

AN

APOLOGY

FOR THE FRIENDS OF PEACE,

IN TWO

DISCOURSES,

DELIVERED AUGUST 20, 1812.

BEING

THE DAY APPOINTED FOR FASTING AND PRAYER

THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES,

ON ACCOUNT OF THE

WAR WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

BY JOHN SMITH,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN SALEM, N. H.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE HEARERS.

—*—

Haverhill, Mass.
PRINTED AND SOLD BY W. B. & H. G. ALLEN
1812.

SERMON I.

PSALM cxx. 7.

I AM FOR PEACE.

IF we consider these as the words of David, they express his benevolent feelings, in the time of his persecution by Saul. The children of Israel “served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel.” After “that generation were gathered unto their fathers,” “there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord.”* God, in his anger, gave them a corrupt king; he raised up Saul to reign over them. Under his influence the people became more corrupt. Such was their infatuation, that to procure the favour of Saul, they sought the ruin of David.

If we consider the text, as the words of some other holy prophet, speaking in the name of the church, it expresses the pious and peaceful desires of the church of God, of all the meek and humble followers of “the Prince of Peace,” in all ages, when surrounded with persecuting enemies.

Of Christ it is said, “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”† His gospel publishes “peace on earth, and good will towards men.”‡ All the followers of Christ are the friends of peace. The words of the text, then, are strictly applicable to the church of God in this land, at this time of trouble and war; and they may, in a certain sense, be considered, as descriptive of the feelings of the greater part of the inhabitants of New-England, in respect to the war, which has lately been declared by the General Government of these United States, against the kingdom of Great-Britain; on account of which we are now convened in the house of God, to unite in humiliation, fasting and prayer.

We are not convened this morning to unite in supplication for protection against an invasion of our country; not to pray, that our officers and soldiers, our neighbours and brothers may be

* Judg. ii. 7, 12. † Is. ix. 7. ‡ Luke ii. 14.

shielded, while standing between us and an invading enemy. We cannot pray in the language of Jehoshaphat, when, being invaded "by the children of Ammon, and Moab, and Mount Seir," he "proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah," to obtain the help of God against a great host of assailants. "O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee."* No company of invaders has come to disturb us in our lawful and peaceable possessions.

We cannot use the language of our fathers, and the pious friends of our country, in their appeals to Heaven, at the commencement of the revolutionary war. We cannot say, that, 'those, who ought to have been our nursing fathers have risen up against us, to deprive us of our just privileges, claiming the right to bind us, in all cases whatsoever, without our consent, and have poured in their armies upon us to force us to submission.' Entirely different was the cause of that war, from the cause of the war, in which our country is now involved. Our fathers could appeal to Heaven for the justice of their cause. They did appeal to Heaven. They cried unto God, and were delivered. But who dares appeal to God for the justice of this war?

Though we have no invading enemy, against whom to implore Divine protection, though we cannot, we dare not, pray for success to American arms against the subjects of another kingdom, while peaceably pursuing their lawful employments, nor for success to those, who design to murder and plunder on the high seas; yet there is occasion for convening, this day, to implore Divine mercy for our country. The sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war, is heard in our land. It is "a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness." War is a dreadful calamity; a calamity, from the thought of which every reflecting sober mind revolts. After a number of years' enjoyment of peace and prosperity, this young and growing Republic is precipitated into a state of war; a war, the declaration of which, to say the least, appears to have been hasty, inconsiderate and premature; a war, which, if prosecuted, must, according to the common course of things, be connected with tremendous consequences, and may issue in the complete ruin of our country.

* 2 Chro. xx. 19

This great occasion presents one subject for prayer, in which all, who love God and their country, can cordially unite. That is, that peace may be speedily restored. Cannot each one in this assembly sincerely say, concerning the present war, "I am for peace?" Such language accords with the views of the inhabitants of New-England in general, with the feelings of all the judicious friends of their country, with the prayers of all the tribes of Zion, this day, in our land, and with the word of God, which says, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee."

However the people of New-England may have differed in their political opinions, previous to the declaration of war, this great calamity has been the occasion of a more general union. I am happy in being able to say, that, in the religious society, which usually worship in this house, I have heard of no one's being for war, nor, in this town, have I heard of but very few, who approve this desperate appeal to arms. May I not, therefore, reasonably hope, that I shall give no offence, as I am sure I design none, in doing what I consider my duty; in expressing my mind, with great freedom and plainness, on the subject of the great calamity, which is the occasion of our present solemnity? Though I may incur, from some, the charge of exceeding the bounds of ministerial duty, yet the fear of this shall not deter me from using my feeble efforts for the salvation of my country. The watchman's voice should warn, before the sword comes. Cannot the vigilant watchman descry danger more terrible than the sword of an invading foe? The occasion is peculiar. The state of our public affairs is alarming, and excites a deep interest in the feelings of all classes of men. Under a free government all have a right to express their minds. "I also will shew mine opinion."

War having been declared by our General Government, it would be wrong to oppose it without substantial reasons; and, as things are, it is wrong to oppose it, in any way, that does not comport with our constitutional laws, and with the precepts of the gospel.

It is the glory of our government, that it is a free elective government, leaving with the people the power of removing their rulers, when it appears, that they have not wisdom or integrity sufficient to discharge the duties of their high and important offices,

and of placing wiser and better men at the head of the nation. This is the constitutional and lawful resort of a free people, under a republican government; and this ought now to be the aim of all the friends of peace.

If an open avowal of this design is thought by any to need an apology, a sufficient apology may be found in the nature of the case. In the opinion of the friends of peace, the war cannot be justified, either in a political, moral or religious view. If it is right to advocate peace in opposition to the war, it is right to remove from office those, who are the authors and friends of the war. If this declaration of war has been made in pursuance of systematic measures, adopted, years ago, by our present rulers, it is not to be expected, that those, who have made war, will make peace. If the memorials and remonstrances, prayers and entreaties of thousands and thousands of the distressed inhabitants of our country, could not influence them to relinquish their preconcerted purpose of war with Great-Britain, after they had so nearly accomplished it, can it be supposed, that the frowns of an indignant people will move them to recede from their measures, when actually carried into effect?

It is proposed, in the sequel of this discourse, to offer some remarks, as an apology for those who are for peace, in opposition to the prosecution of the war, and to suggest some suitable measures to be pursued by the friends of peace, for the restoration of this inestimable blessing.

I. I am to offer some remarks, as an apology for those who are for peace, in opposition to the prosecution of the war.

1. In the view of the friends of peace, the war cannot conduce to the honour, interest or safety of the country.

However the honour, interest and safety of our country may have been impaired by the convulsions of Europe, they have received a much greater injury by the declaration of war. This will appear from a concise view of the pretences for the war.

One pretence for the war, is, that in some instances our seamen have been impressed on board British ships. Undoubtedly, this has been done in a number of instances; and, while it is viewed as an act of injustice and oppression, firm and spirited measures ought to be adopted to remedy the evil. But the government of

Great-Britain claim no right to impress our seamen on board their ships. They claim only the right to search for, and take their own seamen from foreign ships. They say, that their seamen are their defence, in time of war, and claim a right to take them from our merchant vessels. The same right is claimed by France, as well as England, and by all the governments in Europe. Our government refuse to concede to England this privilege, and claim the right of retaining British seamen on board our merchant vessels. Even, if all the men, except the captain, are Englishmen, by the principle asserted by our government, they are to be protected by our flag. Is it expedient or just to engage in a war with Great-Britain, for the right of employing her seamen on board our ships? Whenever our seamen have been impressed on board English ships, it has been done through mistake, or by the lawless conduct of individuals, and not by order of the British government. But this declaration of war, instead of affording safety to our seamen, greatly augments their danger.

The hovering of British ships about our coasts has been assigned as one reason for the declaration of war; but that very declaration exposes our coasts to be lined with British ships, from Maine to Georgia.

It has been surmised by some, that British traders have had influence in exciting Indian hostilities; and this is given as a reason for the war. But war, instead of contributing to the safety of our back frontiers, will probably expose thousands of defenceless families to the tomahawk and scalping knife.

Another pretence for the war is the British order of blockade of May 16, 1806. But this order of blockade, which is now considered as a ground of war, was at first viewed as an act of favour and conciliation. Mr. Monroe, the present Secretary of State, then our minister at the court of Great-Britain, gave his opinion, in a letter to Mr. Madison, that the order of blockade was in favour of American views and interests; and, in a letter to the British minister last October, speaking of the order of blockade, he says, "The object was to afford to the United States an accommodation respecting the colonial trade." Not till after four years, not till May, 1810, was this order made a subject of complaint.

Indeed, not until the views of France were known, was it considered as a ground of controversy, and cause of war.

Another pretence for the war is the British orders in Council, which were not repealed, after it was proclaimed by President Madison, that the Berlin and Milan decrees of France were repealed.

The Berlin decree of France, which was issued on the 21st of November 1806, declared "all the British Islands in a state of blockade," prohibiting "all commerce and correspondence with them, all trade in their manufactures, and making lawful prize of all merchandize, belonging to England, or coming from its manufactories and colonies."

In consequence of the Berlin decree, were issued, the British orders in Council of the 7th of January 1807, "which were merged in the orders of the 11th of November following." These declared "all ports and places belonging to France and its allies, from which the British flag was excluded, all the colonies of his Britannic majesty's enemies, in a state of blockade; prohibiting all trade in the produce and manufactures of the said countries or colonies, and making all vessels trading to or from them, subject to capture and condemnation; with an exception only in favour of the direct trade between neutral countries and the colonies of his majesty's enemies."

The British orders in Council were succeeded by the Milan decree of France of the 17th of December 1808, containing still greater restrictions, by which "every ship, of whatever nation, which shall have submitted to search by an English ship, or to a voyage to England, or paid any tax to that government, are declared denationalized, and lawful prize. The British Islands are declared in a state of blockade by sea and land; and every ship, of whatever nation that sails from England, or those of the English colonies, or of countries, occupied by English troops, and proceeding to England, or to the English colonies, or to countries occupied by the English, are declared to be good prize."

Both the decrees of France, and orders of England were extravagant and unjust restrictions. Neither of the governments justified such proceedings, on any other ground, than that of retaliation and necessity.

By this state of things in Europe, the commercial interest of the United States was much injured; but still they enjoyed a lucrative commerce with other parts of the world, till prevented by the embargo, laid by our General Government. The non-intercourse followed. After four years' painful and destructive experiment of non-importation, embargo, non-intercourse, our restrictive system was for a time relinquished. But power was given to the President to renew it against one belligerent, if the other revoked the offensive edicts, and the former did not within a certain time after. The French decrees were the occasion of the British orders in Council. The British government declared, that their orders should be annulled, as soon as they had evidence of the revocation of the French decrees.

On the second of November 1810, President Madison issued a proclamation, declaring, that the French decrees were repealed; and, because England did not revoke her orders in Council, the non-intercourse law was revived against her.

England denied, that the French decrees were repealed, and as proof, that they were not, they produced official documents of the French government, contradicting President Madison's proclamation, and declaring, that those very decrees, which were said by our Government to be repealed, were the fundamental laws of the French empire.

On the 31st of March 1811, his imperial majesty Napoleon made this declaration to the council of commerce, "The decrees of Berlin and Milan are the fundamental laws of my empire—the power, which suffers its flag to be violated! cannot be considered neutral. The fate of American commerce will soon be decided. I will favour it, if the United States will conform themselves to these decrees. In a contrary case, their vessels will be driven from my empire!" Thus we see, that the French Emperor considered his own decrees to be in force, about five months after President Madison had declared them repealed. Moreover, our ships were seized and burnt, and our seamen imprisoned, merely upon supposition that they had violated the French decrees. Great Britain considered these things as clear proof, that the Berlin and Milan decrees were not repealed; and refused to revoke her orders in

Council. But in face of all these facts, it was insisted on, by our Government, that the French decrees were repealed; and, because Great Britain did not revoke her orders in Council, Congress made their non-intercourse law, then laid an embargo, and lastly declared war; which is really an offensive war, not comporting either with the safety, honour or interest of the country.

As a further apology for those, who are for peace, in opposition to the prosecution of the war, I remark,

2. That, in their view, the war is peculiarly injurious to the lawful interests and just rights of some of the States in the union. It is so to the New-England States in particular.

The people of New-England have chosen their employments, the means of support for their families. They are a commercial people. Their commerce is their principal source of wealth. On this thousands depend for bread, for themselves and their children. By embargo, non-intercourse and war, the property of our mercantile towns is probably reduced nearly one half, and the other half placed in extreme hazard. Many are deprived of the means of providing for their households, and are reduced to the painful necessity of changing their employments or hearing their children cry in vain for bread. To such a state of things, considered as a righteous judgment of God, on a guilty people, we ought to submit, without a murmur, but of the weakness, injustice, and manifest iniquity of human agents, in producing this state of things, we have cause of complaint.

The friends of peace, in New-England, would not sacrifice their just rights for the sake of peace. In case of an invasion, or a just cause for war, a call in Divine providence, to part with their property, and risk their lives, they would not withhold their property, and they themselves would be the first to meet an invading enemy, and the last to leave the ground without victory. But to have their habits entirely changed, to be interrupted in their lawful pursuits, to be deprived of their means of support, to be forbidden to navigate the seas; and, at length, to be involved in an offensive war, by laws passed within the closed doors of Congress, where the liberty of free debate was denied;—and for what? to gain some nice points of national honour or pride? to revenge injuries? or to gratify the wishes of his imperial majesty, Napoleon?

Whatever may have been the real cause of this desperate measure. It is viewed, by the friends of peace, in New-England, as an abuse of power, and a cruel infringement of their just rights and lawful interests. When they joined the union, they did not cede to the general government the power of involving them in a war of invasion, and they are now under no civil or moral obligation to aid and assist in prosecuting such a war.

As a further apology for the friends of peace, I remark,

3. That, in their view, war with Great-Britain is unjust and inexpedient, and tends in a peculiar manner to the ruin of the country.

If war with either nation was necessary, it was unjust and inexpedient to select Great-Britain, instead of France, for our enemy. It was unjust. For, though both nations have injured us, England has injured us the less. All our differences with England are such, as admit of negotiation and adjustment; and no doubt remains, in the minds of our wisest and best politicians, but what an accommodation might have been made upon advantageous and honourable terms. But some of our differences with France are such, as admit of no negotiation or adjustment. Our liberties, our republican institutions, our moral habits, and our religion, are objects of the inveterate hatred of the French government; and the complete destruction of these is their fixed determination. With regard to these fundamental things, an attempt at negotiation or compromise would be a heinous sin. Where is the justice of declaring war against that nation, which of the two has injured us the less, when that declaration is in favour of the other nation, whose designs are the more hostile to our interest?

It was inexpedient to select Great-Britain for our enemy. For our national prosperity depends more on peace with England, than with any other power; and, in a state of war, of all nations on the globe, she is able to injure us the most. That it is for our interest to be on friendly terms with England, has been proved by experience. In the time of Jay's treaty, which was so much opposed by the enemies of Washington, our country prospered beyond a parallel. Since the same enemies of Washington have had the power in their own hands, and refused to renew that treaty, or to make another, the glory of our country has declined almost beyond a parallel.

While England commands the ocean, France can do but little more than she has done for several years; take and destroy some of our property, and burn our vessels, beside what she does by her secret agents, in disseminating corrupt principles, to undermine our republican government. But it is in the power of Great-Britain to seize millions of our property, and spread dismay, distress and ruin, a thousand miles along our seaboard; and should she be provoked by our war of invasion to arm the Indians against our back frontiers, who can describe the distress, which will be experienced by thousands of defenceless families? Who can tell how much blood will be shed? On whose souls is the guilt of this blood to be found?

This war not only exposes us to such miseries; but seems like an attempt to clear the way for the worst enemy on the globe, the Emperor of France, to come and make us his slaves. Could he not effect this by *force merely*, he could probably accomplish it *partly by flattery*, and *partly by force*. What is now the state of *Holland, Naples, Switzerland, Prussia, Rome, Venice, Spain, Westphalia and Saxony*? How long is it since these nations were caressed and flattered by the Emperor of France? While they were free, he made them imagine, that they were slaves, and promised them freedom. He bewildered them with the charm of liberty, until their bands were made strong. Beholding the infatuated nations of Europe, covered with wounds, and loaded with chains, begging in vain for mercy, at the foot of the throne of the tyrant of France, let us take warning. Had these nations been separated from him, who is now their master, by three thousand miles of ocean, covered with British ships, they might have retained their liberty.

While Great-Britain drives the ships of France from the ocean, and confines the French troops principally to the continent of Europe, she defends us. Whether Great-Britain is friendly to the American interest or not, she is friendly to her own interest, and in defending herself, she guards our liberties. Could our twenty ships effect any real injury to the thousand ships of the British navy, it would be like taking away the rampart of our own defence. Could the wildest imagination conceive of any thing like victory over England, in the same event might be seen the com-

plete ruin of our own country. In that case, how soon should we be overwhelmed with the kindness of French friends! how would our ears be saluted with the charming sound of liberty and equality! and should we not be indulged the privilege of being bound, with no common chains, but with chains forged by his imperial majesty, and put gently on by the friends of the people? The weakness of our efforts against England is our strength. The greater our inability to destroy the British navy, the more secure are our liberties.

As a further apology for the friends of peace, I remark,

4. That, they view with deep interest and serious concern, the unavoidable consequences of the continuance of this needless war.

The burden of the expence of supporting the war must be great. While there is no invasion of our country, our troops must be employed, in invading the possessions of others, or they must remain without employ. But an army must be supported and paid. The expence will be great. It has already amounted to a great sum. The embarrassments in business, and the immense loss of property, to which the people of New-England have already been subjected, by embargo, non-intercourse and war, must soon be followed by heavy demands from government to carry on the war. Heavy duties are already laid on a number of necessary articles of domestic consumption. A very great sum of money has been borrowed, and still the treasury is exhausted. A heavy land tax is proposed, and would undoubtedly have been demanded before this time, as money is so much wanted, had it not been feared, that such a measure would open the eyes of the people, and influence elections. It is, therefore, postponed, for a few months, that certain characters may secure their lucrative places in office; and then the farmer must submit to a heavy land tax, to support a needless and unjust war.

Another unavoidable consequence of the prosecution of the war is an increase of vice. As war always comes from the lusts, and vicious principles and habits of ungodly men, so it tends directly to increase the same lusts, principles and habits. The camp is the birth place of vice; and being nourished up there, it will necessarily go forth, and corrupt the community. The dissemination of vice, by the last war, has had great influence in preparing the

way for the present war; and the present war will make the people more corrupt still. Though the vicious part of society do not view the increase of vice, as a serious evil, yet, by the friends of peace, it is viewed with deep concern.

These are not all the consequences, which we have to fear. Should Great-Britain be excited, by our declaration of war, and commencement of hostilities, to exert all her force, the war would become awfully serious and distressing. You must leave your peaceable employments; to meet the dreadful events of war. Your sons, who have grown up around you in habits of honest industry, must quit their homes, perhaps never to see them again, and submit to the hardships and hazards of the camp, and to the dangers and terrors of the field of battle. There many must roll their garments in blood.

Let me mention another probable, if not an unavoidable consequence of continuing the war; a consequence more to be dreaded, than the hardships of the camp, the terrors of the field of battle, and even death itself. It is an alliance with France. Is not this the secret design of the authors of this war? By this war we unite with France against her powerful enemy. It is *implicitly* uniting all our interests with those of France, embarking with her in the desperate war against liberty, against humanity, against religion, against all earthly governments, and against the government of Heaven.

Should France, with the help of America, succeed against Great Britain, and then subjugate these United States, we shall fare no better, than the conquered nations of Europe. Your sons will probably be enrolled among the conscripts of Bonaparte, compelled to cross the seas, to traverse the globe, and to pass a miserable life, as the soldiers and slaves of France.

Was there ever a war like this? A war, which was made in the dark, all the aspects of which are dark, and, if prosecuted, dark and gloomy must be the final issue. A war, in which all the prospects before us are enveloped in thick clouds and darkness. Should the war be continued a number of years, without success, the calamity will be great; should it be continued, with success, the calamity will be still greater. To continue this expensive war, and not succeed, in the attempts to humble Great Britain, will

be disgrace, poverty and ruin. To continue this war, and to succeed in helping the enemies of Great Britain to obtain the victory, will be inevitable destruction to our independence, to our republican government, and to all our invaluable liberties and privileges. I repeat it, was ever a war like this? in which, if we do not prosper, we are undone, and, if we do prosper, we are worse than undone. There is no way, then, to save our country, but to take constitutional measures for a speedy restoration of peace. As there is little or no hope, that the present administration will retrace the rash steps which they have taken, peace is to be sought, by one grand and irresistible effort, of all the friends of their country, to remove from office the authors of this war, and to commit the management of our public affairs to the friends of peace. To attempt this, in a patriotic and Christian manner, and not succeed, will be more noble and honourable, and more pleasing in the sight of God, than not to make the attempt. It will save the friends of peace from the heinous sin, and eternal disgrace, of being necessary to their country's ruin.

SERMON II.

PSALM cxx. 7.

I AM FOR PEACE.

AS a further apology for the friends of peace, I remark,
 5. That, in their view, this declaration of war is directly in favour of the Antichristian designs of the government of France.

It is considered as joining issue with the avowed enemies of the truth, in their opposition to religion, to the church of the Redeemer, to the Son of God, and to the eternal throne of Jehovah.

Great Britain is a protestant nation; and, notwithstanding all the corruption of the English nation, it may be said of it, as it was said of Israel, "Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it!" It contains a very large and important branch of the church of God. Many in that kingdom are engaged in the cause of the Redeemer,

and uniting their benevolent efforts, with those of Christians in this country, to promote the interest of religion, to diffuse the knowledge of salvation among the heathen.

The Government of France, is, I believe, at the present time, generally considered, by writers on the prophecies, as the Antichrist of the last days, so clearly described in the Holy Scriptures: who “shall do according to his will, and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any God, for he shall magnify himself above all*.” Christ is called “the Desire of all nations†.” He was the desire of women. Each woman, in Israel, desired, and hoped to be the mother of the “child,” that was to be “born,” the “son,” that was to be “given;”‡ of the illustrious “Seed,” in whom all nations were to be blessed; of the Messiah.

The government of France do not regard the eternal God, nor his adorable Son. He is Antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”|| This power is supposed to be the “beast,” that was to “ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition;” the “man of sin,” “the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God;” “the mystery of iniquity.” “whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming;” the “beast,” that should hate the Papal church, and carry her to destruction; the tremendous power, that is to gather the nations together “to the battle of that great day of God Almighty,”¶ whom God will give to be meat for the fowls of heaven;** the power that is full of “the names of blasphemy;” opening “his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven;”†† the power, that was “to make war with the saints,” and to aim at universal empire “over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”

* Daniel xl. 36, 37.

† Hag. ii. 7.

‡ Is. ix. 6.

|| 1 John ii. 22.

¶ Rev. xvi. 14.

** Rev. xix. 17.

†† Rev. xiii. 6.

Towards the close of the 1260 years mentioned in the prophecy of Daniel, in which the church was to be in the wilderness, such an atheistical and blasphemous power was to rise. The 1260 years of affliction to the church, according to expositors, is drawing to a close. It is supposed, that the blasphemous power, described in the Holy Scriptures, has evidently risen in France, and exhibits the most prominent features of the antichrist of the last times.†

France has had in operation, for a number of years, a systematic plan to obtain universal dominion. The form of her government is unlimited; her views are circumscribed by no law, either of God or man; her military power has decisive influence over the legislative and judiciary; she has broken through all the forms of civil and religious institutions, and organized a regular plan of universal empire; and for the accomplishment of this plan, she has already employed her instruments and agents with great success. Her emissaries are scattered over the nations of Europe; in order to obtain the geography of the country. It is said by a

† The national convention of France abjured the Christian Religion and denied the being of God. They ordered the following blasphemous sentiments to be printed and circulated; "Man when free wants no other divinity, than himself. Reason dethrones both the kings of the earth, and the King of heaven. No monarchy above, if we wish to preserve our republic below. Every other republic," than that of "Atheists is a chimera. If you admit the existence of a heavenly sovereign, you introduce the wooden horse within your walls; what you adore by day, will be your destruction by night."

The French government set aside the Christian sabbath, and the marriage covenant; they declared death to be an eternal sleep, and burnt the Bible in a public square; they shut their houses of public worship, and forbid even the expression of a desire, that they might be opened. Thus they denied the Father and the Son, and at that time publicly professed to be a nation of Atheists. Bonaparte can be a Mohammedan in Egypt, and a Papist in France, or assume any form of godliness to keep his subjects in subordination. The following is part of the description given of the celebration of the re-establishment of Popery by Bonaparte, by Mr. York, who was present. "The far greater part of the Senate, the Legislative Body, the Tribune, and the generals being *avowed Atheists*, and notorious for the murders, thefts, and atrocities, which they had perpetrated; with their chief Magistrate, who had worshipped at the altar of Atheism, some years before in Paris; who afterwards knelt down before the Pope at Rome; and embraced the religion of Mohammed in Africa; assembled together in one place to adore a God, in whom they had no faith, and to profess a religion which they despised, *merely* that they might be enabled to preserve their usurped authority over the people, and to retain their places: this is an occurrence in the history of pious fraud, not to be met with since the days of Judas Iscariot." See Smith on the Prophecies, page 128.

writer, who lately resided in France, that several hundreds of clerks are employed in Paris "in the business, of tracing maps" of countries, that are marked out for conquest, that "Spain was thus marked out before her invasion," and "deluged with French emissaries, to prepare the way for the event." "Combining the subtlety of the Roman senate, and the ferocity of the Goth;—the wildest passions with the most deliberate perfidy;—they have far exceeded all the examples furnished by the records of antiquity." France has ransacked the globe, and explored the ancient habitations of cruelty, to collect the arts of fraud and seduction, that she might deceive and overwhelm the nations. Her secret emissaries are employed to diffuse licentiousness, to break up sober habits, to divide the people, and destroy their morals, and prepare the way for conquest by arms. Every effort is made to corrupt Gazettes, to make them the vehicles of slander and falsehood, to propagate principles, which have risen out of the bottomless pit.

America has been marked out by France, for conquest. Have not the secret emissaries of France for years been preying upon the very vitals of our republican government. We have sufficient reason to believe, that Printing Offices are established under French influence, for the purpose of justifying the measures of France and disseminating her principles. This is evidently the source, from whence is derived the politics of many of our Gazettes.

Even in the time of Washington's administration the agents of France boldly interfered in the affairs of our country. Some of you remember the detestable policy of Genet, the French agent at Philadelphia, "who appealed from our venerable Washington, then in the chair of the nation, to the people;" representing that friend and political father of his country, "as intriguing to deprive the people of their liberties." "He made himself the chief of a club," and used his utmost efforts "to excite commotions, injurious to the government."

The insurrection in Pennsylvania, under the Washington administration, which cost the nation two millions of dollars, originated in French agency. This appears by the intercepted letter of Fauchet, the French minister, in 1795. Speaking of the insurgents, he says, "Republicans by principle, independent by

character and situation, they could not but accede with enthusiasm to the criminations, which *we had sketched for them.*" Thus it appears, that the criminations or charges against the Federal Government, by which that insurrection was excited, were "*sketched*" by Frenchmen.*

French influence in this country was clearly perceived, and greatly lamented by Washington. Speaking of the French in a letter in 1798, he says, "That they have been deceived in their calculations on the division of the people, and the powerful support from *their party*, is reduced to a certainty; though it is somewhat equivocal still whether *that party*, who have been the curse of this country, may not be able to continue their delusion."

When Washington was President of the United States, he was denounced by *this party*, "as a person under dangerous influence." In a letter of 1794, he says, until the last year or two, I had no conception, that parties would, or ever could go the lengths I have been witness to. Nor did I believe until lately, that it was within the bounds of probability, hardly within those of possibility, that while I was using my utmost exertions to establish a national character of our own, independent, as far as our obligations and justice would permit, of every nation on earth, and wished by steering a steady course to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of being an enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another. And to prove this, that every act of my administration would be *tortured*, and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations of them would be made, by giving one side only of the subject, and that too in such exaggerated and indecent terms, as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, to a notorious defaulter, or even to a pickpocket."†

* After the change of the administration of our government, the leader of this insurrection was made secretary of ~~the~~ *Treason*.

† Had Washington lived to the present time, would not our modern patriots, who were unborn or babes, when he fought the battles of his country, denounce him, as an "*Old Tory*." Many, who fought by the side of Washington, are now so denounced, by boasting striplings, who have never witnessed the terrors of the field of battle, nor ever seen an army. How ungrateful thus to treat those, who carry about, with their grey hairs, the scars and marks of the revolutionary war.

Duane, who received from Mr. Jefferson a colonels commission, was the open and avowed enemy of Washington. He spoke of him, in his noted paper, the Aurora, as "the source of all the misfortunes of our country," as multiplying "evils upon the United States." On the retirement of President Washington from office, Duane expressed his joy, in the following manner, If ever there was a time for rejoicing this is the moment. Every heart in unison with the freedom and happiness of the people, ought to beat high with exultation, that the name of Washington from this day ceases to give currency to political iniquity, and to legalize corruption." "It is a subject of the greatest astonishment, that a single individual could have cankered the principles of republicanism in an enlightened people, and should have carried his designs against the public liberty so far, as to have put in jeopardy its very existence. Such however are the facts. And with these staring us in the face, this day ought to be a jubilee in the United States."†

When the envoys of President Adams were rejected in France, it appears, that the French calculated much on the success of their agents in America. They boasted, that they knew their strength in these United States.

I mention these things to show, that a systematic plan has been in operation ever since the time that Washington was President, to lead or to drive this country into French principles and measures, and to involve us in war with France against Great-Britain. Did not Mr. Madison, eighteen years ago, make every possible exertion, in Congress to obtain a declaration of war against Great Britain? War was then prevented by the patriotism of Washington. It has been artfully and continually insinuated by some of the friends of the present administration, that those who have been at the head of our national affairs, since the time of Washington, were his friends. Many honest and well disposed people believe this, and are influenced to think, that the measures of Washington have been generally persued by our present rulers. But directly the reverse of this is true. The very same characters, which were hostile to the administration of Washington, in coalition with the agents of France, have, agreeable to the fears

† See Smith on the prophecies, to which the reader is referred for a more full statement of facts concerning the origin of our difficulties.

suggested, by that great man, “continued their delusions,” deceive the people, and gained strength, till they have imagined, that their plans were sufficiently matured for the declaration of war against Great Britain, in favour of the Antichristian designs of the government of France.

May not this war, then, be justly considered, as the war of Bonaparte, made by his instruments and means? Is it not joining with those, who make war with the Lamb and with the saints? Is it not uniting with Antichrist, combining with the deluded nations that wonder after the beast, and forming a coalition with that desperate host, that is to fight the battle of the great day, to be meat for the fowls of heaven, and finally go into perdition?

As a further apology for the friends of peace, I remark,

6. That in their view the war is morally wrong.

This is implied in the remarks which have been made; but it deserves a more particular consideration.

Although we have just cause of complaint against Great Britain, yet it does not appear, that there does exist, between these United States and Great Britain differences so great, as to be a sufficient cause of war, that last and dreadful resort of injured nations. Should it be granted, that the differences are great enough to justify a declaration of war, it does not appear, that sufficient efforts were made by the government of the United States, for an accommodation of the differences. Have they not rejected terms of accommodation, the acceptance of which, would have been vastly preferable to war? Every effort for negotiation ought to have been exhausted, before the adoption of this desperate measure.

A judicious writer on the law of nations, says, war is “but a wretched expedient against those, who spurn at justice, and refuse the remonstrances of reason.

It is in extremities only, that a just and wise nation has recourse to it.—Those, who run to arms without necessity are the scourges of the human race, barbarians, enemies to society, and rebels to the law of nature, or rather to the common Father of mankind.—Humanity is shocked at the sovereign, who lavishes the lives of his subjects, who exposes his people to the havoc and miseries of war, when they might enjoy an honourable and salutary peace. Besides the misfortunes drawn on his own subjects for which he is ac-

countable, he is guilty also of those he carries amidst an innocent people. The slaughter of men, the pillage of cities, the devastation of provinces are his crimes. He is responsible to God, and answerable to man, for every person that is killed. The violence the crimes, the various disorders attendant on the licentious tumult of arms, pollute his conscience, and blacken his account, as he is the original author of them all."

Many have already been killed in this war, perhaps before it closes a million of lives will be lost. On whom is the guilt of this blood to be found, at the great and last day? On those, surely, who are the criminal cause of this war. If those, who have declared this war are in the fault, their being members of Congress, and representatives of a great people, will not free them from guilt in the sight of God. No; "the slaughter of men," the massacre of families, "the pillage of cities," the "devastation of provinces," all the violence and licentiousness of soldiers, will be their crimes, for which they must be accountable at the great tribunal. It may be considered a light thing for men, while enjoying the luxuries of a city, to raise their hands in favour of a declaration of war. But when this sets in motion the engines of death and destruction by sea and land, and hurries thousands out of time into eternity, it may be considered as a deed, which will not be so easily accounted for at the bar of God. Can those, who lifted their hands for this war, lift their hands to God, and say, that the guilt of the blood, that will be shed, will not be found on their souls? If a nation chuse rulers, who are disposed to make an unjust war, knowing them to be such, or if they approve such deeds, the guilt of blood comes on the nation. Let every friend of peace, then, free his soul from the guilt of blood by disapproving this unjust war.

I proceed,

II. To suggest some suitable measures to be pursued by the friends of peace, for the restoration of this inestimable blessing,

1. It is proper, that the friends of peace should refuse to aid in the prosecution of this war. They ought not to resist any law, that is made according to our Constitution, nor encourage any thing like a spirit of insurrection. This should be detested by every friend of peace. Let us cling to the Constitution, and to every constitutional law, however we may disapprove the charac-

cers of the men, who made the laws. But no constitutional authority in this country can oblige a man to become a soldier in an offensive war. Our constitution leaves every man to his own choice, whether to assist in the prosecution of this war or not. Should Congress pass a law, that the farmers in New-England, should not gather their harvest, nor sow their ground, or, that they should quit their employments, and take their arms, and go and invade Canada; who would be obliged to regard such a law. Indeed, it would be wrong to regard it. The laws of Congress cannot make it right to engage in an unjust war. The law of God is above human laws; and the laws of man cannot make it right to do that, which the law of God forbids.

Though the word of God requires us to "submit to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work," yet the word of God does not require nor allow us to do evil in obedience to magistrates. Christ says, "Render unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."* The laws of *Cesar* were not above the laws of God.

2. The friends of peace ought to speak freely, openly, and decisively against the war, and say, we are "for peace." Ministers of the gospel ought to speak decisively against the great iniquity and injustice of the war, and warn the people against the heinous sin of aiding in carrying on an unjust war. Civil magistrates, and all in authority, and all men of influence ought to manifest their decided disapprobation of the war.

It is said by some, that the measures of government may not be spoken against. War is declared by the General Government, and we must now close our lips. Even under the monarchal government of Great-Britain, at the time of their war with America, the opposers of the war expressed their minds freely, in conversation, in gazettes, and in the debates of the cabinet. How ought men to blush with shame, who talk of the tyranny of Great-Britain, and would deprive us of the same liberties which her subjects enjoy. Are these our boasted champions of *liberty* and *equality*? Tell it not in France, lest her tyrant should think himself outdone by his friends in America! The deeds of Con-

* Matt. xxii. 21.

gress, in denying the liberty of free debate, will blacken the pages of our history, to the latest generations. But their power in this case does not extend beyond their closed doors. Others, who are as capable of judging of the propriety of measures, as the members of Congress, will judge for themselves, and speak their minds freely, and in doing this, they will discharge an important duty, which they owe to their country.

3. The friends of peace ought to take pains to obtain and communicate correct information concerning our public affairs. This is highly important in any republic. Ignorance is the bane of a free government. Persons destitute of information are easily deceived, and led into the most destructive measures. It is an unhappiness inseparable from a free government and liberty of the press, that there will be various sources of corrupt information. Gazettes will be filled with slander and falsehood? All possible means ought to be used to counteract the pernicious influence of such Gazettes, as are directed by secret French agents, with a view to justify French principles and measures. With what confidence are things asserted, in such Gazettes, as facts, which are known, by men of correct information, to be false. But the most barefaced falsehood insisted on month after month, in a public print, will, by many, be believed. To this it is owing, that the opinion has prevailed among some honest men, that, it is those, principally, who were *tories*, in the time of our revolution, who have been leading in the opposition to the late measures of government, and are leading in the opposition to the present war. Was there ever a more palpable falsehood put in print? But it has been so often affirmed in news-papers devoted to the interest of France, and used as a proverb in the mouths of political incendiaries, that it is believed by many well disposed persons; and has had great influence in rallying a numerous class of people, to vote for rulers, who have made this war.

4. It is proper and very important, that the friends of peace should make every lawful and honourable effort to change our rulers. Is there any ground to hope, that those, who have led us into this calamity will lead us out of it? Must we not have new rulers, or be plunged deeper and deeper in trouble?*

* President Madison's refusing to confirm the armistice, which was proposed by the Governor of Canada, give occasion for strong suspicion, that he

But no unlawful or dishonourable means are to be used to accomplish this. It is better to remain under the burden of our present difficulties, trusting in God, than to seek redress, by any means, that are unfair, or inconsistent with a good conscience.

Happy, indeed, would it be for our country, could we have such rulers, as the word of God requires us to choose. We have awfully departed from the express commands of God in the choice of our rulers. This is a national sin, highly provoking to the Lord; a sin which brings its own punishment, which has brought upon our country the greatest of temporal calamities.†

That infidelity is no disqualification for a ruler in a Christian country, seems to be an idea too corrupt to be advocated, by any except infidels. But many, in the very face of the word of God, boldly assert this principle; than which, can any thing be more provoking to the great Governor of nations, or more directly calculated to draw down his judgments on a people? We now feel the painful effects of such wicked principles, when carried into operation. Is it not time, then, to renounce such absurd sentiments and practice, and hearken to the Divine command in respect to choosing rulers, and seek for wiser and better men, to conduct our national affairs? Too long already have we neglected our duty, and trusted our dearest privileges in the hands of those, who do not suitably regard them; in the hands of those, who will trifle not only with our property, but with our liberties and lives.

désigns to continue the war, whatever may be the event, and that the *real* cause of the war was not mentioned in his manifesto. For the British orders in Council were assigned as the principal cause of the war; but after these orders were revoked, the President refused to concede to proposals for a cessation of arms for a few months. Does not his partiality to France appear in this? he declared, by proclamation, that the French decrees were repealed, *long before the event took place*, and refuses to declare the revocation of the British orders in Council, when no one doubts the existence of the event.

† *Massillon* remarks, that *false teachers* are the greatest judgment, that ever God sends upon a guilty nation. But this judgment is not *merely temporal*. It is a judgment on the *souls* of men, to have those, who pretend to lead them in spiritual things cause them to err. But false teachers are often the means of the greatest temporal judgments. They enticed Ahab to declare war against the Syrians, and to go up to Ramoth-Gilead, where he fell in battle. See 1 Chro. xviii. 11. Traveling false teachers in this country have been almost universally in favour of measures, which have led to this war. They are in general zealous advocates for the war, and have done much towards bringing it on. They have considerable influence over the most ignorant and irregular part of the community; and those, over whom false teachers have influence are in general in favour of this war.

Have we not too long closed our lips and suppressed our feelings, hoping that our rulers would see the evil of their ways, even till they seem to have imagined, that we had no feelings to express, or no spirit to utter a complaint, or to make an effort to save ourselves or country from ruin. With regard to religion, let us return to the God of our fathers; with regard to the choice of rulers, let us return to the plain rule given in the Holy Scriptures. With regard to politics, let us return to the principles of Washington. Let us prove to our present rulers, that we are not pleased with their spurious politics. Let us make it manifest to his imperial majesty Napoleon, that we are not Frenchmen enslaved by his detestable policy, but Americans, "independent by character and situation." Let us convince the world, that we are not yet prepared for slavery and chains, but that there is one Republic on the globe, that will not tamely resign her liberties.

5. The friends of peace ought to pursue the measures pointed out in the Holy Scriptures to procure the return of the Divine favour.

God is displeased. The ensigns of war are the tokens of his anger. He never sends the distressing calamity of war upon a people without a just cause. The judgments of God upon the land are for our sins. We are a "sinful nation, a seed of evil doers," a corrupt people. Sins abound in our land. We have refused to be drawn by mercies, or reclaimed by judgments. We have revolted more and more; and have said, It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances. We have, with our tongues, extolled the religion of our fathers, and their Christian example; but we have sinned and sinned against the God, whom they served. We have boasted of our morality and regard to Divine institutions, and have gone on in rebellion against the Lord. How many who have complained of the irreligion of our rulers, have themselves been their rivals in impiety? How many, who have professed to be shocked at the infidelity of others, have themselves lived more like infidels than like Christians?

We have disregarded the word of God, in respect to the *sanctification of the Sabbath*. The sin of profaning the holy sabbath prevails in our land to an alarming degree. The cry of this sin

has gone up from all our towns and cities, and proclaims the guilt of our country.

By what multitudes have the Holy Scriptures been utterly contemned, in respect to the manner, in which children have been brought up. Such vast multitudes of children have been left to themselves, that, they have brought, not their *parents* only, but the whole *country*, "to shame."

The command of God, *not to take his name in vain*, is despised. *Profane swearing, and false swearing*, are the heinous sins of our country.

How many have departed from the simplicity of the truth, by practising the arts of fraud and deception? In religious concerns, these arts have been practised to save expence of property. In political concerns, they have been practised to promote the views of a party.

The way, in which God is now punishing us for our sins, is the way, in which he usually punishes guilty nations. In the righteous dispensations of his providence in governing the world, he has, at various times, withheld wisdom from civil rulers, and left them to infatuation and injustice. "With him is strength and wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his. He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools." "He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty. He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged. He poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty." He increaseth the nation, and destroyeth them; he enlargeth the nation, and straiteneth them again. He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way. They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man."*

When God was about to punish Egypt with overwhelming judgments, it was said concerning her rulers, "Surely the princes of Zoan are become fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish; how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the

* Job xii. 16—25.

son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?" "Where are thy wise men?" "They have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof." "The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof."*

When Judah was to experience great calamities as a punishment for sin, God said in his anger, "I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable."—"As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths."†

Though "the Lord cometh out of his place to punish" us for our "iniquities," yet let us not imagine, that he has gone out of his usual way of punishing nations.

The Holy Scriptures point out the only way to obtain the return of the Divine favour. "Return unto me; and I will return unto you, saith the Lord."—"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near."—God says, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it: If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them."

* Is. xix. 11—14

† Is. iii. 4, 12

Repentance with Prayer.

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED IN NORTH BROOKFIELD,

JULY 23d, 1812.

A DAY OF PRAYER,

RECOMMENDED BY

His Excellency the Governor,

ON ACCOUNT OF THE DECLARATION OF WAR
AGAINST ENGLAND.



By THOMAS SNELL,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN NORTH BROOKFIELD.



BROOKFIELD,

PRINTED BY E. MERRIAM & Co.

Sept.....1812.