



**AN ADDRESS**

**DELIVERED BEFORE**

**THE CONVENTION OF THE FRIENDS**

**OF PEACE**

**OF THE STATE OF NEW-JERSEY,**

*July 4, 1814,*

**BY LUCIUS HORATIO STOCKTON, Esq.**

**ONE OF THE DELEGATES FROM HUNTERDON**

CITY OF TRENTON, JULY 4, 1814.

*In Convention of the Friends of Peace.*

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, *That the thanks of this Convention be given to Lucius H. Stockton, Esq. for the eloquent and able Address delivered this day before the Convention, at their request; and that Gen. John N. Cumming, Col. Joshua L. Howell and William Griffith, Esq. members of this Convention, do present this resolution, and request from Mr. Stockton a copy of the Address for publication.*

(Signed)

WM. COXE, *President.*

F. DAVENPORT, *Secretary.*

*To Lucius H. Stockton, Esq.*

SIR,

*We present you with a resolve of the Convention of the Friends of Peace; permit us to take this opportunity of assuring you of our sincere respect, and the great regard with which we are your friends and humble servants.*

J. N. CUMMING,  
J. L. HOWELL,  
WM. GRIFFITH.

July 4, 1814.



## AN ADDRESS, &c.

WHEN in the illustrious society of the Cincinnati, and in this Convention of the Friends of Peace, I perceive assembled in this city a large number of the surviving patriots of the revolutionary war, which by severing the United States from the British empire admitted us to rank among the nations of the earth, I am impressed with sentiments of gratitude to the author of all good, who has continued to favor us with the countenance and counsels of so many of the companions of that illustrious man, who "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," has in the inscrutable counsels of the Almighty been called from terrestrial glory to "scenes where love and bliss immortal reign." This consideration, while it ought to convince us of the transient nature of human life and human prospects, increases our solicitude for the fate of our beloved country, which under the most gloomy aspect of former times, was cheered by the presence, the patriotism and the heroic achievements of that august character who was raised to be the founder and father of our nation. Had the sage counsels which on many occasions, and particularly in his valedictory address, he delivered as precious legacies to his country, influenced the conduct of those whom the illfounded confidence of a deluded people has elevated to the administration of our national concerns, we should have escaped that most disastrous complication of perils and dangers which is the occasion of our present meeting, and which designates this portentous æra so big with the fate of the western world. But notwithstanding the surrounding gloom, we ought not to despair of the commonwealth. The most sublime morality of heathen virtue has pronounced that good men struggling with the storms of fate, afford a sight interesting to the Deity, and we are encouraged by the dictates of our blessed religion to be armed in the panoply of a holy courage with the whole armour of God, that we may stand in the evil day.

Since the Friends of Peace two years ago assembled in this city, we have witnessed the most astonishing events which have occurred in the world for near eighteen hundred years. In these tremendous concussions in which he who "hath his way in the whirlwind and

in the storm, and who maketh the clouds the dust of his feet, arises to shake terribly the earth," the United States now have the deepest interest. Although warned by our departed political father against the dangers of foreign influence, and the entanglement of European connexions, our rulers have been so infatuated as to have yoked our country to the car of that ferocious monster who so lately waded to empire through the blood and tears of the oppressed nations of Europe.

Shortly previous to our last assembling here, and with a contemporaneous concert which can never be forgotten, did our government under various pretexts, without adequate preparation or military experience, with an empty treasury and without the smallest rational hope of removing or alleviating the grievances alledged as the causes of hostility, declare war against Great-Britain; at the same time, the ruler of France was continuing his astonishing exertions to establish his continental system to effect the ruin of that kingdom by an invasion of the powerful northern empire which then apparently afforded the only obstacle to the accomplishment of his views. Can we ever lose the recollection that this act of folly and desperation was perpetrated at the very period when years of unqualified humiliation and submission to that tyrant had manifested the vain hopes of those who thereby expected to conciliate his favour and obtain a restoration of the millions of our plundered property?—at the very season when the ocean was illuminated with the blaze of our defenceless ships destroyed in obedience to his piratical decrees, which it was shamelessly pretended had been almost two years before repealed. But our government were under the fatal delusion that it was necessary that the "super-eminent Napoleon," the mighty conqueror, the subjugation of Europe to whom was considered by our cabinet as certain, was to be appeased by whatever means. So bold were the conspirators against the peace of our country, that one of their most distinguished leaders on the floor of Congress was not ashamed to avow that France had twisted a knot around our necks which could only be cut by the sword of war. Behold their master, the tyrant of France, on whom their hopes were so much placed, advance in his murderous career—see him arraying by the terrour of his arms and the blandishments of his artifices, into one vast concentrated multitude, the congregated nations of Europe in his triumphant ranks, and at the head of near six hundred thousand victorious veterans, stimulated by the hope of plunder, and with their swords encrusted in blood, burst upon the Russian empire. In the sublime language of the holy prophet, "A fire devoureth

before them, and behind them a flame burneth; the land is as the garden of Eden before them; yea, and nothing can escape them." At this very time were our troops suddenly passing into the British province of Canada, with an avowed intention of conquering that country, which the war men staked their character, on a pledge which is to this day unredeemed, should be effected in less than six weeks. Great were the resources of the mighty Corsican in men, money, military munitions, and in the terror which the fame of his arms, by many deemed invincible, and of his arts so often successfully practised, had carried to every quarter of the globe. Nor did his tremendous hosts compose an undisciplined multitude; they were tried men. Inured to war and accustomed to victory, they constituted a body of more real military efficiency than any on which the sun had ever shone. The whole of these terrible legions was animated by the presence and driven by the command of a ferocious tyrant of consummate skill in the art of war, who had vanquished the most celebrated military chieftains of Europe, and who trampled under foot every law, human or divine, which opposed that dreadful sway of military despotism necessary to hew his way to universal empire. Under such circumstances, it is not wonderful that superficial observers (and of such consists a large portion of mankind) considered the subjugation of the Russian empire as certain. It was therefore in vain that men of sagacity attempted to array the testimony of history, sacred and profane, against the probability of his success in that chimerical and desperate enterprise. In vain did such men point to times which had elapsed for past centuries, in full proof of the improbability that any individual of modern times, however powerful, could succeed in a plan of universal conquest over countries where military knowledge had been generally diffused. In vain was the distinction pointed out between an ability in a military nation successfully to contend with another on common ground, and power in the first to effect an absolute subjugation of the other by invasion, although such distinction had been recently verified by the successful resistance of the power of France by Spain and Portugal. Nor did the natural course of human affairs, clearly proved by the lessons of history, usually to proceed in the alternate domination of contending nations and interests, admonish the devotees of Napoleon to be prepared for the turning of the tide which had so long continued to flow in his favour. It was in vain that our American Burke, the incomparable Ames, who in an intuitive perception and acute judgment of the motives which impel human politics, and of the resources of empires, was so unrivalled by his

cotemporaries, that many of his anticipations of future events have been since stamped almost with the authority of prophecy, had distinctly foreseen the probability that an effectual barrier to his gigantic power would be interposed by a cordial union between Great-Britain and Russia. Nor was the judgment and information of the most respectable and best informed Russian gentlemen resident among us, specifically stating the enormous resources of their mighty monarch, exceeding in territorial extent of dominion the empires of Alexander or Cæsar, and comprising a population exceeding forty millions of the most hardy and warlike races of men, of the least avail to check the general delusion. Nor did a recurrence to his over-weening pride, his self confidence in the arm of flesh, his wanton murders, his multiplied cruelties, his plundering oppressions, manifested by the groans and tears of the distressed nations which he was grinding to powder, so often characteristically denounced in the sacred writings as objects of the divine displeasure, produce any general conviction of the probability that he was reserved as a peculiar object of the retributive justice of the most high. So great is the impression produced on the human mind by present appearances, that even the plain testimony of the sacred prophecies, so positively and distinctly announcing that the mighty king of the north should continue to rule with great power until the time of the end, was equally unavailing to persuade the narrow politicians and fanatical seers of their own visions, of the delusion of believing in the conquest of Russia. In vain did the desperate exertions of the great Alexander, surrounded by his valiant hosts, led on by the unconquerable Kutosoff and by Bagration, Platow, Thichagoff, Orloff, Denizoff, Chernikoff and a host of other heroes, so bravely contending at Smolensko, Witepski, Wiasma and Borodino, and continually prepared to offer up their lives on the altar of the defence of their religion and country, interpose to check the infatuation. The official relations of their valorous deeds were (in the language of our ruling wretches) from the pens of slaves, the devotees of monarchs and the tools of Britain, and therefore not worthy of the least credit, while forsooth the French bulletins, which on all occasions claimed the victory, were received without hesitation as implicitly true. It is remarkable that our political doctors and unfledged politicians continually encircled themselves in those refuges of lies, and gravely maintaining that they were always substantially correct, and when even these were wanting, swallowing with avidity such absurd fabrications as carried intrinsic evidence of forgery on their very front, shut their eyes against the light of notorious facts, to

the last. But although few men of just views ever believed in the power of Bonaparte to effect the final subjugation of Russia, while the government and people were firm, yet it must be admitted that there was among the best and wisest men a fearful uncertainty of what might temporarily ensue under a doubt whether a pressure of the horrid cruelties of such warfare as had usually marked the career of the invaders, carrying fire, sword and pestilence in its train, would not have induced a compromising treaty which might increase the gigantic power of the tyrant. "But God seeth not as man seeth." It was in this tremendous crisis that he who sitteth on high ruling the armies of heaven and doing his good pleasure among the inhabitants of the earth, awarding not always the race to the swift or the battle to the strong, and who is able to abase those who walk in pride, in answer to the humble and fervent supplications of the Russian church and people, inspired the heroic, the magnanimous, the virtuous, the humane Alexander with a spirit of wisdom and firmness by which he was enabled, like an elevated and impregnable rock in the ocean, regardless of the billowy surges which in vain assail it, breaking in stormy tempests at its feet, to stand unmoved in the strength of his God: With a spirit one and indivisible, worthy a martyr's crown, which proceeding from the throne to the hovel, was infused into the whole nation, princes, nobles, merchants, landholders, labourers, clergy and laity; with a spirit which dashing every comfort but future hope from their lips, neither counted houses, riches, fathers, children, or *life itself dear*, in comparison with the defence of their sacred altars and the deliverance of their beloved country. A spirit which inspired the heroic Rastopchin to consign his most magnificent palace with that ancient and noble city of the imperial czars to the flames, the light of which has illuminated the world with its glorious splendours, and with the crash of its falling temples and lofty towers, like the thunder of the spheres, has shaken the earth to its centre, and struck a blow which is resounding through the universe. The sequel is too recent and familiar to require recital. Suffice it to say that this mighty army was broken into pieces like a potter's vessel, and in less than six months from the commencement of that campaign, in which the haughty tyrant with great swelling words of vanity had predicted the destruction of Russia, in language which has since been strictly fulfilled in his own ruin, his terrific legions which have not been numerically exceeded since those of Xerxes invaded Greece, were terribly overthrown in a manner which clearly manifests the interposition of an Almighty arm.— The consequences have been eventful, and to Europe the cause of

rejoicing. The enemy of the human race, although vainly striving to avert his destiny by the sacrifice of countless thousands successively arrayed in battle, has been driven more than two thousand miles from the banks of the Moskwa to the banks of the Seine; and after many a hard fought field, at Moioyaraflavitz, Dorogobush, Wilna, Donnovitz, Dresden, Leipzig, Brienne and Montmatre, deserted by all the oppressed nations who, though previously subjugated to his yoke and compelled for a season to be the unwilling instruments of his ambition, were finally the illustrious co-operators to effect his downfall, he has been completely vanquished by the triumphant entry of his enemies into Paris, and his deposition and banishment to an inferior and obscure Italian island. Of these nations, Prussia and Austria were so important as to be justly entitled to much glory. The king and emperor, with their valiant hosts, led by the illustrious and venerable Blucher, the gallant Schwarzenburgh, the distinguished Bulow, D'York, Kleist and other great captains, who, while by their splendid achievements they have acquired a fame which with imperishable splendour will descend to posterity, have justly merited as they have received the gratitude and admiration of delivered Europe. For, blessed be God, the mighty conquerors have triumphed but to save! The blood of no adversary avenged their conquests. He who ceased to resist was not merely spared, but cheered with the unloosing of his shackles, and the instruments of mercy to the world, they have undone heavy burthens and proclaimed liberty to the captive. And thou regenerated France, country of our early friends the martyred Louis and the gallant La Fayette, lately so unhappy, rejoice—yea I say rejoice that the Lord hath made bare his arm for thy release. Thy great destroyer is laid low. Delivered from a foreign yoke, and the scourge of that terrible conscription, which like a sweeping pestilence converted thy vine-covered hills and gay regions into a vast sea of blood, and brought tears and mourning into every house, long may thy happiness continue under the mild and restricted dominion of thy lawful prince, who guarantees a constitution securing the civil liberties of thy people. “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning; how art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also on the mount of the congregation in the *sides of the north*; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most high; yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, saying, is this the man that made



the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners. The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth; the whole earth is at rest and is quiet; they break forth into singing; yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us."

If the words of this holy prophecy foretel, as I believe they do, the wonderful events which have been occurring for these two past years, and which have terminated the career of this most dreadful *scourge of God*, they have been certainly and literally accomplished by the remarkable events which have been recapitulated. And here can we refrain from dropping a tear of sympathy to the fate of the patriotic Moreau and his beloved friend Rappart, with whose residence among us in this vicinity we were so lately for several years favoured? Many of us were honoured with a personal acquaintance with these heroes. We knew their worth, we admired their valour, and with their public character you must all be familiar. "But how are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished! how are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!" *Illustrious Frenchmen!* "They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. Lovely and pleasant were they in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."— They loved their country, and freely bled to achieve its deliverance from the yoke of a tyrannical monster. They fondly hoped after the end of all their toils and dangers, in unison with their heroic and common friend Bernadotte, reposing under the shade of their laurels, to be blessed with the consciousness of having rent the shackles of their dear France; but the triumphing joys of the princely survivor are tinged with the gloom under which, mingling with the tears of good men throughout the world, he mourns their departed glory. Hard was their fate! to close their weary eyes in the cold sleep of death in the meridian of their days, after so many years of perilous vicissitude, and when so near the promised land and the accomplishment of the object of all their hopes and labours. But inscrutable are thy ways O God! Resignation to thy holy will is our duty and our interest—

"How sleep the brave who sink to rest,  
 "By all their country's wishes blest!  
 "When spring with dewy fingers cold  
 "Returns to deck their hallow'd mould;

" She there shall dress a sweeter sod  
 " Than fancy's feet have ever trod.  
 " By fairy hands their knell is rung,  
 " By forms unseen their dirge is sung ;  
 " There honour comes a pilgrim gray,  
 " To bless the turf that wraps their clay ;  
 " And Freedom shall a while repair  
 " To dwell a weeping hermit there."

COLLINS.

But while these interesting scenes have been passing on the theatre of the old world, let us for a few moments take a more particular view of the events which have occurred in our own country.

While the nations of Europe are rejoicing in that universal peace which, overspreading their continent, affords a fair prospect of restoring for a season the halcyon days of the golden age—While sitting under their own vines and fig-trees without any to make them afraid, they are pouring forth songs of praise to the God of their deliverance, may I solicit your indulgence while I contrast *their happiness with our present situation*: and prospects. And these in comparison with what they might easily have been, had wiser counsels prevailed among our rulers, afford to the patriotic American the most painful and humiliating considerations. This impolitic war was originally declared against the united remonstrances of the wisest and best men of our country, against the clearest demonstration of what was required by an attention to the public interest, against the avowed and acknowledged sentiments of a very large majority of the most populous and military sections of the United States, and against the obvious dictates of common prudence and common sense. The progress of this disastrous contest has been precisely such as was reasonably to be expected from the circumstances under which it was commenced. It has been lamentably designated by the fulfilment of every evil which its opposers predicted, and by the complete disappointment of the hopes (if any such were really indulged) of those who anticipated any public benefits to flow from it. For my own part I am bold to say, and that not without a considerable degree of reflection and research, that the history of no civilized nation under the canopy of heaven affords a precedent which assimilates with the folly and madness with which our military affairs are conducted. In open hostilities commenced in our own time and by our own act, against one of the most powerful nations of Europe, which exclusively commands the high seas with more than a thousand public ships of war, with our exposed seaboard of above two thousand miles in extent, easily accessible, containing a

population perhaps of two millions of our most commercial people, inhabiting more than five hundred rich towns, with very incompetent fortifications, a brave and thinly scattered militia, but totally inexperienced in the art of war, and almost altogether unprovided with arms or military munitions, do we see our infatuated cabinet, untaught by experience and unconvinced by proof, year after year, continually transporting our regular troops to the northern frontier, where they are occasionally provoking the enemy by temporary incursions of marauding warfare, in which fire and sword is carried for a season into their colonies, but which notwithstanding the vaunting threats of the war men, the history of the last as well as the present contest, proves us to be utterly incapable of holding by permanent conquest. A man of common sense, or indeed one who is not bereft of his reason, can immediately see, that if the men who administer the affairs of this ill-fated country were intent, without the least adequate object, on bringing the most devastating calamities of war upon those who inhabit the important parts of the country exposed to the ravages of the foe, (I do not say they are so intent) they could not have adopted a plan to effect it more certain than the natural operation of their favourite system. In consequence of it, if we turn our eyes to the suffering sea coast, we see a small number of British vessels, with a few hundred men, spreading alarm, burning and devastation, through the whole maritime districts of New-England, storming our forts, harassing or leading captive our scattered people, burning and plundering our ships and other property, destroying all the accustomed employments of the people, by filling the whole country with terrour and confusion. To the south, we may behold a few ships of the enemy, sending their barges with about eight hundred men, ranging through the towns, plantations and warehouses at their pleasure, until they approach within a few miles of our capital, and finally destroying or bearing off in triumph, to the amount in value of nearly a million of dollars, one of the staple commodities of the country, from the afflicted inhabitants, who are crying in vain to our government for assistance and defence. In the mean time, the men of our famous administration, who, previous to their election, have so often sounded their pretended love of the people, are folding their hands, enjoying the splendid luxuries of life on their liberal salaries, and refusing to the wretched inhabitants the protection of a single brigade of the regular troops which have been raised in their own neighbourhood, and content themselves with giving the watch-word to their tools, to reiterate the childish clamour against the *cruel warfare of the British*, as if it were very extraordinary that a certain cause

of their own creation should produce its natural effect. From the unpopularity of the war in the most populous states, or the peculiar state of our society so unfavourable to raising an army by voluntary enlistments, from the pacific habits of our people, without military discipline or experience, the total want of all previous preparation or collection of military munitions, of all which difficulties our cabinet was originally forewarned in the most distinct manner, by many of the friends of peace, and particularly by General German and Mr. Bayard, who in the Senate delivered the most conclusive speeches against the war; and notwithstanding the unprecedented bounty of a hundred and twenty-four dollars to each man, they are unable to raise more than the mere skeleton of an army. Of that wretched aggregate which has the name of an army, I am authorized by an authentic document to say, that there were lately one thousand deserters who had escaped, after having received the bounty. Although without the ability to concentrate more than seven or eight thousand regular troops at any one point, and probably at no one time with fifteen thousand effective regulars really enlisted, *for the greater part of the war* they have had under pay a host of supernumerary officers, adequate to an army of more than fifty thousand men, eating out our substance, some of whom in many parts of the country, are oppressing and dragooning our defenceless citizens. The few really able officers in our service, they have mostly kept in inferior stations, and the government of our armies chiefly committed to a series of unskilful, cowardly, treacherous or enervated dotards. proceeding from Hull to Dearberne, Winchester, Smythe, Wilkinson, Hampton and M'Clure, until having lost fifteen or twenty thousand of our best troops by disease, captivity and the sword, sacrificed army after army, and by the most shameless prodigality and favouritism, by which their creatures, to whom they grant the public contracts are rioting on the public distresses, having contracted a debt exceeding one hundred millions of dollars, lost part of our own territory, our whole New-York frontier frightfully desolated, and being actually put to our defence, we have not only been reduced to the utmost contempt among the nations of the earth, but have even become the scoff and by-word of the very refugees of Canada and Nova-Scotia. In contemplating these melancholy scenes, may I not in the inspired language of that sacred bard, whose hallowed lips when touched with holy fire, so mournfully sung his people's woes, exclaim, "Remember O Lord what has come upon us; consider and behold our reproach; our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses aliens." Nor are our difficulties less dis-

tressing than various and complicated. The public exigencies are so enormously disproportioned to our financial resources, that our government is evidently at the mercy of a set of furious stock-jobbers, who are fattening on the distresses of the public treasury, to recruit which, frequently so empty as to leave every public creditor, not excepting our gallant seamen, for months in arrear of their dues, and by which they are often prevented from enlisting men, loans are effected on the most ruinous terms. If these proceedings be not speedily arrested, the nation can be saved from a state of bankruptcy only by the imposition of such monstrous burthens on the people, *as will fix a load on us and our posterity which will send many an honest man in the nation supperless to a bed of straw, and convert ourselves and our offspring into hewers of wood and drawers of water for generations to come.* But the government sycophants are continually ringing in our ears, that notwithstanding our hopes have been blasted by a very unfortunate progress of events, yet that the war, being *properly commenced on good and sufficient grounds*, it is our duty to unite our exertions to bring it to a favourable issue. Let us spend a few minutes in enquiring into the solidity of this pretence. And here we will refresh our memory by recurring to that most luminous and interesting state paper, promulgated by the honourable George Sullivan and thirty-three other patriotic members of the minority of the house of representatives, who have immortalized their celebrated names by the firm though temperate stand which they made at that day of threatened peril and calamity which immediately succeeded the commencement of this war. I take the present opportunity of saying, that in my opinion, the people of this country received more benefit from that protest than they ever did from any publication since the valedictory address of president Washington. It certainly encouraged, in a high degree, the commencement of a set of measures directed against the authors of this ruinous war; which opposition, although prosecuted under various vicissitudes, will yet, I trust, be successful to effect their final overthrow, than which, a greater national benefit cannot possibly occur. Let me therefore embody a few important facts, brought to my recollection by a recent perusal of that interesting document. The avowed pretexts on which this war was commenced, were the orders in council, illegal blockades and impressment of seamen. Notwithstanding reliance was placed on the first as the principal cause collateral to the others, yet it soon appeared that in reality it had very little efficiency in producing that disastrous measure which, like the fabled box of Pandora, has been ever since scatter-

ing ills through our land. The orders in council which, whether originally unjustifiable, or provoked by the necessity of resisting the decree of Berlin and the notorious departure from neutrality between the belligerent powers, which had marked the conduct of our government and people, need not now be discussed. The fact is, that they had been repealed contemporaneously with our declaring of the war, of which, official intelligence was afterwards conveyed to our executive by admiral Warren, who came with the olive branch of peace, and clothed with full powers to effect an armistice preparatory to negociation. This overture, which with a previous one made to the same effect, though so adapted to the wishes and hopes of every wise and good man, and so imperatively required by the true interests of the country, with an infatuation which can never be sufficiently deplored, was rejected without hesitation by our administration. The ostensible pretext for this desperate measure, was a refusal by Great-Britain to suspend, during the negociation, the practice of impressment, though it is remarkable that no equal period since the peace of 1783, had occurred in which there were so few well founded complaints of this grievance, as in the four years immediately preceding the declaration of the present war. It is equally remarkable, that in the arrangement made with the British minister Erskine, in the year 1809, disavowed by the British government on account of an expression introduced by president Madison, personally disrespectful to their monarch, and in the propriety of which arrangement all parties appeared satisfied, and for which our president received universal applause, not the least allusion is made to the subject of impressment. In reality, this grievance has been always greatly exaggerated by interested partizans, who have inflamed the minds of our people into a high degree of irritation, by the perversion of facts. The truth is, that the British have *never claimed a right to impress our seamen*. This was distinctly admitted by our government when president Madison, then secretary of state, in his letter to Messrs. Pinkney and Monroe, dated 3d February, A. D. 1807, uses these expressions: "I take it for granted that you have not failed to make due use of the arrangement concerted by Mr. King with lord Hawkesbury, in the year 1802, for settling the question of impressment. On that occasion, and under that administration, the British principle was fairly renounced in favour of our flag, lord Hawkesbury having agreed to prohibit impressments on the high seas, and lord St. Vincents requiring nothing more than an exception of the narrow seas, an exception resting on the obsolete claim of Great-Britain to some peculiar dominion over them." From this it appears that the English government agreed to re-

nounce impressment on the high seas, in favour of the American flag, and was disposed to come to an arrangement of the subject. What then is the right which *the British do claim* on this point? It is distinctly this, the right to *seize and search* for *their own seamen*, vast numbers of whom sail under false or fictitious American protections, found on board our *private merchant ships*, a right which they claim and enforce on every other nation, and which they will never surrender to any in the universe. A British minister who should have the hardihood to do it, would be considered as having betrayed the nation by the concession of a right essential to her existence as a maritime power, and would probably answer it with his life; for it has been reserved for *the American people* to exhibit the singular spectacle of that delusion by which they have not merely suffered with patience the most barefaced prostration of their national interests by their own agents, but of rewarding those agents with their confidence and applause. President Madison, in his message to congress in May 1813, expressly denies that Great-Britain has any such right, and hence it is that a late official paper promulgated 30th April last, by the lords of the British admiralty, declares as to the dispute with the United States, that "the previous question now at issue, is the maintenance of those maritime rights which are the sure foundations of their naval glory." Before the insanity of the war men had produced the present disastrous contest, this had ever been considered by both governments rather as a subject of friendly negotiation than as cause of war, and in fact a safe and favourable accommodation did take place in the year 1806 between them, by a kind of treaty entered into with Great-Britain, by Messrs. Monroe and Pinkney on our part. This arrangement would have practically relieved us from the operation of the grievances in regard to impressment of which we complain. Mr. Monroe, the present secretary of state, though he has since been an advocate for war on the avowed ground of impressment, in a letter which he wrote to Mr. Madison on the 28th February, A. D. 1808, on this subject, uses these words: "I have on the contrary, always believed, and still do believe, that the ground on which that interest [impressment] was placed by the paper of the British commissioners, of the 8th November A. D. 1806, and the explanation which accompanied it, was both honorable and advantageous to the United States; that it contained a concession in their favour on the part of Great-Britain, on the great principle in contestation, never before made by a formal and obligatory act of their government, which was highly favourable to our interest." Although this man

could state such opinions, yet since his admission into the administration on certain terms, which are said to be a support of him on a future choice of president, by the prevailing party, we see him an active partisan in making a war on the ground of impressment. —So pliable is the patriotism of our pretending republicans! If it be asked why this favourable arrangement was not consummated by our government; fellow citizens, let it never be forgotten, that it was because Mr. Jefferson, then president of the United States, labouring under the mania of believing the downfall of Great-Britain at hand, promptly rejected it, without deigning to lay it before the senate, his constitutional advisers, and possessing a co-ordinate power in making treaties. Under such circumstances, however, we may lament and deplore the fate of our unfortunate fellow citizens impressed by the British, I can never conscientiously deem it a sufficient cause of the war declared, especially when the hope of alleviating or removing by hostilities the alledged cause, is so totally desperate. The war men, however, are very careful to keep as much as possible entirely out of public view these important facts, by increasing the clamour against Great-Britain, under a pretext that she claims a right to impress our seamen, and by magnifying in more than a four-fold ratio, the numbers of those who actually are impressed. This is remarkably verified by the most authentic documents produced before the legislature of Massachusetts, as well as by the most accurate calculations made by the honorable Mr. Taggart, member of congress from that state, and many other well informed merchants and politicians, representing and residing in those districts which own a very large proportion of the ships and sailors of the United States. It is well known that these documents and calculations which are before the public, exceedingly diminish the number of seamen pretended to be impressed, by those who inhabit the western parts of the United States, and who are totally unacquainted with the subject, and demonstratively prove many mistakes and repetitions which have been foisted in to swell those lists, which are even pretended to bear the stamp of official authority. It is also very remarkable, that from the states north and east of the Delaware, containing such an immense majority of the sailors and shipping of the United States, there were thirty-six members of the house of representatives which declared war, opposed to that measure, while there were but seventeen from those states who voted for it; and that in the present congress, the proportion of members from the same states who are opposed to the war, is much greater. It is not worth while to spend much time on the pretended illegal



blockades. With regard to the one issued by the British ministry on the 16th May A. D. 1806, it is plain that it afforded merely an ostensible pretext, and was not a real cause of this war; to shew this, it ought to be carefully remembered that it was originally and for years after its promulgation, viewed by our government in the most favourable light. It was created under the ministry of that distinguished friend to the United States, the late right honourable Charles J. Fox, the co-patriot and companion of those illustrious noblemen and gentlemen composing the whig interest of the British empire, who for seven successive years during the revolutionary war, so much distinguished themselves in the British parliament in advocating the rights, liberties and interests of America—the fellow labourer in that just cause, with the distinguished nobles Rockingham, Richmond, Camden, Shelburne, Portland, Effingham, and the patriotic commoners Burke, Saville, Sheridan, Conway, Barre, Pitt the younger, Dunning, Cavendish, Manners, marquis of Granby, and a host of others, to whose persevering exertions the so early termination of that bloody war, which ended in our confirmed independence, may under Providence be so much attributed. Mr. Monroe, then our minister to the British king, and now one of the cabinet, who recommended this war, in his letters of the 17th and 20th May, and the 9th June A. D. 1806, expresses his opinion of this blockade as a conciliatory measure. In that of the 20th May, he thus writes to Mr. Madison, that he “had been strengthened in the opinion that the order of the 16th was drawn with a view to the question of our trade with enemies’ colonies, and that it promises to be highly satisfactory to our commercial interests.” With these facts staring them in the face, it was certainly a matter of some delicacy for the war men in congress to assign this very order as one of the pretexts for the present war, which they nevertheless did in a manner which, although not very conclusive, is somewhat ingenious. The lengthy report of the committee who reported the act declaring war in June 1812, which contains the arguments pretending to justify it, in speaking of this blockade, has these words; “Your committee think it just to remark, that this act of the British government does not appear to have been adopted in the sense in which it has since been construed. On consideration of all the circumstances attending the measure, and particularly the character of the distinguished statesman who announced it, we are persuaded that it was conceived in a spirit of conciliation, and intended to lead to an accommodation of all differences between the United States and Great-Britain.— His death disappointed that hope, and the act has since become

subservient to other purposes. It has been made by his successors a pretext for that vast system of usurpation which has long oppressed and harrassed our commerce." This general assertion that the blockade of May 1806, admitted to have been intended as favourable to us, was afterwards perverted to our prejudice by an untenable construction given to it by the British ministry, appears to me altogether unfounded. No proof (except the uncorroborated allegation of the war men) is afforded in support of it. I am persuaded that their objecting to it was an after thought, instigated by Bonaparte, and this is palpably evident, when it is remembered that it was never made the subject of remonstrance by our government during its practical continuance, nor until information had been received that it had been complained of by him. It is also to be observed, that as late as the month of October 1811, the secretary of state, Monroe, while writing to the British minister on the subject of this blockade, says, "It strictly was little more than a blockade of the coast from Seine to Ostend. The object was to afford to the United States an accommodation respecting the colonial trade." Such were the flimsy pretexts in which our devoted country, in a most unprepared state, was forced into a bloody war, with an empire possessing a more concentrated aggregate of effective military power by sea and land, than any other nation of the earth. Nor are the considerations which have been mentioned to shew the deceitfulness of the ostensible pretexts for this fatal step less conclusively manifested by an attention to some extraneous views and circumstances, which convince me that we must seek elsewhere for its real causes. More than two years ago, and for two months before this contest commenced, every eye was awake and every ear open to the events which were passing at Washington; and especially for the last four weeks, the measure so much dreaded was canvassed on every occasion in public and private conversation among our citizens. All the pretexts assigned by the men of blood in favour of the awful mischief which they meditated, were discussed and well understood. Many public meetings in New-Jersey were held, in which the people appeared to express an universal sentiment adverse to the war. Not a solitary expression of public opinion could be extorted from a man in our state, recommending it. I can seriously declare, that in various conversations which I held at that eventful crisis, with many hundreds of my fellow-citizens, including I think more than one hundred of those who profess a confidence in the present administration, *I do not remember one* who, before the declaration of war, *decidedly advocated that*

*measure.* A few of them told me, that though they doubted its expediency, yet confiding in government, they would acquiesce in its decision, which, however, they seemed to hope would not lead to immediate hostilities; but a large majority expressed their decided opinion against it, and some of them declared in my hearing, that they considered the rumours attributing to our cabinet an intention to declare war, as fabricated by those who wished to destroy the *popularity of the administration.* But mark the sequel. The infatuated delusion of the war leaders, precipitating the passage of the Rubicon, resort was really made to the desperate expedient, and lo! the patriots of their ranks, soon drilled to fall in with the destructive march, afford to posterity another memorable proof that with too many, the shackles of party can only be unloosed by the hand of death. Although first struck dumb with the astonishing rashness of an act so little expected, and so unwelcome to many who feared the destruction of their party would ensue, gradually, though for some time more faintly justifying it, they proceeded, until finally not one in fifty of them but what became strenuous in its support. A few honorable exceptions, among which the names of Lambert and Hufty, the latter of whom, from his youth devoting himself to the service of his country, has lately, we trust, passed from works to celestial rewards, are conspicuously pre-eminent. But another most interesting and important source of argument, strongly applies to resist the idea, that the propriety of this war can be maintained on the intrinsic merits of truth and reason;—when these fail, history shews that wicked men in every age of the world, have often resorted to slander, and outrage, to enforce on others an acquiescence, by a system of constraint and terrour. Can we ever forget that system of menace and murderous violence which immediately succeeded the declaration of the present war? of that system which commencing in the fabrication of false accusations against our best citizens, aimed at the extinction of civil liberty, by the destruction of the freedom of speech and of the press? Aimed at the prostration of those constitutional privileges which, consecrated by the blood of our fathers, the freemen of the United States claim as their most precious inheritance, “as the inestimable palladium of their rights, and which are formidable only to tyrants?” Who among us is not alive to the remembrance of the perilous vicissitudes of that reign of terrour in which the ferocious leaders of the war party universally attempted to intimidate the friends of peace, from the expression of their political sentiments, but in which diabolical attempt they were happily, in most of the states, completely foiled?

Who does not sympathize with the helpless widow and distressed orphans, at the remembrance of those heart-rending scenes in a neighbouring city, in which their base tools imbrued their wicked hands in the blood of the venerable and martyred Lingan, while making bare his war worn breast, and vainly pleading the merits of those scars which in his youth he had received, while fighting the battles of an ungrateful country, on the face of which his murderers yet stalk at large with impunity? Sainted shade! accept the tribute of our grateful tears! If civil liberty be not an empty sound, thy memory shall be ever dear to the American people, and thy name decked with a wreath of immortal renown, shall in the page of history be enrolled with those worthies of the world who like thee have died in defence of the liberties of their country; with the self devoted Regulus, Marcus Curtius and Decii of antient Rome; with More, Hampden, Sydney, Russel and Gardiner of Great-Britain; with Warren, Montgomery, Nash, Wooster, Mercer, Campbell, Laurens, and all that illustrious constellation of American martyrs who offered up their precious lives as a sacrifice to the cause of truth.—And ye surviving worthies and co-patriots, who shrunk not appalled at the sight of those toils and imminent dangers which surrounded your labours in the same sacred cause, we thank thee, O father of mercies! that by thy protecting providence brought through the fiery furnace, their lives were miraculously and mercifully preserved from the savage attacks of ruffian brutality, and that they still live the safeguard, the ornament and defence of their country. The name of Lee, especially that of *Henry Lee*, celebrated in the war of our independence, who in his youth had so often risked his life to procure for his country the privileges which were then denied him, on that melancholy occasion, cruelly suffered and bled by the side of his murdered friend. His gallant co-patriots Hanson, our American Percy, Musgrove, Gaither, Hall, Nelson, Kilgour, Warfield, Murray, Thompson, Winchester, on all of whom the blood-thirsty monsters inflicted the most excruciating tortures, with Crabb, Sprigg, Payne, Pringle, Bigelow, Schley, Shreeder, Kennedy, Gwinn, Richards, Hoffman, Bend, and all the other gailant spirits associated on those dreadful nights, will be hailed by an admiring world, and their names celebrated in the poet's song, will be chaunted in the classical effusions of some future Thomson, Collins or Dwight, and recorded by some of our American Ramsays or Marshalls, will rival in story the venerated names of Hancock, Adams, Otis, Franklin, Wither- spoon, Randolph, Gadsden, Laurens, and all the other American worthies who counted not their lives dear, so that they might de-

liver their country from the yoke of bondage. But it has been frequently asked, was this measure countenanced by the ruling party? I answer with heartfelt pleasure, that many worthy men in New-Jersey and elsewhere, who from the imperfection of human judgment are deluded into a partiality for the present administration, but whose dispositions and character *in private life* are truly amiable, reviewed these base transactions with unqualified abhorrence, is *not to be doubted*; of this, it is particularly pleasing to me to be able to say, that the angelic conduct of the *two democratic physicians, Hall and Owen*, affords a remarkable example. Ye merciful men! to you under God we are undoubtedly indebted for the preservation of the lives of these survivors. May he whose tender mercies are over all his works, and who in the gloom of that bloody night inspired you with a ray of his own darling attribute, when the eclat of talents and distinctions have ceased to command the admiration of the world; in that solemn hour when your disembodied spirits shall be winging their flight to his awful bar, leaving the frail tenements of your mortal bodies to descend to the caverns of that dark and narrow house appointed for all the living; when on a dying pillow you are about eternally to close your eyes on the turbulent scenes of this wretched vale of tears, may he in his infinite mercy grant that your last moments may be cheered by the consolatory assurance, that to each of you shall be verified the evangelical promise, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." Justice also requires us to add, that Colonel James A. Buchanan, Mr. Lemuel Taylor, and several others of the same party whose names are not so distinctly known or recollected, interposed their unavailing efforts to resist these abominable acts, and that their conduct affords a strong contrast with that of Stricker, and perhaps some others, whose malignant treachery or reprehensible negligence contributed to the facility and impunity with which these murderous outrages were perpetrated. Having thus admitted what truth requires us to acknowledge in favour of the conduct of some of our political adversaries, it is equally due to justice to observe, that the massacre at Baltimore was unquestionably countenanced and openly approved by many of the flagitious leaders of the war party, in every part of the country, and that they persevered in this course until silenced by the indignant voice of the people they perceived it was destroying their party, is a fact too recent and notorious to be evaded by effrontery or falsehood. That president Madison approved of it, has been strongly believed from his preventing the militia of the District of Columbia, over whom he has controul, from joining in the funeral honours paid to the memory of general Lingan.

Thus, fellow citizens, I have attempted to show that we ought not to support this dreadful war, by which we have been so much scourged, under a pretence that it was *necessarily declared on just and sufficient grounds*. I have endeavoured to prove, and I hope to your satisfaction, that the avowed causes of it *were not and are not sufficient to have warranted the measure*; and have tried to make it plain from reasoning on the alledged pretexts of its supporters, and from a review of many concomitant circumstances, to produce a conviction that it was really declared through some hidden motives which have never yet been avowed by its authors. That they have in a very palpable manner *either wilfully or ignorantly* misapprehended the interests of the nation, is now too clear to create a doubt in the mind of any reasonable man. It has already, though pretendedly waged to secure free trade and sailors' rights, totally destroyed our immense commerce, much decreased the number of our seamen, alarmingly increased the price of every necessary of life, and produced a great addition of taxes, while it has much diminished our means of paying them. It is also obvious, that there is not the most remote probability that we can obtain from Great-Britain better terms than those on which she offered to adjust the disputes between us before we commenced the war, a state of things distinctly pointed out by many of the opposers of the war, and particularly in that admirable address issued two years ago, at a general convention of the Friends of Peace, then assembled in this city, well worth the labour of an attentive perusal at this time. Such a review would shew that almost every prediction contained in it, of the consequences of the war, have been strictly fulfilled. But it has been the fate of the best friends of our country, that their anticipations of evil, like those of Cassandra, have been unhappily disregarded. But the ills with which we are threatened in future, are of a degree still more alarming than those which we have already suffered. Hitherto our foe has been fully employed in Europe. Now, without an ally in the universe, and which renders our situation infinitely more disastrous than it was even in the revolutionary war, when we had the co-operation of France, Spain and Holland, we have to contend single handed against the whole force of the British empire, with the whole world in amity, and the most close alliance of every nation in Europe, a disposable force of more than one thousand ships of war, and above two hundred thousand disciplined veterans who have vanquished the best appointed armies ever brought into the field. In this situation, though as christians we ought to be thankful for the dispensations of God which have brought relief

to the suffering nations of Europe, yet as Americans it behoves us to rejoice with trembling. To me it appears, that our bleeding country, like a way-faring and benighted traveller who, allured by the delusive gleam of the ignis fatuus, has been brought through mazy windings and devious paths to the edge of a frightful precipice, is on the brink of destruction, and it is a mortifying evidence of the dreadful manner in which the destiny of the United States has been linked with that of the wretch whose overthrow has emancipated the nations of Europe, that prudence and patriotism restrains in some degree the inclination which we should otherwise have felt, in joining in the general rejoicing at his downfall. His downfall has rendered his adversaries, as to human appearances, all powerful; and although we may have hopes from their magnanimity, yet we must at present suspend our opinions, not knowing what may befall us. That sublime orator and profound delineator of human affairs, the late right honorable Edmund Burk, says, "I will not rejoice to hear that men can do what they please, unless I know what it pleases them to do"—a sentiment which must necessarily affect our present feelings, in contemplating the state of Europe, in contrast with that of our own country. It is evident that we are reduced to a crisis which must inevitably terminate in one or the other of these three distinct events; *either first*, that we shall be compelled by an overwhelming force, through hard necessity, to accept such a peace as may be dictated by the enemy, on disadvantageous or dishonorable terms; *or secondly*, that refusing to accept such a peace, we shall be forced to wage a war of defence, highly sanguinary, fearfully doubtful in its issue, and jeopardizing to our very national existence; *or lastly*, that we shall obtain a peace on reasonable terms, conceded by the generous magnanimity of the country against which our government has declared war, but which we cannot, with the least reason, hope will be on more favourable ground than that which could have been obtained before it was commenced. The first of these events, every patriot would deplore, and resist at the risk of every thing dear. The second would involve the most distressing scenes of carnage and ruin, and the last, which although the least grievous, if it should occur, would be humiliating to the nation, and utterly disgraceful to our rulers. To this awful situation have we been reduced by the folly or wickedness of those who have been for years gulling the people by prophecying smooth things, and vaunting high sounding pretensions to public confidence—by men who destroyed the public interests by infusing into the minds of the people the most inveterate prejudices against the best patriots of America, the compan-

ions of the illustrious Washington, and the witnesses and co-partners of his perils and his glory; against Hamilton, Knox, Pickering, Strong, Gilman, Gore, Trumbull, Jones, Tracy, Tallmadge, King, Morris, Paterfon, Frelinghuysen, Schureman, Neilson, Sinickson, Ross, Bassett, Carrol, Harper, Rutledge, Tho's and Cotesworth Pinckney, and a host of others, the recapitulation of whose well known names would trespass too much on your time. By that party, many of the leaders whereof, instead of *skulking into corners to hide themselves from the view of a justly indignant nation*, which by their abominable intrigues they have brought to the brink of ruin, are still to this day, with matchless effrontery, endeavouring to call the public attention from a review of their own mal administration, by reiterating the most stale and often refuted charges against the disciples of Washington, of British attachments, toryism, and hostility to the liberties and independence of their country; as if it were probable that the survivors of those who achieved our deliverance from the British yoke, after having grown gray in the service of their country, and when about descending to mingle with the cold and silent clods of the valley, and to render a solemn account to the righteous judge of the universe, would close the last acts of the political drama, by betraying that dear country, so often saved by the instrumentality of their virtue and valour, and as if the sons of their co-patriots, on whom the grave has already closed, were unworthy of their sires.

The creatures of the party, who have brought this unparalleled distress upon us, are now calling us to union, and alluding to the days of 1776, appeal to our patriotism! And are these the men who talk of PATRIOTISM?—of UNION! It is true we ought to exercise both the one and the other, as really necessary for the salvation of our afflicted country; but the best proof which the people can give of their PATRIOTISM, is to have the greatest UNION in exercising their suffrages to displace those who have wantonly brought the greatest calamities on the nation. But the *patriotism* and the *union*, according with the views of these men, is the *support of themselves* and a co-operation in their ruinous schemes; and if the people, under the necessity of union and patriotism, continue to support *them*, it will be acting with the insanity of a man who, discovering that he has been made sick by the poisonous drugs of a quack who had imposed himself as a skilfull physician, because resignation to providential dispensations is a duty, should continue to cherish the impostor and to take his vitiated medicines. These demagogues have for years converted clamorous and unfounded charges against our real patriots, as adherents of Great-Britain,



alleged to entertain serious views against our interests and our liberties, into the instrument by which they acquire ill gotten power. Now I think that if Great-Britain really indulge such designs against the United States, that her adherents among us (if any such there be) would act the wisest part in contributing every possible exertion to prevent a change of the present administration, which is approximating with the most awful rapidity to a crisis which must be devoutly wished by any nation really seeking our destruction. “The ruin or prosperity of a state (says the celebrated author of Junius’s letters) depends so much upon the administration of its government, that to be acquainted with the merit of a ministry; we need only observe the condition of the people. If we see them obedient to the laws, prosperous in their industry, united at home and respected abroad, we may reasonably presume that their affairs are conducted by men of experience, abilities and virtue. If on the contrary, we see a universal spirit of distrust and dissatisfaction, a *rapid decay of trade*, dissensions in all parts of the empire, and a total loss of respect in the eyes of all foreign powers, we may pronounce without hesitation that the government of that country is weak, distracted and corrupt. The multitude in all countries are patient to a certain point. Ill usage may rouse their indignation and hurry them into excesses, but the original fault is in government. Perhaps there never was an instance of a change in the circumstances and temper of a whole nation so sudden and extraordinary as that which the misconduct of ministers has within a few years produced. After a rapid succession of changes, we are reduced to that state which hardly any change can mend. Yet there is no extremity of distress which of itself ought to reduce a great nation to despair. It is not the disorder, but the physician. It is not a casual concurrence of calamitous circumstances; it is the pernicious hand of government which can alone make a whole people desperate. Without much political sagacity, or any extraordinary depth of observation, we need only mark how the principal departments of the state are bestowed, and look no farther for the true cause of every mischief that befalls us.” This melancholy picture, though intended to portray a corrupt ministry of another nation, and of former times, is unhappily too exactly applicable to the state of our own country.— But I am perfectly aware that all this may be answered with calumny and abuse, and perhaps some worthless demagogue who has been for years fattening on the spoils of the public, exhibiting the infallible mark of that low, vicious temper which cherishing base motives of action, attributes them to others, will repeat the charge

so often fabricated and circulated against the real followers of Washington and Friends of Peace, and lustily exclaim with sneering taunts, "*We do not regard what you say. You are seeking the loaves and fishes of office.*" If one of the unworthiest among my political friends may be permitted to speak in the name of the whole, I would repel the charge with indignant decision. I would say of it—We are acquitted by the voice of our own conscience and the testimony of our conduct. Had we been thus unworthily influenced, we had not for near *fourteen years struggled against popular delusion.* I would tell our accusers that we were as sharp sighted to discern the infatuation which for years has clearly pointed to the sources of wealth and power, as any of that numerous family constituting the great household of the Vicar of Bray. I would tell them that we could not be insensible of the rewards which they have been continually lavishing on those apostates who are deserters from our principles, and that had we really sought the emoluments of political life, we with these, many of whom are now their most active partizans, would have seasonably altered our course to swim down the current of the prevailing tide, before an exhausted treasury and ruined country had so effectually destroyed the prospect of their having any loaves and fishes to bestow. I would say to them the sons of Washington are not ambitious of public employments. Restore to us the days of peace and prosperity for which our beloved country is groaning, and by which it was so signally distinguished when the *administration was in our hands,* and we, cheerfully rejoicing in the shades of retirement and the sweets of domestic life, will never envy the responsible and care-corroding possessors of public office.

It is not without much reflection and many mental exercises, that I have been constrained to deliver so public a testimony in recital of these painful facts and views. If I labour under erroneous apprehensions, and have mistated any thing, I shall regret it as an infirmity of my nature. I think that I have delivered many *solemn and important truths*; but if in this idea I am under a delusion, it must arise from an obliquity of intellect, and not from a malignity of my heart, which assures me that I am sincere. To what purpose then do you ask, is the disclosure of so many mortifying considerations made at this day of peril. I answer that the *whole* need not a physician, but the *sick.* We must be sensible of the disease before we can be persuaded to seek the remedy; nor is the expectation of benefit from such a discourse, altogether hopeless. A man who is dreaming over the brink of a precipice, or whose house is on fire while he is asleep, though in the moments

succeeding his first awaking he may be displeas'd with such as disturb him, yet when he comes to his senses he will be thankful to those who alarmed him to a sense of his danger. Believing that the salvation of my country depends on the speedy removal of the political delirium which has so long enchanted the people, I cannot longer hold my peace. Our country is dear to us. The obligations which we owe to it are not released by the most obstinate perieverance in error, indulged by those whom God in judgment hath permitted to rule over us. The powers that be, though they may be sent in visitation for our national transgressions, yet while under the forms of our government they are continued in their stations, we owe them obedience and constitutional submission, according to the divine law. *Our country is theirs.* It contains the tombs of our ancestors, the dwelling places of ourselves and children, and the altars of our God; and whatever cause we may have to distrust those to whom its affairs have been confided, yet as far as we have power, we must defend it from foreign invasion, and *in the strength of God we will defend it, and never desert it in the day of calamity.* But does a consideration of these duties preclude us from all lawful exertions to effect a change of such rulers as those with which we have been for some years afflicted? No! we are incited to make continual attempts to effect it, by the voice of conscience and by every tie. Had I the magnificent and flowing eloquence of Mansfield and Cicero, or the sublimity of Burke; did I possess the irresistible impetuosity of Chatham, Pericles and Demolthenes; could I lift up my voice like a trumpet, and with a sound like the roaring of Niagara or *Ætna*, were permitted to utter the seven thunders of heaven, I would speak with a voice which would shake every dwelling throughout my native land. I would warn my deluded fellow citizens from listening any longer to the syren songs of those who have so long deceived them. I would exclaim to every man, "In the day of adversity, consider; verily there is but a step between thee and death!" *Our rulers must be changed, or we are a people undone!*— Their whole administration has shewn them to be equally unfit for peace or war. If peace should be unexpectedly restored, we have no security in their prudence or virtue, that it will not pass away like the transient dew of the morning; and if obliged to continue the war *under their auspices*, it must be a *miracle of divine mercy* which will preserve us from subjugation to a foreign yoke. A serious question here arises: Is there then no hope? "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" I answer there is. If we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, we

shall be exalted in due time. In a spiritual sense, we are verily guilty before the sight of him whose all-seeing eye pervades the secret recesses of the heart, and who hath declared that righteousness exalteth a nation, and that sin is the reproach of any people. Let each in his proper sphere be diligent in promoting the works of repentance and reformation, and there may be hope that the Lord will mercifully avert the impending judgments. Thus in our exertions in the cause of our country, we may expect the blessing of him who proclaims that "the Lord is with you while ye be with him, and if ye seek him he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you." In humble dependence on the divine blessing, we may resort to those means dictated by human prudence, and praise be unto our all powerful creator, who in his adorable mercy has yet spared to us some who, like Nestor and Epaminondas, stand ready to counsel and defend. We have still surviving the august Jay, a man to whom this country is unquestionably more indebted for national independence, than to any individual (general Washington excepted) that ever lived. He who has so often been denounced, reprobated and burnt in effigy, by the miserable tools of the mock patriots of the present day, the result of whose fatal measures will probably soon bring the "sound of the warrior with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood," to every house, and fill every countenance with gloom: Yes, *John Jay still lives*, and his name alone, like that of the Roman Cato, is equal to a host; and permit me to say, that the dubious fate of the United States excites all his solicitude on many a sleepless pillow, and that the mild lustre of his descending glory is brightened by his breaking for a season the retirement of that sacred peace in which he has been long preparing for celestial enjoyment, to afford the solemnity of his last counsels to his beloved country. We have still in the shades of Mount Vernon, a Washington, whose youth at Yorktown was familiar with scenes of military glory, when under the banners of his illustrious kinsman, whose virtue, wisdom and valour he inherits, he joined our triumphant army in shouts of victory. There still remain to us a Howard, a Stuart and a Davie, who in their earlier days associated with the heroic Greene, led our victorious armies at Cowpens, Eutaw, and many a sanguinary field, to infuse terror and dismay through the hostile ranks of the invading foe. The insatiation of the people of Virginia has consigned to the vale of private life, the American Chatham, the distinguished, the pious, the eloquent Randolph. Deluded countrymen, if you would be saved from instant destruction, you must call these men from their retirement.

You must solicit them as your last resource, and as you would plead for your lives, associated with men like themselves, wherever found with your Websters, Otises, Dwights, Pitkins, Smiths, Grosvenors, Rensselaers, Platts, Lovetts, Emotts, Ogdens, Cummings, Gileses, Hopkinsons, Winders, Thomases, Dorseys, Platers, Marshals, Gastons, Reads, and others, who though not particularly named, are equally worthy, to take the places of those who now possess the chair of state. Nor will it be an easy task to succeed in persuading them to assume such responsible stations, unless their love of country supercede every other consideration. It is not easy to induce other than a very disinterested physician, to pledge his fame by undertaking to cure a dreadful disease, contracted or aggravated in a patient who *despising him*, had against much of his forewarning, gotten into a desperate state, by obstinately committing himself to the care of an empiric. I am not insensible that I have been using great plainness of speech. For the adoption of it I have no apology to offer, except that I think it no time to dissemble, and that the aspect of public affairs imperatively requires it at our hands. To such as knowing my habits of friendship in private life, and indeed my bonds of connexion with some who are attached to the administration which I have been sketching, may think it extraordinary that I have publicly indulged in this style of language, I have only to say, "Piato is great, but truth is greater." "*Justitia fiat celum ruat.*" Being attached to them by the amiable virtues of their private lives, it would distress my soul to wound their feelings. If the friendship of a man beginning to decline into the vale of life, who constrained by duty, thus speaks boldly concerning men and measures which may be dear to them, should still be considered of any value, they shall not lose it; but if a compliance with the dictates of conscience should unhappily deprive me of *theirs*, it is a sacrifice to which, though with great reluctance, I am bound to submit.

And now my most respected colleagues of this convention, I bid you an affectionate farewell. I have discharged, (at your request) and in a state of health not very firm, what *appeared* to me a solemn duty, and I trust I have done it with all that sincerity becoming one who is sensible that he must give an account to the Judge of the quick and the dead. It is very improbable that all of us here assembled, will ever meet again until summoned before his tremendous bar. The peculiar and awful circumstances of the times, impress me with an unusual conviction of the uncertainty of human life and human prospects. Whether the Friends of Peace will ever be permitted to assemble on another anniver-

ry of our independence, is known only to him in whose almighty hand are the issues of life and death, the destinies of nations and the hearts of all men. To the word of his grace I commit you, with the sacred cause in which we are convened, convinced that it will be well with the righteous, come what will, and that from a long and perfect knowledge of your services and sufferings in the public cause, I may without arrogance say, that

“Heaven and earth can witness

“If our country fall, that we are innocent.”

Oh! my children, were you born to be slaves? Oh! my country, art thou (delivered over to strong delusions, joined to thine idols and left of thy God) in judgment for our manifold sins, destined to pass under a foreign yoke? If so, the righteous will of him who cannot err be done; but

“May I lie cold before that dreadful day,

“Press'd with a load of monumental clay;

“These eyes be clos'd in everlasting sleep,

“And neither hear thee sigh or see thee weep.”