

DANIEL H. BUELL,

AN

ORATION,

DELIVERED

AT THE

*Request of the Committee*

OF

**Associated Mechanics;**

AT THE NEW MEETING HOUSE IN MARIETTA, BEFORE  
A LARGE AND RESPECTABLE ASSEMBLY  
OF LADIES AND CITIZENS,

ON THE

Fourth of July, 1808.

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BY STEPHEN C. SMITH.

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*Published at the particular request of a number of  
Respectable Citizens.*

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MARIETTA:  
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# AN ORATION, &c.



**T**HIS auspicious day, my fellow citizens, which gave birth to our glorious independence we are now assembled to celebrate—to commemorate the events by which it was atchieved—to rejoice with public festivity that shall reanimate the sage, to incite the youth to deeds of honorable fame, should ever their country call—to warm the imagination with the recollection of scenes past, to extend the hand of friendship and harmonize our sentiments for our own and our country's good.

At this hour my fellow citizens how many thousands of our countrymen are every where assembled on this joyous occasion to celebrate our deliverance from a nation which now is, and has been long since enthralled in dreadful and destructive war, in which, had we continued dependent on her, we must have been involved with all its horrors. But for the patriotism of the heroes of 1776, whose atchievements still emulate the soul, and shall continue to the latest posterity, we might still have been dependent on Britain and involved in all the wars which at this day desolate the European world.

I think, on this occasion, your hearts like mine will be suffused with that sympathetic joy which is this day breathed by the sons of Columbia throughout this extensive empire. Aided by musical harmony we this day offer beneath this sacred arch, our adorations to the divine preserver of nature, under whose guiding hand was accomplished that revolution which fixed these United States on the broad political basis that they now stand. Shall we invoke the shades of our forefathers who first landed on the Atlantic shores, to tell the difficulties they encountered in the then wilderness of America; many of whom were driven by the iron-hand of persecution to the

shores of America, there neglected by what they fondly called their mother country, they grew to manhood; she then sought them only to assist her, and that assistance would have been freely given on equitable terms, but that Britain refused. But the sons of Columbia ever jealous of their rights, turned their eyes upon themselves, they surveyed with astonishment the rapid population they had made, and were still making;—and determined still to live free.

Hitherto they had cultivated their fields in peace, the forests had been cleared, towns, cities and states, rose by the power of industry, and they were secure in the enjoyment of the productions of the earth. Our harbours were filled with ships and commerce, with expanded wings wafted the treasures of America to every quarter of the globe.

Britain beheld with a jealous eye the rapid advances we were making towards empire; she determined we should acknowledge her sway. She arbitrarily imposed on us laws derogatory to freemen, and destructive of our rights. She impiously assumed the right to tax us without our consent, declaring that as children protected by her care, she had a right to our allegiance and submission. The Americans contended that to tax us without our consent was tyranny in the extreme. They petitioned and remonstrated with a bold and manly language, but they were treated with disdain, the haughty ministers of Britain declared that as children protected by her, we deserved correction for our rebellious language. But the Americans had assumed a manly attitude, and the spirit of freedom had diffused itself from breast to breast with the rapidity of thought, each individual considered himself only as a part of the great whole, whose rights were invaded and determined to defend them to the last. In this trying hour of difficulty and distress, America was not without friends; even in the parliament of England, her rights were pleaded with all the Eloquence of a Chatham and a Barre, but all in vain,—the haughty ministers had determined to compel us to unconditional submission. Reconcilement now became impossible, —war or submission inevitable. The enthusiasm of liberty had spread with the rapidity of electric fire, and to arms the appeal was made.

At this trying moment when every soul was alive to their prospects, and divided between hope and fear, we behold those stern patriots standing forth and "pledging their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honors" in support of the general cause, declaring that they would live free or die: Then was brought forward that celebrated declaration of independence, which cut the gordian knot, by which the American colonies were bound to Britain, and opened American intercourse as an independent nation with every part of the globe.—Yes, noblest worthies, "your lives, your fortunes and your sacred honors" all were pledged, and thanks to heaven, they were not pledged in vain; for we, on this auspicious hour, pay to your memories the noblest homage, in sacrificing to justice and to freedom for the salvation of our country.

While a variety of sentiments and of facts crowd upon the mind, equally entitled to attention, it becomes difficult with me to separate or arrange them;—but it has become my duty to awaken your recollection to scenes which I could wish to consign to the pen of the historian.—Shall we then invade the peaceful repose of honorable death, the shades of departed thousands, slain to testify the sacrifice made to freedom. Shall I carry your imaginations to Lexington and Concord, or to Bunker's Hill? where the memory of Warren and his brave comrades will ever testify the determined valor of freemen in the cause of virtuous liberty. Shall we transport our imaginations to the cold regions of Canada, to the walls of Quebeck, with the brave but unfortunate Montgomery, whose name with others will be handed to posterity with honor. Or shall we return to Long-Island, to New-York, and to the White Plains, where our countymen, with the brave Washington at their head were successively compelled to give way; many of whom were destitute of arms, or if supplied at all, were in a bad or ruinous condition; discouraging indeed to him who bore them, without a supply of ammunition or of camp equipage, pursued by an army of more than double their numbers, the winter approaching, our little army shortly to be disbanded—what must have been the feelings of its friends at this critical moment?—To retreat was the

only expedient left, and the country was left open to the banks of the Delaware.

Americans! what were your feelings at this awful hour? a retreating army dwindled to two or three thousand men, the British arms successful in every enterprise; despondency seized the minds of many, others flew to receive the offered protection from Britain, and the recently assumed independence of the States seemed on the verge of dissolution.

But as difficulties arose, Congress and the friends of the revolution seemed to rise above them in proportion as they appeared: they addressed the states in animating language, calculated to remove their desponding fears. Again we behold in this crisis of danger the farmer, the merchant, the mechanick, and the labourer, all cheerfully relinquishing their domestic comforts to perform the duties of the common soldier in the inclemency of a winter campaign; and the genius of the illustrious Washington rose superior to every difficulty; with his late retreating and half naked army he turned on the daring invaders, and in a few hours snatched from them the victory at Trenton, and at Princeton; turned the tide of war and sent the British arms into disgraceful quarters.

But why should I attempt to particularize events which requires conceptions too vast for me to pourtray. Truth will ever speak from the dark atrocities committed at Wyoming, or beam from conflagrations in which our peaceful habitations and the temples of religion were buried in undistinguishable ruins.—Yes, Americans! it was a war of uncommon severity, and of suffering, many were dragged from their peaceful abodes, and imprisoned only to gratify that wolfish rapacity of tory spleen which knew no bounds short of the destruction of their country and its liberties.

When the rage of battle is over, in most instances, we find the parties clement and humane to the prisoners and wounded. But the warfare between these United States and Britain, was not only in its origin, but throughout its progress, attended with circumstances peculiarly aggravating. Sometimes, we think we may still hear, the groans of imprisoned thousands, confined in dismal and gloomy dungeons, or fettered within the scanty di-

mensions of a prison ship, of godlike men, the martyrs to their country's freedom, many of whom were torn from their peaceful homes to breath a pestilential air without a single friend to sooth the anguish of expiring life; sustained by only scanty meals of putrifying provisions, without the sympathy of conjugal affection, without the filial tear to smooth the thorny couch of death, or the hand of pious care to close the stiffening eye-lids, they dyed amidst the insults of their barbarous foes, unpitied and unknown, the hapless victims of their country's rights,—and to crown the scene, no funeral rites, nor yet a single monumental vestage to guide the future search of friends or relatives was bestowed, and their bones have until late, lay scattered on the surface of the earth, or half buried, bleaching by the rains of heaven,—served only to arouse the tender feelings of the soul, and impress an awful lesson on the mind of the refined cruelty of man.

But, my countrymen, the struggle is over, and a new order of things has long since taken place, a brighter era has dawned on our hopes, and we hope will continue to brighten with increasing time, our independence was completely secured, and our glorious revolution established forever.—Peace succeeded to the horrid clangour of war, our armies were disbanded and our chiefs retired conscious of a well acted part in the salvation of their country.

Again we were threatened with a more delicate danger, our original confederacy formed on the spur of the occasion, was found inadequate to the great purposes of social security, the spirit of rivalship had already made its appearance among the states, and the continuance or dissolution of our republic had become a matter of speculation; one party seems to have wished for two or more confederacies closely united. But the party who seems to have possessed the best talents, inclined to the formation of one consolidated and powerful government. It was in this crisis of affairs that the convention was called which formed and proposed to the people of these United States, that **CONSTITUTION** of our government, which ratified by the general will, has become the law of the land, the barrier and security of our liberties,

and which it has become our duty to transmit unimpaired, and if possible improved to posterity.

Again we behold the saviour of the liberties of his country, the illustrious Washington, called from his retreat to fill the presidential chair, the first office in the gift of the people, as honorable if not more so than any upon the globe ; to exercise the duties of a statesman, to guide the helm of our republic, at a moment which required all the exertions of genius; to establish permanent and equitable laws, and which has since been happily accomplished. Doubts at that time were industriously propagated with respect to the continuance of our system of government; we were told that the system we had chosen was the child of experiment, doubtful in its ends and operations, and that regal authority or institutions more or less absolute, would probably become our dernier resort.

But the fatal experience of antiquity, gathered from the history of nations who have gone before us, convinced us that regal authority was generally or always repugnant to the existence of public liberty, to the privileges, peace and happiness of mankind ; and the sacred name of freedom and of liberty still irresistably pervaded every honest heart.

It is from the general conduct and tenor of a government that we are to judge of its motives, and discover the principles by which it is guided :—and thanks to heaven, with few exceptions, we have no reason to complain ;—for in almost every instance the deliberations of our national legislature have been marked with wisdom ; and the measures that have been adopted have been productive of national prosperity ; the wise appointments that have in general been made, the establishment of a revenue for its support, the encouragement that has been given to commerce, and to useful inventions, open the fairest prospect for the continuance of peace, union and harmony throughout the states, for the increasing respectability of the whole.

National credit, which had sunk to a low ebb, has been restored by the funding system, though it is to be regretted that the delusive name of national honor, should so far have been wronged as to leave the war worn soldiers dressed with all their scars, and the widowed mother

surrounded with her orphans unprovided for. 'Tis true, their legal claims had long since ceased; to gain a scanty morsel to satisfy immediate hunger or thirst, or perhaps to gain one solitary comfort on the couch of pennury and sickness, the hapless child of poverty had parted with the paper which testified his claims against his country; hence they were found in the hands of unprincipled speculators, who had not fought nor yet served their country for them, and were funded to their full amount. Had our chiefs, to whom we looked, as dispensers of public justice, become the patrons of an injured soldiery, if to the unfortunate offspring or widowed wives of heroes slain in battle, if to the men who claimed a recompense for faithful valor, full compensation had been made, then with cheerfulness would we contribute in the cause of justice, and labor with redoubled diligence to satisfy such claims.

But their sufferings have ceased, many of them have now gone to the celestial regions to receive a better reward.

It may not be amiss here to observe that since our government is firmly established, we have now no need of keeping a standing army for domestic purposes, for we have seen that our national militia are fully adequate to the keeping of good order at home, and whilst we have no distant or useless colonies to defend, nor conquest to maintain, we can have no reasonable inducement to keep more men in pay, than what are absolutely necessary to keep our garrisons in repair; to keep more would not only be a useless expenditure of the national funds, but by taking from the citizen soldier the responsibility of protecting the government of his choice, you not only create in him a jealousy of every other measure, but you destroy that manly spirit of freedom, which it is necessary to keep alive in every well regulated republic.—It is always necessary that a due proportion of authority exists in all republics and our constitutions ought ever to contain strength sufficient to carry into effect the laws and intentions of the people or society for whose good they were formed—and that strength they will ever contain so long as a due obedience is paid to the laws, and our chiefs respected.

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Government will then possess that energy which many of our best citizens have complained that we wanted: yet, however I may differ from them in opinion which may originate, in the want of information on my part; permit me to observe that energy is only a delusive and imposing name for power, and when carried to excess, will ever tend to despotism, and that despotism will ever prove destructive of freedom.—Let me ask for a moment, what enabled Alexander to conquer the ancient world, or Ceasar to become master of Rome, but the energy of their power and of their arms, in which the voice of the great mass of the people was unheard, or if heard was overpowered;—or what at this day, has enabled the celebrated Buonaparte to spread conquest and desolation over Europe but the excessive energy of his power and of his arms, and by the energy of the former he perpetuates that of the latter.—What, at this day, supports the government of England in its wanton prodigality, in its enterprizes and perepetual wars, at the expence of their national happiness, and that of posterity, but the excessive energy of its funding system.

In the name of justice, then, my countrymen, let us beware of that government whose measures will not render itself respected without the aid of military force, remembering always that those who are called to fill the first offices of state, are not our masters but our chiefs, elevated by ourselves from the rank of humble equality to which we expect them again to return. So shall we keep alive the energy of public opinion, and by that means still hold the elevated rank of freemen.

But on the other hand if we suffer that to be lost, we dwindle into the abject condition of slaves, and the genius of liberty will fly from us forever.

Yes, the history of mankind, both ancient and modern, abundantly prove that it is more easy to acquire liberty than to preserve it, for it will always be found that without a general prevalence of virtuous sentiments, men will be found ever ready to surrender their political rights for temporary gratifications; and what is perhaps worse, we frequently find men of the best abilities so averse from application that they shrink from their most obvious political duties, remain ignorant of the concerns of their

country—or have become so warped by prejudice as to loose in the flame of party almost the shadow of truth; or have wantonly attacked the private characters of individuals in a manner that will ever tend to widen the breach of party, and debase the morals of society, leaving the true interests of their country unguarded.

Permit me to ask, is it not better that we harmonize our sentiments in union, lest some artful demagogue may find his way to a situation which will enable him to convert the offices of state into a fee simple for himself, or an inheritance for his dependents. Yet it is a pleasing reflection that a state like ours can never fall at once, so many barriers are provided by our federal and state constitutions, that the people cannot easily be taken by surprise; it is however proper that we guard against the operation of those causes which may possibly through some (at this day) unseen events, place us in the catalogue of nations who have acquired and lost their liberties—and to preserve ours it is necessary that a general diffusion of information take place, and in order to become good citizens it is necessary that we have some general knowledge of the laws by which we are governed, that we may know how to obey them; which at this day is in the power of every citizen. By means of the press, acting with such vast mechanical powers, knowledge is spreading, and ignorance, superstition, and tyranny are sinking before the rising sun of reason; and the human mind, it is to be hoped, brightened by its meridian rays, will continue to develop the science of happiness, and promulgate to the world whatever may ameliorate the condition of man. Yes, it is through the medium of the press that we must expect to derive our information, it is the lever by which the human mind is to be raised to an incalculable height; and we have just reason to expect that our free representation will guard the rights of the press, and that the press in its turn will spread that information among the people which is necessary to preserve the rights of representation, and diffuse energy and enterprize throughout the community.

We certainly receive much good information through the medium of our public papers, yet we have to regret from the violence of party spirit which at this day per-

vades all ranks of society, that information but too frequently comes distorted or misrepresented, and through that channel many of our more uninformed citizens have been rendered politically superstitious.

It is true we cannot all think alike, but we ought to treat each other in our investigations with candour and liberality. Remembering that violent declamation, though it may for a while impose on the credulous, yet it will never carry conviction to the honest or enquiring mind. Truth is one, and though our opinions are varied, yet I have candour enough to believe that many of you who differ from me in sentiment, and who are now convened in this assembly, have equally the good of your country at heart with myself. Let us then endeavor to promote whatever may have a tendency to encourage the practice of virtue, to improve the morals of the great mass of mankind, or insure the distribution of justice. We shall then avoid that unhappy gloom of indigence, fraud, servility, ignorance and superstition which has for ages past spread itself like an impenetrable cloud over great part of the Eastern world.

O happy Americans! learn to prize that which is good, remembering that though our sublunary state will ever be chequered with imperfections, yet we have great cause to be thankful for our unexampled prosperity, and let it be remembered, that a restless, a turbulent, or a divided people cannot long remain free. And at this time while our political horizon is obscured by the prospect of added violence to our commercial rights, it becomes our duty to harmonise our sentiments that we may be enabled to stand firm and united against the encroachments or influence of every foreign power; remembering always that it is of as much consequence that we support lawful authority at home, as that we resist the encroachments of the foreign oppressor.

If we cast a retrospective glance over these United States, we shall find tenfold reason to rejoice in the happiness we enjoy.—With a climate hospitable, a soil luxuriant, agriculture, arts and manufactures in a state of advancing improvement; our national debt under a wise administration has been rapidly diminishing; with commerce floating to and from every part of the globe

we have become rich in resources for happiness. Though at this time our commerce is restricted with an EMBARGO, which the contending powers of England and of France, by their orders of council and imperial decrees have compelled our government to resort to. And it may be asked what other mode, under existing circumstances could have been resorted to, with safety or honor to the nation; it has certainly been discussed in both houses of our national legislature, and passed by them, and by the approbation of the president has become a law of the land, and as such it is entitled to the respect and obedience of every good citizen;—to me it appears a matter of defence and of experiment.—Yet of its effects I shall readily own myself unable to judge. But trusting to the wisdom of the present administration, and believing it to be a measure justified by the critical circumstances of the times, I shall suspend all further opinion until we have seen its effects.

It appears that it has been and still is the opinion of some of our ablest statesmen, that our resources are fully adequate to the establishment of a permanent and respectable naval force, sufficient to induce a retreat from the wolfish and piratical mode of warfare adopted by the warring parties against us. And I presume there are many in this assembly, who with me wish that some system might take place, that would in future prevent the necessity of resorting to an embargo, or any such measure. Yet should the embargo continue for any length of time, there is no people on the face of this earth better able to live without foreign commerce than ourselves; though it is to be hoped that we shall not be driven to the sad necessity of sacrificing the best interests of our seaport towns on the Atlantic coast, to any or either of the contending powers of Europe.

Possessing an immensity of territory stretching over a variety of climate, and every thing necessary for subsistence, and all the raw materials for manufacturing; we have only to turn our attention to them, and we may still live free and independent of every other power upon the earth.

By the help of our roads and inland navigation, which are everywhere in a state of advancing improvement, we

Have been hitherto enabled to carry our inland trade in a state of high prosperity, from the coast of the ocean to the Lakes and the Mississippi, and from these waters again to the ocean. And though our political horizon is somewhat obscured at present, yet we hope the time is not far distant when those clouds shall be dissipated, and commerce unshackled shall waft with accelerated motion, the treasures of Columbia to every part of the earth.— And to effect this, and to give energy to our foreign affairs, as well as respect to our government and ourselves at home, it becomes not only our interest, but doubly our duty to unite on occasions like this.

American Fair, you who rule the milder empire, and by your sublime virtues calm the rugged passions of man, may you long continue the watchful guardians of virtuous liberty, and by the influence of your example teach us to be benevolent and just—remembering that the most obdurate heart will seldom or never resist the voice of patriotism when urged by female innocence and beauty. Remembering also, that if your influence be lost with the men, that society will become enervated,—sink into ignorance and become fit only to be governed by the most despotick sway.

Let us for a moment ere we close, turn our attention to our own section of the empire; to the State of Ohio, which little more than twenty years ago, was everywhere an absolute wilderness; and for several years since has been harrassed by a destructive Indian war, distressing and discouraging indeed to those bold adventurers (many of whom we recognize in this assembly,) whose talents and industry laid the foundation for our present and future happiness. And we have now the supreme felicity of beholding the state everywhere filling with respectable farmers; among the mass of whom, as it has long since been sagely observed, corruption of principle is a phenomenon, of which no country or age furnishes an example. Our extensive forrests are opining, towns are planned in addition to those that have already arisen, and by the steady hand of industry are rapidly advancing to that state of mediocrity in which is to be found the greatest share of happiness,—verifying a prophetic remark of Congress in a letter to their constituents in a

moment of gloomy despondency to the following purport. "Vast Lakes and Rivers scarcely known or explored, whose waters have rolled for ages in silence and obscurity to the ocean, and extensive wildernesses of extensive soil, the dwelling place of savage beasts, shall yet hear the din of industry, become subservient to commerce, boast delightful viles, gilded spires and spacious cities, rising on their banks, and fields loaded with the fruits of cultivation."—Yes, citizens, your own industry is verifying the prophetic remark: and we may contemplate the time as not far distant when we may behold the banks of the Muskingum, the Scioto, the Miamis and the Ohio, everywhere loaded with the brightest fields of vegetable gold, interspersed with towns and villages from their sources to their mouths, repaying the laborer with that peace, happiness and plenty, which heaven has decreed was his due.

With prospects like these before us, and professing but one religion, with some shades of difference, that of the Heavenly Jesus, which has stood the buffetings of its opponents for eighteen hundred years, let us learn to be happy.—Let us learn to deserve that glorious elevation which we have obtained by the favour of Heaven. And whilst we enjoy the pre-eminence of freedom let it be our's also to become pre-eminent in the practice of hospitality and of virtue, ever preferring death to slavery or subjugation, by or to any foreign power whatever; and know that it is the first duty of the citizen to guard against unlawful oppression.

Let us pay obedience to our laws, respect to our magistrates, practice justice and benevolence, and a spirit of toleration to the opinions of each other; so shall liberty and public happiness endure, long as the thunders roll, the rains beat, or the waters of Ohio continue to flow.

### S O N G,

SUNG AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE 4th OF JULY 1868,  
AT MARIETTA—COMPOSED FOR THE OCCASION.

#### I

Once more we behold the return of the day  
Which gave to our Liberty birth:

Once more sons of Freedom unite in the lay  
To associate in friendship and mirth.

Then swell the ~~choir~~, united we'll be free,  
And hail the birth-day of our Liberty.

2

See the Goddess of Liberty smiling descend,  
With the Charter of Freedom in hand,  
And cries "my brave sons *this* for you I'll defend,  
If firm and united you stand."

Then swell, &c.

3

Sons of Freemen, (our bosoms beat high at your names)  
We still will support your renown,  
What you bought with your blood on the blood-thirsty  
plains,  
Your sons will defend with their own.

Then swell, &c.

4

While the high car of crest-blazing liberty shines,  
Effulgent o'er this happy land,  
The flame shall evince to the far distant climes,  
That firm and united we stand.

Then swell, &c.

5

Tho' the thundering despots of Europe proclaim  
The horrors of war to our land,  
Such threats sons of Freedom will nobly disdain,  
If firm and united we stand.

Then swell, &c.

6

Thy daughters, O Liberty! claim our respect,  
Their beauties our senses surprize—  
'Tis the duty of Freemen the Fair to protect,  
The brave who are fair in their eyes.

Then swell, &c.

7

This Charter of Freedom thus given on earth,  
We'll preserve it as pure as 'twas giv'n,  
We will while we've breath—nay we'll grasp it in death,  
Then return it untainted to heav'n.

Then swell, &c.