
At a meeting of the trustees of the first Presbyterian congregation in Freehold, in the county of Monmouth, held on the sixteenth day of April, seventeen hundred and ninety,

Resolved,

T*HAT Doctor Henderson, the President of this board, wait on the Rev. Mr. Woodbull, and request a copy of the sermon which he delivered at the time of the late general thanksgiving, in order that it may be printed.*

A

S E R M O N,

F O R T H E

DAY OF PUBLIC THANKSGIVING,

A P P O I N T E D B Y

T H E P R E S I D E N T,

On ACCOUNT of the ESTABLISHMENT of the
NEW CONSTITUTION, &c.

NOVEMBER 26, 1789.

BY THE REV. JOHN WOODHULL, A. M.

Pastor of the first Presbyterian Church in Freehold.

The LORD reigneth, let the earth rejoice. Psal. xcvi. 1.

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M.DCC.XC.

1790

A
S E R M O N,
F O R T H E
DAY OF PUBLIC THANKSGIVING.

IS A I A H LXIII. 7.

*I will mention the loving kindnesses of the LORD, and
the praises of the LORD, according to all that the
LORD hath bestowed on us.*

TH E being and perfections, the providence and government of God, lie at the foundation of all true religion—of all real happiness—of our very being—and, of the universe in general. Take away these foundations, and what a yawning gulf do we hang over!—how soon would all shrink back into their native non-existence!—for an independent creature, is an absurdity.

As God is the author and preserver of the universe, so his providence, both general and particular, reigns over every part thereof.

His general providence is said to be, ‘that superintendency and influence by which he continues in being and vigour all those original laws of nature by which the structure of the universe in general, and the particular being of each individual, are upheld and continued throughout the several stages of their existence.’

He.

HE who formed the universe, and set the wheels of the vast machine in motion, hath not abandoned it to the direction of blind fortune, or fickle chance ; but, superintends the whole himself, without intermission : and can, with the utmost ease, give such a direction to its movements as to bless or punish an individual, a nation, a continent, or a world.

THIS doctrine of a general providence does, in some respects, include a particular one ; for it implies that the most inconsiderable plant, the meanest insect, and the most contemptible reptile, are under the perpetual guardianship and protection of God. According to this scheme, there is not a spire of grass, but vegetates and grows by a divine agency—not a flower in the garden or field, but what the hand of God paints—not a blossom, but what he opens. And, if we turn to divine revelation, and look through the sacred volume, we shall find it an history of God's particular providence ; as in general, it contains an account of his dealing with *particular* persons, churches, and nations : and teacheth, that his care and inspection extend to every object without exception—‘ that even the
‘ hairs of the head are numbered, and, that not a spar-
‘ row falleth to the ground, without the will of the hea-
‘ venly Father.’

WHILE we behold the divine agency in the spires of grass, and in the opening flowers, and acknowledge God's superintendency over the meanest insect ; we cannot exclude it from man, and the kingdoms of men ; but rather say, *here* is its proper empire, *here* it reigns in a more peculiar manner.

WITH respect to us in these United States, wise observers have, with grateful admiration, remarked a kind and powerful hand of providence, conducting us
from

from the feeble state of infancy and dependence, through darkness—through dangers—and through a long and bloody contest, to our present state of greatness and glory.

AND it is not only with pleasure, but even with exulting, I remind you, that, that great and good man, whose glories, like the sun, shine throughout the world, who led our armies to victory, and ourselves to empire; and now fills the first seat of government; hath ever stood among the foremost, in viewing the divine hand, and in ascribing the glory of all his and our successes, to its powerful interposition. And in addition to his example, he is now, by his authority, calling on us, and on all united America, to join with him *this day* in bowing before the LORD, with adoration and praise for his abundant goodness and mercy—and with ardent supplications for a continuance of them.

MY brethren, being invited by so bright an example, enforced by the highest earthly authority, and led by the cords of divine goodness, we cannot suffer all the rich mercies of God to pass unnoticed—but while thanks ascend from the grateful hearts of millions, *we* will join the praise—we will join our WASHINGTON, and the language of every heart shall be, ‘I will mention the loving kindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us.’

THE observation which naturally arises, both from the words of our text, and from our present circumstances, is—That we are under strong obligations as a people, to mention the loving kindnesses of the LORD, with grateful hearts—and with sincere desires, to make suitable returns therefor.

I. AND first, let us comply with the duty, by mentioning the loving kindneses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that he hath bestowed on us. Then—

II. SECONDLY, inquire, what are the suitable returns which we ought to make, for all that the LORD hath bestowed on us.

FIRST, let us, with grateful hearts, mention the loving kindneses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD—

HERE, I may address you in the admiring language of Elihu to Job—‘ Stand still, and see the wonderous ‘ works of God !’

WE will begin the survey with a view of *that* which holds the highest rank of all blessings to our fallen world—I mean the gift of God’s own son ; a gift which leads all others after it—for ‘ he that spared not his ‘ own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall ‘ he not with him also freely give us all things ?’ Through him we receive the common bounties of providence in *this* world ; and through him only, we have the hope of eternal life in *that* which is to come.

As we have ever lived under a dispensation of grace, and do continually experience benefits which flow through a Saviour ; we are in the habit of viewing ourselves, and fellow men, only in that favoured situation ; and, from the commonness of the view, I fear, lose a sense of the greatness of the blessing. But, could we exclude the idea of a Saviour, the Sun of righteousness, from our world—how gloomy and dreadful a prospect would rise before us !—all spiritual light and life would cease, and every comfort—even hope itself, would die—and the whole

whole human race lie in the suburbs of hell—abandoned to eternal death ! What soul does not shrink back from the thought ?—Were our natural sun to be put out, or removed from the system, and leave all objects here as frozen statues, wrapped in eternal night ; yet the prospect could not be equally dreadful. How great cause then had angels to celebrate the coming of a Saviour as ‘ glad tidings of great joy to all ‘ mankind !’ but how much *greater* cause have we to proclaim his name, with the loudest acclamations of joy and praise !

HERE too we should gratefully mention the goodness of God in giving us his holy word, to be a light to our feet, and lamp to our way—in giving us the ordinances of the gospel, and means of grace ; and ever preserving a church in the world, so that the gates of hell have never effectually prevailed against it.

AND as protestants, we ought still thankfully to recollect, that after a long night of ignorance and errors had sitten down on the christian world, by means of the Pope, that man of sin ; that God did, in his providence, bring about a glorious reformation in the beginning of the sixteenth century, or about two hundred and seventy-three years ago : and thereby gave such a wound to the * beast as hath never yet been healed, but under the increase of which he now languishes, and will, probably, soon expire.

THE nation of Britain, from whence the most of us originally sprang, began to be favoured with the light
of

* In the Rev. XIII. 17, 18, the *number* of the Beast's name is said to be six hundred and threescore and six ; which is the *number* of that name which the Pope hath assumed to himself,

of the reformation in the reign of Henry the eighth—but yet in a greater degree in the succeeding reign of the pious young Edward the sixth. The reformation was interrupted for a short season, during the reign of the persecuting and bloody queen Mary; but was again carried on, and fixed on a solid basis, in the long and glorious reign of queen Elizabeth. Yet, under the four succeeding kings of the Stuarts' line, persecution once more reared its malignant head in the land of our forefathers, and with bloody hands pursued and drove them to seek an asylum in a *new world*—where we, their children, now dwell;—and where God provided them a place, and nourished them from the face of the Dragon.

HERE pause—and take a comparative view of what *they were then*, and, of what *we are now*. If we look back, we see *them*, few in number—driven from their native land—far from their friends—without shelter, shivering

self, and wears on his mitre, viz. VICARIUS FILII DEI, *the vicerent of the Son of God*; that is, the *numerical* letters in the name, make exactly six hundred sixty and six, as may be seen on trial—thus,

In VICARIUS, the numerical letters are,	$\left\{ \begin{array}{rcl} \text{V} & \text{—} & 5 \\ \text{I} & \text{—} & 1 \\ \text{C} & \text{—} & 100 \\ \text{I} & \text{—} & 1 \\ \text{U} & \text{—} & 5 \end{array} \right.$	In FILII,	$\left\{ \begin{array}{rcl} \text{I} & \text{—} & 1 \\ \text{L} & \text{—} & 50 \\ \text{I} & \text{—} & 1 \\ \text{I} & \text{—} & 1 \end{array} \right.$
U being formerly the same as V,	$\left\{ \begin{array}{rcl} \text{D} & \text{—} & 500 \\ \text{I} & \text{—} & 1 \end{array} \right.$	In DEI,	
	112		
			554
			112
			666
		Which added make	666

☞ Is not this a striking evidence that the Pope is the Beast there mentioned?

shivering on the bleak shores of the north—or with cautious step entering a vast wilderness, with savage beasts and men around them, and boding fears within—now casting a sad look to their native shores—then on the dreary wilderness—then up to heaven, for pity and protection.

BUT when we *now* look around ; how is the scene changed ! An extensive cultivated country is pouring its riches into our lap—the convenient dwelling, pleasant villages, growing towns, and populous cities lie before us—arts and sciences flourish—commerce swells the tide, and millions of inhabitants fill the land, freed from the gripe of tyranny, conducted to independence and peace, and crowned with glory and honour ! Here the soul, filled with pleasing wonder, is constrained to cry out, ‘ this is the LORD’s doing ! ’ And this sense of a divine and almighty arm in our favour will be more confirmed and improved, as we draw nearer, and consider the manner in which these great events have taken place. Want of time will make it necessary to pass over the variety of goodness which our fathers have experienced, for whom God prepared a place in the wilderness—led them as by the hand—and was as a wall of fire round about them—and come, to what more immediately respects ourselves ; to our late, though ever memorable contest with Great-Britain. Who, like Pharaoh and the Egyptians, with respect to Israel, being jealous of our growing strength and numbers, thought it wise to lay their heavy hand and galling yoke upon us, in order to secure to themselves our subjection and service. And, when they saw the great soul of America disdain such bondage, instead of admiring her virtue, they sent forth their armies like a flood to overwhelm her. And surely we may say, ‘ if it had not ‘ been the LORD who was on our side, when men ‘ rose up against us : then they had swallowed us up
‘ quick,

‘ quick, when their wrath was kindled against us : then
 ‘ the waters had overwhelmed us—the proud waters
 ‘ had gone over our soul.’ We, being but little more
 than in our infancy as a people, used to the walks of
 peace, unaccustomed to the arts of war, and destitute
 of the means for carrying it on ; went forth, like the
 stripling David, with a sling and a stone, against an
 overgrown Goliath clad in steel. And the success in
 either case, must not be ascribed to human power or
 skill ; but to a gracious and overruling providence,
 whereby the race is not always given to the swift, nor
 the battle to the strong.

PROVIDENCE, generally, acts by secret springs, and its
 way is often in the sea, and path in the great waters,
 so that we are unable to trace its footsteps ; but in the
 American cause the divine agency has been less obscure ;
 yea, God hath so manifestly appeared for us in a variety
 of ways, that infidelity must be dumb before him. Some
 of those ways I shall briefly mention.

I. FIRST, by impressing the minds of people, espe-
 cially those of the good and virtuous, with a confi-
 dence of success ; or, shall I rather say, by inspiring
 them with an assurance of final victory. It is difficult
 to account for that high confidence which prevailed
 from any other cause. It could not have arisen from
 a view of the comparative strength of the contending
 parties ; this would have led to a contrary conclusion—
 it came down from heaven ;—and, together with that
 ardor which accompanied it, had a powerful and happy
 influence through every department, whether civil or
 military, and among all ranks of men, from the highest
 to the lowest, supplied, in a great measure, the want
 of constitutions and laws ; raised us superior to diffi-
 culties and dangers, and enabled us to do, and endure,
 what, in the review, is a wonder to ourselves.

II. ANOTHER

II. ANOTHER way has been, by raising up, qualifying, and disposing persons to conduct our cause. In this way God hath in different ages afforded relief to his people. Thus, when Israel was to be freed from the Egyptian bondage, become an independent nation, and have a constitution and laws ; Moses, a wise law-giver, was raised up, and qualified for that purpose. When the nations of Canaan were to be conquered by war ; Joshua a great general was raised up. And after this, when the temple of the Jews was to be rebuilt ; and they returned from the Babylonish captivity : Cyrus was raised up for that express purpose, and even mentioned by name many years before his birth.

AND when America was to be freed from the British yoke, and be led through a long and bloody war, to independence and peace ; a WASHINGTON is raised up, and exactly suited to her circumstances.

AND we must ascribe it to the same superintending care, that events were so disposed, and the mind of Congress so inclined, that *the man*, thus formed by heaven for the very purpose, should be chosen by ourselves, from among the thousands of America, as our head and leader.

III. God hath also wrought for us, by disposing others to favour, and espouse our cause.

I NEED not inform you, that both individuals and kingdoms have done this ; but especially the powerful nation of France, our first and generous ally. And it may be, that a bountiful providence is about to reward them with blessings, in some respects, similar to those which they have assisted in procuring for us.

IV. DIVINE goodness hath further been visible, in
bringing

bringing to nought the councils, and discovering the plots of our enemies.

THEIR councils have been turned into foolishness, and they have fallen into the pit, which they themselves had digged. We have a very memorable instance of this, in the capture of major Andre ; and in the discovery of the dark, and traiterous plot of General Arnold ; for betraying our army, and delivering up our fortrefs into the hands of the enemy.

V. BUT the hand of the LORD hath been more especially visible, in overruling, even the victories of the enemy, and our own mistakes and losses, so as to make all work together for good to us ; and evil to them. While losses on our part have been transformed into blessings ; their most signal victories, have ever proved the occasion of their more signal overthrow. If at any time, they were lifted on high by successes, it served only to make their fall the greater, and more terrible. There is no part of united America, but can witness the truth of this observation.

IF we look towards the north ; the *successes* of Burgoyne, and *our loss*, in that quarter, though at the time grievous on our part, and led us with good old Jacob to say, ' All these things are against us,' yet, in reality, led to, and ended in *his* entire ruin, and *our* triumph ; and gave the first decided turn to the American cause.

AND if we turn towards the south ; there we behold the same scene acted over again. The rapid progress of lord Cornwallis through those states, was but his making haste to destruction ; and the successes which he met, were only baits in the train of providence, to allure him into the net, which was in due time spread over him, so that none escaped.

AND

AND my brethren, you are my witnesses, that the progress of general Howe in this state, though for a season it made the land to tremble, yet led to our victories both at Trenton and Princeton. These were events in which your share hath been so great, and with which your particular interest was so intimately connected, that the grateful impressions of them can never be worn out, so long as your life and sense shall continue.

I ADD once more, that God hath wrought for us, by calling in inanimate nature to our aid. It is said in the song of Deborah and Barak, that 'the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.' The elements have been on *our* side: a thick fog covered our retreat from Long-Island; the snow covered our attack upon the Hessians at Trenton; and the winds and the waves conspired to bring the fleet and army of our allies before Yorktown at the very juncture they were needed, in order to complete the capture of Cornwallis and the British army: and did thus perform a very important part, in that great concluding scene of the war, which exhibited to admiring millions, Britain and tyranny humbled, America and liberty triumphant; and Empire, which had been for ages travelling from the east, securely arrived on this Western World. O Empire! millions hail thee welcome! And while the British yoke lies broken beneath thy feet, may liberty be seated at thy right hand, and justice, mercy and truth, be enthroned in thy heart; and thus mayest thou dwell with us, till time shall be no more!

THAT same kind and powerful providence, which in war turned our mistakes and losses into blessings; and caused good to come forth out of evil, and light to spring up out of darkness; hath in peace, as yet, continued as a glory in the midst of us. To this we are to ascribe it, that America hath peaceably, and by
consent,

consent, given up a constitution framed in haste, amid the confusions of war; and which, by reason of its feebleness, could promise little prosperity to the people, or respect and permanency to itself. And with her collected wisdom, in the arms of peace, and with the experience of ages before her, and the recent experience of the defects of that constitution, after a cool and thorough examination of the nature of government, the rights of man, and the situation and interests of the several states; hath, with admirable unanimity, established a constitution, in which energy and liberty are duly blended, and which seems wisely calculated to ensure prosperity at home, and reputation abroad.

THIS, brethren, *this* is the elevated situation in which we are *at this day* placed as a people.—And if from this eminence we look back through the mazes which we have passed; and duly consider the goodness and mercy, the wisdom and omnipotence, of providence which hath brought us to it; our souls, absorbed in the view, must bow down before the LORD with reverence and praise.

IN the history of *other* nations, we read of defeating armies; and sometimes of their suffering great loss: but *here* we see *whole armies swallowed up at once* so that none escape. Among *others*, revolutions and governments, have been founded in *blood*;—*here*, we see a revolution take place in *peace* and *friendship*; and a constitution founded in wisdom, containing in itself a remedy for defects, and an open door for the highest improvement. In this review, then, we see not only the *general* course of providence in our favour; but, even *new events* take place in the world, tending both to exalt us as a people, and mark us as the favourites of heaven.

AND

AND if we look forward ;—what pleasing and sublime prospects *rise*, and *grow* upon the mind—until the idea becomes too great for expression !—We will therefore leave it, and,

II. INQUIRE, what are the suitable returns, which we ought to make, for all that the LORD hath bestowed on us ? I answer,

1. To observe the hand of God in our manifold blessings, and ascribe them to his power, his bounty and providence ; is one of the returns which we ought to make.

To be sensible of the author of our benefits, is absolutely necessary to any measure of gratitude. Multitudes ascribe their blessings to the agency of creatures, or power of second causes, and thereby rob the Creator of his due, and derogate from the honour, which the first cause only has a right to claim.

SOME ascribe all events to irresistible and unalterable fate ; others to chance, or unintelligible fortune,—mere names without a meaning. One is ready to say, My right hand hath gotten me the victory ; another claims to himself, as the effect of his own wisdom, all the great things which God hath made him an instrument in doing ; thus that proud and haughty monarch Nebuchadnezzar boasted ; ‘ is not this great Babylon ‘ which I have built for the house of the kingdom, by ‘ the might of my power, and for the honour of my ‘ majesty ? ’ Vain man, he had mistaken his proper rank, and invaded the rights of God ; wherefore, ‘ he was ‘ driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, until ‘ he knew that the most high ruleth in the kingdom of ‘ men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.’

BUT *we*, who acknowledge the divine agency, in the smallest events, and have so *visibly* beheld it, in this *land of providence*, leading us through dangers, and raising us to greatness and empire; *we* will cry, 'not unto us, O **LORD**, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory.'

2. **AN** high and exalted esteem of God, is another return which we ought to make, for all that he hath bestowed on us.

GREAT benefits not only claim, but also tend to raise our esteem for those from whom they flow. Hence, an ingenuous mind esteems, and even reverences an earthly benefactor. But how much more should those great benefits, which we have been recounting, and which have filled the world with admiration, fill our souls with the ~~most~~ exalted reverence and esteem for our heavenly benefactor. And this inward esteem, these high and admiring thoughts of Jehovah, may be termed the praise, and gratitude of the heart.

3. **A FURTHER** suitable return, is outward praise. This is making our salvation our song, and is the overflowings of a grateful soul; and God is pleased to account himself glorified thereby; 'who so offereth praise, glorifieth me.' And this the sacred word *enjoins* upon us, 'in every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God.' But more especially must this be our duty, when the **LORD** arises in his goodness and might, and becomes our salvation.

THUS, when the Hebrews had been delivered from the Egyptian bondage, had passed through the Red sea on dry land, and had seen the hand of God on Pharaoh and his army: 'then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the **LORD**, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the **LORD**, for he hath triumphed gloriously—

‘**riously—the LORD is my strength and song, and he
 ‘ hath become my salvation; he is my God, and I will
 ‘ prepare him an habitation, my father’s God, and I will
 ‘ exalt him.’ And in the days of the Judges, when
 God had delivered Israel from Jabin, king of Canaan;
 and Sisera the general of his army was slain by Jael.
 ‘ Then sang Deborah, and Barak the son of Abinoam,
 ‘ on that day, saying, Praise ye the LORD for the aveng-
 ‘ ing of Israel, when the people willingly offered them-
 ‘ selves. Hear, O ye kings, give ear, O ye princes; I,
 ‘ even I will sing unto the LORD, I will sing praise unto
 ‘ the LORD God of Israel.’**

AND can *we* withhold our praise? *we* who have tasted so much of divine goodness? nay, it is *our business* on this solemn day, throughout all the states of united America. And O! America, while the loud song ascends from thy ten thousand tongues, may heaven and nature join the praise, and God, who hath been thy salvation, bow his ear, and accept thine offering.

4. A GRATEFUL *remembrance* of what the LORD hath bestowed on us—or keeping up *memorials* of his distinguished favours; is another return which we ought to make unto him.

THIS is what God himself enjoined upon the Israelites of old. The passover, was a memorial of their preservation in that night, when all the first-born of Egypt were slain: the twelve stones, taken from the midst of Jordan, were to be a memorial forever, that its waters were cut off, before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. And the days of thanksgiving established by Esther, and Mordecai, were for a grateful remembrance of the happy deliverance of the Jews, from the destruction devised by Haman their enemy.

AND of a similar nature is the day which we now celebrate; it is sacred to the purpose of recounting the goodness of God, and rendering unto him thanksgiving and praise. But the duty will not end with *this day*; his goodness should be engraven on the tables of thy heart, and thou shouldest talk of it as thou fittest in thine house, and as thou walkest by the way, and tell it to thy children, and thy childrens' children. Again,

5. A LIVELY and supreme love, is another return which we ought to make.

THE great and peculiar national blessings, of which we have been taking a short survey—the far richer blessings of the gospel of peace—and above all, the unspeakable gift of a Saviour, are displays of mercy and love, truly astonishing to man, and altogether worthy of a God; and should enkindle every pious passion within us. ‘We love him,’ says the apostle, ‘because he first loved us.’ *His great love* should set all the amiable wheels of our gratitude, into sweet and delightful motion. And then will follow,

6. A READY and willing obedience to his commandments; which is another suitable return.

OBEDIENCE is the very *substance* of our duty; if this be wanting, all else is vain shew and empty sound; ‘behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.’ To this, all the divine goodness and love which we have so greatly experienced, ought, not only to invite, but even constrain us. And surely our own ingratitude would cover us with confusion and blushing, were we to remain unmoved by such benefits, and to resist the cords of divine love. Motives, similar to those which now exist before us, Joshua made use of a little before his death, in order to engage Israel

to serve the LORD. He set before them the goodness of God to their fathers, his wonders in Egypt, in the Red sea, and on the other side Jordan—also, the good land for which they did not labour, the cities which they did not build, and in which they dwelt—the vineyards, and oliveyards which they did not plant. And then pressed upon them, saying, ‘now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and truth.’ And farther adds, ‘if it seem evil to you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom you will serve.’ But lets them know, that his own resolution was fixed, ‘as for me, and my house, we *will* serve the LORD.’ Happy resolution! and happy this highly favoured people, should the goodness and love of God prevail with them to resolve the same.

I ADD once more, that

7. TRUST in God for the future, is a return which former benefits demand from us.

THE loving kindness, and mercy of God, afford a proper foundation for the most entire trust, and confidence in him. This David knew, when he said ‘how excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore, the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.’

It would be base in a son, to distrust an earthly father, who had been the support of his helpless infancy, and the guardian and guide of his youth; but how much more so, would it be in us, to distrust our heavenly Father, whose watchful eyes have ever been upon us, and whose everlasting arms have been underneath us. His mercy hath relieved our miseries, his goodness hath supplied our wants, his wisdom hath been our guide in darkness, and his almighty power our shield in danger: then
when

when future troubles rise, we will say, Return to thy *rest*, O my soul, to thy *God*, thou needest go no farther, look no where else, for 'they that trust in the LORD' shall be as mount Sion, which cannot be removed, but 'abideth for ever.'

A FEW observations shall now conclude the subject.

I. FIRST, the past goodness and bounty of God, with the many visible interpositions of his providence, may lead us to look forward with hope.

GOD wrought wonders for Israel, in the land of Egypt, in the Red sea, and in the wilderness, because he intended to make them a great nation, and a blessing to all the families of the earth; the Messiah also, was to come forth of them, and be a light to the world. And when we see the same God arise, and make bare his arm for America, we may *conclude* that purposes of love are in his *heart*; and *hope* that good things are yet in *store* for a great while to come.

SHOULD we extend our views, and consider, that in the course of providence, intercourse and benevolence among mankind are greatly improving, and they becoming more and more like children of the same family—that the man of sin is falling, and knowledge abounding—that war hath laid aside more than half its terrors—and that the horrors of persecution are, in a great measure, past, and, in this respect, the lion and the lamb *now* lie down together. I say, when we consider these things, together with the events which have taken place in America, we may be led to look out for the glory of the latter day; or rather, to look around, and see if it do not already dawn: for we are not to suppose, that this day will appear suddenly in its full glory, like the
last

last great day of the Son of man, but gradually, as the rise and fall of Antichrist have been.

THIS hope of approaching glory, added to all that the LORD hath already bestowed on us, should awaken our souls, and engage us to obedience and love ; and thus ensure to ourselves the blessings which we desire.

FOR I observe,

2. SECONDLY, that God usually, and I believe always, treats nations, considered as publick bodies, according to their general moral character.

THE Judge of all the earth will do right ; he will render to every individual and nation according to their works. And as nations exist only in this world, they must *here* receive *their* reward. Hence, if we look through the history of nations, we shall find, that so long as any have been remarkable for justice and righteousness, they have also been remarkably blessed : but when they became unjust, and abandoned to vice, God abandoned them to misery and ruin. This observation hath been frequently made with respect to the ancient nations of Greece and Rome. Many other instances might be named, but none more remarkable than God's ancient people Israel ; for none under heaven were more eminently favoured, so long as they continued willing and obedient ; and none more awfully punished, when they were disobedient and rebellious, but especially when they had filled up the measure of their iniquity, by rejecting the Saviour of the world.

SUFFER me then, lastly, to observe, that the way of prosperity and ruin are both before us.

AND, as a new empire, we are now to make our choice.

choice. Solemn period—in which the fate of millions hangs in suspense, and in which the eyes of heaven and earth are upon us!—May infinite wisdom direct us!—I hear its gracious voice proclaiming, ‘**RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION.**’—*Here* then lies the road to prosperity and honour—justice to man, obedience and gratitude to God, lead to the summit of national glory; in *this* way, man will look up to us with reverence, and God look down with approbation, and own us as his people.—

On the other hand, iniquity and vice are the way to shame, contempt and ruin. Infinite wisdom and purity have so constructed the frame of things, that *these* have a *natural* tendency to ruin a people, and bring them low; they have also a *moral* causality, by inflaming divine jealousy, which sets them on fire round about. O my Country! shouldest thou choose this forbidden path, thy prosperity and peace will pass away, thy greatness will be lowered with dishonour, thy sun will set in darkness, and thy God will forsake thee. Trembling thought! flee from this way of darkness and danger, and walk in the path of the just, which shines brighter and brighter to the perfect day; *here* peace and safety await thee, *here* riches and honour allure; yea, to *this*, the goodness and love of God constrain, and bind thee: O! break not these cords, but yield to almighty love—be wholly the LORD’s; and henceforth wear engraven on every heart;

‘ His hand hath loos’d my bands of pain,
‘ And bound me with his love.’

T H E E N D.