

A. C. J. 10

AN
ORATION,

PRONOUNCED

AT THE REQUEST OF THE REPUBLICAN CITIZENS

OF

FALMOUTH, MAINE,

ON

THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1805.

BEING THE

TWENTY-NINTH ANNIVERSARY

OF

American Independence.

BY THE REV. JOAB YOUNG.

PORTLAND:

FROM THE ARGUS-PRESS.....BY N. WILLIS, JUNR.

1805.

Oration.

Venerable Fathers—

Respected Matrons—

Beloved Youth—

STRIKE Heaven-born Charity from the list of your virtues, and the *infant in politics* now speaking, would need an apology; but deathless Charity, celestial attribute, legitimate offspring of Deity, waving her golden sceptre of sympathy, veils the defects of kindred humanity, forms the breast of relative nature for the reception of infant language, the product of infant intellects and inexperience; encircles the political child in the arms of fraternal affection, where fearless of the malediction of disingenuous criticism, he addresses his fellow-citizens on the dear-bought level of Equality, solemnly announced in 1776, and compleatly obtained in 1781.

Venerable Fathers,

The Orator of the day, whom partial friendship hath called to the chair at this time, is not insensible of the violence of party spirit in this western bourne;

where the Tree of Liberty was planted by the Second Favorite of Heaven—on the top of which in particular, and on each branch in general, by gentle breezes of Republican virtue, waves unfurled the flag of Equality, uncontaminated with the pestilential calm of Despotism, on the one hand, or the boisterous tumult of Anarchy on the other. But it is not the intention of your Orator to penegrate one party, or calumniate the other ; he leaves that for the respective leaders who have more wisdom to invent and leisure and talents to execute such measures—his object is to bring your minds to realise the unrivalled Liberty you possess ; how dear it was bought ; of what importance it is that you now preserve it : and to prescribe some means to answer so glorious a purpose.

Fellow-Citizens,

This morn awakes in our hearts, feelings not to be erased but by death—this day we reflect on the awful period, when haughty Britain, so far from succouring and assisting her children planted in the west, unfeelingly took their bread, the fruit of their own industry, and gave it to Ministerial dogs. To remedy this evil, we prayed and entreated ; but our prayers and entreaties, our petitions and remonstrances, were treated with contempt or neglect. Laying aside all paternal feelings, she denounced us as *Rebels* ; beat the horrid din of War ; assembled her mercenary Armies ; rallied her thundering Navies ; “ cried havoc, let slip the dogs of war ;” and with more than savage

furiously drove the blazing wheels of death and destruction, blood and carnage, across the Atlantic Ocean; pillaged and burnt our cities, dishonored our virgins, and slew our young men with the edge of the sword.

This morning brings fresh to our minds the fatal *Nineteenth of April, 1775*, when our peaceful fire-sides were converted to scenes of combat; when the family guard was engaged in its defence, which terminated in staining the floor with the blood of innocence. Here was a scene which neither the pen of a MADISON nor the tongue of a DEMOSTHENES could paint or describe. Here was a paternal Father, an affectionate Mother, or a fond Sister, wiping the blood from a ball or bayonet-wound fatally made in the breast of an aged Sire, a fond Husband, a dear Brother, or an only Son, the anticipated stay and staff of hoary age.

These were "times that tried men's souls." Our Mother-Country, turning *monster*, forgot her child, and had no compassion for her own offspring; saying, they have neither discipline, arms, ammunition nor commanders, and will therefore fall an easy prey—But the all gracious finger of Heaven pointed to WASHINGTON, to take the command, to discipline our warriors, and lead them to victory and glory.

These proceedings, and their subsequent effects, produced that ever memorable DECLARATION, made twenty-nine years past; to commemorate which we are this day assembled—and may the Great Arbitrer of all events grant that we may not forget or

cease to realise, but perpetuate its glories, unstained by Despotism or Anarchy, to the latest posterity. The *United States of America* were then declared *FREE and INDEPENDENT* of any power on earth—they solemnly acknowledged God as their king, and adopted his holy word as their law. Then commenced a *Scene of War*, which while it degraded human nature on the one hand, announced the full-souled magnanimity of the then feeble Americans on the other.

Free-born Columbians!

That you may better estimate the intrinsic value of your Liberties, permit me to call your attention to some few of the sacrifices made to obtain them. First reflect on your Political Saviour; whose glory, to attempt to paint, would be like lighting a candle at noon day to shew the beauty of the Sun—see him take his little band of *Farmers, Mechanics and Apprentices*, and unappalled by the menacing threats of hostile Legions, armed with deathful weapons, and whose Chiefs were old in the arts of war—see him with a magnanimity of soul, quadrating with the magnanimity of the object, meeting death and danger, face to face—

Oft did his limbs the frozen ground compress,
 While round his head the watry torrent pour'd;
 Dark clouds the curtain to his couch at rest,
 While the bleak wind & midnight hail-storm shower'd;
 Or else advancing with the solar ray,
 His spirit flamed to meet the lightning glare,
 In hostile reams of ever burning day,
 Sad haunts of plague, of death and black despair.

Fellow-Citizens,

Take a view of the cares of his mind; reflect on the responsibility he felt; the value he set upon life, and the love he had for his men. When torrents of blood were flowing, his heart was expanding to the all gracious God, in whose hands all hearts are. Think a moment of the bloody scene of *Bunker-Hill*—the unparalleled action and safe retreat of *Long-Island*—the distressing scenes of the *Monmouth* battle, *Bennington* victory, *Stillwater* conquest, *Fort-Washington* massacre, *Trenton* victory, *Rutland* and *Brandywine* blood and carnage—where twice ten thousand Americans were entombed in death—until the capture of *Cornwallis* compelled the haughty Tyrant, through the medium of his satalitish Ministry, to acknowledge our *INDEPENDENCE*, and plight his faith (if any he had) to respect our Flag accordingly.

These, my Fathers, are but faint ideas of the blood and carnage your Liberties cost; from which you can form no just estimate—we will, therefore, take other views of the subject. Simply describing the scenes through which a *WASHINGTON* passed, is indeed but an imperfect portrait—for *he lived*; but how many thousands *DIED*, whose lives were *equally dear to them*, though not to us! Reflect, fellow-citizens, and, while you reflect, realize the number of *Parents* who *sacrificed their Sons*, to obtain those Liberties which you now enjoy—turn your attention to a scene which *your Orator has witnessed*—see the fond Mother receive a letter from the Army, written by a Captain in whose company her dear Husband, her main support in trouble, the stay and staff, the head

and guide of her family, had long served his country—view her, with extatic pleasure, eagerly catch the message, call her little family, and exclaim—*Children, here is a letter from your Father, we shall now know when he will return*—she opens, she reads—but, O! Heavens!—though the *black seal* was unobserved in the moment of joy, the contents fail not to impart the dreadful tidings!—She falteringly utters, *Children, your Father is dead—he was killed at Fort-Washington—you are Orphans—he is no more!*—Her strength fails, the letter falls; she bereaved of her senses; her Children crying around her—she revives to weep, and lives to mourn in poverty. *Poor little Orphans,* (observes the Messenger) *you have lost a good Father, who lost his life to obtain that Liberty which he can never enjoy—I hope it may be a valuable legacy to you—the double task of Father and Mother, now devolves on your surviving Parent.* What heart-rending sighs, what convulsive struggles have agitated the feelings of the Daughters of America!—how many thousand Innocents have been made Orphans, to obtain those Liberties which we now so unthankfully enjoy! Great has been the expence, incalculable the sacrifices by sea and land, by burning and sinking of property; but when these expences are compared with the loss of lives, and the mental troubles of the bereaved, they vanish like smoke and vapour.—Thus the war closed, and our liberties are secured.

All is now hushed, the war is o'er,
Great-Britain rules the States no more;
But each enjoys a just degree,
Of health, of peace, and liberty.

Fellow-Citizens,

When the sacrifices, the expences, and the troubles which your Freedom cost, are recollected, is it possible the war-worn, patriotic sons of America will tamely submit to the tyrannic yoke of any foreign despot, or set of domestic creatures of their own creating; or by courting Monarchical alliances, or adopting the doctrine of implicit faith and blind obedience, suffer those inestimable privileges to be wrested from their hands, and leave our posterity to say, *Our fathers possessed the fortune of Freedom and Independence, but they fooled it away, and left us in slavery and indigence to drag out the remains of a life not worth possessing?*

In this new state of affairs, it was found necessary to have a regular Government, founded on the true principles of the Declaration of Independence, made in 1776, by which spirit I hope we are this day united; a Convention was assembled, a Constitution was formed, and with much difficulty was acceded to by the respective States; here the prerogatives and powers of the rulers are defined, and the right of the ruled specified; this Constitution, as the palladium of our happiness, should sacredly be adhered to: Our beloved WASHINGTON takes the helm, he guides the ship for eight years, discharges the duties of Chief Magistrate with that dignity, integrity and accuracy, which would have done honor to a Roman Senator, and during which time peace and harmony reigned triumphant. He then resigned his elevated station, and Mr. ADAMS ascended the Chair, which rank he held for four years, during which time many disasters took place which agitated the public mind, but

some of those difficulties were removed before the expiration of his term of office ; and had it been the voice of the Nation that he should continue, perhaps the remainder would have been amicably settled ; but the voice of that People, in accents strong and impressive, called THOMAS JEFFERSON, to fill the Presidential Chair ; former abuses were rectified, harmony restored, and notwithstanding party spirit exists in some parts of the Union, prosperity and happiness holds the balance. There are no alarms of foreign invasions, intestine broils, or domestic insurrections ; all is quiet —“ our Meeting-Houses” are not “ burned,” “ our Bibles” are not “ destroyed,” and none of our “ Ministers” are “ hanged ;” all Religious Societies are equally protected by good wholesome laws, and all enjoy the same privileges where those laws are duly executed : every candid man will acknowledge, that Religion in the United States is more flourishing at present, than it has been for a century past,

Fathers in Massachusetts,

The prospect before us is not gloomy, as some newspaper squibs assert ; the liberal Arts & Sciences, our Colleges, Universities, Academies, and other seminaries of learning, together with the vast increase of Social Libraries in the country, as also the common Schools of education, were never at any former period in so flourishing a situation as they are at present. Our Commerce, Navigation, & Fisheries, meeting the unparalleled increase of the Agricultural interest, affords a very pleasing prospect. Thus are you surrounded with the smiles of Providence, in the full possession of

those privileges and liberties, which cannot be too highly prized ; but when lost, like female virtue, can never be regained. You have now a President of your own choosing, and almost unanimously so—to attempt to paint whose virtuous worth, would be the height of folly in me :

For 'tis not the muse's fondest strain,

With Patriot Heroes in her train,

To eulogize such worth :

To seraph forms this task is given,

And trumpet tongues of elder Heaven,

Forbid the praise of earth.

It remains now that we cultivate the principle of due submission to the Constituted Authorities ; the spirit of friendship, harmony, and brotherly love—that we encourage literature, diffuse useful knowledge, and extend the excellency and beauty of our Constitution, and the liberties secured to us therein—that we are watchful of our Rulers, watching not for their halting, but for their good in union with our own—that in the choice of our Rulers, we fix our minds on those who retain the *true spirit* of '76, and will consider America as an *indivisible Republic*, who in their deliberations will prefer measures to men—will contemplate the general good, consider themselves the guardians of Liberties next sacred to life, and who feel their responsibility to those who created them what they officially are. Should any leading characters of a party, seek to destroy your Constitution, or advise to a dissolution of the Union of the States—advert to the legacy of your *Political Father*, and say in a satiri-

cal tone—*Satan, Avaunt ! United we stand; Divided we fall.* Those pretended friends of their Country, of whom our WASHINGTON forwarned us to beware, who consist of disappointed place-men, office-seekers, and revolutionary fire-brands, must never be entrusted with the guardianship of this infant Republic—Such are always to be met with in free Governments ; disappointment is the fire which causes their pot to boil over, & by the vileness of the scum, we learn the putrefaction of the meat—they may, however, answer as good a purpose in a free Government, as a number of *wasp's nests* do in a meadow, to keep the *industrious* on their guard, and the *lazy one* busy : Thus, if you continue to choose Rulers, whose bright reasoning, happy genius, and elegant style, added to the spirit of Freedom, integrity, and rectitude, your Constitution will stand, your ship will ride out the storm of Anarchy and Despotism, and be safely moored in the harbor of Republican confidence ; your Liberties shall remain until the moon shall fade with age, the stars quit the sphere of Heaven, and the sun shall wear his evening fire in lighting nature's final tomb.