were pending in the field, there was no time for deliberation at home, for cool reflection on theoretic principles, or nice adjustments of checks and balances: and even if there had been, few limitations could profitably be imposed upon an executive whose first function it was to wield at once, and with the tenfold energy of the new system of tactics, the thirteen armies of the Republic, and to launch them with an all subduing impetus, upon Savoy, Nice, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. Such a government, in such times, must be too weak to execute its office, too weak to stand the first shock of a revolutionary earthquake, or else far too strong for the popular liberties, too strong to suffer any theoretic checks to have much practical operation in controlling its movements. In running the eye over the succession of events, and recalling the rapid transitions that occurred at this time, in all the facts which present themselves to our observation, we read the same lesson, our own peculiar felicity in possessing the best part of a continent to ourselves, without hostile or intriguing neighbors, to attack us by force from without, or to excite internal troubles a-

mong us by fraud—too happy, if we but understood our happiness. Particularity however, would be superfluous here, since the rise and overthrow of the Empire, teach the same great lesson in a much more emphatical manner.

While Bonaparte was absent in Egypt, it became apparent that the tottering Directory was too weak to sustain itself against combined Europe, undermined as it was, by the Bourbonists on one side, by anarchists on the other. All that the Revolution had gained must be given up for lost, and the blood that has deluged France was spilled in vain, if a stable government cannot be formed, and clothed with powers adequate to the crisis. Moreau, who declined, Joubert, who accepted the offer, were invited by their friends to assume the helm ; but the latter fell at the battle of Novi. The case became more critical, and the need more urgent of a chief magistrate of commanding character, who could unite contending factions, and form a nucleus for the friends of order, and of the revolution, to rally around. He must be a statesman of the highest grade, to overcome the intrinsic difficulties of the foreign relations, and to adjust the fluctuating elements of society at home. He must possess unrivalled military talents, to cut whatever Gordian knot his policy cannot unravel ; and as genius cannot operate without instruments, his influence must be based on public confidence, and that this may be permanently secure, the principal directors of public opinion must feel and acknowledge the supremacy of his intellect—he must be the favorite of the people and the idol of the army. Bonaparte returned, the man whom fate provided for the occasion. All eyes were fixed upon him ; all hearts implored him to rescue his humbled country from the thick dangers that beset her ; to become the redeemer of despairing France. It is no new discovery that amid the din of arms, the voice of law is hushed. A revolution, in which a column of grenadiers supplied the immediate impulse, concluded the Directorial rule, and installed the new Consulate. Its power was military in its occasion, the pressure of foreign foes ; military in its origin, the favor of the army ; military in its mode of creation, by an assembly of officers, through the instrumentality of bayonets ; and depending on the *prestige* of military glory for its endurance. That bright illusion

outdazzled the splendid victories of the great monarch, Louis XIV. and produced the full effect expected from it. The military spirit predominant in the state, its military position with reference to the continent, as they had first called into being the Consulate, strengthened its hands. Surrounded by irreconcilable enemies, distracted, impoverished, disorganized, France willingly entrusted to the First Consul the powers without which he could not repel the foes, quell the factions, and restore credit and order. Every branch of the government required reform; he undertook to remodel and direct all its operations, and thereby concentrated in himself all its functions. The title of Emperor followed the assumption of all-controlling power; the renewed war stimulated the military spirit to still greater excess; the military establishment acquired a gigantic disproportion to other classes in the state, and the government became, and for some years remained essentially absolute. Could France have enjoyed repose after the treaty of Amiens, she would have demanded and gradually obtained guarantees of civil liberty: but while her victorious legions embodied the vigor and youth of the people, the head of the army was the autocrat of the nation, wielding an arbitrary, unchecked, irresponsible power, exercising the full force of his dictatorship to develop the tremendous energy necessary in his novel and peculiar strategy, monopolizing all free action to himself, and carrying constraint through all the ramifications of the social system. To consolidate the fabric of his empire he surrounded his throne with subsidiary institutions, and provided for the aggrandizement of his family, and his followers: his brothers became kings, and his generals constituted a new nobility. His genius planned a colossal fabric and reared it in its full proportions, but its vastness was the very cause of its downfall. It occasioned umbrage, jealousy, fear and hatred everywhere. France was exhausted by over-exertion to maintain it; a universal reaction rose against it, and it was overthrown. When Napoleon appeared a second time on the scene, a panic spread that he would reconstruct his former power and overshadow the sovereigns once more. It was an idle fear, but it sufficed to rally them again, to his final overthrow. That the subsequent efforts to establish freedom in France have failed, for want of that per-

fect and absolute INDEPENDENCE of foreign influence, which we alone enjoy, has already been sufficiently shown.

That Spain cannot unloose her fetters because France has rivetted them on her; that Spain still endures those degrading institutions which have obliterated her national virtues, because she has been too much exhausted, impoverished, and depressed by long wars in which she has been involved by her neighbors, to have the power of resistance left;—that Portugal, having relapsed into helplessness, through the habit of foreign dependence, is now writhing under excruciating tortures inflicted by an usurper with the countenance of the legitimates, because her military caste at home leans for support on the military aristocracy of Europe, and her unarmed citizens have no means of defence, is equally obvious after what has been said.

That Northern Italy cannot be free because of the immediate pressure of Austria; that Naples cannot be free because the Holy Alliance commissions Austria to extinguish her freedom; that Italy, as one great nation, with historical recollections to animate her, such as belong to no other people, cannot be INDEPENDENT of these influences, and free in spite of these enemies, with her eighteen millions of inhabitants of a magnificent country, speaking a common language, holding a common faith, their true interests common, having the sea on three sides, and the Alps for a northern barrier, because her separate states have no bond of Union, and from their mutual hatred can hardly hope to have, while two deadly factions struggle for mastery in each of those states, is too evident to require further elucidation.

The German Empire has long been the mere shadow of a political body, possessed of no real strength either in peace or war. Before it was dissolved in 1806 it contained a congregation of nominal princes without states, whose suppression has considerably meliorated the condition of Germany. The confederation now contains only thirty-eight members instead of several hundred as before. “This shows that some progress has been made towards the great object for which Germany has sighed for centuries, unity and independence.” “It may be asserted, *says a German*, that UNION is at present more necessary for Germany than liberty; at least, give her the former and the lat-

ter will soon follow." With Union she may "rest from the bloody conflicts in which for centuries, Germans have slain Germans, and which have wasted their wealth, checked their industry, impeded the development of public law, and extinguished in their literature that manliness, which is so striking a feature in that of a neighboring nation partly descended from them." Lying in the centre of Europe, bordering on three seas, with numerous large rivers, it should have been one of the first Commercial States of the world; but its disorganization produced incessant intestine wars, and what is no less to be lamented, a restrictive system, with its ruinous effects, which reduced it to a subordinate rank among Commercial nations: in short her imbecile confederation has made one of the most extensive countries in Europe, one of the most impotent. Her thirty years war, to go back no further, with the anarchy and chaos she has presented ever since that awful tragedy, form the most instructive study for all who would coolly "calculate the value of our Union." To recapitulate all that would assist in the calculation would occupy volumes. The fact that Disunion paralyzes her energies, as it does those of Italy, and keeps back thirty-four millions of the noblest race of mankind infinitely behind their brethren of England and of America, making their "unhappy country the theatre of foreign aggression, domestic convulsion, and political oppression," is abundantly sufficient, without pursuing the subject into details, for the purposes of the present argument.

The fate of Poland, and its causes, civil discord and foreign interference, are too well known to be more than mentioned here. The sufferings of Prussia during the general war, a small state in the midst of great ones, torn by their contests, and crushed by their collisions, would furnish an impressive warning, if we had not already more striking instances in larger states. Austria is the hammer with which Russia rivets the fetters of Europe. That these two powers could not exert a deadening influence on the liberal spirit of the continent, nor exclude it from their own dominions, if the military element did not enter largely into the constitution of their governments, is too obvious for proof.

The situation of Great Britain demands a more particular examination: but I have not time to enter on it now. I will only

allude to the point that bears directly on the topic of this address. What makes reform dangerous though inevitable? The artificial system in which her entanglement in continental affairs has involved her. Her debt carried to that amount that it can hardly be increased, or endured, or reduced, for vast military and naval establishments, for subsidizing the nations of the continent, for Pitt's system of eternal war against revolutionary France. It was necessary that British arms and British gold should win victories abroad to keep the power in the hands of English Tories at home. The power has departed but the debt remains.

The view we have just taken of the condition and recent history of the principal nations of the Old World, abundantly confirms the position we have advanced, that the Federal Union is essential to our Independence, and that more than one substantially independent nation could not exist within our present limits. It establishes further that a real national Independence is essential to liberty, and a comparative freedom from such wars as are carried on by standing armies essential to any high degree of liberty. In the words of Washington, taken from that farewell address which cannot too often be quoted, the unity of government which constitutes you one people is a main pillar in the edifice of your real Independence, the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize.

Should this unity of government from any cause be abandoned, it is not to be inferred from these remarks that we should at once be placed precisely in the situation of the nations of Europe, whose misfortunes we have been considering. In some respects, our condition would be more eligible than theirs; in others, quite the reverse. From many of the grievous plagues that infest their social state we should be at the first outset exempted; but it would require the gift of prophecy to say how long we should continue so. We have no aristocracy, and should have none till war had built up a military order of nobility. We have no debt, but all the sources of revenue that would be left available are so exceedingly unpopular among us, that to meet the heavy expenditures that would be indispensable, debts would grow up like

mushrooms, at enormous rates of interest, and to an amount not to be foreseen ; if indeed the credit of the precarious governments formed under such circumstances did not prove too weak to obtain funds on any terms, in which case the property of the country would be subjected to an operation more deplorable in its effects than any debt ; a system of confiscation and plunder, such as has frequently followed violent revolutions in all ages, and such as has often been resorted to in the South American States. But our people are animated with the love of liberty, it will be said, "it is interwoven with every ligament of their hearts," and therefore they will never wear the yoke of a military despotism. The Greeks loved liberty better than they loved life, yet some Greek states were held in the most galling bondage by others—there never was a time when the principal Grecian States did not lord it over the lesser. The Romans loved liberty to such excess that they esteemed the assassination of a personal friend a glorious action, when that crime was perpetrated for the sake of liberty, yet Rome bowed beneath the sway of the Cæsars. An inextinguishable love of liberty burns in the bosoms of the French, yet the liberty they so ardently desire and seek, they cannot obtain. What warrant have we that we shall love liberty with a stronger, a more enduring, a better omended passion, than the French, the Romans, or the Greeks—what warrant, save our one, sole, conservative principle, our Federal Union ? Again, it may be said, we have no such hordes of unprincipled and abandoned wretches as are to be met with in the corrupt cities of the Old World ; we have not the materials of which a *mob* is made, in the European acceptance of that term. True, but war makes more rogues than peace can hang, and the incessant wars which must rage between separate communities in our own territories would multiply the class in a ratio beyond the power of calculation. The pressure of extreme poverty is unknown among us, the debasement of extreme ignorance is comparatively rare, so that there is not a populace, maddened by want and blind to consequences, ready to rush wherever a momentary impulse may lead them : but let property become insecure by frequent confiscations, and more frequent bankruptcies, from political revolu-

tions, so that the inducements to the accumulation of capital shall be suddenly diminished, and tens of thousands who are now living by honest industry will be thrown out of employment ; those who continue to labor, from the great reduction of wages, will feel the hand of poverty heavy upon them ; high taxes to which we have hitherto been unaccustomed, will grind the middling interest into the dust, and a horizontal division, here as elsewhere, will distinguish society into pampered lords and pauperized peasantry. Those who feel no concern in the management of the government, except the desire to throw off the burthen that bears upon them, will cultivate but a small circle of political ideas : those who are so hedged in in a state of miserable destitution as to have no hope in life and no refuge but death will waste but little time in acquiring a general education, which to their view would serve no other purpose than to fit them to feel more keenly the depth of their degradation : extreme indigence therefore would beget extreme ignorance. The circumstances in which we should be placed would therefore generate a large and constantly increasing class fit to become slaves themselves, and to help to make slaves of others, quite as certainly as they would produce ambitious and enterprizing spirits disposed to make themselves masters, and would furnish opportunities, from time to time, to plot and execute conspiracies against liberty.

While therefore these peculiarities of our social condition would not confer upon us so decided a superiority as might at first be supposed, there are some other particulars in which we should be circumstanced much more unfavorably than most other nations. Our newly formed communities would have *no natural boundaries*. Rivers are the worst possible lines of demarcation between jealous neighbors, because each party will continually interfere with the trade of the opposite bank. Our ridges of mountains do not pass where in all human probability the outlines of Independent Empires would first be drawn ; on the contrary they run through states, as at present constituted ; and besides, in the present state of internal commerce, with the rail road and the locomotive engine, such mountains as ours are no longer impassable barriers. Without natural boundaries, the

conventional limits will be continually fluctuating. The most fruitful source of warfare, an undefined territory and conflicting claims to a debateable tract between rivals, will entail implacable hostility on the contiguous nations. Whoever has observed how often the waters that surround her, have sheltered Great Britain from invasion, how often the Pyrennees and the Ocean have protected Spain, how often the Mediterranean and the Alps have shielded Italy, how effectually her mountains have guarded Switzerland, how illfated Poland has fallen a prey to the spoilers because her territory was one vast plain, how futile has been the attempt to restrain France for any length of time, where nature has not drawn the line, how impossible it has been to fence in the Netherlands, even with a double barrier of strongly fortified towns, how Flanders, because it lay open on both sides to the opposing powers, has been made again and again the battle field of Europe, till all its soil was fattened with the slain; in short, not to multiply instances, whoever has cast the most casual glance over the history of Europe cannot underrate the importance of this consideration, pregnant with momentous consequences. Even the petty states of Greece had for the most part natural fortifications stretched around them, an advantage of which we should be almost entirely destitute.

Another circumstance, most fortunate for the nation if we continue one people, most unfortunate if we should ever be constituted into many, is that we have all *one language*, and with slight shades of difference, the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. Nations having different languages, and different trains of thought and modes of feeling on most great subjects of human interest, have little mutual action: they move in different spheres, and there are but few points on which they have occasion to interfere with each other. Discussing the same topics in the same language, imagination can form no estimate of the fury with which political controversies would be carried on in the disunited States of this Union. The inflammatory harangues of leading demagogues in one State would be circulated and read through all the rest; engendering antipathies and awakening animosity and wrath not easily to be allayed. Crimination and recrimination would proceed to intemperate vituperation

and corroding calumny, and these would be retorted back with mingled scorn and defiance. The appeal to arms in which such collisions must inevitably end, from the similarity of character between the parties, must partake of the nature of a civil war—fell, relentless, truculent, fiendlike ; which casts into shadow the unspeakable calamities of ordinary warfare, by the direr horrors in which Moloch revels when fraternal affection is converted into fierce abhorrence.

Not only have we no natural boundaries to divide our physical force, and no difference of language, religion or general character to supply moral distinctions which would favor separation, but we have *no distinct interests* which each section might cultivate without need of assistance or fear of interference from the others. The Agricultural products of the South furnish the medium through which our foreign commerce is carried on. If no cotton, rice, or tobacco, were shipped from Southern ports, our merchants could not draw bills on England, nor could they find any other adequate means to pay for their purchases. To declare war against the South and blockade her ports, would therefore be an act of suicide on our part. She, on the other hand, is unfitted by the nature of her population and her pursuits to carry on navigation advantageously : for the transportation of her merchandize it is her interest to be indebted to us, and were the Union dissolved, the Empire of the Ocean would remain with us, so that she could not transport her surplus products but must leave them to rot upon the soil. To withdraw from the Union would be, therefore, equally on her part an act of suicide. The harvests of the West, where soil which has lain untilled since the creation returns a hundred fold to the cultivator, finds its way to the markets of the world only through the Atlantic coasts, or through the rivers that flow into the Gulf of Mexico. Let the West secede from the Union, and the Atlantic States forbid a passage through their borders, while Louisiana, or a New England fleet, sealed up the mouth of the Mississippi, and all the crops of the noblest valley inhabited by civilized man must perish where they grow. To renounce the benefit of the Federal Union would be destruction therefore to the West. I forbear to enlarge upon the necessity which New England feels of

a wider market than her own for her manufactured articles ; the Middle States for their flour and grain ; the security against a servile insurrection which the moral influence of the Federal Union, with its preponderance of free white population, affords to the slave holding states ; or the entire freedom from taxation, the munificent bounties to education, the extensive and costly works of internal improvement, which the West owes to the fostering care of the general government ; because I have not time to exhaust this fruitful subject. I have enumerated mutual dependencies enough to show how deep and lasting injuries we should have it in our power to inflict on each other, and this will enable us to form some idea of the intensity of that mutual hate which the exacerbation of such mutual wrongs must needs originate.

No balance of power could be established to preserve peace between the several confederations. In Europe, where changes in the number and pursuits of the population of the different countries take place gradually, and where they have passed through the fiery furnace of those afflictions which we must anticipate, and have learned that wisdom through suffering which we could only hope to acquire in the same school—there, they adjust the political equilibrium, so that it remains undisturbed for a short period ; and when alterations in the state of any member of the body derange the system, diplomacy endeavors to accommodate a new apportionment of power to the new state of things which requires it. But with us, where some communities would be rapidly developing their resources, while others were stationary, or perhaps declining, while the character and pursuits of the people were changing every day, as the wilderness was converted into fertile fields, and the sparse into a dense population, no such arrangement could be any thing more than a temporary expedient. Our states, watching each other with a jealousy that would never slumber, their interests clashing with each other perpetually, and often in new particulars, our passions acted on by the most prolific press that ever existed, scattering envenomed missiles of discord on the wings of the wind, and kindling the flame of popular fury, now here, now there,—not a year would pass away that did not change their relations to each other.

Peace would seldom be more than a transient truce, and the sword would be the only acknowledged arbiter in their innumerable collisions.

Nor must it be omitted that *party spirit*, the bane of commonwealths, would have freer scope and wider sway among us than in the older countries, and would infest our narrower communities with a more virulent contagion than has ever infected the united Republic. In most of the old countries it is but a very small class that interests itself in the operations of government. The mass are too ignorant and too degraded to concern themselves with affairs so totally beyond their comprehension. They know and feel the government only by the dead weight with which it rests on them : under this they were born and have lived all their days, and of course have become habituated and in some measure reconciled to the pressure. They take no part in political transactions, but remain an inert and passive substratum over which the battles of the higher classes are fought out while they themselves are as seldom moved as the deep sea. It is not so with us. Our common schools qualify all our children in the art of reading, while ten thousand newspapers carry political information to every man's door. In our party agitations therefore, it is the whole frame of society to its very basis that heaves and tosses. And if the fabric of the government sometimes rocks, now, when party spirit is comparatively mild and diffused over a continent, what ruinous convulsions must we not expect whenever parties are brought face to face, and pent up in small states, to spend their unmitigated fury upon each other : especially when we reflect that direct taxation, the species of oppression to which the people at large are ever most sensitive, will fall with a crushing weight upon each fragment of the broken Union the moment it is dissevered. Duties on imports could no longer be collected on the sea board, because each section would underbid the others in its tariff, to entice away their commerce, and because smuggling over the frontiers could not be prevented : so that the vast revenue required to set on foot the necessary armaments, to build, equip, and support the separate navies, and to maintain, with proportionably higher salaries, stronger governments, must all be raised by the hard, ungrateful

process of direct taxation. Discontent would excite rebellion against the sectional governments ; each party as it predominated would decimate the front ranks of the other ; the minority would league with the majority in the neighboring state, and invite an invasion to their assistance, and thus revolutions, civil wars, and foreign wars would alternate and mingle their horrors.

Subserviency to foreign nations is not the least of the evils that would follow the rupture of the ties that bind us together. A section which found itself endangered by the superiority of another at home, would eagerly seek "an apostate and unnatural connection" abroad. However humiliating the terms on which their aid might be obtained, we should be driven to accept whatever terms the nations of the Old World might offer us. When our allies became belligerents, we must enlist in all their quarrels. It would be their policy to foment by their intrigues all our dissensions in order to make us more dependent on them, to prevent us from regaining any weight in the political balance, and to take from us, and share among themselves, that large portion of the Commerce of the World, which, while united under a wise government, we shall always be able to retain.

As the bands of the National Government are strengthened in proportion as the number of the States increases, each State of twenty-four having less power to resist the delegated authority of the whole, than each state of the thirteen had originally, and as combinations among two or three states of fifty, if that number shall ever be reached, will be much less dangerous to the integrity of the Union than a combination of two or three of the original thirteen would have been, we may infer that the power of any new confederacy formed out of a part of our sister states, would be less competent to hold together its members than the present Federal Union. The causes of disunion which had operated in the whole system, would continue to act with a centrifugal impulse in each of the parts ; and with increased violence, for who can doubt that the majority would tyrannize over the minority with less restraint from generosity or conscientious scruples in each of the states, if they were cut asunder, than it ever can under the government of the Union. The history of the Greek and of the Italian Republics shows that it would

be so, for such is the nature of little communities with popular governments. Common sense, applied to the case, shows that it would be so, for the struggles of parties would degenerate from honorable contests involving general principles, into the base altercations of personal rancor. Besides, the weight of taxation, augmenting as it must, would be a fruitful source of discontent, and they would have before them the example of a union, older and more hallowed than theirs, successfully resisted and broken up. *The tendency to subdivision* therefore would grow stronger and stronger. Revolutions would spill the best blood in the land, and sunder confederations as soon as they were formed: ephemeral governments would rise and disappear, till anarchy held undisputed possession, and society was resolved into its original constituents, unless some influence of an opposite nature arrests this obvious tendency before the downward progress reaches this ultimate limit.

But there is another element which must enter into the calculation, whose influence is to counteract the tendency to perpetual subdivision, and that element is *military force*. The great will devour the small. The larger states will annihilate the separate political existence of their lesser neighbors, and if these last do not acquiesce in their unavoidable condition of inferiority, the right of conquest will put into the hands of the ruling states a rod of iron; the inhabitants of the conquered territory must be made *sub-jacti*—subjects—thralls; and the force their masters must keep on foot to secure their servitude will enable the successful soldiers who head their troops to make slaves of the citizens of the invading states, and involve victors and vanquished in one common doom.

This imperfect investigation of the probable consequences of disunion, brief as it has necessarily been, discloses sufficient cause of alarm if indeed the Union has been put in jeopardy. The Union lost, all is lost: the Union safe, all our prospects are bright and cheering. We are happy to perceive symptoms of a growing conviction of this great truth in every quarter of the country.

Though from the present sound and healthy state of public opinion on this subject we cannot believe the Union to be in any

immediate danger, yet we cannot but deeply regret the deplorable fanaticism which has seized upon an unfortunate and misguided sister state: South Carolina, distinguished for the number of her clear headed and warm hearted statesmen and patriots, till in an evil hour, the baneful theory of nullification took root in her soil. It flourished rank, and grew up a moral Bohon Upas, to blast and wither all within its atmosphere. Its pestilential boughs have overshadowed with their blighting influence the prospects of her noblest sons. We mourn their aberrations from the straightforward path of political duty, we pity the hallucination which has bewildered their strong but metaphysical intellects, yet we must not the less condemn the heresy which threatens our existence as a nation, our liberties as a people, and all the blessings which we hold most dear. Happily for us the voice of condemnation will preclude the necessity of raising the cry of war. Public opinion will strangle in its infancy the monster nullification, and thus, without the cruel alternative of intestine hostilities, we shall be delivered from the impending peril. But while we hesitate not to condemn their extravagance, let us compassionate and do all in our power to alleviate their distresses. Let us remember that partial and sectional legislation, while it is not warranted by the letter of our Constitution, is inconsistent also with the genius of our institutions. There can be no lasting peace which is not based on justice; but if any part of our revenue system is calculated to produce an advantage for one set of interests or one section of country at the expense of another, its operation is unjust towards those whom it injures; and it must not be wondered at if they are loud in their complaints, and sometimes even push their opposition beyond the exact limits which sober reason would prescribe. Let us be first just, then generous. Let us remove all their grievances, and then the work of conciliation will be easy. Even if their wrongs have been altogether imaginary, which it requires no small share of modest assurance to assert, even if we have the most perfect right to protect certain interests, supposed to be peculiar to this section of the country, at the cost of another section, even then, concession and compromise would be vastly, inexpressibly, preferable to obstinacy and consequent disunion and civil war. But

we have no right, and can have none, to legislate partially under whatever pretext. Washington in that immortal legacy of the political wisdom which his active life had been spent in accumulating, the farewell address, every line of which ought to be indelibly engraved on the hearts of his fellow citizens, tells us that it occurs to him as matter of serious concern that any ground should be furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations—Northern and Southern—Atlantic and Western—and he bids us indignantly frown upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts. If, rejecting this advice, we press a course of policy which tends strongly to alienate an important portion of our country from the rest, we not only jeopardize our own Union, “the palladium of our political safety and prosperity,” but we put in hazard all the blessings we enjoy under its shelter, and more than all we throw doubt and uncertainty over all the hopes of future improvement which mankind in every quarter of the globe may reasonably entertain.

The example of our free institutions in the full tide of successful experiment does more to promote the progress of a rational political system on the other side of the Atlantic than all the speculations of philosophers who have reasoned, all the eloquence of orators who have declaimed, all the exhortations of all the authors who have written for the people, since mind first began to act on mind. Let them look at our firmly cemented Union, whose value is beyond calculation, and see how the economy and flexibility of local governments may be happily blended with energy and strength of a general, central, controlling power. Here is illustration! Here is demonstration! With this brilliant spectacle before them, they need not doubt the possibility, nor dispute about the manner, of accomplishing the great ends of government, without the invading any desirable liberty of the citizen. Let us not then suffer this hope of the world to sink in despair—this beacon light of the tempest tost nations to be quenched in blood—this guiding star, on which the pilgrims of transatlantic liberty gaze with fond devotion, to go down in darkness and eternal gloom.

Already intestine dissensions, to whose relentless power all the republics whose names are written in history have fallen a prey, has reared her horrid head among us. Shall we listen to the dictates of prejudice and passion? Shall we enter that career of civil strife, wherein, like the broad road that leads to the pit of woe, there are no steps backward? Has Mammon such undisputed Empire in our souls, that, for a miserable percentage on our corporation stocks, we would roll the torrent of a desolating warfare over a large section of our native land, and cling to our dividends with the grasp of a dying miser though they must be coined out of the blood of our Southern brethren? If so—then

Discord's spirit rankling for her prey,
With Ate at her side, come hot from hell,
Shall in our campfire, with a demon's voice,
Cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war.

But it cannot be. Our guarantee is in the intelligence of the American people. The intelligence of the people is the original cause—the operating instrument—the sure palladium of American union and liberty. We have read the annals of those who have gone before us. We know how they tempted their destiny till it overwhelmed them. History has given us a faithful chart, and we know where are the rocks and quicksands and where we must shun destruction. With our eyes open we shall not follow the downward path in which all the elder Republics have preceded us to ruin. If the common welfare demands any sacrifices from New England, certain it is New England will never be backward to make them. Her ready acquiescence in the late arrangement of difficulties, because it was better than none, although not altogether satisfactory to any party, is a pledge of her future good conduct. In fidelity to the Union, she is true to the core, and for no subordinate interest will she suffer it to be endangered. **THE FEDERAL UNION MUST BE PRESERVED, AND WILL BE.** Under its protection may we realize the dying wish of the patriotic patriarch of liberty—**INDEPENDENCE FOREVER.**

These speculations I have addressed to you, gentlemen, not because I suppose them to be of that popular and spirit stirring character, belonging to certain other topics which might have

been selected for this occasion, but because it is necessary, at the present time, that every good citizen should understand the true interests of his country, and realize their value: more especially the working men of the Republic, who are in truth the bone, muscle, and sinew of the nation. With them is deposited the physical force in every country: in our highly favored land a superior education endows them with a corresponding moral force. You do well then, gentlemen, to cultivate intelligence—to make it a prominent object of your association. Knowledge is not only power—knowledge is also safety. It is the stability of our times—our trust and stay amid the dangers that thicken around us. Foster then your intellectual faculties; treasure up useful information. So doing, you will qualify yourselves to discharge the duties of good citizens: you will enable yourselves to judge fairly of public men, and public measures: you will increase—vastly increase—your share of influence in the body politic, and you will feel more and more sure that you are exerting that influence in the right direction.

The following hymn, composed for the occasion, was sung as a part of the services, to the tune of Old Hundred :

Let grateful nations join to raise
 To Freedom's God, a song of praise ;
 His red right arm our fathers led,
 Before his frown oppression fled.

Rouse all your powers, the strain prolong,
 Land unto land repeat the song ;
 And Ocean's voice, with solemn roar,
 Swell the loud chorus to the shore.

When foreign foes our rights invade,
 This God vouchsafes his mighty aid ;
 And till the victory is won,
 Inspires the breast of Washington.

When hideous anarchy of late,
 Destruction threatened to our state,
 His favor for our quick relief,
 Raised up another matchless chief.

The chief his Providence elects,
 His wisdom guides his care protects,
 Internal discord's cry is hushed,
 And faction's hydra heads are crush'd.

Our States to their remotest bound,
 With peace and happiness are crowned :
 No civil strife unsheathes the sword,
 But Union reigns and love's restored.

Then freemen lift your anthems high,
 From every clime beneath the sky :
 In tones as thunder loud proclaim,
 Glory to his Almighty name.