

A
FUNERAL SERMON,

PREACHED IN NEWARK, DECEMBER 27, 1799.

A DAY OF PUBLIC MOURNING, OBSERVED BY THE TOWN, FOR

THE UNIVERSALLY LAMENTED,

GENERAL WASHINGTON,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

WHO DIED THE FOURTEENTH OF THE SAME MONTH.

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED, HIS

LAST ADDRESS,

TO HIS BELOVED COUNTRYMEN.

*Quis talia fando.
Temperet a lacrymis.*

By ALEXANDER MACWHORTER, D. D.
PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NEWARK.

—:~:—
NEWARK:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY JACOB HALSEY.

MDCCC.

1800


INTRODUCTION.



THE Committee of Arrangements in behalf of the Town of Newark, return their thanks to the Reverend Doctor Macwhortor, for the Discourse delivered this day, on the *DEATH* of General GEORGE WASHINGTON, and request the favor of a Copy for Publication.

JAMES HEDDEN,

JOHN PINTARD,

WILLIAM S. PENNINGTON,

} Committee.

NEWARK, DECEMBER 27, 1799.



TO THE RESPECTED CITIZENS OF NEWARK,

AT whose request this Discourse was Composed,
Delivered and now Published.

It is most Respectfully Inscribed,

By their Friend,

Fellow-Citizen,

And most obedient,

And very humble Servant,

A. MACWHORTER.

P R E F A C E.

It cannot be unacceptable to the reader to introduce to his notice, the ensuing Discourse, by giving an extract from what was published in the Newark Papers, respecting the observation of that solemn day.

NEWARK, DECEMBER 28, 1799.

PARTICIPATING in the general grief, occasioned by the death of our illustrious countrymen GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON, our village by a unanimous resolution of its citizens, appointed Friday the 27th inst. to be set apart as a day of special mourning, accompanied with solemn exercises of devotion : conceiving that the sacred duties of religion, would not only be the highest tribute of respect to the memory of the late beloved Father of his country, but also, the most suitable expression of humble resignation to this afflictive dispensation of an over-ruling Providence, in whose hands are the issues of life and death, in whose sovereign will is suspended the fate of men and empires, and whose gracious interpositions have been so manifestly displayed in the events of American history,

In recording the ceremonies observed on this melancholy and never-to-be-forgotten occasion, we do not presume that the modest evidences of our unfeigned sorrow, can possibly shed any lustre on a name, which far transcends all human praise. The plain and simple recital of our village rites will testify, that tho'

among the least, we were not last, to display within our humble sphere, emotions of sympathy, in unison with our brethren of the United States. Following the dictates of pure and genuine gratitude to the memory of the man, who under God, was the instrument of our country's independence, every class of citizens combined in one common effusion and liberal indulgence of the finest feelings of the human heart.

Pursuing the plan previously adopted by the Committee of Arrangements, the Procession formed at the Academy, with the Military in front, under the command of Major Beach, and moved at 12 o'clock in the following order :

1. Music, playing a dead march with muffled drums.
2. Captain Hay's Company of Light Infantry.
3. Captain Van Arsdale's Company of Federal Blues, with their standard dressed in mourning.
4. Captain Parkhurst's Company of Artillery.
5. Captain Johnson's Company of Cavalry, dismounted.
6. Field Officers, and Officers of Militia.
7. The Rev. Clergy of the town with scarfs, and the Clergy of the vicinage.
8. The members of St. John's Lodge.
9. The Magistrates.
10. Captain (Colonel) Hay's Company of Silver Greys.
11. Preceptors and Scholars.
12. Citizens.

ALTOGETHER composing perhaps as numerous a Procession as have ever been assembled in this town.

THE Military marched with reversed arms, and on arriving at the Church door, opened their ranks, the whole facing inwards, and resting on their arms, formed an avenue through which the remainder of the Procession passed.

THE ceremonies of the Church were introduced by the Rev. Doctor Ogden in a well adapted prayer. The Rev. Doctor Macwhorter delivered the ensuing Discourse. A crowded audience listened with profound attention, and a multitude of eyes were suffused with the precious crystal of melting sensibility.

As the most appropriate mark of respect to the *First of Citizens*, the Address of the late President, on his declining a re-election, was read by Alexander C. Macwhorter, Esq. The important advice contained in this last legacy, could never come more home to the bosoms of Americans than at this solemn moment—It was the voice of WASHINGTON, speaking from the tomb.

DIVINE Service being concluded, the troops formed in front of the Church, and the Procession passing through in inverted order, they marched with shouldered arms and unmuffled drums to the Academy, where the whole was dismissed.

WE should do injustice to the subject, were we to conclude without a remark on the decorum and orderly conduct observed by every description of persons on this mournful occasion.

NOT a single incident occurred but what will bear a pleasing retrospect; and in our village annals, this day may be transmitted to posterity unsullied with a stain.

WERE we to discriminate any individual circumstance as deserving more particular notice than the rest, we should select the fraternity of Free Masons, whose share in the Procession attracted every eye, and gave a solemn dignity to the whole. The emblems and badges of the order were all veiled in the deepest mourning; and a monumental Obelisk* to the memory of

*The Obelisk (since repositied on the Altar of St. John's Lodge in this town) is three feet in height: consisting of a base

their ILLUSTRIOUS BROTHER, borne by the two eldest and most respectable members of the Lodge, which, during the time of divine service, was elevated on the desk below the pulpit, made a most striking impression on every beholder.

Sic transit Gloria Mundi.

and pyramid of accurate proportion, representing black marble. The front of which, exhibits an exact likeness of General Washington, in white bas-relief, above which are masonic emblems in pearl and gold. The remaining three sides contain the three great characteristics of christianity, Faith, Hope, and Charity, also in white bas-relief. On the base are inscribed the name and dates of the age and death of the bright luminary of the western world, with monumental inscriptions. A wreath of laurel encircles the top.

A

FUNERAL SERMON,

DELIVERED

IN NEWARK, DEC. 27, 1799.

BY

ALEXANDER MACWHORTER, D. D.

MY DEAR FRIENDS

AND FELLOW CITIZENS,

THROUGHOUT a ministerial life of more than forty-one years, I never stood in the sacred desk with so much reluctance, as on the present occasion.—The object, you wish to be eulogized, and to be portrayed in all the colours and dark shades of weeping sorrow, is far beyond my feeble pencil, and trembling hand.—It seemed to me impossible, either to evade, or decently excuse myself from a compliance with the honorable and solicitous request of my respected Townsmen.—But, it is now too late to offer unavailing apology.

THE text I have selected as the theme for our mournful meditations, you find recorded in

DEUT. XXXIV. 5. So Moses the Servant of the Lord died.

WASHINGTON the great!—WASHINGTON the admired!—WASHINGTON the beloved!—is no more.—Doleful the sound!—Painful the thought!—How extensive is the stroke!—How deep the wound!—A nation groans—clothes herself in sable weeds—and pours forth the bitterest lamentations—Sorrow fills

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the heart, and a melancholy sadness broods on every countenance.

And, while we pay the just tribute of mourning, in honor of the deceased, and shed the tear of sympathetic woe, let us remember as men and christians, that the Lord God Almighty lives ;—He sits at the head of the universe ;—directs all events throughout his extensive dominions in infinite wisdom and goodness.—“ A sparrow falls not to the ground without the notice of our heavenly Father, and the hairs of our heads are all numbered with him.”

It cannot be expected that the character of this eminent man can be portrayed at this time.—The genius of the poet, and the energetic eloquence of the orator would fail in the great attempt : how far then must my feeble powers shrink from daring such an undertaking.—Poets and orators will no doubt exert all their learned abilities upon this subject ; but, it is the simple retail of the historic page, which alone will be able to do justice to a life so extraordinary.

All we shall pretend to, on this mournful day, will only be,—to touch upon a few of the outlines of some of his virtues,—some of his more prominent excellencies,—and direct our minds to such christian reflections, as may be a proper improvement of this gloomy dispensation of divine providence.

This distinguished personage shone conspicuously in a multitude of the private virtues.—It is recorded of Moses, and given as a summary of his private character ; “ That he was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.”—So with regard to *him*, the laws of meekness, kindness and benevolence ever dwelt upon his lips. And for many years Mount Vernon has appeared to be the residence of hospitality, liberality and charity. What thousands, and thousands have experienced

the blessings of his beneficent hand ?—What Job, in ancient times, the greatest man in all the East, declared, with respect to himself, may with striking propriety be applied to him. He “ delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that “ had none to help him.” He “ caused the widow’s heart to “ sing for joy.” Yea, he “ was a father to the poor.” He “ broke “ the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth.” He “ withheld not the poor from their desire, or caused the eyes “ of the widow to fail, or eat his morsel alone.” *

ONE thing very remarkable in him, and was often observed by

* *GEN. WASHINGTON was an uniform professor of the christian religion. He steadily discountenanced vice ; abhorred the principles of infidelity, and the practices of immorality. He was a constant and devout attendant upon divine worship. In the army he kept no chaplain of his own, but attended divine service with his Brigades, in rotation, as far as conveniency would allow ; probably to be an example to his officers, and encourage his soldiers to respect religion. He steadily attended the worship of God when President. He was not in this respect like too many, who practically declare themselves superior to honoring their Maker in the offices of religion. He firmly believed in the existence of God and his superintending providence. This appears in almost all his speeches and proclamations. He was educated in the Episcopal Church, and always continued a member thereof, and was an ornament to the same. He was truly of a catholic spirit, and considered the distinctions of the great denominations of christians, rather as shades of difference, than any thing substantial, or essential to salvation. After President Washington’s inauguration into his high office in New-York, knowing the multiplicity of business to which he must attend, and that he must not be interrupted by continual visitants, “ he assigned every Tuesday and Friday, between the hours of two and three, for receiving visits, and that visits of compliments on other days, and particularly on Sundays, will not be agreeable to him.” I produce this quotation to show the great reverence he had for the Lord’s day.*

his friends ; how it was possible for a man, whose mind was full of cares, perplexities, embarrassments, and great concerns, to attend at all times, with the graces of the politest ease, to the various *minutiae* of what is styled *good breeding*, or the accomplished gentleman.*

His capacious mind was not only formed for the grand arts of war, policy, and legislation, but it comprehended the common arts of life to an exceeding high degree. He was one of the most skillful and successful husbandmen in his country. He not only cultivated, and improved his own farm in the most advantageous and beautiful manner, but he greatly improved the farms of his neighbours in various parts around him by his example and by his instruction. So that in this line, he might be styled, *a complete farmer*.

BESIDES this, he had a polished taste for many of the fine arts, and for the graces of certain branches of polite literature. He exceeded the most of men in epistolary writing. The volumes of his letters, which have been published will remain a standing monument of his exalted accomplishments in this respect. The world has been stunned for ages with encomiums upon the epistles of Cicero and Pliny, as models of perfection in this species of learning ; but, let them be compared with the former, I must be strangely mistaken, if their glory will not extremely suffer, and probably be totally overshadowed by the experiment.†

* *All ranks of men even to children were objects of his peculiar politeness. A modest and placid serenity ever surrounded him. Of what multitudes of little ones did he take a tender and condescending notice ? And ladies of every class universally acknowledged with pride his respectful attention. He was a person of such finished politeness, that by-standers would suppose, he had nothing else to attend to, but the etiquette of genteel ceremony. He was hardly ever known, to be in-
sident to absence of mind.*

† *Consider the vast difference of the education and employments of*

He wrote with amazing facility and readiness ; communicated his ideas with the greatest precision, perspicuity and energy. Oftentimes during the late war, he had to direct and correct in various instances the proceedings of Congress. By the stretch of his sagacity and superiority of knowledge he frequently flashed conviction upon the minds of that great house, eminent for wisdom and understanding, so as to induce them to adopt his measures, and alter or relinquish their own. His labors in writing in that perilous period were immense ; and were there not the most incontrovertible evidences thereof, would seem to exceed all credibility. His military orders, his letters to Congress, &c. compose more than thirty volumes in folio, which are preserved in the national archives.

LET us now contemplate this great man in his military character. With justice it may be said, "He was a man of war from his youth." When he was very young, he girded on the sword, and entered the martial field for the defence and protection of his country. In the beginning of what is called, *The last French War*, the French and Indians made incursions into the frontiers of Virginia. Young Washington, with a few militia companies of about three hundred men, immediately flew into the wilderness to repel the invading aggressors. The enemy were nume-

Cicero and Pliny from Washington. The former were educated in all the learning of Greece and Rome. Composition was their business from their youth. They wrote in all the quietude of retirement ; but the letters of the latter had no advantages either from a common liberal education or common study. They were written upon the spur of the moment, and generally in the hurry, tumult and confusion of war ; and many of them, I may say, amidst the beating of drums and din of arms. Yet the native productions of his pen, flowing from his superior genius, and as if it were from an inspired polish of literature, in my opinion, far exceed them, and will be much better models for the imitation of youth.

rous far beyond his expectation. The advanced and reconnoitering parties had skirmished. He determined, if possible, to check the enemy's progress. For this purpose he threw up a hasty and trifling fortification, in a place in that country called a *glade* or *savannah*, which is a space of flat ground destitute of trees, and generally of shrubbery. This wise manœuvre was to oblige the enemy to leave their coverts and their trees, and make the attack in the open plain. The enemy, conscious of their vast superiority, consisting of nine hundred French, besides Indians, sure of conquest, rushed furiously to the assault. They were firmly received, and the action became severe and dreadful. More than half of Washington's corps was slain by his side, and more than twice that number of the enemy fell. The final conclusion of this bloody scene was, that the French commander, finding with what brave and desperate men he had to deal, offered him an honorable capitulation, which Washington accepted, and nobly marched off with the honors of war.—Although he lost the field, yet he gained what was equal to a victory, by arresting the progress of the enemy, and covering the frontier settlements. His conduct, his bravery, and his military genius displayed at that time, acquired for him great renown, and turned the attention of the public mind towards him. This was the beginning of that astonishing martial fame, to which in process of time he arrived. *

* *The event to which I have alluded took place in the year 1754, but it will be said I ought to have introduced him to public view previous to this. I well know, that just after he past his age of 21, in the year 1753, he was honored with a commission by Mr. Dinwiddie, then governor of Virginia, to M. St. Pierre, the commander of a French Fort erected on the Ohio, "to demand the reason of his hostile proceedings, and to require him to withdraw his forces."—How he travelled thro' a trackless wilderness of hundreds of miles with only a single companion with their provisions on their back, and how he was treated by the haughty Frenchman, and sent back with ignominy and contempt, every one may see in the histories of those times.*

THE campaign of the following year, according to my recollection, when Gen. Braddock, a veteran English officer, with a respectable European army under his command, accompanied with strong colonial additions, marched for the purpose of destroying Fort Du Quesne, (now Fort Pitt) and driving the enemy from that quarter ; exterminating them from our territory, and giving deliverance to an extensive frontier of our country.

AT this period our rising hero was only a common aid in the general's family. This mighty European, utterly ignorant of the wiles and prowess of the foe, plunged precipitately forward, leaving part of his army far in his rear, soon fell into an Ambuscade. He himself was killed, and his forces routed by an enemy perhaps, he never saw. At this awful crisis, young Washington burst forth, flew to the head of the colonial troops, which the general had contemptuously put in the rear, aroused them from their panic, rallied them, and understanding the Indian mode of warfare, impeded, checked and baffled the progress of the enemy, covered to admiration the retreat of an army of Britons, saved a multitude of lives from the *scalping knife*, and obtained for himself immortal laurels. He received the thanks, the plaudits, and blessings of his country. And it has often been supposed by many, that if he had been general at that time, stripling as he was, the tide of the war would have been very different.—May we not say, that *Braddock died as a fool dieth*, but Washington received crowns of glory. *

* I could not mention in my discourse, how Washington informed the unadvisable general of the Indian mode of fighting, and that they were not cowards, as some Europeans were ready to suppose, and wished and begged to be permitted to go before with some rangers to scout the woods and guard against a surprise. This same strange commander at the head of 1400 men, suffered himself to be surprised and destroyed by about 400, chiefly Indians.

FINALLY this French war came to a happy termination, greatly to the advantage of Great Britain, the comfort of America, and the honor of both. And our youthful hero retired with dignity, and wreathed with laurels, to the silent walks of private life.

Soon after these important events, the British government advanced doctrines and enacted laws, which struck death into our chartered rights, our colonial privileges, and just and long enjoyed liberties.

The first instance of alarm was the ever memorable *Stamp Act*. This enkindled a flame of righteous, and universal opposition in America against the parent country. Washington soon appeared among other high characters, as a distinguished opponent to these unconstitutional measures.—After a short struggle, by the firm, united and determinate fortitude of the colonies, the offensive act was repealed.—Then the storm ceased and calmness and tranquility were restored. But this repeal was accompanied, with a horrid declaration, “ That they had a right to bind (or tax) the colonies in all cases, whatsoever.” Which doctrine, if put in practice, must have proved the extinguisher of every spark of liberty in this country. It was the fixed determination of the Britons to reduce it to practice in some form or other. Hence presently came forward the fatal revenue acts. These rekindled the flame which blazed for some years ; but by non-importation agreements, by remonstrances, and the determinate conduct of America, the all-grasping parliament, was again forced to retreat, leaving only a duty upon tea. But we would import no teas from them, and while they kept them in their own island, the flame of dissention did not burst forth into extreme violence. Yet, when they were resolved to open the way for the taxation of America, and by an artful and circuitous route, thro’ their East India company, would absolutely force their teas upon us ; We as absolutely and with indignity rejected

them. Their pride was then wrought up to almost intemperate fury, and nothing proceeded from them, but the demolition of charters, suspension acts, port bills, fishery bills, &c. In this mighty contest, before the shedding of blood, we find our beloved Washington making a leading and conspicuous figure, in committees, conventions and congresses. At last in the madness of their rage, they plunged the sword into our bowels, determined to have our lives, or property, or both. Then our country was compelled to raise armies in their own defence, and to repel force by force. Immediately the eyes of congress were fixed on Washington, and he was duly appointed *commander in chief*.

As Moses with timidity and reluctance obeyed the divine decree, when he was ordered by heaven to go and put himself at the head of the chosen tribes, and deliver them from the fangs of a cruel tyrant, from bondage and slavery, lead them to liberty, and conduct them to the promised land: so General Washington, when the high appointment was announced to him by the voice of Providence and the voice of his country, for the deliverance of these American tribes, with what struggles in his breast, with what fear and hesitation did he submit to the solemn undertaking? — When Moses once assumed the charge, he never murmured under all his burdens, toils and adverse trials, till he had accomplished all that God intended by him: so, our American Moses, when once he had undertook the arduous task, we never find him murmuring or threatening to resign, even in the worst of times, or in the darkest and most perplexing seasons of adversity. He steadfastly persevered to the last, till he completely finished all the work requested of him by his country; till he had fully established for them their glorious **INDEPENDENCE**, and precious **LIBERTIES**.

Moses accomplished the emancipation of more than two millions of people, and led them to exalted freedom and the glories

of independence. Our hero accomplished the emancipation of more than three millions of people and perfectly introduced them to the highest liberties, civil and sacred, and endowed them with privileges and advantages altogether incalculable.

We do not read that Moses received any pecuniary reward from his people for all his services ; so, our great leader and deliverer would accept no compensation for all his mighty labors.

Moses was the greatest and most successful general in remote antiquity ; so Washington has been the most eminent, the most prosperous, and the most honored general in modern times.*

We must not enter into the wonderful conduct of our illustrious general during an eight years war.† To retail his sufferings, his manouvres, his stratagems, his sleepless nights and anxious days ; his circumventing, out-generalizing, worrying and mortifying his enemies, would far exceed the limits of a contracted discourse.—One thing only ought not to pass unobserved, that whensoever he was foiled by the adversary, his defeats escaped

* *He was not only the wonder of his own country, but the admiration of the world. His fame encircled the globe. Especially in Europe, his name was extolled by kings, emperors and the greatest generals. The late king of Prussia, Frederick III, it is said, presented him an elegant sword, accompanied with this grand compliment, " From the ablest general in Europe, to the greatest general in the world."*

† *Let it be here observed, what a young, raw, undisciplined people Gen. Washington had to oppose to the mighty power and vengeance of Britain. His country was destitute of every article of military furniture, of magazines, arms, ammunition and money. There was scarcely a man in America, that understood the detail of, or how to provide for an army. The fact was, Washington, unacquainted as he was with military routine, by his natural powers, and amazing appli-*

censure, and even by the shades of adversity, he obtained acquisitions to his fame.*

BEHOLD the days, the transporting days, of sweet and blissful peace, after an awful and tremendous conflict, arose and beamed upon this favored land ; a land, like Canaan of old, in which the SUPREME delighted. Contemplate the great and honored warrior with raptures of pleasure sheathing his sword, bidding a final adieu to war, and in tearful floods of love, gratitude and friendship, taking a last leave of his beloved officers and fellow-soldiers.†

cation and diligence, superintended the whole business, from the drill-serjeant to the highest officer. He was for a long time, in a leading measure, quarter-master, commissary, waggon-master, &c. and every thing, and accountable for all.—There is no describing the greatness of this man.—Bring forward Themistocles, Epimanondas, and all the heroes of free governments, their exploits can scarcely form spots in his unclouded SUN.

*Time would not admit in a narrow discourse, of further consideration of this remarkable man, but I ought to have mentioned the last honor conferred upon him by his country, and which he condescended to accept. When Congress deemed it expedient, from the state of some of our foreign relations, to raise an army for the security and defence of this country, he was appointed (and surely no person so proper) Lieut. General of all the forces that should be raised in the United States.—His acceptance of this commission, has been viewed by many as one of the most disinterested traits of his amor patriæ or patriotism. He had been chief commander of all the armies of America for eight years ; he had been President for eight years, and of consequence Commander in chief of all the forces by land and sea ; for him to stoop to this inferior appointment is an instance of such strange and disinterested patriotism the world never before saw. It could not be fame, or any other motive inducing him hereto, but the pure and exalted love of his country.

† The moment was full of the most feeling passion in this farewell

ATTEND him now to Congress, and there returning his commission to the hands from which he received it, with an elated mind, and with the most tender, delicate, and pathetic speech. The scene was full of weeping joy, and heartfelt sorrowful gladness. Behold the Congress, the venerable representative sages of our country, all basked in tears on the happy occasion.*

It took place in the city of New-York. The officers being previously assembled for this purpose, their general and father addressed them in these words, "With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish, that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy, as your former ones have been honorable." The officers came up to him one after another, and with reciprocal showers of tears, like children embracing a tender father, bid him an affectionate farewell.

* His speech was in the following words :

"Mr. President,

"The great events on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I have now the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country."

"Happy in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States of becoming a respectable nation, I resign with satisfaction the appointment I accepted with diffidence: a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superceded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme power of the union, and the patronage of heaven."

"The successful termination of the war has verified the most genuine expectations, and my gratitude for the interposition of Provi-

HERE the illustrious man, the patriot, and citizen shone forth in a greater effulgence of glory than he had ever done in the fields of his most brilliant victories. He was here more glorious than he was in that day, that great day, in which he triumphed over Lord Cornwallis and the whole British army.

WE now leave the Cincinnati of the age returning in joyful pleasure to the peaceful walks of Mount Vernon, there to cultivate again his farm, and all the sweet charities of domestic bliss:

*"dense, and the assistance I have received from my countrymen, in-
"creases with every review of the momentous contest."*

*"While I repeat my obligations to the army in general, I should
"do injustice to my own feelings, not to acknowledge in this place,
"the peculiar services, and distinguishing merits of the persons, who
"have been attached to my person during the war. It was impossible
"the choice of confidential officers, to compose my family, should have
"been more fortunate. Permit me, sir, to recommend in particular
"those who have continued in the service, to the present moment, as
"worthy of the favorable notice and patronage of Congress."*

*"I consider it as an indispensable duty to close this solemn act of my
"official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to the
"protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence
"of them to His Holy Keeping."*

*"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great
"theatre of action; and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august
"body, under whose orders I have long acted, I here offer my Com-
"mission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life."*

Allow me here to make a quotation from Dr. Ramsey, after the President had returned his answer to Gen. Washington's speech.—
"The great scenes that crowded in upon the imagination of the Gen-

THIS country soon felt to the centre, that the federal compact, which aided us through the war, was absolutely incapable of securing happiness to us in times of tranquility. State was taking the advantage of State, and all things were rapidly hurrying to discord and ruin. In this dreadful conjuncture of affairs, it was happily proposed that a convention should be called, to alter and amend that compact, or frame a new constitution. The convention of our wise men assembled; among whom Washington appears, compelled again by the suffrages of his State to forsake his delightful retirement, and to enter upon a new scene for the trial of his mental abilities; to consider of all governments in the world, which was the best; and to form a civil constitution for these United States most promotive of their happiness.

He is the man immediately exalted to the chair of this grand convention. This council was called upon the most extraordinary business, and blessed with the most extraordinary success, while all America stood, in awful suspense, listening and waiting for their decisions. Such a civil body upon such great concerns had never assembled in our world from the creation of man, and perhaps, all circumstances taken into consideration, there never will be such another.—Here Washington, amidst his great compeers, acquired honor and applause in a new line; for his profound wisdom, his extensive and various knowledge, his ast ideas, his consummate prudence, and his immense powers of accommodation.

THE new constitution was framed, published, and adopted.—

*“eral, and of the President, so affected them both, that they almost lost
 “the power of utterance. The mingled emotions that agitated the
 “minds of the spectators, on seeing the Commander in chief of their
 “armies resigning all public employments, and his country acknowledg-
 “ing his services, and loading him with their blessings, were beyond
 “description.” See Ramsey’s history.*

BUT, who must be the personage, that would hazard himself, his reputation, and his all, to put this strange, this novel, and untried political machine into operation?—Washington is the man called upon by the universal and unanimous voice of the nation, to risk all his hard and well earned fame, and make the critical and dangerous experiment.

FOR the good of his country, which he always had at heart above all sublunary things, with struggles and perplexing difficulties in his own mind, and with shedding many tears, he nobly abandons personal ease and domestic felicity, and bravely ventures to accept the helm of government, and ascend that thorny seat, the Presidential Chair.

HERE his great abilities, beyond the hope of his constituents, enabled him to acquit himself as usual, to the acquisition of new fame, and more accumulated honor; and to the shedding down peace, prosperity, riches, glory and innumerable blessings upon his beloved country. He served in this exalted station, he laboriously served, like a second season of war, another eight long years, till he saw the government established, and promising a permanent duration; then he breathed for rest, like the weary labourer for the evening shade. He fervently requested his dear country not to elect him again to the dignity of the Presidency, but to suffer him to retire to his delightful solitude, as he found the declension of life approaching, and his setting sun fast hastening to the horizon.—His desire was honorably, though reluctantly gratified. *

* A person of eminence in England, observed to an American gentleman in office there, on the report that President Washington intended to decline standing as a candidate at the next election; "That such a thing was impossible; he could not give up such honors." Upon the American's saying, by the letters he had received from home, he had no doubt but that would be the case; the English gentleman then re-

Now comes on the most uncommon, interesting, and indescribable scene that probably ever took place under the sun.—The father of his country, the long tried, venerable and reverend father taking his last leave, bidding a final farewell, and delivering his *dying* speech to the dear sons, the beloved children of his country. This subject is too refined, too passionate, and sublime for me to touch. I refer you to the wonderful address itself, which will bye and bye be repeated to you. Your hearts *must* be of adamant and steel, if the big tears do not roll down the *face*, while it is pronounced. *

BUT, to what have I been persuading your attention?—To the deeds—to the life of a mortal or immortal man?—Alas! mortality is inscribed upon all things in this nether world. And man, however great, eminent, distinguished, or useful, must depart hence and be here no more. This is the last trait in every human character, *he died*. “So Moses, the servant of the Lord died.” Moses, that favorite of heaven, the greatest general, legislator and statesman, the most useful friend to, and the father of his nation, died.—So, Washington, the famed warrior, the mighty soldier, the illustrious magistrate, the great father of this American nation, the father, under God, of our independence, liberties, privileges, flourishing commerce and prosperity, is—how can I utter the word?—*died*.—“How are the mighty fallen?—How are the mighty fallen?”—His great soul has burst the bands of mortality, disencumbered itself of this clay tabernacle, and winged its way into the world of spirits; and every American cries—“My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!”—“The Lord ac-

plied; “If such be the case, I will say, that if all the heroes, from the beginning of creation to the present day, were formed into one Pyramid, Washington would make the Apex of the whole.”

* See the Address at the end.

“ cepteth not the person of princes, nor regardeth the rich more
 “ than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands, and in a
 “ *moment they shall die.*”—Greatness, honor, and dignity cannot
 shield from death. The conqueror is conquered. And robes
 of state must give way to the shroud.—Admit here two lines of
 vast ideas from Dr. Young :

“ Death,—great proprietor of all ! 'tis thine
 “ To tread out empires, and to quench the stars.”

THE king of terrors cannot glut his insatiable maw with such
 another victim. Here we may take up the lamentation and say,
 “ All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of
 “ grass ; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth
 “ away.”—“ Lord, what is man ?”—What is the life even of
 superior men ? —“ It is a vapour, which appeareth for a little
 “ time, and then vanisheth.”—Let us be silent—the righteous
 God hath done it.

THE death of this exalted personage ought to lead us to devout
 reflections, and to a wise and christian improvement thereof ;
 that we, that our whole nation may be consoled under our sor-
 rows—not faint in the day of rebuke, but have our faith, our
 hope, our confidence strengthened in God, even in the living
 God.

THE first improvement we ought to make of this mournful
 providence is, to learn and practise the great duties of submission
 and resignation. Hath God, the just governor of the world,
 done it ?—How should our mourning souls reply, “ It is the
 “ Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.” Submission and
 resignation in unavoidable adversity are not only indispensable
 duties, but in the cultivation of them, there is much consolation.
 They apply balm to the wounded spirit, and shed abroad on the
 soul a sacred calmness, peace and tranquility. When in extreme

troubles, the heart can devoutly put up that petition taught us by our divine master, saying "Thy will be done." This happily quells the tumults of our thoughts, detaches our affections from the transitory objects of the world, and elevates our minds to things celestial and unchangeable. "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth, but woe unto him that striveth with his Maker." We are extremely prone from the frailty of our nature, to murmur, repine, revolt against heaven, and indulge hard, unreasonable and unbecoming thoughts of a wise superintending providence. These things exhibit the selfishness and pride of our hearts, and that we would wish the Almighty under our controul, and that we were exalted above the character of dependent creatures. We should instantly expel them from our minds, and with the high priest of God in ancient times, be silent under the chastenings of heaven; "Aaron held his peace." Or imbibe the spirit of mourning Job, and say, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Christian resignation excludes despondency.—That God who raised up a Washington, and furnished him with all those important and brilliant qualifications; rendered him such a blessing to mankind, and made him the father and saviour of his country, can and will raise up another, whenever he shall deem it expedient for the good of the world, and similar circumstances require it.

A second improvement, we and our land should make of this calamitous event, which has caused us to consecrate this day to mourning and sorrow is, to render gratitude to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, that he enriched this country with his invaluable life so long. We should offer upon this solemnity to indulgent and merciful heaven, souls full, running over, and pressed down, of grateful sentiments. I too well know it is incident to human nature, the longer we have possessed a precious blessing, and the more our hearts are attached to it, when the unhappy hour of its removal comes, the more we are prone to

murmur and complain. Even blessings, which in the enjoyment we cared but little for, when taken away, our feelings are apt to rise in resentment. These things, with a thousand others exhibit to view the exceeding great depth, subtle and tortuous nature of the moral corruption in the children of men. Alas! let a favorite object depart, and be everlastingly separated from us, how is gratitude, christian gratitude, for its long continuance, thrown into a very distant back ground.—You may think it strange I should preach gratitude upon this melancholy day; but were I preaching to his nearest connections, to the wife of his bosom overwhelmed in sorrow, and to all his tender domestics, pouring out their weeping souls around his hearse, I would preach to them, as a part of their duty, gratitude and thanksgiving as a principal source, from whence flow the refreshing streams of succor and consolation. Sure I am, if ever any people on earth had causes of gratitude, *they* stand at the head of the column of obligations. They have enjoyed a distinguished blessing for many years; they are enveloped in blessings now, and they have the afflicted hearts of a great nation condoling with them, and all the floods of tears flowing down the face of Columbia, are flowing to their honor.

His exit has taken place at the most proper time and in the fittest manner. The God of all the earth is always doing that which is right.

WHAT if he had died at some forlorn period of our war with Britain?—Speaking after the manner of men, we would now have been groaning and wreathing under the mortifying yoke, which his life as the principal instrument under heaven has released us from.—What if he had died just at the adoption of our new constitution, when some states received it not, and multitudes in the adopting states opposed it?—All things in probability would have rushed into confusion, and this country been involved in all the horrors of domestic war.—State stood ready to draw

Avord against state.—And nothing suspended or prevented the direful event, but deliberations upon a new constitution, and the seasonable adoption of the same. Had Washington been removed at this critical, doubtful and all-important time, let every rational mind conjecture the train of incalculable evils, which would have started into tremendous existence.

He died at the very moment that was proper, and in the manner that was infinitely fit, by a few hours sickness, * therefore let the citizens of America raise their hearts in gratitude and praise to God, the sovereign God, who doth according to his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of this lower world; that he granted to us, his important, useful and invaluable life so long, and that he transmitted him down to the tomb, richly adorned with his unfaded laurels, and with all his unstained honors, and untarnished glories. †

* *Allow here an abstract of his last illness, as published by his physicians, Dr. Craik and Dr. Dick. "Sometime in the night of Friday (December 13th.) Gen. Washington was attacked with an inflammatory affection in the upper part of the Windpipe. The disease commenced with a violent ague, which was soon succeeded by a fever, and a quick and laborious respiration. Plentiful bleedings four times were used, a blister applied to the throat, calomel and repeated doses of emetic tartar were given, vapours of vinegar and water were frequently inhaled; blisters were applied to the extremities, together with a cataplasim of bran and vinegar to the throat." All these applications could neither mitigate or stay the disease. "At half after eleven on Saturday night, retaining the full possession of his intellects, he expired without a struggle."*

† *A brief account of his funeral, I presume will not be unacceptable. "On Wednesday, December 18th, the mortal part of Washington the great,—the father of his country and the friend of man, was consigned to the tomb, with solemn honors and funeral pomp."*

A MULTITUDE of christian improving thoughts croud upon my mind, of which, I will only detain your attention to one, and abruptly leave a subject entirely inexhaustible.

*“ On the ornament at the head of the Coffin was inscribed, Surge
“ ad Judicium,—about the middle of the Coffin, Gloria Deo, and
“ on the silver plate,”*

GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON,

DEPARTED THIS LIFE ON THE 14th OF DEC.

1799, Æt. 68.”

*“ Between three and four o'clock, at the sound of artillery from a
“ vessel in the river firing minute guns, the corpse was moved, a band
“ of music with mournful melody, melted the soul into all the tender-
“ ness of woe.”*

*“ The procession was formed, and moved on in the following order :
“ Cavalry, Infantry, Guard with arms reversed. Then music and the
“ clergy. Next was the General's horse, with his saddle, holsters and
“ pistols. Then the corpse, attended by six pall-bearers, who were colonels,
“ viz. Little, Payne, Marshall, Ramsay, Gilpin and Simmes. The
“ mourners then followed, next the masonic brethren, and after them
“ the citizens.”*

*“ When the procession had arrived at the bottom of the elevated lawn
“ on the banks of the Potomac, where the family vault is placed, the
“ Cavalry halted,—the Infantry marched toward the mount, and
“ formed their lines.—The Clergy, the Masonic brothers, and the
“ citizens descended to the vault, and the funeral service of the church
“ was performed.”*

*“ The firing was repeated from the vessel in the river, and the
“ sound echoed from the hills around.—Three general discharges by the
“ infantry, the cavalry and eleven pieces of artillery, which lined the
“ banks of the Potomac back of the vault, paid the last tribute to the
“ commander in chief of the armies of the United States, and to the
“ venerable departed Hero.”*

THE last improvement, I shall mention is this,—That as men and christians, it behoves us to maintain an unwavering immovable confidence, and firm trust in that God, who never dies ;—in his wisdom, righteousness, goodness, and all his adorable perfections ;—and in the certain rectitude, supreme equity, and immutable excellency of his government.

How will this faith console the grieving heart, heal the wounded spirit, and dissipate more than half its sorrows ?—It will wipe the big tear from the eye, bind up the broken bone, illumine the gloom of the sad countenance, and cause the soul of mourning to rejoice.

HAS God, the infinitely wise and infinitely good God, taken from us our Moses ; let us believe, trust and hope in him, as becometh christians, and he will not only raise up a Joshua, to maintain our independance, guard our privileges, and support our liberties ; but, if as a nation we cultivate virtue and practise righteousness, he will raise up a succession of Joshuas, to be our leaders, guardians and defenders, while suns and moons shall endure.

LET our mourning hearts be now filled with faith and confidence in God, the immortal God, and unite, “ And sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the lamb, saying, great and marvelous are thy works, Lord, God, Almighty ; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints.”

“ Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen”——and Amen.



A D D R E S S
OF
T H E P R E S I D E N T,
TO
T H E P E O P L E
OF
T H E U N I T E D S T A T E S.



Friends and Fellow-Citizens,

THE period for a new election of a Citizen, to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person, who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you at the same time to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken, without a strict regard to

all the considerations appertaining to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that in withdrawing the tender of service which silence in my situation will imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest; no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

THE acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been an uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives, which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I REJOICE, that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety: and am persuaded whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove of my determination to retire.

THE impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have with good intentions contributed towards the organization and administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the out-set, of the infe-

riority of any qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself: and every day the encreasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country, for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the stedfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness, unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead amidst appearances sometimes dubious—vicissitudes of fortune oftendiscouraging—in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism—the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected—Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing wishes, that heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its benificence: that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual—that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained—that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue—that in fine, the happiness of the people of these states, under the auspices of liberty,

may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection and the adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

HERE, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments, which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former, and not dissimilar occasion.

INTERWOVEN as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

THE unity of Government, which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquility at home; your peace abroad; of your safety, of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense

value of your national Union, to your collective and individual happiness ; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual and immoveable attachment to it ; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity, watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety ; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned ; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together ; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils, and joint efforts of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole.

THE *North*, in an unrestrained intercourse with the *South*, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprize and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *South* in the same intercourse, benefitting by the agency of the *North*, sees its agriculture grow and its com-

merce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *North*, it finds its particular navigation invigorated—and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The *East*, in like intercourse with the *West*, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The *West* derives from the *East* supplies requisite to its growth and comfort—and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as *one nation*. Any other tenure by which the *West* can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power must be intrinsically precarious.

WHILE then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in Union, all the parties combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts, greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and what is of inestimable value they must derive from Union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves which so frequently afflict neighboring countries, not tied together by the same government; which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments and intrigues, would stimulate and embitter. Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty: In this

sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

THESE considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorised to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. 'Tis well worth a fair and full experiment.—With such powerful and obvious motives to Union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those, who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

IN contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as a matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterising parties by *Geographical* discriminations—*Northern* and *Southern*—*Atlantic* and *Western*, whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations: they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head: they have seen, in the negotiation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and the universal satisfaction at that event, throughout the United

States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government, and in the Atlantic States, unfriendly to their interests in regard to the MISSISSIPPI: they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them every thing they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their Brethren, and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your union, a government for the whole is indispensable—No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true Liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their Constitutions of Government—But the Constitution which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

ALL obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, controul, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force, to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a small, but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans, digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests.

HOWEVER combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men, will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

TOWARDS the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite not only that you speedily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles however specious the pretexts.—One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments, as of other human institutions—that experience is the surest standard, by which to test the real tendency of the ex-

isting constitution of a country—that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion ; and remember, especially that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty, is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you, the danger of parties, in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

THIS spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controuled, or repressed ; but in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

THE alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism.—But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism.—The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual ; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this dispo-

sition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of Public Liberty.

WITHOUT looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise People to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the Public Councils and enfeeble the Public Administration. It agitates the Community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

THERE is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the Government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of Liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in Governments of a Monarchical cast, Patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in Governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming it should consume.

It is important likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country, should inspire caution, in those intrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective consti-

tutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and Proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power; by dividing and distributing it into different depositaries, and constituting each the Guardian of the Public Weal against invasions by the others has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern: some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If in the opinion of the People, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers, be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the constitution designates.—But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed.—The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil, any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Or all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports.—In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens.—The mere Politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them.—A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without

religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure ; reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles.

'Tis substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric ?

PROMOTE then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge.—In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible ; avoiding occasions of expence by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger, frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it ; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shutting occasions of expence, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear.—The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate.—To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be Revenue ; that to have Revenue there must be Taxes ; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant ; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always

a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining Revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

OBSERVE good faith and justice towards all Nations, cultivate peace and harmony with all ; Religion and Morality enjoin this conduct ; and can it be that good policy does no equally enjoin it ? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and at no distant period a great Nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it ? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a Nation with its Virtue ? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas ! is it rendered impossible by its vices ?

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate, antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others should be excluded : and that in place of them just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation, which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another, disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur.

HENCE frequent collusions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody contests. The Nation, prompted by ill will and resentment,

sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject ; at other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes, perhaps, the liberty of Nations has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in case, where no real common interests exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation, in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others which is apt doubly to injure the Nation making the concessions : by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained ; and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld :—And it gives to ambitious, corrupted or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite Nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity ; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public Councils ! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards

a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.—Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake ; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of Republican Government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial ; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious ; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

THE great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

EUROPE has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.

OUR detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance ; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality, we may at any time

resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected ; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation ; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

WHY forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation ? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground ? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humour or caprice ?

'TIS our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances, with any portion of the foreign world ; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it ; for let me not be understood as capable of patronising infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

TAKING care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

HARMONY, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand ; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences ; consulting the natural course of things ; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing ; establishing, with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them ; conventional rules of intercourse, the best that

present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate ; constantly keeping in view, that 'tis folly in one nation to look for disinterested favours from another ; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character ; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from nation to nation. 'Tis an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish—that they will controul the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations : But if I may even flatter myself, that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good ; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigues, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism ; this hope will be a full recompence for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d of April 1793, is the index to my plan——

Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me ; uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

AFTER deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest, to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance and firmness.

THE considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the Belligerent Powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

THE duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

THE inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption, to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

THOUGH in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error : I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have com-

mitted many errors. Whatever they may be I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence ; and that after forty five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

RELYING on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations ; I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, and trust, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers.

G. WASHINGTON.

UNITED STATES, Sept. 17, 1796.