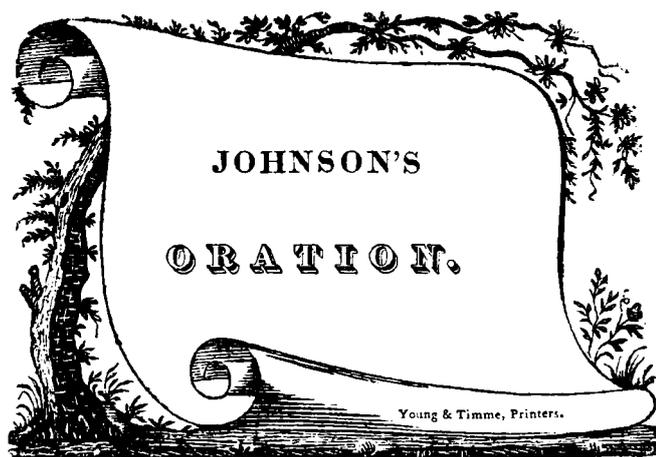


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ORATION

ON THE

FIRST JUBILEE

OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE:

Delivered at Greenville G. H.

SOUTH-CAROLINA.

By REV. WILLIAM B. JOHNSON, A. M.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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ORATION.



FELLOW CITIZENS,

The stated celebration of important events that have occurred in our world, is sanctioned by the authority of God. The seventh portion of time was, in the infancy of our earth, set apart by HIM its Creator, for rest; and for the devout remembrance of the stupendous work which he had accomplished. The same portion of time was subsequently set apart, to commemorate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, in that wonderful event, effected the greater work of Redemption for lost man. The paschal lamb was periodically slain by the Hebrews, to preserve among them a grateful recollection of their miraculous deliverance from Egyptian bondage and the Jubilee was instituted for purposes not less important.

Other nations, in imitation of these observances, have had their times of cessation from ordinary labor, that they might joyfully commemorate some interesting event in their history. But, alas! the *spirit* of their observances has, in numberless instances, been awfully variant from *that*, in which those of divine appointment originated. To mitigate the force of despotic power, tyrants have amused their subjects, at stated periods, with shows, with games, with triumphs: the fetters of abject submission have been more strongly fastened; the object of the government has been more securely attained.

How different, my countrymen, are the views with which this day is set apart. How different our feelings in the observances, which mark its glad return. To do homage to no tyrant, are we assembled. To bow with submission before no monarch, but the Monarch of the universe, are we convened. "We were never in bondage to any man." The effort was made to *bring* us into bondage, but, always free, we refused to submit. And this day, half a century ago, beheld us asserting our freedom, rising, under God, in the majesty of our strength, and declaring by the solemn act of our Fathers, that, with the Divine blessing, we never *would* be brought into subjection. That blessing has been afforded; our assertion has been made good.

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“If ever one country owed,” to the Lord of All, “an incalculable debt of gratitude, that country is the United States of America.” If any people were ever bound to acknowledge the special interposition of Divine Agency in their affairs; that people is the people of this favored country. Our course as a free and independent nation, from its incipient state to this great Jubilee, has been marked by an order of events, bearing the stamp of no common character; and indicating a destiny, more glorious than that, which has been conferred upon any other nation on earth. And now in the fiftieth year of our Independence, we are assembled in the place “where prayer is wont to be made,” to bow with gratitude to God for his distinguishing benediction. And not we alone. More than Ten Millions of Freemen, throughout this happy land, are assembled for the same ennobling duty on this transporting occasion. Oh! It is the Jubilee of Freedom indeed. A day sacred to Liberty and to God. A day that should be hallowed in our hearts, holy in its observances, chastened in its enjoyments by the spirit of piety, temperance and thanksgiving; consecrated, in its recreations, as the sabbath of rational liberty; devoted, in its offerings, to God as “the author and giver of every good and perfect gift.”

With such views of this day, and of our obligations to God for its joyful recurrence, the object of its celebration cannot be to inflate our national pride, or to give indulgence to licentious practices. No, my countrymen, but rather to acknowledge the goodness of our Heavenly Father, and our dependance upon him; to stir up the mind by way of remembrance of past mercies; to promote unfeigned humility under continued favors; to incite to gratitude the heart too prone to insensibility; and to rouse up all our powers to a wise use of present privileges.

Under these views of duty in the celebration of this day, I appear with pleasure before you, fellow citizens, to bear the part, which you have been pleased to assign me, in its observances.

The magnificent subject of American Independence has been discussed by the master spirits of the republic, with such transcendent thought and language, as leave to the Orators, on this occasion, who stand pre-eminent in talent, little of what is new to present to their auditors. Speakers of inferior grade must, therefore, necessarily feel the duties of their office at this period difficult of performance. I honestly acknowledge this to be my case. Having no pretensions to oratory, I can make no rhetorical display before you. All that I

can claim is love for my country, and an honest desire for her prosperity. It is only the hope, then, that I might be of some service to her cause, that has induced me to address you on this auspicious morn.

In the course which I prescribe to myself, I shall take a cursory view of this continent from its discovery to the first settlement of the country, and thence I shall proceed in a similar manner, to the period at which our difficulties with Great Britain commenced; contrasting I pass on, the principles by which those were influenced who emigrated to this portion of the American Continent, and those who settled in other parts of it. A similar view will be presented of the difficulties which led to our separation from the Parent State; the Declaration of Independence; of the struggle for freedom; its happy result, and our progress to the present day. In treating on our progress to this period, I shall notice some of the leading events of our history, which illustrate and prove the strength and excellence of our government. I shall then close with some views of our present state; of our prospects; and of the duties that are binding on the citizens of this great republic.

I begin with a cursory view of this continent, from its discovery to the first settlement of this country, and shall intermingle with it some remarks on the condition of Europe, at the time of the discovery of America, and previous to that event.

In the close of the fifteenth century, Christopher Columbus, the honored instrument of Jehovah in the discovery of this Western World. Safely conducted through the dangers of the deep and the perils of a mutinous crew, and sensible that his deliverance and success resulted from divine interposition and guidance, he publicly knelt with his followers on the newly discovered soil, and in some of *Te Deum* ascribed thanksgiving and glory to God alone. Returning to the old world and announcing the discovery of a new continent he was hailed as the benefactor of mankind. A discovery of so important a nature opened a new channel for the direction of man's energies. Renewed vigor was given to the spirit of enterprise, and a thirst for bold, daring adventure revived with unexampled energy. Successive plans for visiting the new world were formed, in which vast numbers engaged, who, from different motives, sought an establishment in countries far distant from their natal soil.

For centuries, previous to the discovery of America, Europe groaned under the pressure of that monstrous doctrine, *the div*

it of kings, and that degrading superstition, imposed on the science by the Hierarchy of Rome. This superstition, incorporated with, and becoming a main pillar in, most of the Governments of Europe, was a powerful support of that doctrine. And that doctrine, being thus supported, ministered, in its turn, in no ordinary degree to the supremacy of the Hierarchy. The will of the Ecclesiastical Pontiff the law of the subject, and the will of the monarch by the people, because both were believed to be the will of God. This unhallowed supremacy of the Priesthood was, as we naturally have been expected, and was actually predicted, cruelly abused. The persons and the consciences of men were subjected to the control of an unrighteous coalition between church and state. A despotism, ruinous to individual and national peace was established: A despotism the more hideous and destructive, because clothed under the pretended sanction of a religion enstamped in the bosom of its purity with the seal of Divinity. The human mind was bound in chains of ignorance, superstition, and abject submission, its energies enfeebled, and the just principles of natural, civil, and religious liberty almost obliterated from the earth.

For years in the valleys of Piedmont, a lamp had burned, from which a pure but ineffectual light had issued. A similar light was struck out by Jerome of Prague, John Huss of Bohemia, and John Wycliffe of England, which exerted an enfeebling influence on the state of things, and tended in its progress to destroy it. But it was limited in its effects and arrested in its march. Others, catching the spirit, by which these holy men were animated, labored also for the righteous cause of Liberty, but overpowered by the hand of authority, they could not rescue their fellow men from degradation and bondage. Power triumphed over right, and superstition over

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 In this awful state of things, when the human mind was making some feeble struggles towards an emancipation from the chains of ignorance, superstition and despotism; a new world presents itself, offering incentives, which awaken the powers of man and invite him to vigorous exertions in plans at once bold and ennobling. A little after this period, in the commencement of the sixteenth century, another far more important and glorious event burst upon the astonished world. Martin Luther, a native of Saxony in Germany, boldly stood forth the champion of religious truth, in opposition to that superstitious fab-

ric just mentioned. He zealously maintained his luminous career, scattering the gross darkness, by which the human mind had been for ages enveloped, and diffusing a light which has burnt with increasing lustre to the present day.

Nothing can have a more friendly influence on liberty in general, than the diffusion of true religious knowledge. There is no science that can instruct the understanding in the great important principles of moral obligation with such clearness, precision, certainty and force, as that which leads it directly up to the Great Creator and moral Governor of the universe; and from the relation in which his rational creatures stand to *Him*, deduces their obligations to *Him* and to one another. This science is no where taught with truth and authority, but in the Bible, the unadulterated word of God. It was this science, in which Martin Luther became the successful instructor. It was this word, that he was the instrument of rescuing from the false views which had concealed its light, and in the clear interpretation of whose correct principles, he was honored with being the leader.

Two such events, the discovery of America, and the Reformation, so important in themselves, so big with eventful results, and taking place within less than thirty years of each other, cannot be supposed by the most sceptical mind, to owe their existence to the concurrence of fortuitous causes. No! To the immediate agency of God himself must they be ascribed.

By the last of these events, (the Reformation) the supremacy of the papal Hierarchy was shaken, and by a part of Europe thrown off. The divine right of kings began to be questioned, and in the agitation of the subject, received a fatal shock. By the first, (the discovery of America) a door of escape was opened to those, who groaned under the rod of the tyrant, or the thunder of the Vatican. Embracing the opportunity so graciously afforded by God in his providence, multitudes abandoned their native country, and fled to the shores of this New World. They sought in the wilds of America a relief from their woes. They found the blessed object of their search, CIVIL and RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, and have transmitted to us the inestimable inheritance. The discovery of America, therefore, and particularly when considered in connexion with the reformation, must be regarded as having a most benign influence upon our present condition. For, although we are removed at the distance of more than three hundred years from the periods,

ulize, but rather to contract, their minds. Their governing principle discovered its true character and tendency in their treatment of the unoffending natives; and the retributive hand of a just God has not left their ashes unavenged.

How different, my countrymen, was the principle of our ancestors. As different was their conduct, and as different have been the dealings of God with them and their descendants. Our Fathers loved liberty more than gain. They feared God and sought an asylum in which, without interruption, they might worship Him "under their own vines and fig-trees, none daring to molest or make them afraid." In the practice of virtuous habits and industrious pursuits, they supplicated, and not in vain, *his* benediction, that giveth life, and *his* favor, which is better than life. They felled the forest, they cultivated the soil, they established schools, founded churches, organized civil government on principles of liberty, labored to improve their savage brethren, read their Bible, believed its doctrines, obeyed its precepts, and taught their children to imitate their example. By these means, their acquaintance with the principles of liberty became more clear, intimate, just and strong. Their descendants inherited their principles, which prepared them to assert and maintain their rights. And when the mighty conflict with the Parent State summoned them to the test of their principles, they gave not back, but buckling on their armor, and confiding in the justice of their cause and the protection of their God, they successfully resisted all encroachments on their liberties.

Fellow citizens, what do we not owe to these settlers of the Plymouth Rock and their descendants! Men, who, though they were not ashamed of the name of *Puritan*, are too often stigmatized by its ungenerous application. What do we not owe, I repeat it, to these sons of liberty! They formed the nucleus of this mighty empire. Sacred be their memory! Hallowed be their principles! More sacred the memory of their God! More hallowed the fountain from which their principles flowed!

The first settlements formed in this country, arose at length to the number of thirteen colonies, embracing a population of three millions of people. They were loyal in their sentiments, and devoted in their attachment to Great Britain. Regarding her as their mother, they felt a lively interest in her concerns and cherished for her the fondest predilection. They were, therefore, always ready to assist her when properly called on, and had, on more occasions than one, affor-

at which these events transpired, yet our existence and our privileges must be traced back to the era, of which they were such interesting epochs, as receiving at that time an incipient state of being. Then, my countrymen, was deposited that germe, which has since shot forth its branches, and grown up to a tree of no common size and beauty, the fair tree of American Liberty, whose "leaves" are, I humbly trust, for the political "healing of the nations."

I shall now proceed to a cursory view of this country from its first settlement to the period at which our difficulties with Great Britain commenced.

The two grand divisions of this country, that were first settled, were known by the names of Virginia and New England. Virginia was settled by High churchmen from England at a time "when their Denomination was flushed with complete victory over the religious of all other persuasions." The first settlers of New England were a part of Mr. Robinson's congregation, originally from Old England. They had removed to Holland "for the purpose of avoiding the cruelties of persecution, and for the sake of enjoying purity of worship and liberty of conscience." Their views of church government were democratical, which rendered them obnoxious at home, and imposed on them the necessity of a removal. In 1620, they emigrated from Holland, and settled at Plymouth; their little company consisting of one hundred and one souls.

Both these establishments enjoyed to a considerable extent their civil and religious privileges. The dangers, which they had overcome in their new settlements on these shores, strengthened their high sense of liberty. The principles, which had animated their minds and sustained their efforts, became more vigorous. These were inculcated with care and effect upon their descendants. The blessing of God was shed abundantly on them, and they grew and multiplied and prospered exceedingly.

I shall here contrast the principles of these men, who emigrated to this portion of the American continent, with the principles of those who settled in other parts of it.

The emigrants to South America, and the South Western parts of North America, were allured by the prospect of obtaining large quantities of gold and silver. It was not therefore for the sake of liberty, but of gain, that they left their native country. They carried with them their submission to the prince and the priest. Their success in the pursuit of the precious metals did not tend to liber-

pled her important aid. Notwithstanding the loyalty and affection of the colonies, the British Ministry adopted the most unjust measures, to fill the coffers of the government from the fruits of American industry. In the violation of the chartered rights of the colonies taxes were imposed on them without their consent. This constituted the head and front of the offence. Equally astonished at the attempt, thus made to wrest from them their substance and their just rights, and unwilling to submit to it, the colonists in the most respectful manner remonstrated. With deep humility they entreated the gracious sovereign to repeal his iniquitous laws. But remonstrance and entreaty were alike unavailing. Force was employed to reduce them to submission.

By this procedure of the British Cabinet, the charters of the colonies were violated: The fundamental principles of the British Empire were violated: The allegiance of the colonists to their sovereign was therefore dissolved. And every conciliatory effort having been tried in vain, they were roused to assert their rights with manly boldness, and in the invincible spirit of freemen, to defend them at the hazard of their lives. A deputation of the colonies assembled in Congress. In solemn council they long debated; "wondering when the dreadful scene would end." At length, impelled by dire necessity but influenced by motives the most pure and noble, they did, on the 4th day of July, 1776, declare the colonies to be free and independent States. From this period, the United States of America assumed an independent rank among the nations of the earth. A systematic war was waged under circumstances peculiarly disadvantageous, but, conducted by the God of battles, our arms were successful, and the conflict terminated in the acknowledgment of our independence.

The struggle for our freedom called into notice a race of heroes the moderation of whose principles, the correctness of whose sentiments, the valor of whose arms, and the success of whose enterprise adorn the fairest pages of history. Time would fail me, and the power of language sink beneath the attempt, if I were to enter on the detail of the dignified conduct of the American Congress in the arduous struggle for independence. The laurels which encircle the brows of a Warren, Montgomery, Moultrie, Gate Wayne, Greene, and far above all others, a WASHINGTON would wither under the unsuccessful effort I should make to add to their splendor, or to give to their freshness a more enlivening hue

suffice it for me to remark, on this occasion, that the united labor of the statesmen and warriors of America, in the Revolutionary conflict, transcend "all Greek, all Roman fame."

From the commencement to the close of the war, which we waged against the giant power of Great Britain, at such fearful odds, a sense of dependence on God pervaded the American people. It animated their constituted authorities, and received its proper expression in their public acts. In the celebrated document, so impressively read before you this day, the most appropriate acknowledgment of this dependence is made. General Washington, in his private communications, never failed to express his confidence in the Father High, nor to ascribe to His gracious interposition the success of his country's cause. On the capture of Yorktown, which "may be considered as the closing scene of the Revolutionary war," this great man ordered "that divine service should be performed in the different brigades of the army; at which he recommended the presence of all the troops not upon duty to assist, with a serious deportment, and a grateful heart, in offering thanks to that Providence who had so remarkably extended his hand in their behalf. Moved by a similar feeling, Congress resolved to go in procession to church, to give public acknowledgment to Almighty God; and issued a proclamation for religiously observing the 13th of December following, as a day of thanksgiving and prayer"* O how appropriate, how becoming was this in the rulers of our country!

On the efforts of the distinguished men, whom God raised up for our defence, his smiles rested, our independence was acknowledged, and we were placed in no inferior grade on the scale of independent nations. But, although the freedom of these United States was acknowledged, yet the ultimate object of our efforts was not secured. We did not enjoy in peace the blessings of LIBERTY. The terms of confederation, which was framed in the moment of danger, and was found adequate to the exigency of the occasion, did not, on the day of peace and tranquility, prove competent to our wants. The results were awfully uncertain. The dissolution of the confederation was threatened. The abandonment of those advantages, which had been gained by the toil and expense of a seven years' war, seemed to be at hand. From Maine to Georgia, the evils of our condition were felt and deplored.

* Ramsay.

At length, America, rising once more in the majesty of her strength, under the smiles of approving Heaven, convened her sages in one general Council. Those who had conducted her through the perilous storm of the Revolution, were now called on to preserve from destruction, "the ark of her magnificent and awful cause." The experiment was to be fairly made, whether a great people, spread over an extensive territory, and combining various local concerns, could deliberately form a system of government, which should unite and secure the interests of the whole community, without a too great sacrifice of individual rights, and so adjust its several departments and offices, as to promote general happiness and prosperity.

After long deliberation, after mutual concession, after the most interested exertion, but not until special prayer was offered to God, who counsels counsellors, and teaches senators wisdom, the Federal Constitution was formed. An instrument, under whose operation, the wisdom of its framers, is not less conspicuous than the prosperity of the States, for which it was framed, has been unparalleled. Its various parts are so nicely arranged, its different departments so admirably contrived, that the rights of the citizen are secured on the most enlarged principles of rational liberty, at the same time that sufficient power is vested in the constituted authorities for the most successful administration of its affairs.

At the head of the Government, now to commence its triumphant march, is placed our Washington, in himself a host. With that judgment so peculiar to himself, he assembles around him his cabinet. The operation of the new system is soon most happily felt. The United States revive from her supineness and lethargy to slumber no more again, I trust, till she shall have filled up her high destiny.

The exterior aspect of our Government has no imposing forms. Even the inauguration of our President is attended with no very extraordinary movement. More attentive to substance than form, simplicity is the grand characteristic of the Government. This feature constitutes so great a contrast between the Governments of Europe and our own, that it sometimes misleads strangers in the conceptions, which they form of its real strength. "Where," said an ambassador of a foreign court, soon after his arrival at Washington, "where," said he, to one that had been there some time before, "is the government? I do not see it? Where is it? You do not see it," replied the other. "But if occasion requires, you will feel it. Although it is not *visible*, it is the strongest govern-

ment in the world." A higher compliment could not have been paid to our country. A more correct remark could not have been made. It is a government strong indeed, for it is seated in the hearts and approved in the understandings of the people. They themselves constitute the government. Public functionaries are their organs. The public will speaks through them. The people may for a time be mistaken, but there is a redeeming spirit in them, which will acknowledge their mistakes, reform their errors, and restore them to a sound mind, and that too, ere a fatal misstep is taken.

Not very long after the new government went into operation its strength was severely tried, but it successfully stood the test of the experiment. The wonderful events, which had transpired in America, were not confined in their effects to these States. The principles, which had been so powerful here, were not powerless in Europe. In France, they wrought with mighty force. The subjects of that government were roused to assert *their* rights. Unprepared for the results produced here, the people of France were precipitated in their revolutionary struggle into the most direful calamity. Discarding the only light, which could guide them correctly, the word of eternal truth, "they groped in darkness at noonday." From despotism, they plunged into anarchy. One of the earliest and most devoted props of the Roman Hierarchy, that unhappy country, now overtaken by the retributive hand of a just God; and she, who had been drunk with the blood of the saints of the Most High, now made drunk with her own blood. In their lawless career, they hurl their monarch from his throne, wage a tremendous war with the powers of Europe, and in their fury seek to draw us into the vortex with themselves.

In this critical posture of affairs, our beloved Washington issued his proclamation of neutrality. About the same time, the minister of the dethroned monarch being recalled, Monsieur Genet is appointed to succeed him. Being a man of an ardent temper, he warmly enters into the views of his government. And who does not well remember his conduct! Landing at Charleston, he proceeds, without the authority of our government, before he is even accredited in his official character, to make us a party in the war in which France was engaged. He does this by undertaking "to authorize the fitting and arming of vessels in the port of Charleston, enlisting men, and giving commissions to cruise and commit hostilities, on nations wi

which the United States were at peace."* Passing through the intermediate states between this and Pennsylvania, he sees that the affections of the people are strongly on the side of France. At Philadelphia, however, the seat of government at that time, he is surprised to find that the constituted authorities are not prepared to go beyond his views. Then was the strength of our government tried. Not the strength of physical force. But the strength of what is far more valuable. Sound judgment; attachment to principles of true policy; the inflexible decision of virtuous patriotism and true courage, unawed by menaces. The French minister threatens to appeal from the President to the people. And the people, carried away for the moment in their enthusiasm for the French Republic, whose name that deceived them, seem to question the correctness of the President's course. He, unmoved by the threats of the one, or the misguided enthusiasm of the other, pursues, unchanged, his dignified course. Calm, deliberate, wise, as if inspired from above, he sees, as from some eminence our danger, and reposing just confidence in the turning good sense of his countrymen, swerves not from his purpose, but remains firm as a rock on the ground he had taken.

The ebbing of that feverish tide, which had risen to an undue height, from mistaken views of grateful return to France for revolutionary aid, exposes to full view the rocks and whirlpools, which extraordinary flowing had concealed. The redeeming spirit of the people rises, they are restored to themselves, they rally around their beloved President. His dignified stand is approved and sustained. The recall of the minister is demanded and complied with. His successors pursue a similar career, but in a milder manner. The Government holds on its manly way, and the country is saved from ruin. I consider this to have been one of the most critical eras in our political existence. What would have been the result of our yielding to French influence, we cannot *certainly* tell, it is true, but in all human probability, the most disastrous consequences would have befallen our infant Republic. So wisely, however, was our government constituted; and so energetic and judicious was its administration under our ILLUSTRIOUS WASHINGTON, that it sustained the shock, unhurt by the rude attack.

Wonderful man! Thou wert indeed the precious gift of God. Twice the precious gift of kind Heaven to thy country! First as

* Ramsay.

the invincible leader of her armies to victory in the war of the Revolution. Now as the guide of her councils in the preservation of what thy valor had won. Twice the political saviour of thy country "Thanks be unto God for so precious a gift." "And let all the people say, Amen!"

In passing, I shall only mention other instances, which illustrate and prove the strength and excellence of our government. Among these I rank the bloodless suppression of the insurrection in the Western parts of Pennsylvania; the happy effect on France (subsequently to the period I have discussed more at large) produced by the energetic measures of defence adopted under the successor of President Washington; the humbling of the Turkish Bashaw, and the rescue of our country from the disgraceful tribute imposed by Turkish rapacity; the successful stand taken for the abolition of the slave trade; the extension of our territory, and the facility and energy with which our affairs are managed throughout this growing empire; the influence which we have exerted upon the allied powers of Europe, in relation to their interference between Spain and her former colonies, now independent States; and subsequently similar influence upon those States in relation to their meditated attack on Cuba. These, with many others that might be mentioned, prove the strength of the government, and the dignified standing which she holds among the nations of the earth. And whence does she derive this glory, this strength? Not so much from her fleets and armies, as from the justice of her principles, the honesty of her dealings, the freedom of her institutions, the integrity of her statesmen, the humanity of her warriors, the blessing of her God. These constitute her strength, her glory. And whilst she stands on this elevated ground, uncontaminated by corruption, unawed by foreign influence, untrammelled by foreign alliances, she will remain unbroken, the wonder and the example of an admiring world.

But whilst I only mention these instances as proofs of the strength and excellence of our government, I must not so slightly treat our recent conflict with Great Britain; the calm state of things at the decision of the late Presidential election; and the wonderful spectacle, which our country presents, of four private citizens, whom she cherishes and honors with the fondest respect and affection; I mean the venerable ex-presidents.

Of the conflict with Great Britain I shall first speak.

For thirty years, we had enjoyed the blessings of peace. Happy

of that era, which "tried men's souls." On whom shall choice fall, was the delicate, the interesting enquiry. Whom, of the second generation of her sons, shall America place in the chair, which a Washington first occupied. There was one whom the public eye was most favorably directed, Carolina's favorite son, the illustrious Lowndes! A man, whom all loved, whom all honored, in whom all confided. But before the Presidential election took place, he was no more an inhabitant of earth. Faithful to his trust and unwearied in his efforts for his country's good, in the successful part he took in that momentous question, when agitation boded so much evil, his constitution sunk beneath the pressure of his disinterested patriotic labors. Ere yet the full benefit of his wonderful talents could be enjoyed, ere yet the gathering host of an admiring and grateful people had encircled his meritorious brows, this great man was snatched from our embrace. Honor be thy memory, O thou much loved man!

Probably this distinguished citizen was the only one who could have so united the hearts of his countrymen, as to have received from the electoral colleges the constitutional number of votes for placing him in the Presidential chair. But being removed from scene of earth, and no longer numbered with those out of whom a choice was to be made, the sentiments of the people were so divided, that the decision of the important question, who shall be our President? devolved upon the House of Representatives, the popular branch of the Government. It is well known that one of the Candidates had a plurality of votes from the people, and it was expected by many, that the popular branch of the Government would have become the organ of the popular will in elevating him to the Presidential chair. But it was otherwise. And yet notwithstanding the disappointment, that the result occasioned to vast multitudes of the people, to many of their most respected representatives, to the distinguished individual himself, no opposition was made, no clamor excited, no disorder countenanced, by the disappointed members of the body, or their constituents, or the illustrious himself. They submitted with calmness and dignity, to the will of the Government, constitutionally expressed, though believed by many to have been unrighteously obtained. O! what a day of glory was that to the American people. The laws were paramount. The Constitution ruled: The genius of American Liberty triumphed! To consummate the bright scene, the unsuccessful candidate

ly removed during a large portion of that period, from the turmoil of European politics, we had grown to a vigorous maturity. But this state of things was interrupted. The tocsin of war was again sounded. The embattled ranks of America's freeborn sons were again summoned to the field to maintain their injured country's rights. The summons was obeyed, and America once more was arrayed in battle against Great Britain. Notwithstanding the disadvantages under which we rose a second time to oppose our ancient foe, we addressed ourselves to the conflict with manly courage, and taught our enemies that this "vine of the planting of the Lord's right hand was not yet to be wasted by the wild boar of the forest," nor yet to be plucked up by the hand of rude violence. It is to be hoped, that we shall no more be troubled from that quarter, but that as friendly nations we shall dwell together as co-adjutors in the great work of evangelizing our fellow men, and of accelerating upon the earth, the calm reign of holiness, the mild government of the Prince of Peace.

The pacific measures, which our government had pursued for settling the difficulties with Great Britain, tended rather to sink our rising reputation in her eyes and the eyes of other nations. But the result of the conflict placed it on higher ground than before. The spirit of '76 was revived. The gallant heroes of the Revolution lived again in their descendants. The names of Pike, Dudley, Cass, Harrison, Scott, Dearborn, and pre-eminent above all, Jackson, were added to those of the warriors of the Revolution, as worthy of enrolment on the same page. Whilst those of Hull, Bainbridge, Porter, Lawrence, Jones, M'Donough, Chauncey, Perry and others form a bright galaxy, worthy of the star-spangled banner under which they fought. On the efforts of these illustrious men and their compatriots in arms, a gracious God smiled, our liberties were maintained, and honorable peace was restored to our country. Sacred be the memory of those who perished in the conflict! Honored be the persons of those who survive the mighty struggle!

I come now to speak of the calm state of things at the last presidential election. Nine times had the free-born sons of America elevated, from their number, illustrious men of the Revolution to the chief magistracy of the nation. When the tenth revolving period called them to the same duty, no revolutionary hero presented himself as a candidate for the high office. A selection, therefore, was to be made from those, who had risen to eminence since the passing away

anly form, greeted their more successful competitor. In particular, did the most popular one, the hero of New Orleans, with a soldier's frankness and surpassing heroism, approach the President, and congratulate him on his elevation. O my country! what a halo of refulgent glory surrounded thee on that day. I repeat it: the laws were paramount: the Constitution ruled: the Genius of American Liberty soared with a loftier flight. But whilst I thus pay all due praise to the unsuccessful candidates for the Presidential chair in their magnanimous deportment to their more successful competitor, I must not be understood as leaving *him* in the shade. His transcendent talents, his long and faithful services to his country place him in the first rank among the first men in any nation, on an eminence too lofty for my feeble flight to reach. I must therefore bear any eulogy on his exalted merits, as all, that I could say for the purpose of placing them before you in a clearer point of view, would be only as the lighting of a candle to assist you in seeing the light. Since his elevation, "The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him, but" I trust that "his bow" will be "made strong" in his country's cause "by the hands of the mighty God of Israel."

We pass from this scene, a scene that speaks more than volumes on the true spirit of the people, and the genius of our Government, to a scene not less illustrative of its excellence. The venerable names of Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, are enrolled among those of the great men and citizens of these United States. Coadjutors in the labors of the Revolution, and honored with the most distinguished offices in the Government, until they were successively placed in the Presidential chair, they have been most assiduous and successful in rearing the tree of American Liberty. Under its branches, these great men, full of years and full of glory, now repose in private life, in the full enjoyment of its happy fruits. In how clear and strong a manner does their dutiful submission to the laws of their country exhibit the force and correctness of those principles of which in the view of their powers, they were such invincible advocates. Illustrations as men! Worthy of this august era! To the shades of your great names, the benedictions of a grateful and admiring people follow you, more welcome to your patriotic bosoms, than are the acclamations of the millions to the proudest monarch before whose

sceptre they bow, and whose triumphant car they follow. The offerings presented to you are the offerings of the heart.

From the auspicious period, at which the last war with Great Britain closed, the United States have made rapid advances to national grandeur. In politics, she affords important instruction to the Governments of the earth. In morals and the education of her youth, she yields to none. In internal improvements, she is fast rivalling other countries. In commerce, her sails whiten every sea. In the endowment and maintenance of religious institutions, she is second to no other nation. In efforts for evangelizing the world, she excites the astonishment, and commands the admiration of every civilized land. Thus exalted is our standing in the view of other nations. Thus great is the elevation to which God has raised us. An elevation not based upon intrigue, injustice, accident, or the exercise of mere power; but fixed upon the principles of justice, good faith, benevolence, religion; above all, upon the favor of approving Heaven. With what devout acknowledgment, should we then exclaim, "*God hath done great things for us, whereof we ought to be glad.*"

I indulge myself with pleasure in these remarks on our present state, not for the purpose of inflating your national vanity, but for the nobler design of stirring up your minds by way of remembrance on this great Jubilee; that you may trace the hand of a kind parent in its dealings with your fathers and you, that you may, on this joyful occasion, impressively feel the obligations under which you are brought to **THAT BENEVOLENT PARENT**, and be incited to perform the duties, which those obligations render indissolubly binding.

It is impossible for the devout and grateful mind to review the subjects on which we have touched, without enquiring with pious emotion, "what hath God wrought" for this highly favored land.— Equally impossible for it not to perceive, that religious principle had a powerful influence on the leading men and the leading measures, which have contributed to the foundation and prosperity of this great Republic. As no one, who casts his eye over this fair portion of the Western World, can escape from the strongest emotions of joy, admiration, and gratitude, when he realizes the distinguishing favors of his Creator upon the Government of his choice, and beholds the rising glories of the land of his fathers, advancing to meridian splendor; so no one, who is rightly affected with the view, can fail to enquire, what are the prospects of this my beloved country?

How shall I act as one of her sons? What are the duties that are binding upon me as a citizen of this Republic to secure its welfare, to advance its rising interests, to perpetuate its dignified standing.

The prospects of this country naturally rise out of her present standing, her resources, and her capacities for future advancement. What her standing is, we have seen. What her capacities and resources are, we shall now consider. Wealth is power: knowledge is power: influence is power: liberty is power. All these we now enjoy to as desirable an extent as any rational being can consistently wish. Placed on the eminence we occupy, and possessing the advantages we enjoy, what, that is possible to man, may not be accomplished by us. Ours is "a government of law, and not a government of will." It is our privilege to be the *first* nation on the earth in point of true political and religious liberty. We have set the example to other nations. "They can only be our imitators." Our prospects are therefore of the most favorable character. For whilst we pursue the course, which we have thus far trodden with success, our light must burn with increasing brightness, until the world shall be illuminated. Already have South America, Guatimala, and Mexico, thrown off the shackles of tyranny, and declared themselves free. Europe is agitated, and her monarchs tremble. She *must be* regenerated. Her despotic power *must be* prostrated. The work is already begun. Greece, the land of heroes and of classic lore, has burst her bonds, and will be free. The light, taking a retrograde course, will proceed from the west to the east, and all Europe, and Asia, and Africa, and the isles of the sea, shall feel its influence and be free. And in this mighty work, what nation shall be the successful instrument? What nation shall take the lead? If true to ourselves, the United States will be that nation. What prospects are these, my countrymen? Prospects of glory and magnitude sufficient to waken up all our energies, to call into operation all our powers, to task to the uttermost all our capacities. Whilst such prospects then open upon our view, how unwearied should be our efforts in employing our resources and capacities for advancement in true national dignity of character.

The energies of the human mind are progressive in their nature. When called into exertion under favorable circumstances, no limit can be affixed to their improvement. The resources and means, enjoyed in this country for their development, are most ample, the subjects on which they are to be employed are almost boundless.

and the patronage of the government most liberal. Our territory stretching across the southern half of the northern temperate zone and washed by two oceans, we are placed in a most favorable situation for intercourse with all parts of the world. The length and the breadth of our rivers, the facility with which they can be connected, the fertility of our soil, and the variety of its products, all afford the most ample means of commerce, of internal improvement, and of defence against a foreign foe. Our schools, academies, colleges, universities open the doors of knowledge to all ranks of the people. The institutions of religion are multiplying, and flourishing, and extending their benign influence to the remotest corners of the earth. In our naval and military departments, our officers and men yield to no other nation in skill and prowess, not even to the long boasted mistress of the ocean. In the late trial that was made, they rose superior. In the civil, judicial and diplomatic departments, our statesmen and jurists excite the admiration and command the respect of foreign courts. I repeat it, then, our prospects are of the most favorable character, and if true to ourselves, must be realized, if merciful Heaven so permit.

methinks, I hear each of you enquiring, how shall these prospects be realized? What are the duties that I can perform as a citizen of this the most favored nation on earth, to secure its welfare, to advance its interests, to perpetuate its dignified standing. Listen, my countrymen, for a moment longer, and I will tell you.

I have observed that religious principle had a powerful influence on the leading men, and the leading measures that contributed to the foundation and prosperity of our Republic. If the past shall be a light upon the future: If successful experiment furnishes a correct guide in the affairs of men, then is it the duty of every American citizen to cultivate and diffuse religious principle to the greatest possible extent.

What an awful yet instructive contrast is exhibited between France and the United States in their revolutionary struggles and results. The leaders of France set at nought the Bible, and despised its institutions. God's awful hand was laid upon them, and tremendous judgments visited them with sore dismay. The leaders of the United States acknowledged God and honored his institutions. His hand was on them also, but it was in mercy, and he shared largely in his paternal benediction. "He hath not dealt with any nation; and as for his judgments," we "have seen

own them." O let religious principle then be cultivated and diffused by us all. Let our citizens reverence God, and do his right as will. "He will be a wall of fire around" our country, Himself, the glory in the midst."

Just in proportion as religious principle extends its influence, will morality prevail. This term implies conformity of conduct to a given standard. As the only true standard for its regulation is the will of God, so the only correct principle of its operation is religious principle or love, to God the Saviour of sinners.

"Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!
Thou maker of new morals to mankind!
The grand morality is love of thee."

We must be cautious, therefore, how we indulge the idea, that morality can prevail in the absence of religious principle. Are you desirous of promoting your country's welfare, cultivate morality, that true morality, which has for its rule the will of God, and its principle love to the Divine Saviour.

In next to the maintenance and diffusion of religious principle and morality which is based upon it, the preservation of the elective franchise, in its free and independent character, is an imperious duty. Ours is a Representative Government. Too numerous to assemble in one place, we delegate to a few the right of assembling in our name, and of exercising the high prerogative of legislation. These should always be the men of our choice, and the wisest and best we can obtain. There are three indispensable requisites which they should possess; purity of character, independence of principle, and political sagacity. On such, the painful task of becoming candidates should never be imposed, much less the degrading one of soliciting, in the most indirect manner the votes of their fellow citizens. They should rather be *solicited* to serve, than required to *solicit the privilege of serving*. Whatever name our government may assume: Whatever the wisdom of its arrangements may be; if the suffrages of the people are not freely and independently obtained; if by intrigue, corruption, bargain and sale, or any other unbecoming means, they are obtained; then the Representatives are not the choice of the people, but of a few through them as their instruments. The people are at once sunk down from the high and honorable standing of freemen, to the low and degrading condition of slaves. This low state of degradation may for a time be conceal-

ed from their view. Ambitious and unprincipled men may, by specious representations, amuse them with the belief, that they are freemen, because citizens of the Republic, but they will in fact be on the tools of demagogues and their satellites. When once this state things shall take place in our country, her death warrant is signed, her funeral knell is sounded, and though in a sickly state, she may drag on a protracted existence for a few years, it will only be, that her funeral dirge shall be the more sad, and that, when her citizens are summoned to her interment, the solemnities of the mournful occasion shall be the more heart rending. O! my country! may this awful destiny never be thine! You shudder, fellow citizens, at the thought of this being your country's fate. To avoid it then, let the elective franchise be sacredly guarded and independently exercised. Frown indignantly on the man, who would give it an unrighteous direction. Be freemen indeed, and then will your country be free.

Our government depends, under God, upon the will of the people. That will, therefore, should be under the influence of an enlightened understanding and purified affections. That this may be effected throughout the country at large, the cause of education should be an object of deep solicitude to all ranks of citizens. It should receive the fostering care of the government. Primary schools and colleges ought to be liberally endowed and supported. But education is not confined to the instruction and discipline of the school. Education is a term that imports not the imparting of a given amount of knowledge to the mind, but the leading out of its powers to the most judicious exercise, the training of them to acquire and use knowledge aright. This is true wisdom, the distinction between which and mere knowledge is clearly taught by the poet of "the far-anchored isle" in the following beautiful lines:

" Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have oftentimes no connexion. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials, with which wisdom builds,
Till smoothed, and squared, and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems to enrich.
Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much,
Wisdom is humble that she knows no more."*

* Cowper.

Education embraces the whole conduct and management of the child from its birth to its arrival at legal age. In this work the parent and the teacher are more immediately concerned. More generally, the whole community. The divine direction is, "Train up a child in the way he should go." The promise that "When he is old he will not depart from it." Careful attention should be observed in obeying the direction, and the promise will be fulfilled by a faithful God. Let it be the care of parents and teachers, then, to impart to their children and pupils correct instruction, and to rear them up under proper discipline, and of the whole community to remove from their sight and to place beyond their reach the examples and the means of vice. "Our sons will, then, be as plants grown up in their youth, our daughters as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace." Thus fitted for stations of dignity and usefulness, our God will be pleased to employ them for the noblest purposes—their country's good and his glory. To such hands under God we may safely commit the rising interests of the Republic, assured that they will not suffer loss by the transmission. It is in the performance of these duties, that we shall realize our glorious prospects, my countrymen. For on the country, whose citizens shall thus act, the divine benediction will be abundantly shed.

In conclusion. The governments of the earth are brought into existence and carried on by Jehovah for purposes of the highest good to the universe. Our world is but a part, though a very important one, of the system that constitutes his boundless empire. This little span of imperfect being is only preparatory to an endless state of duration. The displays of intellect, and feeling, and glory on this isthmus of creation are, when compared to the full blaze of the Divine perfections in the future world of ineffable splendor, like the twinkling of the smallest star "that glitters on the mantle of night," to the shining of the great orb of day in his strength. Here men materials of the mighty whole are only *preparing* for their respective places at the consummation of all things. In the preparation of these materials, the United States are now bearing an important part.

Oh! if the movements of our fellow citizens, on this small portion of the earth for the last half century, affect our hearts with admiration and joy, too big for utterance, with what inconceivable glory will the mightier movements of our God for thousands of years, when brought to their completion at the last day, overpower our

souls. More especially, if we shall be permitted to stand before him with acceptance, and be honored with seats at his right hand. The christian patriot's views cannot then be limited to the mere earthly glory of his country: to the mere worldly prosperity of his countrymen. He aspires for them and for himself to the unfading splendors of that kingdom, whose duration is eternal; that, after the purposes of their mutual labors on earth are answered, he with his compatriots may ascend to the blessedness and purity of the Heavenly State,

"To walk with God
High in salvation, and the climes of bliss."*

But this will not follow as the necessary consequence of patriotic labors on earth. As regeneration of heart, godly sorrow for sin, and faith in Christ are the indispensable preparatives for, so a vital interest in the Redeemer of sinners is the only title to, the Heavenly Inheritance.

Sic transit gloria mundi--so fades the glory of the world be written upon the last page of the history of our country. In the lapse of ages, must sink amidst "the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds." O when this awful period shall arrive, when the angel shall put one foot upon the land and the other upon the sea, and lifting up his hand to Heaven shall swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, that time shall be no longer; may you, my countrymen, may all the citizens of these United States, leaving the dusty beds, and rising in the likeness of the Son of God, receive the transporting plaudit, "Well done good and faithful servant enter ye into the joy of your Lord." May this be the ultimate destiny of the citizens of this my beloved country, and then indeed will the measure of their glory be full and complete.

* Young.