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THE
EVANGELICAL
WITNESS.

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EDITED BY
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Having, therefore, obtained help of God, I continue until
this day witnessing both to small and great, saying none other
things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say.
Acts, xxvi. 22.

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INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

The Creator of the worlds besides furnishing to man an inhabitant of this globe, a variety of sources of enjoyment from without, in the natural constitution of things, has provided him with faculties of an inventive nature suited greatly to enlarge these sources. This fact is of itself sufficient to demonstrate that such enjoyments are not in themselves sinful; they had their origin in the primitive constitution of God; they belonged to man in his state of innocency. The pleasure therefore to be derived from the beauty of colours, or from their fragrance, from the natural taste of the palate, or from melodious sounds, can have nothing in itself intrinsically wrong. The evil is adventitious, it is consequent on the fall of man, and consists in the misapplication or abuse of these external and internal sources of happiness to an end forbidden, or not commanded—by the law of God. And is thence converted not to a means of promoting the actual felicity of man:

In order to place before our readers the goodness of Almighty God to our land, we publish the following discourse delivered on the 4th of July. So many and so great blessings bestowed upon a people so sinful, give to us a strong demonstration of the long suffering and tender mercy of the God who rules "in the armies of heaven and among the children of men."

"O that men to Lord would give
Praise for his goodness then,
And for his works of wonder done
Unto the sons of men." *David's Psalms.*

§SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT WALDEN,
JULY 4, 1825.

This day, brethren, we commence the first American Jubilee. You have heard much and read much in the public journals of the approach of this jubilee, an appellation which it has received in allusion to an institution which God gave to the people of Israel in the days of old. That you may have this institution and the propriety of the allusion more distinctly before you, I read to you a part of the 25th chapter of the book of Leviticus. [Here a part of that chapter was read.] Every seventh year, among the Jews, was to be kept as a Sabbath, or sacred rest unto the Lord. When seven of these sabbatical years had been kept, the following, or 50th year, was also to be observed as a holy rest, and was called the year of Jubilee, because its arrival was announced by the sound of a trumpet, called a jubilee trumpet.

Forty-nine years ago, the 4th of July was the first day of our national existence, and this day we begin the 50th year of our age. But the allusion to this divine insti-

tution of the peculiar people of God, suggests several considerations of much higher interest to us, than the mere number of years. To some of these, you will permit me to direct your attention.

1st. *Liberty*.—In the first month of the year of jubilee, every Israelite who had become poor, and had been reduced to bondage, was emancipated and restored to liberty. To this unhappy class of society the notes of the jubilee trumpet conveyed the joyful tidings of their disenthralment. They had not then, in any nation, the facilities of the present times for communicating intelligence. Paper was not then invented, and they had no printing presses. But an event like that of the arrival of the year of liberty was made known throughout the land with a rapidity outstripping our modern vehicles of intelligence. A trumpet was sounded on the sacred hill of Zion—its notes were taken up by others on the summits of the surrounding mountains, and the cheering sounds were re-echoed from every hill and along every vale of Judea, conveying joy and gladness to the hearts of the afflicted children of bondage. What a benevolent institution of the divine legislator!

That liberty which is dear to every human being, our fathers loved and sought through much peril, and it was bestowed on them, by the God of Heaven. Let us with grateful emotions commemorate his goodness. I have always thought that the finger of God was remarkably manifest in the origin and causes of our national emancipation. There are but two ways, in which men are politically governed: either the few govern the many under pretence of divine right, or the many govern themselves on the principle of representa-

tion. The former is always the government of force, the latter voluntary submission to the representatives of the people. Let the few kings and nobles, who claim a divine right to govern the nations, contrary to their will, shew their charter, let them exhibit their commission signed by the high authority of heaven. In vain shall it be sought for in the archives of the kingdoms. Yet for many centuries the greater part of the world has been governed on this principle, and long did the people groan, under oppression, hardly daring to call in question the right of their rulers to oppress them. The doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance was every where avowed and taught. It was thought that every attempt of the many to resist the tyranny of the few, was made under pain of damnation. When such had been for ages the fundamental principle of the constitutions of the nations, (if constitutions they might be called) and such apparently the fixed tenor of public sentiment, it is certainly a subject of astonishment that, forty nine years ago, our fathers, few in number, not more than two and a half millions, poor and spread over a vast territory should dare to call in question, at every hazard the established doctrine of all the governments in the world. What makes the finger of Providence still more visible, is that the causes did not seem equal to the effects, which where produced. The tax which the British crown attempted to impose, was comparatively small in amount, and to be raised from what was considered a mere luxury. But it involved the principle, that rulers have the right to levy taxes and perform other acts of government, though not elected to rule by the suffrage of the people that they govern; of their

own right, and not as the representatives of the governed. Our fathers had learned in the school of religion from their reforming ancestors, and they applied in the civil government, the doctrine of representation.— There, undoubtedly was the germ of the revolutionary principle, which now shakes the nations; but that it should have spread so extensively and evolved itself so powerfully may well fill us this day with gratitude and astonishment. In maintaining this principle our ancestors attacked the very basis of all the governments of the old world; and that in the face of a hostile array sufficient to make the world tremble and the hearts of men to quake with fear. Let us remember too that severe oppression was not felt in the colonies, and that great nations have for centuries endured incomparably more, without even the shew of resistance, and I had almost said without murmuring. We were not held in bondage, as a conquered people. Much had even been done for us. This we may fairly acknowledge; for we are not assembled to day for the purpose of provoking hostile passions, or to awake slumbering strife against our fellow creatures, or strife against any thing but oppression and evil. The armies and the navies of Britain had protected our colonies in infancy, and from her we had derived our literature, arts and agriculture. But in the progressive history of nations, the time fixed by heaven's high decree, had arrived, for testing the doctrine of representative government, on a liberal basis. Among a weak people, thinly spread over the forests of the west, to shew that it was of God and not of man, the first great effort was made and succeeded. The eyes of the whole civilized world were

tarned to the west, to observe the contest, watch its progress, and see with wonder the liberty of the human species fixed, in a free, representative government. Let us improve with gratitude the blessing; for it is we who enjoy it. After all, it is painful to reflect that there are great multitudes of human beings in our country, to whom the notes of this jubilee are not grateful and to whom they announce no tidings of emancipation. In heavy bondage, they groan and find no deliverance. Their cries of sorrow ascend this day to heaven. Do not I hear, as they come on the winds of the south, their deep groans mingling with the songs of the national jubilee? but I turn from this theme and withdraw your attention from this painful subject, this deep stain on the national escutcheon, which ages will not wash away.

2. The trumpet of jubilee, was a trumpet of peace, which did not summon the people to battle. Our institutions are essentially peaceful in their character, and on their representative principle all nations will be governed when millennial peace shall bless the nations. It did not often fall to the lot of Israel to celebrate their year of liberty in a state of peace with all surrounding nations, as we do this day. However much the thrones of iniquity in the old world may envy our liberty, and wish its destruction, they do not, and perhaps I may add, they dare not, attack us. All nations are seeking our friendship. We have within ourselves twenty-four commonwealths, all in peace with one another, and moving harmoniously in their respective orbits. For this eminent blessing we cannot be sufficiently grateful. When, in the language of the scriptures, any

eminent good is pourtrayed, we often have the imagery drawn from peaceful scenes. "Thy peace should have been as broad rivers." The blessed state of the world during the millenium is described as peaceful. "He shall maintain abundant peace." "The nations shall learn war no more." What a contrast does our land present, to the state in which it was forty-nine years ago! Then powerful and well appointed navies, which had been victorious in every sea, to which the ocean and its islands were subject, hovered on our coasts, or occupied our harbours and rivers, menancing with destruction our western borders. Many of our villages were smoking in ruins, our large cities were seized by the enemy, and much of our soil trodden by the foot of an exulting foe. Savage bands issued from our woods, in the darkness of midnight, to bathe the tomahawk and the scalping knife in the blood of their victims, scarcely awaked from sleep, and to illuminate the darkness of the night by the blaze of their dwellings. Many a widow then bathed in tears her children, made orphans by the sword of the enemy. These days of sorrow have passed away, and we are called upon to be thankful for peace, with its numerous train of blessings.

3. Plenty. Though, among the Israelites, the forty-ninth year was sabbatical, in which the land was not cultivated, yet so great was the plenty, that the people enjoyed abundance, and had stores laid up for their supply during the sabbatical year of jubilee, without any addition to them by the labours of the husbandman. Half a century ago how great was our poverty and how remote the prospect of relief! Now, in the goodness of God, to a sinful people, witness

what a change. Our territory is vast, extending from the Atlantic on the East, to the Pacific on the West, more than 3000 miles, and from the great lakes on the north, to the gulf of Mexico on the south, not less than 1800 miles. How ample is this territory compared with that of the ancient people of God, which was no more than one hundred and fifty miles from north to south, and seventy-five miles from east to west ! I do not doubt that we could select, in our country, more than one spot, of equal extent, that would rival it in fertility. We have too a fair prospect that those wide domains will all, ere long, be peopled. Forty-nine years ago, our population, amounted to no more than 2,500,000, now it cannot fall much short of 11,000,000, an increase unexampled in the history of nations. A progress in population so extraordinary, is a decisive proof that the country abounds with all other earthly blessings. Allow me to allude to a fact in the history of another nation which demonstrates that the growth of ours, in numbers, is owing to the liberal and happy character of our institutions. By a census of Russia, in 1822, it was ascertained that she added to her population that year, only 500,000. As the population of that great empire is 50,000,000, at the rate of increase for that year it will require 100 years to double her present numbers, while ours is doubled in less than 25 years. Russia, like ourselves, has an extensive unpeopled territory and vast forests. But the government is despotic. The great mass of her people are serfs, slaves attached to the soil, who labour for haughty lords, and are bought and sold with the soil like cattle. There is little encouragement to marriages or industry, where the

proceeds of the labours of the poor are wrested from them by rapacious masters. This must account for her comparatively slow increase; for the southern parts of her empire are nearly on the same latitudes with those parts of the United States, where ours is the greatest.

So great and rapid a progress as we make in every branch of national wealth, has never before been realized in the history of man. It is true that a large class of our farmers, experience at present, very considerable difficulties; which however do not arise from the *want* of food, raiment, or other necessaries, or even luxuries of life, but from their *superabundance*. Our agricultural resources are multiplying every year, and every season is more exuberant. Large and small cattle are annually becoming more numerous and productive. You have only to cast your eyes over the surrounding agricultural prospect, and see the neighbouring hills and vales white with corn and flocks of sheep, tokens of the divine munificence. Manufactories and all the other arts that adorn and meliorate the temporal condition of man, improve daily and flourish. Commerce makes the products of the soil and of the arts of all nations ours, while our ports are visited by the merchantmen of all trading kingdoms. Internal improvements in roads, canals, the facilities of travelling, and transportation of articles of merchandise, advance with a pace that surprizes ourselves and almost exceeds the belief of foreign nations. New energies of man seem to develop themselves. Primary schools and scientific institutions are every year amplifying the means of intellectual improvement: while Bible so-

cieties and other associations of a religious or charitable character are not neglected. You all know, from your own observation, that this picture is not overdrawn, but that, on the other hand, it is far from equaling the reality. Was there ever a people more highly favoured, or laid under greater obligations of national and personal gratitude to the Giver of all good? What nation ever celebrated a jubilee with more cause of joy and thanksgiving?

4. The benevolent example set by the people of Israel on their year of jubilee and their national prosperity, were calculated to produce a good effect upon neighbouring nations. The influence of our republican institutions and the developement of our resources and comforts have produced and must long continue to produce powerful effects upon all civilized kingdoms. The notes of the American jubilee trumpet this day will be heard, even to the Ganges, and, while they roll over the hills and plains of Europe, will convey pleasure into the hearts of millions of oppressed men, animated by new and cheering hopes of emancipation, and sound terror in the proud palaces of their oppressors. Forty-nine years ago yesterday the whole of this great western world was subject to the dominion of the thrones of iniquity in Europe; now, the whole continent from our great lakes to Cape Horn is free; some islands too are independent, while the others are preparing to burst their chains. The South American colonies seem to have thought, until emboldened by our example, that any resistance made to their transatlantic oppressors, would have been made at the risk of eternal perdition, a doctrine which

they were no doubt taught by their priests. The good sense of the nations had approved our successful resistance long before the South Americans dared to follow our example, though the wrongs that they suffered were much greater than ours. They will long indeed feel the effects of their former oppression, and that of their forefathers; for though they have succeeded in gaining their independence, and though their colonies were one hundred years older than ours, yet they are probably one hundred years behind us in improvement. The colony of Virginia was founded 1607, that of New-York 1612, and that of Massachusetts 1620, while in 1504, Columbus left St. Domingo in possession of the Spaniards. It is only after 300 years, that the people of the Southern Continent have dared to become free. We already begin to see the fruits, in their public journals, their schools, colleges, Bible societies and other liberal institutions. What changes for the better may be expected by their first jubilee? Their example is now added to ours to stimulate the people of Europe to efforts for reclaiming their rights.

The eyes of the old world are on us, as a free and happy people, on our land as the asylum of the oppressed; and the great mass of the people wait only for a fit opportunity to seize the reins of government, by electing their own rulers. Every vessel from our shores, conveys from those who have migrated hither, letters to their friends who are left behind. Those letters are read by thousands in Scotland, England, Ireland, France, and Germany. Our journals transmit to Europe our state papers, the debates in our deliberative, and legislative bodies, the progressive improvements in agricul-

ture, arts and literature, and the comfort, wealth and increase of the great body of our people. To this cause, in fact, must be ascribed the efforts which are making by the people of Ireland to free themselves from bondage. A people who have been for ages oppressed, plundered and degraded by their more powerful neighbour. In time they will celebrate their jubilee. To our own revolution we can trace the origin of the late abortive efforts of Portugal, Spain, and Naples to introduce the principle of representation into the constitutions of their governments. But they attempted to make it harmonize with the ancient hereditary laws of Empire. The attempt was vain; for the principles which they endeavoured to unite in their civil institutions are essentially adverse. Heaven has decreed the demolition of the thrones of despotism, and all attempts to repair them can only hasten their destruction. In our land has been lighted the torch of freedom, which, in three campaigns, has conducted the gallant Greeks to victory. Less than three millions of people have there waged a successful warfare on more than twenty millions, while the ancient surrounding dynasties have been frowning on their cause. The arm of Heaven alone has restrained Russia, Austria and France from interfering to crush at once the nascent liberties of Greece as they have done for a time those of Portugal, Spain and Naples. May they still be restrained.

Our great continent seems to have been created and reserved to this age of the world, as a theatre on which divine providence might display to the whole earth the means of securing political rights on the only safe

foundation, a government by the representation of the people. That we should be the first of the nations to enjoy it, and that our example should produce effects so salutary upon other nations, should teach us our obligations to "him who rules the nations, seated on the throne of his holiness," and excite us to a cordial, grateful and speedy national subjection to "the King of kings and Lord of lords." May I not say, the Almighty hath not shewn such favour to any other nation?

5. Allow me from this portion of scripture to suggest one other and by far the most important topic for your meditation. The jubilee trumpet which proclaimed emancipation to the Israelitish bondman, was a type or symbol of the glorious redemption to be purchased for sinners by the death of Jesus Christ, and applied by the Holy Spirit. Deliverance from earthly bondage is a great blessing which men do not duly appreciate, but disenthralment from the servitude of sin and satan is an infinitively greater. We have all become poor by falling through sin from our original state of holiness, honour and dignity; our poverty is incomparably worse than that of the Israelite, who lost for a time his earthly inheritance. We are by nature in a state of slavery unutterably more wretched and debasing than that of the Israelite who was sold as a bondman, to one of his brethren. Sin has gained dominion over us, and we are naturally under a malediction, subjecting us to the most cruel bondage of the prince of darkness here, and consigning us to perpetual war in the world to come. When the pious Hebrew celebrated his jubilee, he looked forward to the appearance of the Saviour, for the accomplishment of his liberation from spiritual

bondage ; and when we celebrate ours, we should not allow the remembrance of his blessed appearance for our salvation to be banished from our thoughts. The trumpet sounded by a priest, proclaimed to Israel the year of jubilee, celestial hosts announced the joyful event, of which that was a symbol." And the angel said unto them, fear not : for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you ; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, glory to God in the highest : on earth peace, and good will towards men,"* This heavenly jubilee proclaims a liberty fraught with substantial and everlasting blessings. Its blessings do not pass away with a few revolving years, like those of political or personal, temporal freedom, which blooms for a moment, then fades, dies and disappears forever. Civilians tell us that the principles of decay and dissolution enter into the constitutions of all political constitutions. They shall certainly all perish, even those which during the approaching thousand years of holiness and peace, shall be established in righteousness, and subjected voluntarily to Messiah and his law. "They shall all wax old as doth a garment." On all the greatest and most splendid of all human associations, there shall, ere long, be inscribed *obit*, it hath passed away. Not so the commonwealth of Israel, and the liberty enjoyed by its citizens. They shall endure for evermore.

*Luke ii. 11, 14.

We trust, brethren, you will beware so to celebrate the jubilee of this day, as to demonstrate that you have not, that you seek not an interest in the holy disenthralment which a Saviour announces in the gospel, to the slaves of sin. You are aware that this is too common in the scenes of dissipation, often witnessed in our country on the celebration of this anniversary. It is painful to reflect, that in the criminal indulgence and revelry of this day, many seem to say to the King of nations, "we do not acknowledge that our national blessings are from thee, we will not have thee to reign over us." When will men cease to insult the majesty of heaven, and to despise the divine goodness? While we rejoice in our distinguished blessings, and enjoy as a people peculiar tokens of the divine favour, let us sedulously avoid accumulating the iniquity of the land, and so provoke the wrath of God to withdraw from us the abused demonstrations of his bounty. Few, if any of those who now hear, will witness on earth another of our national jubilees. Where will we be when the next jubilee trumpet shall sound? Over our bodies mingled with the dust in the silence of the tomb, its joyful notes shall pass unheard. The conflicts between earthly despotism and liberty shall not then affect us. The falling crash of the mightiest empires shall not awake us, and the acclamations of liberty triumphant shall pass by unheeded and unheard. These grave and solemn reflections should teach us to use our present blessings, as not abusing them, to seek speedily an everlasting interest in the liberty proclaimed by the gospel jubilee. After a few more revolutions in the kingdoms of the world, a trumpet shall sound,

summoning the quick and the dead to appear before the the judgment seat of the King of kings, and give an account of all the deeds done in the body. Let all now prepare, by seeking an interest in the Redeemer, for hearing without alarm that trumpet's dread sound. To the dead, who die in the Lord, it will be the jubilee of endless emancipation from slavery, sin and sorrow, and the commencement of the everlasting and "glorious liberty of the sons of God." O that, through the tender mercies of the most high, it may be so to us.

Amen.

We publish without hesitation the following extracts from a letter, sent us for publication by a gentleman occupying an important station in the American Bible society. We are glad to find statements tending to remove any shade that may hang over the pecuniary transactions of that institution. The article should have appeared in the last No. had it been received in time.

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

"New-York, July 12th, 1825.

"SIR—In the June number of your publication, which has just now been shown to me, and at the 285th page, I find an article headed the '9th Anniversary of the American Bible Society;' which I think calculated to produce a very incorrect impression on your readers.

"After some general notice of the proceedings of the Society, you make some calculations from an unofficial document in one of the newspapers of the day, which you complain leaves the public in the dark as to a sum of about \$11,000 of the receipts for the year, and which sum, you state must be, "the annual expense