

*See Revised Edition*

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MR. FRISBIE'S  
ORATION  
ON THE  
PEACE,

Concluded between GREAT-BRITAIN and the  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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<sup>A N</sup>  
**O R A T I O N,**

**D E L I V E R E D A T**

**I P S W I C H,**

**At the Request of a Number of the INHABITANTS,**

**On the Twenty-ninth of April, 1783 ;**

**O N A C C O U N T O F T H E**

**H A P P Y R E S T O R A T I O N**

**O F**

**P E A C E,**

**Between GREAT-BRITAIN and the UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA.**

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**BY LEVI FRISBIE, A. M.**

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**Published by the Desire of those GENTLEMEN,  
at whose Request it was delivered.**

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A N  
O R A T I O N, &c.

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BRETHREN, FRIENDS and FELLOW-CITIZENS,

**I**T is with mingled emotions of pain and pleasure, that I attempt to address you on this occasion. The event we celebrate, is so grand, so illustrious and joyful, that every heart must beat with wonder and delight, in the contemplation of it : And yet 'tis so extraordinary, so interesting and important, in its nature and connexions, that I greatly fear I shall not be able to do it justice : But I flatter myself, that the delightful and liberal affections you feel upon this auspicious Day, will increase your natural benevolence and dispose you to attend, with a candor suited to the occasion.

PERMIT

PERMIT me then to introduce the present subject of attention, by congratulating you all, my Fellow-citizens, upon the restoration of PEACE, and the establishment of INDEPENDENCE and LIBERTY. This is an event, which must have been the object of every virtuous and benevolent citizen, amidst his various wishes and efforts, during the preceding contest : An event which ought to be notic'd with devout and grateful acknowledgments to the GREAT DISPOSER of all things ; and with all corresponding demonstrations of joy.

THE ordinary effects and operations, which take place in the natural and moral world, are sufficient to impress our minds with the belief of an alwise and universal Providence, and awaken a regard to the powers and principles of the human race : But there are periods, so crowded with extraordinary occurrences and transactions, as that they seem especially design'd to excite an uncommon attention to the perfections of the Deity, and the dispositions, characters and conduct of mankind.

Such

Such a period is the present ; the most remarkable that has taken place since the first settlement of America ; and equal in many respects to any recorded in the history of modern times and nations. This must appear obvious even to superficial observers, if they will attend for a moment to the causes, the operations, and the progress of the late bloody and obstinate contest, and contrast them with the present happy and honorable *Peace*. *Peace*, my Brethren, there is pleasure in the sound ! ' There is more in the signification ! ' 'Tis comprehensive of every civil and social benefit. The Peace we now celebrate is peculiarly delightful and important : 'Tis the happy, the glorious conclusion of a war attended with dangers and sufferings innumerable. A war, on the doubtful event of which, the most precious and valuable interests and privileges were suspended. We well remember the premeditated, the unprovok'd and unrighteous attack which was made upon our Rights and Liberties, our lives and properties, by a proud and imperious nation, whose armies had been victorious by land, and whose fleets had rode triumphant on the seas ; who were deem'd

deem'd formidable by all, and invincible by themselves.--We remember our own defenceless and unprepared situation, when the blood of our Brethren, spilt by the hand of lawless violence, first rous'd us to arms : And as a traveller who has pass'd a dangerous precipice, trembles at the review of the hazard he has but just escap'd ; so we are ready to recoil at the recollection of those depress'd and critical circumstances to which we have been reduc'd ; “ when the fate of America stood trembling on the point of suspense,” and one more successful effort of our enemy might have plung'd her into irretrievable ruin. But gracious Heaven, which is always ready to succor injur'd innocence in the hour of extremity, step'd in to our relief ; and by directing our Generals and Armies to the most seasonable, skillful and vigorous efforts, put an effectual check to the progress of our enemy, baffled their designs, and turn'd that ruin and disgrace, which they fondly imagined *our* certain fate, upon their own devoted heads.

BUT I cannot, I need not, particularly trace the various events of the war ; the most important of them are still fresh in your memories. I need not recount on the one hand, the various painful passions which have agitated our breasts, the hardships and calamities we have sustain'd, the treasures we have exhausted, the blood we have spilt, the cruelties we have suffer'd, and the arduous efforts we have made, while we have been struggling through difficulties, dangers and deaths, to the happy mansions of *Liberty, Independence and Peace.*--Nor will I, on the other hand, recapitulate the wise counsels, the manly exertions, the signal successes, the expulsion of enemies, the capture of armies ; which have manifested the power and wisdom of Providence, signaliz'd the virtues of America, reflected honor upon her counsels and her arms, fill'd her with hope and encouragement, and struck attentive nations with astonishment. Yet these are that wonderful train of causes and effects, which have led on to the present glorious crisis: A crisis glorious and happy, in proportion to the numberless evils we are deliver'd from, and the various and extensive blessings and advantages we have obtained.

IT is not difficult to foresee what must have been our wretched and deplorable circumstances, had our enemies accomplish'd their designs. That impolicy and injustice which attended their counsels and measures, the unexampled barbarity which has distinguish'd their military operations, that devastation and rapine which have mark'd the progress of their arms, have left us no room to doubt their cruel and vindictive resentment against us : And had they succeeded in their enterprize, the ax, the gibbet and the halter must have been the fate of our most noble Patriots, renown'd Warriors and virtuous Citizens. A scene must have opened too shocking for description ! Our Liberties must have been annihilated, our estates confiscated and made the prey of imperious Tyrants, and those few Friends to America who might have been suffer'd to escape with their lives, must have dragg'd out a wretched existence, under the accumulated miseries of poverty, slavery and contempt. And this execrable patrimony would have been entail'd upon posterity, to, who can tell, how many future generations.---Better must it have been to have spent the last drop of our blood  
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in contending for Liberty, than to have suffer'd the horrors of such an ignominious conclusion.

BUT praised be Heaven, the struggle has terminated in a period of success and prosperity beyond our most sanguine expectations ! The great ARBITER of nations, to whom we made our solemn appeal, has espoused our cause, and crown'd it with a most happy conclusion. How is the scene changed ? How different our situation from that in which our insulting foe pursued our feeble armies, and triumph'd in the prospect of speedy conquest ? America is free ! Is independent ! And by the formal and explicit acknowledgment of her reluctant enemies, ranks with the nations of the earth ! Rejoices in the establishment of her Rights and Privileges, and exults in the restoration of peace and security ! The storm of war is dissipated, and the air is no longer wounded with the bloody ensigns of battle, the thunder of arms, the groans of the dying, and the infectious exhalations of the dead. The ground no longer groans with the shock of armies, nor is heap'd with mountains of slain, or choak'd with rivers of blood :--- Wives and  
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children, parents and friends, shall no longer sicken with painful apprehensions for their dearest connexions, nor lament them untimely fallen on the bloody field ; or more than murder'd in gloomy prisons, and floating dungeons of disease and want, wretchedness and despair. The angel of Peace descends with his olive wand, and proclaims a period to these dismal evils, and diffuses joy and gladness thro' every free and generous soul. Let us then, for the present at least, forget the injustice and cruelty of our enemies, and sink every painful sentiment of anger and indignation, in the more delightful sensations of gratitude and joy. Let the mourning parent, the disconsolate widow and the weeping orphan, divert for a moment from the objects and causes of their grief, and not damp the gladness of this happy day with unawailing tears. And let us lose ourselves in contemplating the blessings of peace and prosperity, and the lengthening train of happy prospects which open to our view. Our houses, no longer expos'd to the plundering hand and destructive flames of a watchful and cruel enemy, shall now be peaceful mansions of security and rest. Our towns and cities shall no longer

longer tremble at the approach of hostile invaders, and merciless incendiaries.--Let our husbandmen pursue the labors of the field with fearless hearts and joyful prospects : The produce of their toil is safe from the ravages of the enemy : They shall no more be call'd, as they have been, from their whitening harvest just nodding to the sickle, to reap a rigid crop of hardships, wounds and death, in the field of battle. Nor shall the industrious mechanic be summon'd from his favorite seat of activity and art, to form, or to use the equipage of war and the instruments of death ; but may bestow his labor and skill upon the more useful manufactures of civil and domestic life.--The Scholar, the Philosopher and all the Sons of science and genius, are now at liberty to prosecute with safety and pleasure, their favorite studies and researches, to improve former discoveries, to surprize the world with such as are new, and to cultivate all the milder arts of peace and civilization. Peace and Liberty are the most cordial Friends to the muses : Useful learning and valuable improvements, must undoubtedly flourish under the benign influence of a free government and a generous patronage. And on the happy return  
of

of Peace, the Patriots and Statesmen of America have leisure and opportunity to form the best laws and regulations for the order, security and happiness of civil society ; and the Ministers of Government, to execute them with an integrity, steadiness and perseverance which shall be highly conducive to the public good.

AND among the various advantages of peace the freedom, the enlargement and the prosperity of trade and commerce, are not the least. The merchant and the sailor may rejoice in the liberty of the seas :--No longer harrass'd with burdensome impositions, or unnecessary restrictions ; no longer watch'd and pillag'd by the mercenary tools of a tyrannical government, they may waft their commodities to every climate, without molestation or disturbance ;--the ports of every nation extend their arms to receive them, from whence they may import the various riches and treasures of the globe. The *Fishery* so important to our commercial interests, granted to us with such ample privileges, must afford us a living and inexhaustible fund of wealth and traffic ; a fund of superior worth to all the glittering mines of Peru.

AND

AND if we attend to the extent of our territory, it comprehends a vast tract of fertile country ; and affords a large opening for extensive settlement and population.--We have room for ourselves,--we have room for our children,--we have room for all virtuous foreigners, who chuse to seek in this happy land of light and liberty, a safe retreat from the cruel fangs of tyranny and oppression. How does the genius of America triumph in the extent of her habitation ! And point us to future towns, cities and states, to be erected, in those distant tracts of country, where nothing is now to be seen but lonely desarts and dens of savage beasts. Some future years shall behold the western wilderness subdu'd by the hand of cultivation, and rising afresh in habitations of men, and seats of industry, health and plenty. America has but just emerg'd from her minority ; and she must (if she continues to be bless'd with a free and happy Government, and enjoys the influence and direction of wisdom and virtue) rise in numbers and greatness, in arts and sciences, and in all useful and refined improvements, to an equality with the most distinguished nations of the earth : And as the flame of Liberty burns brighter in Ame-

rica than in any other quarter of the world, will not our example and our intercourse with foreign nations widely diffuse this sacred flame, and extend its happy influence thro' all the kingdoms of Europe, if not to the most distant quarters of the globe? Even now, we are assured by the best authority, that some nations, who formerly have but sparingly tasted the sweets of Liberty, rous'd perhaps by the struggles of America, and enlightened by those liberal sentiments which have inspir'd Statesmen and Heroes, have begun to abolish the impositions of civil and religious tyranny, and to assume the Rights of men and Christians.--Happy indeed would be the effects of the American Revolution, should it be the means of communicating liberty and happiness to millions of mankind!

PERMIT me to add another animating prospect which rises to view.--May we not indulge the pleasing hope, that the restoration of Peace will open the way to a more extensive prevalence and advancement of Piety and Virtue? I would not eclipse the joy of this auspicious day by uncharitable reflections: But is it not a truth too obvious

obvious to be disputed, that the busy and interesting concerns and operations of politics and war, have diverted our attention from the sacred duties and obligations of religion? And that the peculiar circumstances of the times, with various other causes not now to be mention'd, have diminish'd our virtues, corrupted our morals and diffused among us a spirit of vice, error and infidelity; whose growing progress if not seasonably and effectually check'd, may prove our disgrace and destruction. But we will not depress our minds with gloomy presages. Let them be inspir'd with the pleasing expectation, that the Father of mercies, will animate the Ministers of Government and Religion, with such ardent zeal for the advancement of truth and virtue, and attend their endeavors with such a divine energy, as shall render them effectual to revive their sinking interests, and cause them to flourish thro' the land. The horrors of war, and the terrors of public judgments may affright people into a temporary reformation; but is it not in the secure tranquility of peace, that virtue and goodness take the deepest root, shoot forth the largest branches.

and bear the most perfect and permanent fruits ? 'Tis worthy of observation, that when the world was compos'd into the profoundest peace, our divine Redeemer made his entrance upon this earthly stage, began by himself, and carry'd into effect by his Apostles, the most surprizing reformation that ever the sun beheld. And shall we not ardently hope and devoutly pray, that a similar glorious Reformation may succeed the *present* Peace ?

THESE then, which have been recounted, are the blessings, the advantages, which we possess or expect from the present pacific establishment : And are they real ? They seem indeed like the visionary images, and airy pleasures of a fleeting dream, which when we awake, vanish in a moment : But they are not such. The greater part of them are substantial realities.

BUT to whom are we indebted for this profusion of benefits ? Not primarily to the wisdom, benevolence or prowess of mortals ; but to that infinite summary of perfections, who spread out the Heavens with all their glory, and moulded  
by

by his hand this mighty globe of Earth ; produc'd all creatures by a word, and sustains and comforts them by a ceaseless and inexhaustable munificence. This LORD of nature and glorious Patron of human rights espoused our righteous cause, blasted the designs of our enemies, and effected this happy and glorious Revolution.--*Sing O ye Heavens, for the LORD hath done it ! Shout ye lower parts of the earth ! Break forth into singing ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein, for the LORD hath redeem'd his people !*--Let our hearts catch these triumphant acclamations, and our joyful thanksgivings ascend to Heaven in one united chorus of gratitude and praise.

BUT is there no tribute of gratitude and applause due to those Heroes and Statesmen, who have been the bold and successful Assertors of our Rights, and the Fathers and Defenders of our Country ? Yes there is. The great Governor of the world in the ordinary dispensations of his Providence, makes use of secondary and human agents for the accomplishment of his designs : And as these

these

these agents are rational and voluntary in their operations, and often act upon the most virtuous and generous principles, and discover the most exalted abilities, they are worthy of peculiar esteem, gratitude and praise. And indeed every zealous and active friend to his Country's cause, of whatever rank or denomination, and whether employed at home or abroad, in the Cabinet or the Field, should receive from his grateful Countrymen, that portion of honor and applause due to his virtue and merit. But 'tis impossible that I should now pay a particular attention to the numerous characters which have shone with distinguished lustre upon the American stage. Go forth in a serene evening, turn your eyes to the numberless luminaries and bright constellations which glow in the concave of Heaven. How bright, how numerous and how various ! Such are the intellectual stars which have shone in the hemisphere of America ! And among these resplendent lights it will not be difficult to discover, by his superior magnitude and splendor, that renowned CHIEF, who foremost in the counsels and operations of war, has led our armies to conquest

conquest and glory. But who is this that looks forth from the Eastern World, and lends to our injur'd bleeding Country, the aid of his counsels, his treasures and his arms? 'Tis no other than our noble and generous Ally, the illustrious SOVEREIGN of France. How eminently our alliance with this magnanimous Prince, and his accomplished Nation, has contributed to our prosperity and success, let the hero Cornwallis and his captur'd army declare. But while we celebrate the virtues of the living, let us not forget the merits of the dead. A sympathetic tear shed to the memory of those valiant Warriors, who spilt their blood and breath'd out their souls in the arduous struggle for Liberty and Independence, cannot misbecome the present joyful occasion. Alas, ye hapless Heroes! ye perish'd in the storm of contest, and never reach'd the blissful port of Peace. Perish'd did I say? Not so; but too early ye reach'd the goal of military glory; yet still you live in the hearts of your grateful Countrymen, and in the sacred annals of fame; your memories shall be transmitted to posterity with increasing lustre, and generations yet unborn shall celebrate your praises!

BUT

BUT having travel'd thro' the rugged scenes of war, and obtained at last the blissful retreats of Peace, shall we now sit down in indolence and ease, and erroneously conclude, our cares and labors are forever at an end? No, my Fellow-citizens, no. Much remains to be done, to preserve firm and unimpair'd that magnificent structure of Liberty, Independence and Peace, which has been rear'd at the expence of so much treasure, toil and blood; and to carry it to the highest degree of beauty and perfection. Wisdom and policy, integrity and watchfulness, a firm and governing regard to the public good, with the whole train of moral and political virtues, must exert a superior and unabating influence, if we would preserve and perpetuate our national freedom and security, happiness and glory. If we sink into carelessness and indolence, pride and luxury, folly and dissipation; if envy, selfishness, avarice and ambition; if any or all of this brood of execrable vices gain a predominant influence over us, they will misguide our councils, corrupt our governments, enervate our strength, destroy our order and security, *dissolve*  
*our*

*our union*, blast all our glory and happiness, and plunge us into a tremendous gulf of infamy and wretchedness, from which we may never be able to emerge. But Heaven forbid such a disastrous fate ! And that it may be effectually prevented, let every rank and denomination of people, exert themselves to the utmost of their abilities, in their respective stations, for the promotion of industry, activity, temperance and moderation ; and labor by the best instructions, encouragements and examples, to advance and strengthen the influence of every virtue, and give the fullest force and credit to all the principles and obligations of piety and religion. In this course only, can we expect to maintain the blessings of Peace and Liberty inviolable, and transmit them improv'd and extended, to posterity. And let us instantly offer up the most devout and importunate supplications to the Father of all mercies, that he would delight in our prosperity ; that he would carry the wonderful work which he hath already begun, to an elevated pitch of perfection ; that he would adorn us with those beauties and excellencies which are the objects of his own peculiar

culiar complacency ; and make this land the joy and glory of the whole earth.

AND let us forever remember that Virtue and Piety are not only indispensably necessary to civil Peace and Prosperity ; but absolutely requisite to the enjoyment of everlasting Felicity. All sublunary things are hastening to a period.---  
 “ The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces, even this great world itself shall fade away ; and like the baseless fabric of a vision leave not a wreck behind.” Happy, thrice happy, then, will he be, who is found cloath'd with the immaculate righteousness of our divine REDEEMER, and adorn'd with the living virtues of the sincere Christian ; for he shall ascend to mansions of rest and safety in the New Jerusalem, and triumph there in the rapturous enjoyment of celestial Peace, Blessedness and Glory throughout the endless--endless ages of eternity.

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