

LIBERTY,

A

POEM,

DELIVERED ON THE FOURTH OF JULY.

“ O Liberty, Heaven’s choice prerogative !
True bond of Law, thou social soul of property,
Thou breath of reason, life of life itself !
For thee the valiant bleed.——

———Beam glory on the world.

GUSTAVUS VASA

THE STRANGER.

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DEDICATION.

THE following effort of juvenile taste is presented with diffidence to the amateurs of poetry—with honest zeal to the firm supporters of our glorious Republic—and profound veneration to the immortal WASHINGTON. Its author aspires not to the elegance of refinement, nor accuracy of riper years: but hopes to meet that candor, which evinces a grateful and generous heart, which rears the tender fancy to maturer judgment, and helps the swelling bud to form the rose.

LIBERTY,

A

P O E M,

Delivered on the fourth of July.

WHILE halclujahs swell the rolling wind,
And sacred beings praise th' immortal mind ;
While thro' bright ether rolls the radiant sun,
And worlds, harmonious, round this concave run ;
While, from afar, the din of arms is heard,
And helmet meets with helmet, sword with sword ;
While the loud burst of cannon rocks the ground,
And dying millions join the doleful sound ;
While bleeding martyrs in their country's cause,
Rush to the field, and die amidst applause :
The Muse, more bashful, trembling, tunes her lyre,
While fancy fans the soft, luxuriant, fire.
For you she form'd these all unpolish'd lays ;
More dreading censure, than expecting praise.
Her only wish claims the approving smile,
Which sweetens labour, and repays my toil.

FIRST, ye, who gild life's dark and devious way,
 As yon gold beams illumine the nat'ral day,
 Who fill the hours of man with smiling bliss,
 And weave the laurel for the brow of peace.

YE Fathers too, who guard the helm of state,
 Watch cancr'ous faction, and the jaws of fate.

AND ye, who guide the all important plough,
 Who prune the vineyard, and the femin sow,
 Be gracious to my lays, that future time
 May hear a poet grac'd your infant clime;
 May hear your sons compos'd the breathing lay,
 And gain'd from genius Fame's immortal bay.
 For this my pratt'ling muse ne'er dar'd aspire,
 She feels nor sacred glow, nor rapt'rous fire.
 For, all unpra&is'd in that living art,
 Which warm the senses and expands the heart,
 She, bashful, brings an all celestial theme,
 Which angels rev'rence, and the gods esteem,

FAIR LIBERTY to glorious patriots given,
 The breath of God, and first-born child of heaven;
 Who rose from chaos out of nature's night,
 And sprang to being with the orient light;
 Who, late unknown, travell'd thro' boundless space,
 And came on earth to join her sister peace.
 She scorns the pamper'd monarch's golden chains;
 Flies

Flies to the desert, or uncultur'd plains,
 From pomp and grandeur, from the rich and great,
 Where modest man delights in humble state :
 Unknown to flattery, or the cursed plan
Of bartering human flesh, and murdering man.
 To seek thee, Goddess, in thy humble glade,
 To sip thy fountain, and enjoy thy shade ;
 To hail thee at the full pierian fount,
 Pure, as descending from the holy mount :
 Our fathers journey'd o'er the bounding deep,
 Basted with ocean's foaming, briny, heep ;
 Cut thro' the waves that lash'd the sounding shore ;
 Sang to the tempest, bade the torrent roar ;
 Hove back the surge, that beat their rending sails :
 Nor once despair'd, tho' tost by northern gales.
 Such was the strength *Jehovah's word* had given,
 Such their reliance on a blissful haven.
 Great was the spirit, which inspir'd each soul,
 And firm the golden bond, that bound the whole.
 Pleas'd with their faith, and all confiding minds,
 God spake—and instant ceas'd the roaring winds.
 God spake, and lo—propitious gales were driven
 Along the ocean, from the east of heaven.

THE Eternal same, who form'd the mighty ark,
 Beheld them floating in the devious bark—
 Stretch'd out his hand—the shaking rudder steer'd,
 And

And mark'd their passage, till the shore appear'd.
 Soon, as a vision, rose the waving land,
 And their glad feet impress'd the virgin sand.
This happy clime receiv'd the wand'ring guest,
 And in its sacred tomb their manes rest.
 Here peace had shed her all celestial dew,
Young Commerce flourish'd, and our country grew :
 Nay, *cities* rose in full, luxuriant, pride,
 And *India's* riches skim'd our curling tide.
 Blest reason spread her scientific scroll
 And God and wisdom swell'd the infant soul.
 But faithless Britain, that ungen'rous dame,
 Thirsting for infant blood, and savage fame ;
 Too soon ascended her emblazen'd car,
 And rode the *Fury* of tremendous war.
 Beneath her butch'ring hand our heroes fell,
 While her red thousands, gasping, sank to hell.
 Rivers of blood ran thro' our waving fields ;
 Old scythes were turn'd to swords & ploughs to shields.
 The sound of horror howl'd the desert through,
 And death terrific fix'd the wond'ring view.
 Beside his thatch the hoary vet'ran bled,
 And famish'd infants wept " their grandfire dead."

Along the vales contending cannons roar'd,
 While 'round our burning domes bombs, bursting,
 shower'd. These,

These, with each wile, and ev'ry menial art,
 Which could entrap the mind, or win the heart ;
 Were join'd to drive *thee* from our blushing soil ;
 Were join'd to link us to eternal toil.
 But God's *still voice* awoke our slumbering fame,
 And INDEPENDENCE deck'd Columbia's name ;
 Firm Independence spread her heavenly wing,
 And free-born souls forsook a trait'rous king.
 Yes—sons of freedom, on this glorious day,
 Which warms the youthful bard's expiring lay,
 Which shall be mentioned till the end of time,
 And sang by honest bards in Britain's clime ;
 Sang till the voice of Freedom shakes the throne,
 And on the earth no ruling despot's known :
 Sang till the 'briny sea is turn'd to blood,
 And gall and wormwood steeps the flowing flood.
 Till suns shall melt, and this our globe shall blaze ;
 And the Archangel sounds "*the end of days.*"
 Tho' not far back began the golden years,
 When the blest sound assail'd our ravish'd ears ;
 When the bold, swelling clarion spread abroad
 "*The GREAT COLUMBIA owns no king but God.*"

HER rights to hold, from 'far her sons appear'd,
 And o'er the gazing world her flag uprear'd.
 Then, WASHINGTON, the great and glorious star,
 Shot thro' our fields, and led our troops to war ;

Like Israel's Joshua, swept the threatening host;
 From camp to camp, from flying post to post.
 O'er strengthen'd mounds he bore his piercing way ;
 Watch'd guards by night, and conquer'd troops by day.
 Before his conquering arm proud Britains' fled,
 And boasting gen'ral's hugg'd the meaner dead.

THEN, angels loud their hallelujahs sang,
 And with our joy the boundless concave rang :
 Then from on high, in radiant robes array'd,
 Downward descended the celestial maid.
 In her right hand the *olive-branch* she bore,
 And wav'd her plumage round the bleeding shore.
 Then glowing heroes sheath'd their crimson swords,
 And slavish minions sought their fighting lords.

SINCE then the vestal smiles upon our land,
 And GEORGE, Columbia's son, has borne command.
 Long may he live, and beam with lustre bright,
 Till, like the sun, he sets in nature's night.
 Long may we live a freeborn, happy, race—
 And rise in virtue as we grow in peace :
 Till the grand Epilogue of Time is given,
 AND YON RESPANGL'D CURTAIN FALLS FROM
 HEAVEN.