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MR. FRENCH'S  
THANKSGIVING SERMON,  
NOVEMBER 29, 1798.

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S E R M O N,

DELIVERED ON THE

ANNIVERSARY THANKSGIVING

NOVEMBER 29, 1798.

WITH

SOME ADDITIONS IN THE HISTORICAL PART.

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By JONATHAN FRENCH, A. M.

Pastor of the South Church in Andover.

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*Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.*



**T**HANKSGIVING and Praise are among the most natural, and pleasing duties prescribed to man. They imply such a lively and devout sense of the excellencies and perfections of God, and such a recollection of his favors, and wonderful works, as cannot fail to excite the most grateful sensations of heart, and a course of obedience, expressive of an earnest inquiry, what we shall render to the LORD for all his benefits. Thanksgiving and praise are the dictates of natural reason and conscience. A sense of the existence of a Supreme Being is stamped upon the human mind with such force, as that nothing less than extreme depravity, and abandoned wickedness can eradicate. The existence of Deity shines through all creation; and the footsteps of God may be discovered in all his works. *In him we live, and*  
*move*

*move, and have our being.* Without the care of Deity, without the exercise of divine power and goodness, we could not subsist a moment. *He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. He is the Father of mercies, from whom cometh down every good gift, and every perfect gift.* To the light of nature these truths are so clear, that the heathen are condemned by the apostle PAUL; *because when, by the things that were made, they knew GOD, and could not but know him, they glorified him not as GOD; neither were they thankful to him.*

ANOTHER Argument to enforce the duties of thanksgiving and praise, is derived from a consideration of our relation to God, and our absolute dependence upon him. We are his creatures. His Almighty power and goodness uphold us in being, feed and clothe us, and give us to drink of his springs; to taste of his mercy, and to breathe his air. But we have abused his goodness, have sinned against him, broken his law and incurred its awful penalty. Yet God in his infinite mercy hath provided a Saviour, to redeem us from the power and punishment of sin; to bring us from under its bondage into the liberty of the sons of God. The store-houses of grace are set wide open to sinners; and, through faith repentance and obedience, he gives us a lively hope of a glorious immortality beyond the grave.

Thus the consideration of creating goodness, preserving mercy, redeeming love and grace, and the hope of everlasting happiness hereafter, lay us under  
the

the strongest possible obligations, to render to the LORD the most sincere sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise.

ALMIGHTY goodness hath been pleased so to construct our natures as to connect pleasure with duty. The pious and grateful soul takes pleasure, therefore, in acknowledging divine favors, and in making the most suitable expressions of gratitude for benefits received. With a mind inspired with such sentiments, we find the Psalmist frequently expressing himself in such language as this; *I will remember the days of old, and meditate on all thy works, and talk of all thy doings. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?* Under such a lively sense of God's goodness, divine mercies will appear too great, and too numerous to be expressed. His thoughts of mercy toward us, and the things he hath done for us, will appear truly wonderful! Who can recount the mercies of ages, or of years past, or of a long life, of one year, or even of a single day? They are more than can be numbered.

INSPIRED with such sentiments, and influenced by such animated feelings of gratitude, from a reflection upon temporal and spiritual blessings, the Psalmist expresses himself in the language of the text; *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works, which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: If I would declare and speak of them, they are*

*are more than can be numbered.* David, even with his great inspired mind, could not possibly recollect, comprehend and express, the greatness, and the number of mercies, divine goodness had bestowed upon him and the people. If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. In the Hebrew text it is thus; I will declare and speak of them, &c. As if he had said; *They are more than can be numbered;* yet I will as far, as I am able, recollect and speak of some of them.

TAKING example from David, and the ancient people of God, imitated by our pious Forefathers; agreeably to the present occasion, we may attempt to recollect, and speak of some of the innumerable favors, God hath bestowed on this land, and the wonderful works he hath done for us.

To fulfil the great designs of heaven in spreading the glorious gospel, and extending the Redeemer's kingdom, God was pleased to take our Forefathers by the hand; and by a series of wonderful and mysterious providences, in 1620 landed them upon these shores. Here they erected the standard of Christ in the midst of a barbarous, idolatrous people; and under his banner triumphed gloriously! As Dagon fell before the Ark, so the powers of darkness, superstition and idolatry seem to have fallen, shrunk back, and fled before the Sceptre of JESUS. "This is the LORDS doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

The trials and conflicts with which our first Settlers had to encounter with cruel enemies, artful and designing men, with pinching wants, distressing sicknesses, and almost countless dangers, surpass description.

A FEW years before our Ancestors came into this country, the tribes of Indians were almost innumerable. But Israel's God, who sent a pestilence before his chosen people, to make room for them in the land of promise, sent his destroying Angel, a mortal pestilence, among the idolatrous natives of the country; and, from the best accounts that could be collected, reduced the Massachusetts Indians "from thirty thousand, to about three hundred fighting men.--- Some tribes were in a manner extinct."(a) Our

## B

## Ancestors

(a) Different opinions have prevailed respecting the nature of the disease which proved so fatal to the Indians. The small pox, according to Mr. Hutchinson, made terrible havoc among the Indians of *Massachusetts* in the year 1633. "This caused some to suppose that to have been the disorder; but the Indians themselves always gave a different account, and, by their description, it was a pestilential periodical fever. In one of the voyages collected by Purchas, it is said to have been the plague, and that some of the Indians who recovered showed the scars of the boil." This seems to be corroborated by the account Mr. Prince gives of some, who, sailing to *Massachusetts* in the year 1632, "found a great sickness among the natives, but unlike the plague, it was the same." *Pelago, Chron. v. 123.*

Mr. Hutchinson gives us an account of an extraordinary mortality among the Indians of *Nantucket* in the year 1763, which he supposes "strengthenes the probability of the account of the distemper and of the amazing effect of it. There were about 90 families of Indians in the island of *Nantucket* containing about 220 persons, men, women and children. In the beginning of October, a fever began among them, and before the end of January, between 250, and 270 persons had been seized with it, of which number 6 men and 9 women only recovered, and but 15 families and about 35 souls remained, 15 of whom had wintered in the straits of *Belleisle* and escaped the distemper." Some imagined this disorder was imported; but others thought there was no room for such a supposition. "It is remarkable, that the English inhabitants were free from the distemper, and not one person died with it." *Massch. hist. vol. 1. p.*

Ancestors supposed an immediate interposition of providence in this great mortality among the Indians, to make room for the settlement of the English." But notwithstanding the devastation by sickness was so great, yet in many places great numbers remained, and harassed the new settlers, and kept them in continual wars, and alarms. But God upheld them in their struggles, increased their numbers, and enlarged their borders. Wars however were their lot, and the Indians their scourge. But between the years 1670 and 1680, war became general, and all the *New England Colonies* were involved in its distresses. Before it ended "there was scarcely a man in the Colony who had not some friend, or relation killed." "Dreadful were the sufferings and deaths of those who fell into their hands. No age, nor sex found mercy! The delicate Mother would be cut in pieces in the presence of her children, and the tender infant snatched from its mother's breast, and dashed against the stones."

In the year 1675, the Indians formed a general and extensive combination that filled the Colonies with the utmost concern. They began their assaults early in the season. In the month of February they fired the town of *Lancaster*, and killed and took about 40 persons(a). They attacked the Towns of

#### *Marborough,*

Some have conjectured that the distemper among the Indians was the same disorder that has made such awful devastation in the Cities of *New-York, Philadelphia,* and other places. Whether this fatal disease originated in this country, or was imported from abroad, may be highly worthy investigation. It is a subject which merits the attention of the learned, and in which the health and happiness of this country may be deeply interested.

(a) The late Mr. Rowleyson, *Minister* of the place, was absent. His wife, and children were taken prisoners, their house was burnt, and the old cutter where it stood, and the *Bank*, are still to be seen.

*Marlborough, Sudbury, Chelmsford* and *Medfield*. The latter of which, notwithstanding it was defended by several hundred soldiers, was about half burnt down, and a number of its inhabitants killed. Seven or eight houses were burnt in *Weymouth*. All these mischiefs were done in the same month; and many others were committed before the year closed. The year following they attacked *Northampton, Springfield, Groton, Sudbury, Marlborough,* and *Plymouth*, burnt many of their houses and barns, destroyed their cattle and killed many of the inhabitants. *New-hampshire* and the Eastern country suffered exceedingly. But the pious zeal, and unceasing exertions of this infant country in defence of religion and liberty, under the auspices of divine providence, avenged these cruelties, and quelled the Indians, at least for a time, in almost every quarter.

WARS, more or less, however continued to imbitter the cup of this people. *Haverhill, Rowley,* and *Andover*, were among the sufferers. In the year 1703, in the dead of winter, when the ground was covered with a very deep snow, the Indians fell upon the town of *Deerfield* and destroyed it. They killed about 40 persons, and took about 100 prisoners. (a) In the year 1708, they burnt a part of *Haverhill,*

(a) THE REV. MR. WILLIAMS, his wife and five children were among the prisoners. Two others of their children were murdered. Mrs. WILLIAMS, having scarcely recovered from her lying in, was in a weak state, and being unable to travel as fast as the rest, the second day after they set out, her Indian master sunk his hatchet into her brains. *March 1708.*

*verhill*, and ransacked the rest; killed 50 or 40 persons, and according to some accounts, took about 100 prisoners (*b.*) The French were concerned in both these expeditions as well, as in many other instances. The Indians continued their mischiefs for many years. They seemed so void of a sense of moral obligation, that no treaty would bind them; and no faith could be placed in any of their promises.

The French, who had great foot hold in America, were not indifferent and inactive during these scenes. Artful and intriguing, as was always their character, in every possible way, they encouraged the Indians to annoy the English. They made great encroachments upon the Colonies. They greatly obstructed our trade and fishery, captured many of our vessels, and carried them into *Louisburgh*. “Roused with indignation at such continual insults and injuries, an expedition was formed against that nest of plunderers; and, after forty nine days siege, to the astonishment of all Europe, *Louisburgh* surrendered to the New England forces, June 17th, 1745. “An event, viewed in all its circumstances, scarce paralleled in modern or ancient history(*c.*)” From the first step of that memorable expedition by our New England forces, aided by a small British squadron, to the complete reduction of that formidable fortress, was evinced the conducting hand of providence in a  
wonderful

(b) THE REV. JOHN ROYCE, his wife and one child were among the killed. This mischief was done August 9th 1703.

(c) *Parliamentary History.*

wonderful manner. What cannot a people do, when the LORD is on their side?

FILLED with repentment on account of the loss of *Louisburgh*, France resolved to raise “a fleet and armament to recover that place, to make a conquest of *Novascotia*, and to lay waste the whole sea-coast from *Novascotia* to *Georgia*.”

GREAT preparations were accordingly made: “The whole fleet consisted of 14 capital ships, 20 smaller ones, together with five snips, bombs, tenders, and transports for eight thousand troops; in the whole about seventy sail.”

THIS great fleet, under the command of Duke d’Anville, was to have sailed the beginning of May, 1746. But the hand of that providence, which commands the winds and the seas, seemed to be visible in causing the opposing elements to retard the enterprise; for, notwithstanding they were so early ready for sea, contrary winds prevented their sailing from France, till the 22d of June.

M. CONFLANS, with four ships of the line from the West Indies was to join them. This squadron arrived upon the coast sometime before the grand fleet. After a while, being severely combated by storms and fogs, and being strangers to the coast, and not finding the fleet, they grew discouraged, and returned to France.

THE news of the fleet’s sailing from France excited great anxiety in the minds of the people. Their fears were in some measure, however, relieved by the news

news of the failing of a British fleet after them.— These hopes, however proved abortive; for Admiral Lestock put out no less than seven times from England, it is said, (d) and was driven back by contrary winds. The French fleet having sailed, and steering too far southward fell into the hot climates in the very heat of summer. This, with the length of their passage, which was about three months, caused a mortal sickness among them, of which about thirteen hundred died at sea. The rest were much weakened and dispirited.

WHEN the news arrived that the fleet was seen approaching the coast, the country was filled with consternation; and every face seemed to gather paleness. The streets filled with men, marching for the defence of the sea ports, and the distressed of women and children, trembling for the event, made too deep impressions upon the minds of those who remember these scenes, ever to be erased. But never did that religion, for which this country was settled, appear more important, nor prayer more prevalent, than on this occasion. A God hearing prayer, stretched forth the arm of his power, and destroyed that mighty Armament, in a manner almost extraordinary, as the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea.

One day near the end of a tremendous storm threw the fleet into great distress. One vessel was cast away upon the isle of Sables, and four ships of the line, and one transport were seen in great distress,

but

but not heard of afterwards. After the storm, they were enveloped for several days, in an uncommon fog. At length, the Admiral's ship and one more, on the 11th, of September got into the harbour. One got in before and three others in three days after. Finding his ships in a shattered condition, so many of his men dead, and so many sickly, the Admiral fell into discouragement and died on the sixteenth.(e)-- The Vice Admiral, soon after arrived, and finding himself in such an awful condition, and struck with chagrin and disappointment, put an end to his own life with his sword. What remained of the fleet landed to recruit. But the sickness swept off one thousand, one hundred and thirty more at *Chibucto* (g) before they left the place.

THE news that Admiral Lestock with an English fleet was expected after them, hastened their determination to leave the place. They burnt one ship of the line, and several others not fit for sea; struck their tents, embarked, and on the 13th, of October, put to sea with all expedition. On the 15th, they were met by another violent storm near Cape Sables, by which they were scattered and very much damaged. On the next day, the storm abating, and the weather proving more favorable, they collected their scattered fleet as well, as they could, and attempted to press forward on their voyage.

ON this great emergency, and day of darkness and doubtful expectation, the 16th, of October was observed

(e) The French said he died of an apoplexy, but the English, that by poisoning himself. *Hutch.*

(g) Now called Halifax.

observed as a day of *Fasting* and *Prayer* throughout the Province. And, wonderful to relate, that very night **GOD** sent upon them a more dreadful storm than either of the former, and completed their destruction. Some overset, some foundered, and a remnant only of this miserable fleet, returned to France to carry the news. Thus New England *stood still, and saw the salvation of GOD.*

PEACE ensued in 1748. But France, ever restless and ambitious, forming new schemes, put her intriguing wheels in motion, and precipitated another war. Open hostilities commenced in 1754, and war was proclaimed the 17th of May, 1756. For the first year or two of this war, the English were unfortunate, and the French successful. In 1757, Fort William Henry fell into their hands. An excellent historian (*b*) gives us the following just account of the conduct of the French and Indians at that place, as they who were present, and eye witnesses of the scenes, can testify. “The marquis de Montcalm laid siege to Fort William Henry which stood on lake George, on the 3d, of August 1757, with ten thousand men, and a train of artillery; and on the 9th, Colonel Monro, the Commander, was obliged to surrender, having expended all his ammunition. The garrison obtained, by their gallant defence, an honourable capitulation; but many of them were cruelly butchered by the French Indians, together with women and children.

(b) Hist. of the war from 1742, to the definitive treaty of peace in 1763.

children. A scene of such savage cruelty, and horrid barbarity; was never acted as at the gates of this fort: The infants and children were seized by the heels, and their brains beat out against stones and trees; the throats of some of the women were cut; and the bodies of others were ript open, and their bowels torn out and thrown in their faces: And other more shocking marks of rage, horror, and cruelty were committed, but which, for the sake of the humane reader we shall not mention. All these were done in the sight of the French regulars, and their inhuman commander, who, contrary to the articles of the capitulation, never ordered them to restrain the barbarity of the Indians. Part of the garrison, however, escaped to fort Edward, in a miserable condition, after being pursued seven miles by the enemy's savages." (i)

HEAVEN repented their perfidy, pleaded our cause, and changed the events of war in our favor. The marquis de Montcalm fell in battle at the siege of Quebec; which important fortress surrendered to the English on the 18th of September, 1759. This victory was celebrated in Europe and America. The late Dr. Cooper, in a sermon preached before the General Court on the occasion, says, "The worth of this conquest will appear greatly enhanced if we reflect upon the character of the enemy which we

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(i) The foregoing historical sketches were collected from the writings of Mr. Prince, Mr. Foxcroft, Mr. Hutchinson, and others.

have so far subdued---An inveterate and implacable enemy to our religion and liberties; inflamed with *Romish* bigotry; perfidious, restless, politic, and enterprising: An enemy that has ever made war against us in a manner shocking to humanity: That has so envied our superior advantages and growth, as to deem any methods just by which we could be distressed; and has accordingly long employed the barbarity of savages to drench our borders with the blood of the unarmed villagers, and even of women and infants.”(k) One conquest followed upon the back of another; and, on the 10th of September 1760, all that vast country of Canada surrendered to the arms of the English, who almost every where became victorious. In 1763, to the joy of America, peace was concluded between *England, France, and Spain.*

Thus the God of armies *girded his sword upon his thigh: and rode upon the heavens for our help, and in his excellency upon the skies;* and laid the enemies of our religion at his feet.

BUT, alas! what returns did we make for these inestimable favors? Our ingratitude and disobedience to God justly raised his righteous displeasure against us. Our joy was soon turned into mourning. A distressing war commenced between Great Britain and America. At length, humbling ourselves before God and appealing to heaven for the justness of our cause

(k) Dr. Cooper's Serm. before the General Court, Oct. 16, 1759. p. 47, 48.

cause, we declared ourselves independent, and resolved to be free. To defend our rights and privileges, and to maintain our independence, by a solemn public act, *we pledged to one another our lives, our property, and our sacred honor!* Through a series of wonderful providences and events, not much short of miracles, under the guidance of heaven, and the ablest statesmen and warriors, through bloodshed, and numerous indescribable difficulties, we obtained a name among the nations of the earth; and our independence and sovereignty were either implicitly or explicitly acknowledged by every nation in Europe. The remarkable providence, by which we were defended against the wiles of the wicked, the numerous misrepresentations of perfidious enemies at home and abroad; and against the force of one of the most potent nations; the manner in which we obtained warlike stores and other supplies; and the detection of the vilest plots against us, all demand our grateful remembrance. We may particularly notice the treason of Arnold, who for silver and gold, bargained away one of the strong fortresses of America, (1) the day was fixed upon, and had arrived when it was to have been delivered into the hands of our enemies. Praise to the God of our Fathers and our God, the plot was discovered, the British agent was taken and hung as a spy. Arnold, that Judas of America, escaped to be despised even by his employers; and to suffer the stings and torments of his own  
conscience

(1) Fort on West point.

conscience, more dreadful than a thousand deaths. These, and numerous other instances of the signal interpositions or divine providence, during the war, ought never to be forgotten. Was ever a people under greater obligations to acknowledge the guiding, protecting hand of GOD, than we are? But ingratitude and the misimprovement of divine goodness, we have reason to fear, have moved a righteous GOD to suffer us to be involved in new troubles.

SETTLED down in peace, under the freest and best constitutions of government, ever framed by man; administered by men of our own choice, whose liberties and interests are inseparably blended with our own; under flourishing and rapidly increasing trade, agriculture, fishery, and manufactures, with a growing population; and the enjoyment of civil, religious and national happiness, surpassing the anticipations of the most sanguine; did we not too hastily, “reign ourselves into the arms of security;” saying, as it were, “the bitterness of death is past,” we shall see no more war in our day? And, like GOD’s ancient people, did we not forget the works of the LORD, and the wonderful things he had done for us? Almighty GOD, who always takes notice of the ingratitude of his people, and never suffers it long to go unpunished, was pleased to permit a terrible war to break out in Europe. As the only possible wise step for a people situated as we were, we took a neutral station. Every possible artifice was used to draw us into the vortex. Britain unjustly attacked our trade, and made great spoiliations upon our commerce.

commerce. We complained of their flagrant injustice, and proposed a negotiation. England listened to the proposal; and a commercial treaty of alliance ensued; which, though it was not in all points the best that could have been wished, yet was infinitely better than a war. France had formerly, for her own interest, acknowledging our independence was established, assisted us in the war against Britain; for which aid we made her full compensation, even before the times stipulated for had expired. But now, vexed at not being able with all her intrigues, to draw us into the war, contrary to the laws of nations, of justice and the faith of treaties, has committed the most grievous outrages upon our defenceless commerce; and unrighteously plundered us of our property by the lowest calculation, to the amount of more than fifty millions of dollars. A minister was sent to France to present our complaints, but was refused an audience. Our distresses and our forbearance continued. Three envoys extraordinary were then sent, with most ample powers and instructions, "to do justice to France and her citizens, if in any thing we have injured them; to obtain justice for the multiplied injuries they have committed against us; and to preserve peace." But all was in vain. They could not be accredited without stipulations for such vast sums of money, and such submissive terms, as would be tantamount to the resigning of our sovereignty and independence to their influence and dictation, as the price of entering upon a negotiation. Such degrading terms were spiritedly refused:

ed; and our envoys were recalled. The spirited and judicious measures of our government, our naval and military operations to defend our commerce and our dearest rights, it is said, have changed the language of the French government into a milder tone. Happy for us, if it should not prove to be the tear of the Crocodile over the prey he means to devour. Let us beware of the decoy. Satan often does more mischief when transformed into an angel of light, than when he attacks openly with his cloven foot. What reliance can be placed upon men who renounce christianity and the holy sabbath; who deny the immortality of the soul, and even the existence of a God? What ties of obligation can be found in the faith and promises of such, to give them consideration in the minds of a wise, and religious people? Should fair and candid overtures of peace, upon just and righteous principles, accompanied with good evidence of their sincerity be made to our government, the offers would doubtless be eagerly embraced; and the event would gladden every true American heart. But, till then, putting our trust in God, the great Arbitrer of nations, let us unite in the strongest bonds of peace among ourselves; and put forth every exertion even to the last extremity, in supporting our own government and defending our independence, and our precious rights and privileges, against all foreign influence, and every bold invader. Then may we hope, that *no weapons formed against us will be suffered to prosper.* The complete and most important victory, gained by the Brit-

ith over the French fleet in the Mediterranean sea, may also have influence, to induce the French government, *ostensibly*, to change their professions and conduct toward us; while their dispositions and views may be precisely the same. But O, let our country beware; let us be doubly guarded against the envenomed serpent in the grass, as a more dangerous enemy, than the most mischievous viper in open view. Snares have been laid for us, and snares without dispute will be laid for us.--- As the Psalmist expresses it; *they may encourage themselves in an evil matter. They commune of laying snares privily.* But hitherto by the wisdom, the vigilance and firmness of our rulers, their snares have been discovered and broken, and we have escaped. May a protecting providence still keep us *from the snares and the grins laid for us* by the workers of iniquity; and may the evils designed against us, eventually, fall upon their own heads. Particularly, may we be defended against the men of treachery, slander and falsehood, of our own nation, who have been so busily employed in fomenting difficulties and divisions among ourselves; who, by wicked artifice, falsehood and misrepresentation, have left no stone unturned, to bring us under foreign influence. As for those weak, but honest men, who have been the dupes and the tools of the artful and the wicked, their ignorance may be some palliation of their faults; and is all that can be pleaded in their excuse. But as for those wicked tools of a foreign nation, whose pride and avarice would lead them to sell their country

to gratify their passions; I am persuaded the time is hastening, when a tenfold vengeance will light upon their guilty heads.<sup>(m)</sup> May timely repentance, and their every exertion in making reparation for the evils such men have attempted against their injured country, save them, through the mercy of GOD, from final perdition. Praised be GOD, who hath hitherto *disappointed the devices of the crafty, and prevented their hands from performing their enterprises.*

WHAT thankfulness is due to a protecting providence, that we have not yet fallen a sacrifice to those dangerous secret societies, which are numerous in Europe, and some of which, it is said, and I believe with truth, exist in America. Their atheistical, their blasphemous, immoralizing, disorganising principles, their unremitting endeavors to overturn all existing governments and religion, as set forth by Professor Robison and the Abbe Barruel, both writers of eminence and credit, are almost enough to chill the blood in our veins; and ought to rouse the attention, awaken the vigilance, and excite the endeavors of every friend to religion, to develop the dark designs, and to guard against the baneful influence of all such dangerous secret machinations.

THE seasons afford us further demonstrations of the many wonderful works of GOD toward us. Notwithstanding the distressing drought, and destructive storms of hail have in many instances cut short the expectations of the husbandman; yet in a general way GOD hath prospered

<sup>(m)</sup> Among numerous other publications, how far a letter, said to be written by Mr. Jefferson to Mazzell, and a letter from Mr. Barlow in France to a member of Congress, are a proof that such characters exist, let those who read them judge for themselves.

prospered the works of our hands. Beyond the influence of the drought and the hail, and, compared with the whole country, they were not very extensive, the seasons have been propitious, and the earth has yielded a plentiful increase.

UNDER the smiles of heaven our fisheries have been successful. Our commerce, notwithstanding all its embarrassments by lawless, cruel, and unjust robbers upon the high seas, has been much more prosperous, than our circumstances gave us reason to expect.

NOTWITHSTANDING the exertions that have been used to sow dissention among the people, to promote difficulties, and to divide us, the blessings of peace and good government are yet enjoyed in this commonwealth.

IN the midst of mercy God hath been pleased, in his righteous displeasure, to visit our capital and many other towns and cities with the awful judgment of pestilence. Numerous victims have fallen a prey to its malignity.--- The distresses which have accompanied this mortal sickness, are beyond description. But in the midst of judgment God hath remembered mercy; and caused the the voice of returning health to gladden the hearts of the people.

AMONG the blessings of heaven we recite this day, the continuation of the life and health of our excellent chief Magistrate, the President of the United States, demands a tribute of grateful praise.

FOR the preservation of the life of our beloved WASHINGTON, whose heart has again been inclined to step forth at the call of his country, at this critical pe-

riod, to take the command of our armies, in defence of our independence and privileges; for which he fought, and through a series of unparalleled difficulties, jeopardised his life in the high places of the field; for these first characters in the world, and for other great and good men, lovers of their country, whose talents are employed in her defence, thankful acknowledgments are due to heaven from every American heart.

The present history of Europe is little else than a history of revolutions, wars, rapine, bloodshed, and distress of nations. The constitutions of peaceful republics have been overturned, their governments destroyed and the worst of tyranny substituted in their stead; and those republics have now become vassals, and tributaries to their more powerful and tyrannical invaders. Some of these instances have been pointed to us, through our Envoys, to awe us into measures, which in time might reduce us into a like humiliating situation. But through almighty goodness, the guardian Angel of America has hitherto protected us; and we yet enjoy our sovereignty and independence; the best constitutions of civil governments, and our rights and privileges both civil and sacred.

MAY our minds be deeply impressed with a high sense of the value of our constitutions, independence and privileges; that we may never provoke our Supreme Benefactor, by our ingratitude and disobedience, to suffer them to be arrested from us.

But among all the blessings we this day celebrate, is there, can there be a greater, than the continuation of

our holy, blessed, christian religion? This religion is calculated to promote virtue, and piety toward God, and peace and good order in society; to support the afflicted, to comfort the sorrowful; to disarm death of its sting; to give the most sure and certain hope of a future state of blessedness for the righteous, and a glorious resurrection from the grave.

How lost to a sense of the dignity of man; how lost to virtue, and to all ideas of true happiness, must that man, that society, or that nation be, who discards this religion? How then should every well wisher to the happiness of mankind, in this, and a future world, bless God for CHRIST and his religion; and joining with the Apostle say; *Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift?* How should we then, in every possible way, endeavor to strengthen and support religion? A greater injury cannot be done to a man, to a people, or nation, than to destroy religion. Who then upon serious reflection, who loves God and the happiness of mankind, could with an intimate friendship with a government of atheists, whose avowed principles are to destroy the kingdom of the Redeemer?<sup>(m)</sup> That such a government exists, and

(m) The following is contained in a discourse published by order of the National convention in France. "Man, when free, wants no other divinity than himself. Reason dethrones both the kings of earth, and the kings of heaven. No monarch above, if we wish to preserve our republic. Voltaire has been willing to let nature weather, or let a republic of *idols* continue. The miracle that every other republic has seen. 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 at night &c. We shall instantly see the monarchy of heaven condemned in its turn by the revolutionary tribunal of victorious reason."

In Mr. Gifford's letter to Mr. Erskine may be found the following horrid instance of the most daring blasphemy ever expressed. "On the 30th of November, 1793, the pupils of a new republican school, in France, appeared

finds so many friends to its cause, is much to be lamented. Among the leaders of that government, we have reason to believe, there are practised some of the grossest immoralities, that ever disgraced human nature.--- Who can wish or court the friendship of such men? The caution of Solomon may not be untimely in this case. *Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go; lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy feet.*

But some may perhaps say, that these men, bad as they are, ought to be respected as the instruments, who have pulled down the Pope, the man of sin. And have not even the Clergy been reflected upon, in a scandalous venal paper, a villain of our government, for not giving public thanks for the downfall of the man of sin, for which they have long prayed? Were we to follow the example of France, every such paper in the United States would be immediately suppressed, and the authors, even without a trial, would be banished from the country. But blessed be God, we live under a government of laws, and not of tyrants. But let it be asked, if the Pope be displaced, and the devil incarnate hath himself taken the chair; if instead of peace and tranquility though guided by bigotry and blind superstition; if, instead of these, atheism, bloodshed, rapine, and tyranny have

appeared at the bar of the Convention, when their leader declared, that "he and his school fellows detested God: That instead of learning the Scriptures, they learned the Declaration of Rights, and made the Constitution their catechism." The President expressed the satisfaction of the Convention at the declaration they made. The young demons were admitted to the honor of the sitting, and received the kiss of fraternity amidst the loudest acclamations." Who dares, I repeat, now wish for an intimate friendship with France?

have succeeded, with a train of tenfold greater evils than the popish hierarchy itself, bad as it was, does this look like the downfall of the man of sin? When the time shall come, that the kingdom of Satan shall be destroyed, and the man of sin shall fall; then, according to prophecy, *the Lord will consume that wicked one with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming.* But previous to this, Satan is represented, *as coming down upon the inhabitants of the earth, and the sea, with great wrath; because he knoweth he hath but a short time, i. e. to reign.* Have we not some reason to apprehend, that now is the time of the fulfilment of this prophecy; when that *great Dragon, that old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, is come down upon the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea; having great wrath; stalking among the nations, seeking whom he may devour?* And if so, we may hope his reign will be short. O let us pray and look for the coming of that period, when Satan shall be bound and cast out, and nations learn war no more. Let us praise God for the joyful hope and expectation of that day, when the LORD GOD shall arise, and in the greatness of his strength, subdue all things to himself; when the church and people of God shall triumph gloriously over all their enemies through the Redeemer, and peace upon earth universally reign.

WHILE we thus commemorate some of the unnumbered mercies of God; and endeavor to express the warmth of our gratitude, for the wonderful works of his goodness toward us; let us subjoin to our praises, a

humble and sincere confession of our numerous sins. May a sense of divine goodness lead us to unfeigned repentance, and sincere obedience to the divine will. Let us fervently pray for the destruction of sin; for a revival of religion; and for the restoration of tranquility to the nations of the earth. *Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem*; and that all who love and seek her prosperity may prosper.

MAY the bands of our national union be strengthened, and all our enemies disappointed. Justly estimating the privileges we enjoy, let us support them to the last extremity. Let us love our country, and promote its felicity, by endeavoring *to lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.*

MAY our University and all seminaries of learning be smiled upon, and the blessings of God rest upon instructors and instructed; and may all our children be taught of God.

MAY the Ministers of the everlasting gospel be assiduous and successful, in teaching the great doctrines of Christ, and the various duties of his holy religion.

MAY wisdom be imparted to all our public councils. May civil magistrates and other officers, in the faithful discharge of their duty, *be a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well.*

MAY parents and heads of families, young people and children, and all consider this as a time of fear, as well as joy and thanksgiving; and every one endeavor to promote virtue, morality and religion; and the peace and happiness of society; that in all the ways of well-doing,  
through

through the aids of the spirit of CHRIST, we may be prepared for the important crisis, that, may be formed before the return of this anniversary. May almighty God for the sake of his dear Son, *satisfy us early with his mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. So may his work appear unto his servants, and his glory unto their children, that the beauty of the Lord our God may be upon us.*

Now to him who hath existed from eternity, and in whom dwelleth every perfection; to him who created the worlds, upholds them by his power, and governs them by the wisest and best laws; to him who lead forth Joseph as a flock, and guided his ancient church with the skillfulness of his hand; to him who took our forefathers into his holy protection, planted them in this good land, and supported them under numerous and unparalleled sufferings; to him who hath been our GOD, and hath done so many wonderful works for us, that they cannot be numbered; to him who, we trust, will continue to be our GOD, the GOD of our children, and children's children to the latest generation; to him who hath hitherto delivered us, and we trust will still deliver us; to him, as is most due, through JESUS CHRIST, be glory and honor, thanksgiving and praise, forever and ever.

A M E N.