

Evans

AN

ORATION,

DELIVERED AT

HACKINSACK,

On the Tenth of September, 1780.

AT THE INTERMENT OF THE

Honorable Brigadier *ENOCH POOR,*

GENERAL OF THE NEW-HAMPSHIRE BRIGADE.

BY THE REVEREND ISRAEL EVANS, A. M. AND
CHAPLAIN TO THE SAID BRIGADE.

PUBLISHED BY DESIRE OF THE OFFICERS OF THE NEW-HAMPSHIRE
TROOPS, AND A NUMBER OF GENTLEMEN IN EXETER.

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A FUNERAL ORATION, &c.

Friends, Country-men, and Fellow-Soldiers; Favor me, I beseech you, with your attention and candor.

I COME, in compliance with the mournful call of this day, to offer my honest endeavors, as well as to unite my most sincere zeal with this honorable Assembly, in paying respect to the memory of our worthy deceased General.

No labors nor expences, as we are assured in history, were ever neglected by wise and gallant nations, which in any manner could honor and perpetuate the memories of great and illustrious men.

CITIZENS

A Funeral Oration

CITIZENS and Warriors, eminent for their public zeal and superior bravery, have, in all ages of the world, been greatly venerated; and their examples have been esteemed very serviceable to mankind, in directing them to whatsoever was truly honorable, and most conducive to the practice of virtue.

WHEN living characters of worth and excellence are the objects of our daily and pleasing contemplation; or, by recollection, we bring into view those of past ages, and are persuaded, that, by zealous imitation of them, we can advance to great degrees of pre-eminence in honor and virtue; then, a generous emulation is kindled in our bosoms, and we are animated, and even charmed to surpass others in glory and excellence: for good examples possess the enchanting powers of persuasion, even when they are cloathed with the important dignity
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on the Death of General P C O R.

of instruction. And our own experience must have taught us, that their influence is more extensive and powerful than that of the most accurate and profound reasonings. By extraordinary examples our admiration is excited, our vigor and resolution are drawn into action, and we are led on to glorious achievements. On this account we find that, not only justice, always faithful to excellent characters, demanded honor and respect for their precious memories; but also the public interest of mankind required such useful characters to be proposed as patterns worthy the imitation of posterity.

WITH a laudable design of kindling a generous emulation of the best examples, and of always preserving this pure and VESTAL flame alive; the ancient republics directed their orators to pronounce eulogiums over their deceased heroes and patriots, before they committed their bodies to the funeral pile.

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BOTH

A Funeral Oration.

BOTH Greece and Rome, those sublime patterns of republican wisdom, virtue and valor, instructed their citizens that their glory and fame should attend them; not only in life, but survive their ashes, and flourish among nations of future periods.

AN exalted motive this! But the influence of it reaches only the virtuous man, who is animated by the sublime hope and expectation of future approbation, and nobly aspiring to the attainment of true glory, transcends the applause of the present age, and greatly lives in the prospect of gaining a plaudit from future generations and future worlds.

BE this then the improvement of the present day's transaction; this the advantage we will strive to obtain even from the loss of a worthy citizen, a brave and virtuous man, we will consider by what means we may with dignity approach that eternal
cessation

cessation from earthly employments, which our friend has so lately reached.

By possessing true virtue, we shall be furnished with the essential qualifications for ending this life gloriously, and leaving an illustrious character behind us which will speak for us, we being dead, and prolong our usefulness far beyond the narrow compass of a few years in which our present lives are circumscribed.

HONORABLY to pursue such heroic and immortal fame, as the greatest and most useful men have acquired, is the true glory which their examples point out to us and encourage us to possess.

BUT though a love of fame is found in almost every breast, yet that desire and expectation of gaining it only are innocent and laudable which result

sult from virtuous actions. True fame and lasting glory are founded upon the rock virtue, and shall outlast the flight of ages and the most durable memorials of human structure.

WHEN the brazen statue and the sculptured marble shall become faithless to their charges, and they shall themselves crumble to dust ; even then, true glory, the first born of virtue, substantial virtue, shall uphold an immortal duration : but false glory, built upon a selfish and contracted foundation, shall totter and fall in disgraceful ruin, like a fabric raised on the unstable sand. May this therefore be the rich profit which we will endeavor to derive from the best and noblest characters ; they shall teach us not to grasp so much at the airy vision of a momentary name, as to covet, and therefore possess all those virtues out of which true fame and sublime glory will grow and flourish, without the danger of ever fading.-----

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THE character of the famous Cato of Rome will inform us how much he loved his country and esteemed the practice of virtue above the applause of mankind, even though a regard to the just approbation which our fellow-men owe unto us is innocent and lawful,

CATO fled from fame, but she pursued him with the greater speed. He chose to be virtuous rather than appear so ; he preferred that self-approbation which arises from meritorious actions, to the changeable and tumultuous acclamations of the fickle multitude.- --From this, as well as other examples of worth beyond number, we are induced to say that men can never travel in the road of true glory, but when they are employed in the service of their country, and for the benefit of their fellow-citizens and friends, and are justly entitled to their approbation and praise. That approbation and praise, we

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say,

say, which are devoted to them by their fellow-citizens, and unalterably confirmed by the voice of every good man. And, if I were here permitted to enrich this humble page with a name known and loved by every friend to justice and liberty, I would say, such united and universal love and praise are justly devoted to the character of * * * * * And the God of all goodness has in mercy to the American army presented us with a man whose example is most worthy our imitation.

NEITHER the abundance of wealth, nor the unlimited gratification of sensual appetites, nor the possession of power formidable to liberty, and too often intolerable : none of these can bribe the voice of divine justice to pronounce that man truly great who is destitute of noble and virtuous actions, to entitle him to so great a reward. True merit only, has a righteous demand on true glory, and yet it seldom makes this lawful demand.

HERE

HERE then we will fix our determination: that man is eminently great who is truly good, for united, they happily conspire to form a sublime and dignified character. The solid basis of permanent glory and happiness, is true religion, and the approbation of that blessed Being, who is worthy of all veneration, is the sublime reward which animates the good man through life, and, at death, crowns him with *glory and honor and immortality*. For as the Poet says,

Let the witling argue all he can,

'Tis Religion still that makes the man.

Most happy then is that man who having a truly public spirit and an enlarged and catholic soul in the service of mankind, does yet, above all things, solicit the love and favor of his infinitely wise Creator, who being acquainted with all his virtuous intentions, however much they may be concealed from the imperfect view of short sighted mortals!

Pleasant

Pleasing consideration to the virtuous mind ! An all wise and merciful God is the Judge of the good man's actions, and perfectly knowing their weight and value, will give them their equitable reward.

OH, divine virtue ! Methinks thou hast charms and beauties sufficient to court and captivate the love and admiration of every rational being. It is virtue which dignifies both life and death : Oh let my breast be ever one of thy fair habitations, and there deign to sway thy peaceful sceptre, until all my inclinations and passions are sweetly and powerfully subjected to the laws of unchangeable rectitude ! Thou gentle dove of happiness, ever bringing the olive branch of peace to the mind of the good man ! Mild angel, of heavenly birth, daily whispering in the softest accents, sweet innocence and seraphic joy to the smiling conscience ! Bright and unspotted conscience, thou approving spirit,
lovely

lovely daughter of virtue, sister to the pure hosts of the Cherubim, and best companion of Arch-angels.-----

I HOPE then it is evident to all of us, that those examples are most worthy our careful imitation, which have the largest portion of moral goodness united to the most heroic and patriotic abilities. True piety should be the vital and animating principle of all our pursuits, and we ought to consider it the first and strongest obligation which is laid on us : and indeed the duties of love and reverence to God are so just and important, that without them no character can be complete. Suppose many useful and excellent qualifications may justly distinguish a man, and let it be granted, that he has a comparative dignity ; yet the want of love to the kind parent of the universe will be found so great

a blemish in his character as to tarnish all the rest of his boasted excellencies.

BUT when I say a character excellent in many useful qualifications among men, is not complete ; do I discourage the cultivation of those heroic patriotic and other abilities and qualifications by which the cause and interest of men are supported ? Not by any means I hope. I wish the world all the happiness and dignity which can possibly be obtained from whatsoever generous and laudable motives they may be pursued : but despairing ever to see mankind in a happy and flourishing state, unless they unite the love of the great disposer of all events with the generous service of the public interest ; I am constrained to intreat all my fellowmen, as far as I am able, to lay the foundation of their usefulness and future glory, on true piety to God, and then they will be sure to stand immovable.

ble. Does this appear unreasonable or impracticable? Shall we not find it more easy to follow the dictates of reason and conscience than to oppose them?-----

ARE we pleased with a good human character, and powerfully disposed to admire what is excellent in it; and can we, without offering violence to our reason and interest, withhold our love and grateful admiration of the infinite rectitude, the unspotted purity, and the uncreated excellence, goodness, and omnipotence of the Most High? Do we feel the principles of gratitude warmly excited within us, and our passions laid under a weighty sense of the many acts of kindness and generosity our benefactors have conferred on us? And can we refuse to be grateful to our Creator, our preserver and most bountiful benefactor, and the eternal source of all that is good and glorious in the whole creation?

creation? A character therefore without these pious affections must be very defective in the most essential requisites, and can not have the truest dignity; for it is destitute of that which is of all things most reasonable, most pleasing, and which gives a lustre to all our actions. And what is this but piety, which is no more than the exercise of love, respect and gratitude to the author of all good, Let us then be invited to make the character of the Supreme Being the first object of our love and veneration, and let us follow the exhortation of our Saviour. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect. And may we mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.*

OUR greatest dignity consists in going off the theatre of life with a full orb'd blaze of resplendent glory; like the sun himself whose splendors
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are not diminished, even when he retires from this hemisphere to illuminate the other.

HERE let us pause a moment ; and reflect on what has been said ! What, may it be asked, is the design of this address ? Has it attempted to teach us the certainty of dying, and the near approach of our exit ? This was not thought necessary among men who exercise their reason and reflection ; but to remind us how we may die with dignity, and arrive at the possession of true glory. The best passage from life to death has been pointed out to us, and virtue has been offered to pilot us safe from all the shoals and rocks of vice and ruin, into the haven of celestial glory. Under the convoy of this heavenly guide we need not fear the approach of death, nor turn pale at the sight of an opened grave. Let us then, with a cheerful hope, draw near to these precious relics of the deceased ! Sweet are the

slumbers of the virtuous man ! How beautiful is death when earned by virtue ! Here, Oh Death, is one of thy trophies ! Thou hast dyed thy arrows in the blood of a hero ! But the good man has power to gain a triumph even out of thy boasted victory. *Oh Death, will he say, where is thy sting ? Oh grave, where is thy victory ?* Here ends the journey of life ! The weary traveller has laid himself down to rest ! Short is the interval between the weeping infant and the dying hero ! Such is the lot of man ! *He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down !* Experience has demonstrated this truth, which the sacred voice of inspiration has proclaimed ; that *It is appointed unto all men once to die.* The many millions who left this world in thick succession, and have given room that others might advance and act their several parts : the many who fall around us may convince us beyond the use of an argument, that in a short time we shall

be called from the possession of this world, and introduced into one more extensive and unconfined.

BUT am I come to make the approach of Death alarming and terrible? Did I come to unmask the ghastly tyrant, and to represent the groans and agonies of the last conflict? No, my friends. Let this task be assigned to the votaries of vice; they better can speak the painful fears of a restless, unappeased conscience. It is vice alone which can arm death with a poisonous dart. Vice is the enemy to mankind which arrays death in gloomy horrors, and represents him as the inexorable murderer of the human race, for ever, in pursuit of their lives and happiness, from the very cradle to the tomb. Oh vice, thou hell-born monster! nursed by infernal furies, and sent by some malignant spirit, envious of the felicity of man, to plague, to curse, and damn mankind. Inslaved to thy tyranny of mis-

ry and madness, and poisoned by the infectious breath of thy more rancorous heart; men, alas, once the bright image of Heaven, turn their veneration of unspeakable goodness, and unwearied mercy, into foul blasphemies, and with oaths and curses abuse the hand which feeds them, and defy the God who made them! Oh, my heart bleeds within me! Shall this intrepid army of patriots, who have offered themselves champions in the defence of the liberties of America; whom no hardships can conquer, whom no tyrant army can terrify: shall these heroes reject virtue, the friend of men, and charmer of angels? Shall they despise this fair companion of all this charming train of graces; modesty, decency, complaisance, temperance, chastity, and pure untainted language, the voice of angels, and men of honor? And will they prostitute their reason and their glory to vice, the unchangeable enemy of mankind, and intail misery on themselves, and the curse of slavery on their posterity?

posterity? Forbid it liberty, forbid it virtue; and Oh, thou author of all good, for thy mercies sake prevent it! But stop my zeal, a milder theme bespeaks thy attention. Be mine ever the pleasing employment to divest death, the imaginary tyrant, of all his supposed terrors; let me separate him from vice, and then I shall disarm him of his poisonous weapons. I will represent him coming with the smile of a cherub, to call the truly virtuous from their posts of toil and danger, to the regions of eternal felicity and unabating joy. There shall they join a countless multitude of heroes and patriots, and be united *to an innumerable company of angels, and, to the general assembly and church of the first born which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect*: where they shall see the blessed Redeemer of mankind, and sit with him *in the throne of his glory*. And they shall be admitted into the presence

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sence of the unwasted source of life and happiness, and, *beholding the glory of the Lord, be changed into the same image, from glory to glory.*-----These are prospects so full of glory and happiness, as methinks are more than sufficient to reconcile us to every trial and difficulty we may have to encounter in our passage through life ; sufficient to sweeten our very toils and labors ; to soften every care and grief ; to put all our murmurs and complaints to silence, and to dispose us to submit patiently to every dispensation of divine Providence, however great our losses and sufferings may seem to be. It was an heroic fortitude, as well as a pious heart, which enabled the good man, Job, to say, under the loss of every earthly comfort, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord. Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

I HAVE now, gentlemen and fellow soldiers, nearly finished what I had in view, when I asked your
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candid attention. I have endeavoured to plead the cause of virtue and true honor before you, and I hope your reason and interest will cheerfully give their suffrages in favor of what has been offered. I have attempted to mark out the road which leads to substantial greatness. And when I consider that every military breast in this army, beats high with the love of glory; I am induced to hope that nothing more is necessary to engage you in the pursuit of true glory, than only to shew you the infinite difference there is between real and false glory. To attain the one deserves our most careful attention; to avoid the other requires the steady exercise of our reason, and the constant cultivation of virtue. For this generous purpose, I have said, the histories of the best and most illustrious characters have been presented to us as so many wise and safe guides to conduct us beyond the dangerous and illusive phantoms of false glory, through the temple of virtue to the temple of true honor.

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To answer a similar laudable purpose, we ought to spare no labors nor expences in transmitting to posterity, the histories of those good and great men whom we have seen, and by whose bright and living examples we have felt our hearts warmed, and our zeal kindled to virtuous exertions.

WARRIORS and statesmen, and patriots, and senators, an illustrious growth of a few years, have adorned the American world. Many indeed have left us after paying down their blood to purchase liberty for this country and mankind; but their virtues will be remembered to prolong their usefulness, even though their lives were short. Some have been called from their posts of defence, while supporting the cause of liberty, and even when she most wanted, and seemed most earnestly to plead for their longer stay to vindicate her violated rights, and to gain a complete triumph over the machinations of tyranny !-----

OH,

Oh, sacred liberty ! with thee this day we condole the loss of one of thy worthy sons ! Early he saw thy danger, and early in this contest espoused thy cause. Happily he united the love and defence of thy glorious person with the practice of sublime virtue. That glory, which results from the generous protection of the privileges of our country, and that *righteousness* which *exalteth a nation*, he laudably pursued.

I WILL not presume to determine how far the very amiable and useful character of our worthy friend and much lamented General, corresponded with those examples and characters of true glory which I have attempted to describe : for I must venture to use the freedom of saying he was *my* friend, and I loved him sincerely !

PARDON me, if to avoid the charge of partial attachment, I should too faintly describe his virtues !

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And yet, neither my time nor my abilities can reach the extent of his virtues, civil and military ! I however rejoice, that though my feeble, but well meant attempts fall short of the mark of his merit ; yet your affections, my friends, will do him justice, the army, deprived of his counsel and valor, will remember his worth and value. The State of New-Hampshire in tears will lament the loss of a brave defender of her rights ! To him she may not care to decree the title, too rarely found of a Patriot ! The languor of the country, and their inattention to the suffering and starving situation of the most patient and persevering army in the world ; the coldness and poverty of spirit, which prevailed in many civil councils ; the want of energy in the legislative bodies ; none of these things however discouraging they are, could for a moment chill his zeal and ardor for the public interest of America. When prospects of amassing wealth, with disgraceful temptations, bewitched so many Americans

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from the service of their country, and bound them with the execrable chains of mean and contemptible self interest : then might you have seen him shine with a soul of superior make ; and, no charms were powerful enough to allure him from the unutterable hardships of the American war, and the dangers of the field of battle. Though the present emolument and the future support of a rising family, together with the sweets of domestic happiness, seemed all with the fair show of justice, to conspire in demanding his attention to them ; yet, with a patriotic firmness, he put all their intreaties aside, and chose rather to make a daily sacrifice of private interest and personal happiness, and to support the cause of liberty, than to live in affluence when the liberties of his country were expiring. This shall decree him the American crown of honor ; this shall procure him the glorious name of a FATHER to his country.

ME THINKS

METHINKS I yet hear him in a noble transport of generous zeal, address his friends and countrymen, in such patriotic strains as these,

*Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,
The gen'rous play of pow'r deliver'd down
From age to age, by your renown'd forefathers,
(So dearly bought, the price of so much blood)
O let it never perish in your hands!
But piously transmit it to your children.
Do thou, great liberty, inspire our souls,
And make our lives in thy possession happy,
Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence.*

NOR were the virtues and abilities of our General less conspicuous in the field. He was prudent in counsel and solid in judging, firm and steady in his resolutions, cautious of unnecessary danger, calm and undaunted in battle, vigorous and unwearied in obeying military commands, and executing enterprises ; patient and persevering under hardships
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and difficulties, punctual and exact in the duties of the army. His mind ever engaged in promoting the good of the army, and in preserving order and regularity among those troops he commanded : and far from possessing such a narrow and impoverished soul as can be content with a bare escape from censure ; he was ever willing and pleased to do as much as possible, even though it were out of the immediate line of his military duty. He was affable and condescending, easy of access, yet maintaining dignity, and commanding respect ; ever sustaining an honorable command of his passions. He well knew how to respect, and he honored all characters which were faithfully employed in the discharge of their duty, and he thought none, who were faithful and brave, beneath his notice. The soldier under pressing circumstances of distress had free access to him, and he was as a father to them !
Yes, my dear fellow soldiers, you who have been

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long acquainted with him, and happy under his just and resolute, but merciful command, well know he was dear to you as a father ! But he is gone from us, he is gone where we hope and trust he has found the approbation of his Maker.

HIGH heaven, whose will is ever right, has called him from the societies of men, and from acting his part, any longer, in this calamitous war, which we are involved in, by the ambition of the foolish tyrant of Britain. We however rejoice, that our deceased patriot has left a worthy example of virtue and perseverance to animate us in the glorious conflict, in which we are engaged, and lead us on to lasting honor.

IN this place I think myself happy that I have his example to furnish a substantial argument in support of a truth I have long labored to establish.

Namely,

Namely, that religion and true courage are no ways inconsistent with one another ; but being united, mutually promote dignity and true glory. Many parts of the sacred writings might be adduced to show that the generous zeal of the patriot and the unshaken intrepidity of the warrior, never appear with so distinguishing a lustre, as when they are adorned with the piety of the truly good man. However, these divine examples and precepts being too numerous to repeat before you at present, and I hope too familiar to you to appear new, let us for a moment, at this time, turn our attention more particularly to the example before us. You gentlemen who now appear the disconsolate mourners at this funeral solemnity of our late beloved friend and General, and were in time past the subjects of his more immediate command ; you well remember how regular and unspotted were his life and manners ! He was an unchangeable friend of the moral and social virtues, and taught the excellence of them

them more by his amiable example than by a pompous parade of words without actions. He was an invariable advocate for public and divine worship, never omitting to assemble the troops under his command, at the stated time for this purpose, when the circumstances of the army would permit, nor DISDAINING to pay his own personal attendance. Was this a blemish in his character? Did this injure his courage, or make him insensible of the interest of his country? None of these things! His virtues laid the solid foundation for all his other excellences to build upon, and stand immoveable amidst all the seeming casualties of time.

NEED I say, that intemperance and profaness, and every vice, were strangers to him? Here let me observe, for such an omission would be criminal, that during three years service under his immediate command, I never once knew him guilty of
profane

profane cursing and swearing. But I should trespass on your patience, by attempting to draw his character to its just and full length, and rehearse all his labors and services since the commencement of the present war. From the time when he with his country, first armed in opposition to the cruelty and domination of Britain, and precious American blood was first shed in defence of our rights near Boston. From Boston to Canada, and from Canada to those important fortresses on the lake Champlain, and from thence in various encounters, in toils of marches, and pains of hunger, until his troops fought the army of Burgoyne, on the heights of Behmus, where in repeated battles, and in the convention of Saratoga, he was entitled to a large share of those laurels which crowned the American arms. The last year it was his lot, with many more, to dare the hardships of the wilderness, and traverse a land, before unknown, as far as the Che-

nesses, and it was by the troops under his command that the savage enemy were defeated.

WHEN the present campaign opened, without soliciting the post of honor and superior danger, or even knowing the intention of any new appointment, his merit procured him the command of a Brigade of light infantry under the Honorable Major-General the Marquis de la Fayette. With pleasure he accepted that command, desirous of serving the interest of his country more eminently in this station, and of emulating the generous zeal of him, who though not born in America, has made the cause of this continent his own, and has spared neither blood nor treasure to establish our Independence. Oh Americans, serve your country with such unwearied zeal as this noble son of France serves you, then may we hope success will attend our arms!

I said that our General, whose loss we have lamented, with pleasure accepted the command
which

which was offered to him, eagerly panting to meet the enemy, and, under the direction of that Being in whose hand is the fate of nations, to bring this war to an honorable and speedy conclusion : **But** alas ! in the midst of those sanguine hopes and expectations he was removed from the service of the United States.

THUS do our disappointed hopes and expectations teach us the uncertainty of holding the possession of earthly blessings independent of **the great** Governor of the universe.

IN the last words which I shall address to you on this occasion, and if they were to be the last I should ever utter for my country, I would most earnestly pray and beseech you to lay the foundation of your future glory and happiness on true religion ! Let freedom, from tyranny, be the object of your pursuit ; perseverance in the service of our country be your motto, and victory your hope
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and creed; then if we should fall in the field of battle, we shall not only purchase the glorious titles of heroes and patriots; but our religion shall be a passport for us to the regions of eternal happiness!

'Tis not in mortals to command success,

But we'll do more my friends, we will deserve it.

MAY it please that good God who has hitherto guarded us, to grant us all that true glory which illustrious characters possess in this life, and the felicity of the blessed in the life to come!

Now to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be ascribed, as is most due, all praise, might, majesty and dominion, from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

GLORIA EST PRÆMIUM VIRTUTIS.

DULCE ET DECORUM EST PRO

PATRIA MORI