

THE
MAGAZINE OF HISTORY
 WITH
NOTES AND QUERIES

Extra Number—No. 82



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| THANKSGIVING DISCOURSE AT YORKTOWN, VA (1781) | - | <i>Israel Evans, A. M.</i> |
| A NARRATIVE OF TRAVELS, &c. (1778) | - - - - - | <i>Isaac Walden</i> |
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TARRYTOWN, N. Y.

REPRINTED

WILLIAM ABBATT,
1922

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

MR. EVANS' Thanksgiving sermon is a very rare item, of which the only recorded sale in many years was in the Caplin sale of 1918, \$21. It is worth recording that this was seven years before the first National Thanksgiving, which was in 1789. A very full and interesting account of Thanksgiving Day from its first observance (1621) will be found in the *Magazine* for October, 1910.

The Isaac Walden narrative is also very rare, and we believe hitherto unpublished. Though an unlettered and somewhat fanatical youth, he has left an account which rises to eloquence upon the cruelties and hardships seen and suffered while serving in the ranks.

A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED

Near YORK in VIRGINIA,

ON THE

MEMORABLE OCCASION

OF THE

SURRENDER OF THE BRITISH ARMY

TO THE

ALLIED FORCES OF AMERICA AND FRANCE,

B E F O R E

The BRIGADE of NEW-YORK TROOPS and the DIVISION of
AMERICAN LIGHT-INFANTRY, under the command of the
MARQUIS de la FAYETTE.

By ISRAEL EVANS, A. M.

CHAPLAIN to the TROOPS of New-Hampshire.

[On the 13th day of December, the day of General Thanksgiving, this Discourse, nearly in its present form, was delivered in the Second Presbyterian church in Philadelphia. The author is indebted for its publication to the generosity of a number of gentlemen in this city; and it is principally intended for the gratification of the brave soldiery fighting in the cause of America and mankind.]

P H I L A D E L P H I A :
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TO THE HONORABLE
MAJOR-GENERAL THE
MARQUIS de la FAYETTE,
WHOSE DISINTERESTED SERVICES
IN THE CAUSE OF AMERICA
PROVE HIM TO BE
The Friend of Mankind,
AND WHOSE WELL KNOWN
A M I A B L E V I R T U E S
RENDER ALL PANEGYRIC NEEDLESS,
THE FOLLOWING
D I S C O U R S E
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

By HIS MOST HUMBLE

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR

A

DISCOURSE, &c.

1 SAMUEL vii. 12.

Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

AN army and nation standing upon the foundation of a rational and pious hope of divine aid, and united in defence of honor, innocence and justice, should never despair of obtaining success. For they whose principles of warfare are truly benevolent and righteous, will in the end find themselves triumphant over the injustice of tyrants, and all their minions and armed slaves.

Such considerations have often in adversity, consoled the minds of those advocates for the interests of men, who esteem themselves most dignified when they are numbered among the true friends to their country.

In further introducing what I intend to perform on this auspicious day, let me hope to offend no one by reciting a part of those orders which were addressed to this army and seem to accord well with the sentiments just expressed. The general orders which only a short time preceded our operations against the army commanded by Earl Cornwallis, shew a virtuous dependence on Heaven and say, "We have prospects which, UNDER THE SMILES OF HEAVEN, promise to crown our toils with most brilliant success."

This was an honorable and public declaration, that the influences of Almighty power were necessary in order to give us a fair prospect

of victory; this was an humble invocation of the Divine favor: and heaven has smiled upon the exertions of our combined forces, and "the Lord," in the stile of the text, "hath helped us."

The sacred penman of the history of the prophet Samuel informs us, that this pious and illustrious person was, in a very remarkable manner, raised up to judge and govern the Jewish nation. He was the gift of God to reward the prayers of piety, and was by his parents early devoted to the service of God and his country.

But before I enter fully into a discussion of the subject, we may take notice that during a considerable length of time which preceded the government of Samuel, the Jewish nation had very much degenerated in their customs and manners. Vice and iniquity so abounded throughout the nation, that scarcely could the vision of truth, mercy or justice be perceived either among priests or prophets, judges or people. The judgments of Heaven had collected and kindled over the heads of a people who, with very few exceptions, had forsaken their God, and united their sins to draw down whole stores of punishment from the very hands of mercy and goodness. Let rulers and nations know their fate when they neglect or despise their God.

In a word, the Israelites were sorely oppressed by the Philistines. They had been defeated in repeated battles; their young men and judges and armies were slain; the ark of God was taken, and "the glory had departed from Israel." The hand of God was also immediately against them to punish them for their sins; and "he smote of the people fifty thousand and three score and ten men. And the people lamented saying, Who is able to stand before this Holy Lord God?"

At this time of universal calamity, Samuel rose up and judged the children of Israel.

"Prepare your hearts unto the Lord," said the prophet, "and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." By the prayers and intercessions of this man of God, and the penitent returning of the people unto the Lord, the aid

of Omnipotence was allied to their cause: "For when the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel, the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines and smote them.

Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

I now beg your further attention, my dearly beloved hearers, while I attempt to illustrate the meaning of the words which I have chosen for the assistance of your devotions on this joyful day.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." By these words we are called to a devout consideration of our dependence on the Almighty God, and to a recollection of the many instances of help and relief with which he has condescended to bless us.

"Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer."

This was intended to manifest the grateful sense they entertained of the merciful deliverance which God had granted them, and their earnest desire of perpetuating their praise and gratitude to nations then unborn. This part of the subject shall solicit our care and attention in the second place.

What I have in view, as we advance in the business of this day, is in the first place, to illustrate that part of the text which informs us that "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Here, perhaps, it may be asked, does this subject require any illustration before men of thought and reflection? Are not all men, it may be said, persuaded by the force of reason that the Supreme Being has supported and preserved them in every stage of life? But shall there be many found notwithstanding this persuasion, who have neglected to pay their dutiful homage to the most merciful guardian and benefactor of mankind? If this be so, I shall not do wrong when I endeavour to make my fellow-men sensibly feel their

dependence on the Creator as well as acknowledge this truth. I will then both wish and attempt to remind them, that they can be in no situation where the aid of the Creator is not the existence of the creature. That we may give weight to this sentiment, let us view mankind when they first awake into this world of toil and hazard. All the weaknesses and imperfections of infancy attend them. They are in themselves considered, most deplorably helpless. The very animals of the field may, with great propriety, laugh at this feeble creature man, and boast of their superior strength and independence. Nor is man helpless only in this dawn of life. Even when he has reached the utmost strength and wisdom within the attainment of human nature, yet he must still confess that safety is not derived from himself. For it will ever be found that we can neither foresee nor overcome all the toils and dangers which await us in our passage through life.

Every man must therefore feel himself lonely and melancholy in this world, until he has confided in One whose power can protect him, and whose wisdom can guide him into the pleasant paths of glory and felicity. This sentiment seems to be born with us and not merely the effect of teaching; the voice of Nature and not the laboured acquisition of philosophy. It is a truth authorized and supported by the testimony of much the greater part of mankind in all ages of the world. Were we to call for the opinion of those nations not acquainted with the knowledge of the true God, and ask the religious pages of their histories; there we should be informed that their greatest support and consolation amidst the common or extraordinary vicissitudes of life, were founded on the supposed goodness, wisdom and power of those beings to whom, in their unenlightened zeal, they attributed the government of the world and its numerous inhabitants. Let us a little farther follow the doctrine of our personal dependence on the Supreme Being. We will for a moment reflect on some of the circumstances of our lives, and what smiling prospects of human felicity have presented themselves before us. Upon recollecting their instability and painful

delusion we are constrained to say, that neither what immediately respects ourselves nor the affairs of the world are under our controul or direction. Is not every man able to say that a thousand disappointments have attended him in the transactions of life, and all of them perhaps quite contrary to his most lively hopes and expectations. What appeared perfectly just and proper at one time, has nevertheless afterwards assumed a very different aspect.

We have seen the best human abilities and the oldest experience fall under the weightiest disappointment. Schemes which were in appearance well calculated to produce favorable events in the concerns of life, have nevertheless proved abortive.

Nor will it appear, upon examination that nations or kingdoms have any stable foundation for their support independent of the Sovereign Governor of the universe. All their combined wisdom and strength are subject to the direction of that Omniscience which perfectly comprehends every tendency of the councils of men. None of those plans of operation which are founded upon our imperfect knowledge of future events, and the scanty experience of past ages, can with any certainty promise great success. Of this truth the greater part of mankind have been very sensible; for they saw such national events take place among them, as were evidently of a magnitude too great to be accomplished by any human means. A conviction of this kind induced many nations, which can be named, to begin all public business of importance with public acts of worship. We are also assured that they never declared war, nor undertook any hazardous enterprise, or entered the field of battle, without imploring the aid and direction of supernatural power. Influenced by these religious sentiments, their generals and officers and soldiers, have performed many things which were astonishing, and much above all that could, with reason, be expected from human strength and sagacity. In the support of this declaration, I am richly furnished with the venerable authority of ancient historians and eminent statesmen. They teach us that the hope of Divine aid was the noblest incentive to valour and resolution in the field of war, and gained them

the most important victories. The courage of the soldiers was animated by piety, and their fears dispelled by a firm reliance on Heaven. And both sacred and prophane authors inform us, that commanders of armies have been attended by victory no longer than they thought an alliance with Heaven was necessary, Here I think we may, with advantage, recollect the conduct and vanity of a certain Grecian general: when among his companions, and recounting the victories which were gained under his command, he often ascribed the success of his army to his own good management and courage, and frequently said, "and in this Fortune had no share." Afterwards he never prospered in any thing which he undertook. The same instruction may be derived from the infamy and ruin of the Pharaohs, the Sennacheribs and Herods of all ages. These are the men who defy the powers of Heaven and earth, and seem to challenge the utmost exertions of Omnipotence. They carry with them the marks of weakness and presumption, and are followed by ruin and confusion. On the contrary, those nations and commanders who placed the greatest confidence in Almighty God, have been most victorious and most flourishing. This is a truth which cannot be justly contradicted; and this is a truth from which America ought to learn her happiness as a nation. When a lively confidence in God springs from the source of a warm and enlightened heart, and this confidence is aided by our most skilful and most vigorous exertions, then may we entertain a well-grounded hope that we shall be blessed with help from on high. This rational hope of Divine aid will beget fortitude in danger, patience under hardships, cheerfulness and pleasure in prosperity, and modesty and mercy amidst all the triumphs of victory. Hear what the sacred Scriptures say to those who acknowledge the providence of God; who are obedient to his commands; who confide in his goodness and power; and who humbly ask his aid and direction. "Then shall no man be able to stand before you: for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon."

Therefore, a righteous people may encourage themselves when they oppose their unjust enemies; and while they adopt the following language of the sacred volume, may rejoice and say, "With them is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles."

With these words I close what I have thus far designed. They are able to support my honest exertions in the cause of justice and religion. I ask their aid, and earnestly wish our minds may be ever impressed with a weighty sense of our needed help from Almighty God.

In the farther discussion of my subject, I will recollect some of the past mercies which have been extended to us by our gracious God. Suffer me to say, they are sufficient to inforce on our minds both a personal and national application of the words of the text; "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Who that considers the weakness of human nature, and how much it is exposed; who that reflects on the journey of man through this world, or marks the various circumstances which visibly attend his life: I say, in the midst of these sober thoughts, who does not find himself constrained to give his grateful assent to this declaration of one of the holy prophets: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not?"

Were it possible to disclose the histories of our lives; could we rehearse the hazards of infancy and childhood, and recount the toils and dangers which have kept pace with the increase of our years; or, to go yet further, were it in our power to enumerate not only the open and professed enemies of our lives and happiness, but also to enter into the secret ambushments of our concealed foes, and to point out narrow escape from evils against which we could not guard, methinks there would be very few pages in this history without a "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." It is said, "In the midst of life we are in death;" and indeed death in a thousand dismal forms continually surrounds us. His arrows fly thick at all times; and it can be owing only to the guardianship of Heaven

that they have not been aimed at us, and fastened in our vitals. Every morning and evening we can only say, that we have lived, but are uncertain of the consequences of the next hour. But these are not all: how many thousand precious gifts are we blessed with from the hands of our bountiful benefactor? He gives us life, and all the blessings of it. "In his hands is our breath, and are all our ways." Let each one of us say, then, in the inward gratitude of our hearts, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diseases. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction: who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies."

But I correct myself. I check that general zeal of gratitude which may another day be more indulged. I came not, my friends, to exhaust your whole time by addressing you on those subjects of gratitude which have a common relation to the particular and personal situation of every one present. This employment, however pleasing and rational, must submit to claim only a future, though a more enlarged attention.

The voice of authority among men calls us to diffuse a general joy and gratitude through our hearts, and the hearts of the generous sons of freedom. Nay, the voice of God, in his providential goodness, demands our thankful homage for a national and most signal blessing; yes, and for repeated blessings. Let us then, whether under the heaven's spacious concave, or in the sacred temple, let us worship the King of Heaven and earth, and adore his mercy and power, which have given us the victory over our enemies.

Could we give a general utterance to the United States of America; could the voice of her annals and records be heard on this glad day: or were our pious ancestors to appear before us to aid our praise and increase our devotions, they would all, with one harmonious voice, unite with this assembly in proclaiming, that "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Join then, friends and brethren of America! join in heart and spirit, ye patriots and friends to posterity, and form one general

concert of praise to HIM who has aided us! Time and history, who point out to the world the ways of God, ye shall teach men that the Father of the oppressed became the advocate of the inhabitants of this land! "He found them in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led them about, he instructed them, he kept them as the apple of his eye."

As a vine is planted, so, O GOD of Hosts, thy hand did establish a people in this land. "The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches into the river."

But tyranny, which raged against this people in their infancy, again prepared calamity and oppression for them: and notwithstanding our enemies enjoyed the fruits of our industry and virtue, and grew great by the labour of those they had exiled; yet they became envious of the happiness and jealous of the flourishing state of those who were befriended only by their God. In the spirit and style of Egyptian tyranny, they call upon one another to unite in measures of cruelty and injustice. "Come on," say they, "let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters, to afflict them with their burdens." Such was the conduct of Britain towards the inhabitants of this continent. But the Lord helped us, and their secret councils and schemes, the most wisely planned, at least in the eye of human wisdom, were turned into foolishness.

The Lord raised up wise and public-spirited men, able to discern our rights and privileges, and willing to defend them. The Lord raised up warriors and statesmen, and united their hearts and strengthened their hands in the service of their country. Our enemies were disappointed; they despaired of success, unless by their superior strength and skill in the field of war.

Ministerial avarice, arrayed in rigorous acts and unjust laws, suddenly changed into British vengeance; and then hostile armies advanced to enforce submission by the weapons of death and the shedding of blood.

Then was war in the gates. Was there a shield or a spear seen among forty thousand in America? But with joy, with praise we will say, "The battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift. My heart is toward those that offered themselves willingly among the people. Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good. Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever."

Will any one blame me for honestly attempting to kindle the warmth of this day's gratitude into a generous and perpetual flame; a flame which, like the refiner's fire, shall purify our hearts and consciences from all evil, and consume the dross of every sinful practice and impure affection?

Let then our gratitude be increased by a recollection of the unexpected and astonishing union of the inhabitants and states of America, in opposition to the usurpation of Britain. We will call to mind some of those gallant actions in which the assisting hand of Heaven has appeared, and the wisdom and courage of our armies were conspicuous.

Seven dangerous and laborious campaigns shall aid my feeble voice. Ye well-fought fields of battle, and ye joyful victories, from the heights of Boston to the plains of Georgia, ye shall all conspire to prove that the Lord hath helped us.

Begin we then with the nineteenth of April, memorable for the first open and bloody assault on the liberties of this continent. Oh! Americans, forget not to tell your children that liberty was on that day marked for the slaughter, and appointed to bleed on the altars of avarice and tyranny! Oh! ye parents, tell your young offspring, as they rise under your tender and instructive care, tell them, they were devoted to slavery! teach them what a heavy curse it is! let them know what miseries they have escaped! kindle their young minds to a manly and generous love of freedom; but let a dignified resentment against every system of slavery grow with their growth, and strengthen with their years. Let them hear of the cruelties of Britain; let them listen to those narratives of war and battles,

till the name of Britain and slavery shall make the blood thrill in their veins; let them attend to these tales of horror, until, a martial spirit shall mingle with their blood, and glow in their faces, in an aspect daring and resolute as the front of the Libyan lion.

In the temples of that beneficent Being, who delighteth not in the miseries of mankind, in his temples let the sound of liberty be lifted up, as well as the seraphic voice of religion; let them give force and influence and happiness to each other. Let the benevolent preacher teach his people to esteem the blessings of liberty, and to be religious and thankful; let him also require them to regard their freedom as one of these blessings: but to consider voluntary slavery as the most dreadful curse that can be inflicted on mankind.

But I return to consider what has been done between the ever memorable 19th of April, 1775, and the joyful 19th of October, 1781.

Following the example of the holy Scriptures, and humbly aiming at what the judges and the prophets and the divine poets have done, fain would I bring into view every remarkable interposition of Heaven, and, in the words of the grateful Psalmist, close every period of mercy and deliverance with "Praise the Lord, who hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever."

Hear then, citizens and fellow soldiers, what was done on Bunker's hill: that place shall claim a splendid page in history, from that time when virtuous citizens so gallantly opposed British troops, and humbled their proud contempt of the American arms.

In Canada, though there the brave have fallen, have sunk to rest, yet in the early stage of this war, very important success attended our arms: strong fortresses and British troops were compelled to acknowledge the prowess of our forces.

From thence, in imagination, let us pass to our army before Boston: there the enemy were forced to look for safety by the evacuation of that place.

That year the war was carried into the state of New York: then did our enemies hasten from the other side of the ocean to join

their brethren, already engaged, to make so large a portion of mankind miserable. Number the enemy from Britain! number them from Hesse! number their ships of war! Describe, if you can all the awful engines of death and carnage! At this time, Oh, my brethren! who taught you to hope that you could be free and independent, who preserved you from falling at the feet of Britain?

But see the waters, though not, "like the Red sea," divided into parts, yet favourable to us in a time of distress and danger. The very winds in the hand of God granted their aid to save our army. That night which bro't our troops from Long Island to New York, shall be foremost in giving an example of the most interesting and finished retreat from the most imminent military ruin.

That year Clinton and Parker felt the weight of American bravery; and being defeated and miserably shattered, were obliged to relinquish their southern expedition. This campaign wore away, and saw no extraordinary success attend the numerous forces and the powerful fleet of the enemy; unless to murder a garrison of brave men after they had capitulated, may be called extraordinary success.

Oh! ye first fruits of American fortitude and perseverance, let me in imagination drop the tear of love and compassion over your honourable graves, if your iron-hearted enemies gave you any! Ye martyrs for the cause of freedom, whose steady souls could never bend even to a partial and momentary desertion of your principles of virtue, neither the fair promises of your enemies were able to allure you, nor the unutterable horrors of the most execrable prisons and cruelties; not death in his slow and ghastly approaches; not the lingering death of hunger and torture could terrify you from your fixed attachment to your country! Oh! were it consistent with the will of Heaven, I would say, Arise, and come from the dead, to behold a large army of your enemies conquered! arise, and animate your countrymen to finish the glorious work of liberty! arise, and lead on your brother soldiers to dreadful deeds of death

and slaughter, until the ruthless hand of Britain shall no more disturb the peace of men.

We will now pass on to a view of the American army. It was almost disbanded; it was reduced to a small number, and better fitted to draw forth pity and compassion from the beholders, than to strike them with terror; more able to show their fortitude in adversity, than to do execution with their arms! Why, O Cornwallis, didst thou not seize the feeble warriors and their persevering commander? Then who can say thy present fate would not have been suspended?

Next go with me, I beseech you, thro' one of the storms and tempests of nature. Follow the march of a few naked men, or if they were clothed it was only with rags, exposed to the rigors of December's cold. O Liberty! by what charm or what magnetic power didst thou hold these suffering men firm in thy interest? But follow them to the capture of a large body of Hessians at Trenton. From thence pass on with the troops to Princeton; and in your way learn the resources and stratagems of war, and hear of the disappointment and confusion of the enemy. Princeton, that once peaceful abode of the muses, and seat of science, then heard unusual thunders, and saw Britons defeated and slain. Then the dying lamp of liberty was kindled anew! Thousands of heroes flew to the standards of freedom, and thought she could be still defended.

An American army again took the field, and the enemy found they had the war to begin anew.

Near the close of this year, the Almighty, "who had not given us as a prey to their teeth," remarkably helped us, and gave Burgoyne and all his army into the hands of the United States.

Let a recollection of the mercies of the next year begin with a declaration of the alliance of America with the magnanimous Lewis XVI. The illustrious hero, and friend to the rights of mankind, heard the fame of our cause, and joined the interest of his kingdom to the support of our independence, and has spared neither blood nor wealth to establish us in the possession of our freedom.

From this subject, let the operations of our army, numerous and gallant, demand our attention. Consider their formidable movements to the fields of Monmouth. There my fellow soldiers, you remember the fortune of the day was torn from the hands of the victorious enemy, and the flower of their army. Methinks I shall not do amiss, by leaving you to apply the words of the poet, where they were deserved on that day:

“To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,
Inspir'd repuls'd battalions to engage,
And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.”

From the battle of Monmouth, and the various operations of the army within the fourth year of this war, we pass on to the succeeding campaign. No small success favoured our arms that year. Paulus-Hook and Stoney-Point taught our enemies that their strong fortresses were not impregnable to the intrepid resolution and the impetuous assaults of the American forces. In the same year an important expedition was directed against the Five Nations of hostile Indians. That expedition, though attended with immense toil and difficulty, and rendered exceedingly precarious by a great number of hazardous circumstances, a few of which, in their operations, could have destroyed the troops on that service: That expedition was not without success; and what men could perform, was done.

But I hasten to the sixth campaign, and remind you of what happened on the 25th of September in the year past. That day should have a place in the calendars of all ages, to inform mankind what human nature can attempt. Then were disclosed, as it were, the secret plots of hell; and treason too big to be any longer confined, burst from its concealment. Let that day be numbered among the days of mercy; let it constitute an annual festival of grateful joy; and let Liberty and the glad angels of America hover round the assembled sons of freedom, and inspire them with a love of virtue and honor, and a lasting remembrance of the goodness of God, who with scarcely any human means, and by very little human sagacity,

discovered treasonable plots when they were upon the very point of execution. Then did the Almighty save the commander of our armies, and the most important fortress and a part of our troops, from the very jaws of treason and our enemies. On this subject, I know you will anticipate me, and think sooner than I can say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." How wonderful and mysterious the just and merciful ways of heaven. We have been suffered to stand upon the very precipice of ruin, before we were delivered from our danger. This, we ought to believe, was mercifully intended to teach us our dependence upon Him, who alone can make a nation flourish; this was to make us grateful, that we might be happy. But how many subjects of gratitude have I omitted! How many which I cannot bring into view on this day! The grateful heart will recollect more than I can utter. How various have been the conflicts between us and the enemy, superior to us in strength or numbers in almost every instance? But though in various places success has not attended us, yet the conquests of the enemy have been few, and of short duration. Nay, the very victories they have boasted of only hastened their ruin. For the confirmation of this truth, let us bring examples from the southern part of the continent. We will admire the enterprizing and persevering spirit of our southern army, who in the midst of the enemy's victories have destroyed their army. North and South Carolina shall proclaim the military sagacity and intrepidity of General Greene and his faithful band of worthies. Those states shall repeat the victories which have been gained by that army; they shall remember how many fortresses have been wrested out of the hands of an insulting enemy, vainly elated with their visionary success. The late important victory obtained by the troops under the command of General Greene shall aid the joy and praise of this day, and increase our gratitude.

But here let me pause a moment. Perhaps upon reflection I may find reason to say that I have aimed at more than can be performed in the short time that is allotted to the public worship of

this day. Pardon me then, my dearly beloved brethren, if I have detained you too long from what appears to be the more immediate intention of this assembly. I imagined my text meant more than to acknowledge only one victory, or one instance of the goodness of God, however great the blessing might be. When our hearts are truly grateful, they are also generous and enlarged. We wish to know how much Heaven has bestowed upon us, and how much the debts of gratitude are accumulated; and even when we find that the computation will rise infinitely above our abilities to make any equal compensation; and that every new mercy will render us more eternally insolvent; yet still the grateful soul is most delighted, when the contemplation of the mercy and goodness of God is most extensive; and must, after all we can say or do, end with this pathetic and thankful enquiry, which it will not be easy to answer, "What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me?"

This shall prepare our hearts for a new subject of gratitude. We will now enter upon the pleasing employment of impressing our minds with a pleasing remembrance of the last national blessing, which Heaven has vouchsafed unto us.

Shall I not venture to say, that no expedition which depended, in the first plan of it, upon forces so much disjointed, and events so precarious, was ever blessed with a more seasonable and harmonious junction of prosperous circumstances, or ended with more substantial glory and complete success. The first transient view of that expedition seems to impose upon us the presumptuous notion of having in our hands the command of the winds and the waves, the rains and the tempests, any of which, under the orders of Heaven, would have rendered our plans of operation altogether ineffectual.

O Clinton! did your tory spies, those evil geniuses of America, who are employed in "going to and fro in the earth, seeking whom they may devour;" did they fail to announce to you the early destination of the combined army? Alas! was there no friend to Britain able to inform Cornwallis of his approaching danger? To us this is a happy consideration, it is a mark of military skill.

Secrecy! thou life and soul of every warlike enterprise, ever deign to envelop the designs of our army in a cloud, which as of old shall be darkness to the enemy, but, like a pillar of fire, shall give light to the children of America.

But I come to observe, that from the time our army was ordered on the expedition into Virginia, until the day on which the enemy surrendered, scarcely any circumstances attended the allied forces which could be deemed unfavorable. The cheerfulness and patience of the troops under the fatigue of long and rapid marches; the spirit of enterprise; the willingness to endure labours and hardships of every kind, in order to promote the service of this country, and subdue the enemy; these were all favourable omens, and are worthy of our attention and regard. The critical and seasonable arrival of the fleet under the command of his Excellency the Count de Grasse; and this before the enemy entered the Chesapeak, and by their prior possession of the bay made the junction of our army and the French fleet very difficult, if not altogether impracticable. But the situation of the fleet under Count de Barras, yet at sea, was very critical and dangerous. The enemy appeared at the entrance of the Chesapeak to intercept his arrival. This was the time for the Count de Grasse to display his abilities, and to prove how much can be done by a seasonable, well directed, and impetuous attack. By a most gallant manœuvre, he defeated the enemy, destroyed some of their men-of-war, and drove the rest in flight far to sea. By this happy victory a junction of the two French fleets was accomplished, and under the Divine auspices, future success was insured to our united forces.

I will next speak of that harmony, that emulation, and that equal love of danger which subsisted among the allied troops; as if the same generous fire of true glory glowed in their bosoms, or one patriot soul animated them to the cheerful performance of every military duty and to encounter every danger. Witness the emulation of those French and American troops who at the same time entered the trenches of the enemy, and with equal intrepidity and vigour of attack, stormed some of their redoubts.

That only a few of our troops have fallen in the reduction of the enemy is a pleasing consideration, and should contribute to make us thankful. The favourableness of the season shall be remembered, and----But short be my narration of this glorious victory, for short were the operations of the siege. A strong and numerous army of our enemy have surrendered themselves prisoners of war: and this signal instance of the goodness of Divine providence, demands a repetition of those words which you have already often heard; "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

O Virginia! highly favoured of the Lord, rejoice and be glad, for the spoiler is taken captive! Turn your fears and lamentations into grateful songs of praise, and forget not to love and adore that Almighty Being who says to the rage and cruelty of men, "Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther."

O! all ye inhabitants of the United States, let your thankfulness appear by the piety of your hearts, and the purity of your lives. Every new instance of the goodness of the Creator calls upon us to give new signs of our love and obedience to Him. We should endeavour to shew ourselves as worthy of the mercies of God, as human nature is capable, by being more virtuous, more dutiful, and more benevolent.

What will all the most pompous appearances of gratitude avail, if the manners and customs of our country are not pure; or the vices not reformed? Believe it, my friends, a sinful people cannot be a grateful people! For be assured that a people who cannot be moved by the mercy and goodness of God to do what is their duty, and to examine by what means they may please their Maker and bountiful Benefactor, are truly unworthy of his mercy and protection: Nay, every part of their conduct which is vicious, seems very loudly to declare that they are weary of the very goodness of God, and all the blessings of Heaven.

Having now finished what I proposed in the first grand division of my discourse, I proceed to what I said should solicit our attention in the second place.

“Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen.” I have already hinted, that by this monumental stone, the children of Israel intended, not only to express their present gratitude for favours conferred upon them by Divine providence, but also to perpetuate the remembrance of a very extraordinary mercy, to nations long after to be born. That this was the manner of perpetuating the memory of signal success, or extraordinary events is made evident by the testimony of every ancient historian, whether sacred or profane. This custom, however, has not been altogether confined to the ancients. Many are the pillars and monuments which stand, this day, as witnesses of great success or of illustrious merit: and America is not without her monuments of great and worthy men, who have generously shed their blood in the defence of their country. I therefore think it not difficult to shew that public and lasting signs of praise to God, as well as marks of respect for worthy men, have been authorised by the examples of all nations. Let then the enemy to religion, let the enemy to his country, nay, let the vicious infidel, and the debauched libertine, let them all cease to stigmatise public and devout homage to Almighty God with the name of unnecessary and unprofitable parade. If they will neither hear the voice of reason, nor hearken to the sublime and charming instructions of the inspired writings; let them, however, be taught some reverence for the Deity even from the customs of heathens and pagans, where nature spoke, in part, what nature's God hath shewed to all his rational creatures. Let them ask what meant those costly sacrifices of whole hecatombs; what meant those large and expensive libations; and what meant those solemn processions to the temples of devotion? Were not all these things expressions of gratitude for the mercies they had received? However, not to say all that can be offered on this subject, from the customs of polished nations, I can derive examples of this most rational duty from the very original inhabitants of this continent. I can avail myself of their customs to plead for those signs and expressions of gratitude, which are due to the Almighty Disposer of all events.

But we may be more happy than they, we are more enlightened in the knowledge and service of the blessed and good God. Our gratitude should be more pure and more spiritual than theirs. We are instructed, that he delighteth more in the humble and thankful heart, than in the most costly sacrifices. Instead then of erecting altars, as of old was done, for offerings to ascend in costly incense, to represent our gratitude and praise, let pure and virtuous hearts be the altars, and love and obedience be the incense which shall better please the Deity. Gratitude shall be written on our hearts; for this also will be more pleasing to our Divine Benefactor than all the pomp of praise which ever was inscribed, in the largest characters, on the towering pyramid or the solemn temple.

O blessed day this, which calls us to the pleasing duty of praising God for so many mercies conferred upon us! O happy day, whose sun rises not to compassionate us in some deplorable exilement from our habitations, or more miserable flight from our victorious enemies! Happy sun, that rises not to light us by his sickly beams to some dire and lonely retreat; but bright shines this day, to shew the blessings of Heaven and the triumphs of victory! Let us collect all the generous efforts of our souls, to form one humble and grateful offering, and let it be laid on the public altar of our united and open acknowledgement of the goodness of HIM who hath helped us! In the language of the Psalmist, I will say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me, bless his holy name, and forget not all his benefits." O just and blessed God, has it pleased thee to check the sword of the destroyer; yes, and in a great measure to wrest it out of the hands of the oppressor and the tyrant! Methinks if men uttered no songs of praise to their deliverer, this continent itself would reprove their ingratitude; it would break its long silence, and become vocal in high sounding songs of praise! But our gratitude shall rise high! high as the mercy-seat of Heaven! O for glowing words! words from warm and glowing hearts! for words from lukewarm hearts can never ascend to heaven! Incense must be inflamed before it can rise to the skies! On this

day, the enthusiasm of the grateful heart is pardonable, and a passion of praise may not be displeasing to that all-wise and merciful Being, who is acquainted with the upright intentions of the heart.

Great are our blessings, and many and public should be our acknowledgements of them. This I am justified in saying, not only by our own sentiments; but also by the voice of that venerable body of men, who have *Recommended to the several states to set apart this day to be religiously observed as a day of THANKSGIVING and PRAYER.* This well corresponds with the conduct of Samuel and the elders of Israel. Samuel sustaining a public character, and being at the head of the elders and people, called their attention to acts of religious worship, and in the sight of all Israel raised a monument of praise to Almighty God. "And after this, the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel."

How dignified and venerable do great men appear, when they acknowledge the Supreme Being as the author of all their wisdom, greatness, and success; and lay all their shining laurels of victory at the feet of the Great Disposer of all the events of the world. And suffer me to say, that men who are endowed with the most distinguished abilities, are under the greatest obligations of gratitude to that good God, who formed them capable of serving the interests of mankind, and being his ministers to support justice and mercy among the inhabitants of the earth. Happy that nation where these vicegerents of Heaven are a pure and living example of their most virtuous RECOMMENDATIONS. Who will give weight and energy to their laws and resolutions, by their first and most steady personal observation of them; and shew mankind, "that virtue alone is happiness below."

Since then, my friends, "it hath pleased Almighty God to assist and support the United States of America, in their important struggle for liberty against the long and continued efforts of a powerful nation;" it must be not only our indispensable duty, but our greatest interest, to perpetuate our gratitude by learning righteousness. Under the invoked assistance of the same merciful God,

let us prosecute this war with more unanimity and unabating resolution. Divine providence has pointed out our duty, and calls us by the most signal instance of interposition, to perform his work, and to give our enemies no rest, until they be forced to see the injustice of their intentions, and the cruelty of their warfare. Could my influence reach as far as my wishes are extended; could I appear before the inhabitants of the United States in all the irresistible majesty of ancient elocution; could I wield the thunder of Demosthenes, and arrest the lightning of Pericles; how should the nerves of opposition to our country be withered, and every American be fired into a patriot or a soldier.

Ye American friends to your country, this is a year of glory and public felicity! you can now with the calm and dignified triumph of freemen look back, and smile on the toils and dangers you have sustained in this righteous conflict! You can with a pious pleasure and awe mark the goodness and wisdom of Providence! You can add pleasure and delight to all these affections of the mind by a more animated gratitude and a purer zeal! This day brings you nearer the full possession of those earthly blessings for which you have so ardently panted! Your prospects are fairer and brighter than they have ever been! and if you are not wanting to yourselves, all the blessings of freedom are yours! The Lord helps you and invites you by every national blessing to renew your exertions; to press on and gain a complete conquest over the tyranny of your enemies! But should you be disobedient to the calls and smiles of Heaven; should you neglect the interest of your country; remember, you may have reason to curse your indolence and impiety when it is too late! Consider the numerous inhabitants of Europe. Do they not all wish you to be free and independent? They will date their days of unmolested freedom in trade and commerce from the Æra of your independence! The three potent nations of France and Spain and the United Provinces are all on our side; they have commenced hostilities against Britain and are preparing to humble the pride of that nation. These considerations should be motives

of encouragement and new zeal; but not the grounds of sloth and inaction. Honor, justice and our national character demands our utmost exertions to prove that we are worthy to be allied to a nation who have bravely fought and generously bled in this war.

Oh Louis the XVI, live forever! Oh that my words were like the words of an angel! I would wing them to thy ears! Or could I borrow from some guardian angel of America his swift pinions! I would hover round thy person and guard thee from all danger! I would stand before thy majesty, and in the name of America offer thee the sincerest thanks of this continent, for thy fleets and thy armies, for the wisdom, and the zeal, and the bravery of thy officers and soldiers in the service of America! There shall be men who like the bards and poets of old, in heroic stile, shall rehearse the immortal deeds of the allied nations and of **THE DEFENDER OF THE RIGHTS OF MANKIND, LOUIS THE GRAND MONARQUE**. There shall be Miriams and Deborahs; there shall be virgins and daughters in France and America who as among the ancient people of God, shall sing of the glorious achievements of our combined arms; they shall praise the Lord with instruments of music and with the sweet melody of joyful voices. Some Mœonides shall enrich his verse with the honorable names of those who commanded the combined army. Or after the example of David the renowned king of Israel, it shall be said "These be the names of the mighty men" who led forth the allied troops to subdue our enemies. Their names shall be familiar to us; they shall be sounded with pleasure. Old men shall remember them; they shall report them to their children. The grey-headed soldier shall beguile the heavy hours of night with his animating history of those battles in which he fought. He shall warm his cold blood with the names of Washington, and Rochambeau, De Grasse, Barras, and St. Clair; B. Viomenil, and Lincoln, Chastellux, and La Fayette, C. Viomenil, St. Simon, and Steuben, Lauzun, and Knox,* and———Oh were it possible, I would with pleasure and gratitude repeat the name of every worthy officer and soldier of that army; they should stand side

*The reader is requested to observe that these names and some sentences have been added since the discourse was first written.

by side and hand in hand emblematic of our friendship and union! I would have them written in capitals of gold! Aid me, all ye who with a composed joy stood on the plains of York and saw the British host lay down their arms; stamp on your faithful minds the characters of every brave officer and soldier, and hand their names down to posterity. Thus far have I endeavoured to assist you in celebrating that Divine Providence which has given success to our arms; and in thanking God, who has raised up great and worthy men to aid us in this war. What you have heard has flowed I hope from an honest and lively gratitude both to God, and every friend to my country. However if, upon reflection, any one is piously fearful that I have arrogated too much to the skill and valour of men; if any one thinks I have forgotten the more express business of this day which is to give thanks to God and to glorify his name; to these intimations suffer me to say; all men of merit are entitled to the approbation of their fellow men; and while we pay them the debt which is justly due to their usefulness and abilities, with a constant dependence on the influence and government of God, I hope we shall not do wrong. We came hither with a view to reverence the King of heaven and earth; to adore his wisdom, his justice, and his unmerited goodness; but more especially we have been called to acknowledge the past mercies of Providence; and I hope we most humbly and most earnestly supplicate his future protection and goodness. These duties we have been engaged in, and these are delightful employments to every rational and pious mind. With these serious and pleasing words I end my discourse after beseeching you to unite with me in ardently praying that it may please the Almighty governor of the universe to hasten the time when the use of hostile weapons shall cease, and the doctrine of the blessed Redeemer effectually influence the minds of all men. Now to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be ascribed, as is most due, all power, might, majesty and dominion for ever and ever. AMEN.

“We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery.”

The CONGRESS

STANZAS, adapted to the preceding discourse, and addressed to the American army.

TO him who led in ancient days
 The Hebrew tribes, your anthems raise;
 The God who spoke from Sinai's hill
 Protects his chosen people still.

Not to ourselves success we owe
 By help divine we crush'd the foe,
 In sword or shield who vainly trust
 Shall soon be humbled to the dust.

How vain all arms, the shield or spear,
 Unless the soul disdains to fear;
 But terror must their hearts annoy
 Who came to murder and destroy.

Those leaders fam'd, untaught to bow—
 Where are those hostile captains now?—
 The soldier rough, in steel array'd,
 Where is the sleeping soldier laid?

Lost!—to the lands of darkness fled,
 Or captive to your standards led,
 Behold that boasting, bloody band
 Who came to waste your native land:

Praise Him who gives us to repel
 The powers of Britain and of Hell,
 With thankful hearts his goodness own,
 And bow before Jehovah's throne.

Soli Deo Gloria.