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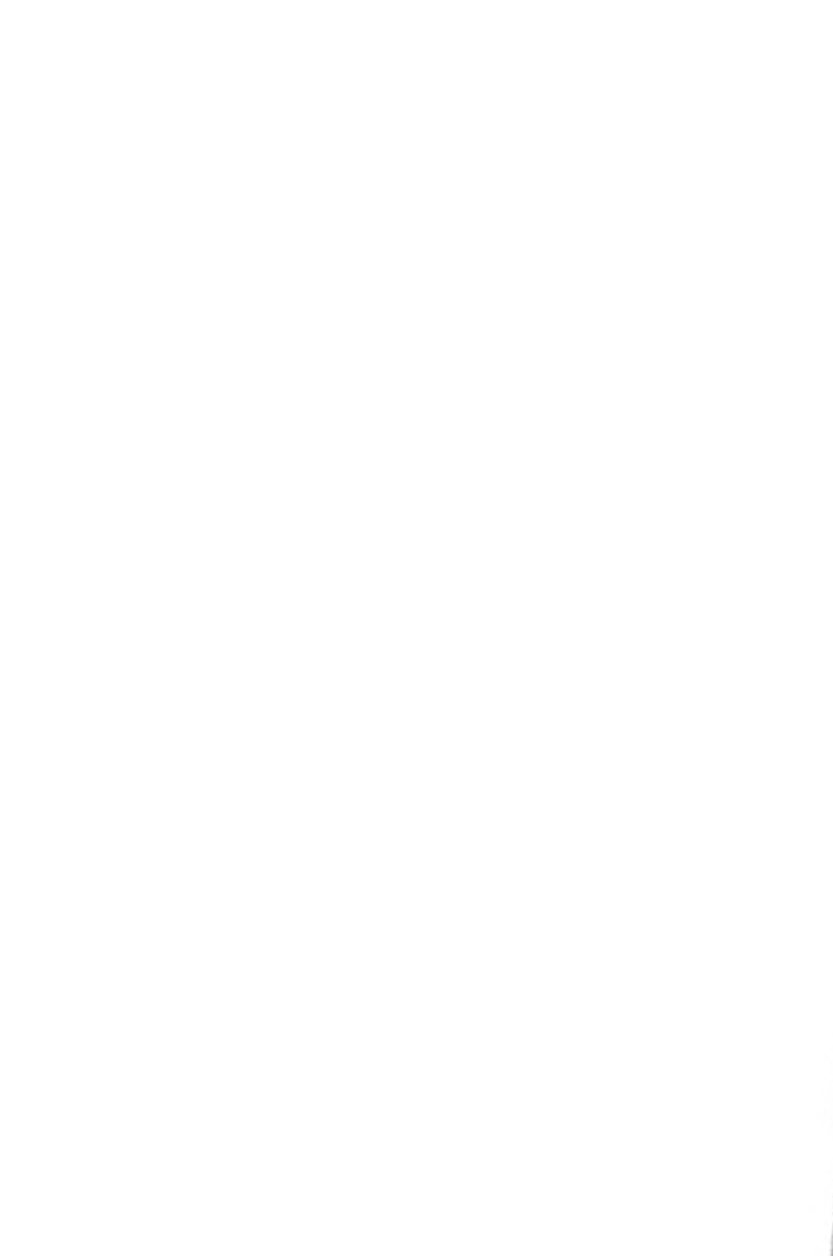


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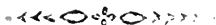








*My Cattle  
Have been Disappointed.*



A

# THANKSGIVING SERMON,

DELIVERED

AT NOTTINGHAM-WEST,

APRIL 13, 1815.

A DAY RECOMMENDED BY THE NATIONAL  
GOVERNMENT, IN WHICH TO REHEARSE

GOD'S MIGHTY ACTS, AND PRAISE  
HIS NAME.

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BY DANIEL MERRILL, A. M.

Pastor of the Church of Christ in Nottingham West.

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JUNE—1815.

## ADVERTISEMENT

THOSE at whose particular instance the following has been submitted to the public, have strongly felt that the sentiment delivered from the desk, should not be retrenched in passing through the press. The Author could not, therefore, have justified himself to his patrons, had he largely reduced or kept back what they subscribed for.

The Author having been long and largely impressed with the correctness and magnitude of the principles advanced, and conscious of the destructive bearings of the principles opposed, he has rather dilated upon them than diminished ought from them, especially in the Appendix.

If just principles have been fairly stated, legitimate deductions candidly drawn, popular superstitions and honorable iniquities mildly exposed, the Author calculates upon being satisfied with the consequences. For *truth shall eventually be sustained, its advocates honored, and its adversaries made ashamed.*

The reader is requested to buy the truth at the expense of his prejudices; and to sell it not for the praise of men.

It is fully believed and readily conceded, that there are among the New England Clergy, a goodly number of true godly men; whose grand object is the glory of God and man's best good, however they may, in many instances, have mistaken the means. Should such men peruse the following pages, they are requested to rest assured that the writer would gladly have made, in every instance, a discrimination in their favor. Yes, he would with justice had it been compatible with truth, have attached no blame to such good men. Each is affectionately solicited to accept *the portion* which belongs to him, and not to be angry at the exposition of his faults.



# SERMON.

NUMBERS XXIII. 23.

Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel : according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought !

THESE words were spoken by Balaam, the son of Beor ; whom Balak, the son of Zippor, hired, that he might come from the mountains of the east, to curse Jacob and Israel. Thrice did Balak build seven altars, and thrice did he provide an equal number of bullocks and of rams, that Balaam might prevail with God and curse Israel, and thrice were Balak and his mad prophet disappointed. At the last, Balaam, who would have cursed Israel for gain, was compelled to take up his parable and say, Rise up Balak, and hear ; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor ; God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent : hath he said, and shall he not do it ? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good ? Behold, I have received commandment to bless, and he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel : the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them. God brought them out of Egypt, he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel : according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought ! Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion : he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.

Thus was the covetous prophet compelled to bless Israel, and to lose the wages of unrighteousness which he loved.

Balaam was not singular in being desirous of pleasing his employer, that he might possess the reward; but it was very singular, that he was compelled to bless whom he would have cursed, and thus to offend his employer, miss his wished for reward, and be dismissed with disgrace. Balaam was obliged to pronounce in favor of Jacob and of Israel, what many, much against their inclination, may be constrained to say with relation to the United States of America, according to this time it shall be said of them, What hath God wrought!

It is always wise to acquaint ourselves with God, and to bear peace with his works and ways; but on such an occasion, as the present, it becomes a peculiar and indispensable duty to inquire what God hath wrought, that we may, with admiration, accompanied with thanksgiving and praise, exclaim, According to this time it shall be said of our nation, What hath God wrought!

My principal object in this discourse is to show you what God hath wrought for our nation, and some of the reasons why, according to this time it shall be said of the United States of America: What hath God wrought!

But, as we proceed to the great object of our discourse, we now turn your attention to what God wrought for Jacob and Israel, and how my text was, at that time, verified upon them—According to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!

Jacob had his name also Israel; but by Israel is commonly intended Jacob's posterity.

God wrought for Jacob in delivering him from Esau, and sending to him the birthright and the blessing; in sending him into Mesopotamia, to Laban, his mother's brother; by giving him Laban's flocks and herds, by which he was made rich, became a prince and appeased his brother's wrath. God wrought for Jacob by sending Joseph into Egypt, and there making him lord of the land of Egypt, that he might prepare sustenance for his dear, his numerous family, in days of famine; and by sending them Goshen, a pleasant and productive province of Egypt, for their residence in years of plenty.

When another king arose, who knew not Joseph, and oppressed Israel, God wrought for them, by raising up Moses and Aaron for their leaders; by sending many and great plagues upon Pharaoh and upon his people, till they gladly released Israel from their bondage and their burdens, to serve the Lord in the wilderness.

God wrought for Israel when he brought them through the sea, where he drowned Pharaoh and his host, and triumphed gloriously, casting the Egyptian horses and their riders into the depth of the sea. God wrought for Israel, when he, by the hand of Moses, smote the rock, and caused living waters to flow, and to follow their devious march to forty years; also, during that time, whilst he mightily rained upon them angels' food in abundance; also, whilst he commanded their clothes not to wax old, and put them fear upon all their enemies round about. God wrought for Israel by refusing Balaam liberty to curse them, or any of those who hated them, to prevail against them. God wrought for Israel by destroying their enemies, by driving out the heathen, by giving them Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey; houses also which they builded not; vines and vineyards which they planted not.

Well might Balaam say, Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought! From Balaam's day to ours it hath been said with wonder, of both Jacob and Israel, What hath God wrought!

We now proceed to our main object, which is to say,

I. *What hath wrought for our nation.*

II. *Some of the reasons why, according to this time it shall be said of the United States of America, What hath God wrought!*

As this is a day recommended to our nation, by the government over us, to be religiously observed in offering up thanksgivings and praises to Almighty God; nothing can be more appropriate than an inquiry into what God hath wrought for our nation, and the reasons why, according to this time, it shall be said of it, What hath God wrought!

If, as a nation, we observe a season of thanksgiving and praise, we ought to be willing to know, and desirous of knowing, the true reasons of such observance. If any present are averse from hearing such reasons, they are not prepared for the present occasion; and the motives, which have convened them, may not be of the best kind. The peculiar reasons, for celebrating this day, are the things which God hath wrought for us. We therefore proceed to inquire,

1. *What God hath wrought for our nation.*

In the President's Proclamation, four of the most prominent things, which God hath wrought for our nation, are particularly noticed.

1. God directed our forefathers to one of the best portions of the dwelling-place allowed the great family of man.
2. He hath favored us with civil liberty.
3. With religious liberty.
4. He hath given us peace with those who were our enemies.

In each of these God hath wrought miraculously, and triumphed gloriously.

1. God hath given us one of the best portions of the earth for our dwelling-place.

Our progenitors were grievously afflicted and persecuted by that Church, which spiritually is called *Syria*; and *Egypt*. The kind providence of the Lord brought them to this good land. Here he drove out many nations, which were greater and more mighty than they, by the patience, by the sword, and by the famine, till he consumed these heathen and barbarous nations, till he left them few in number. The land which he hath taken from them and given to us, is a large and fat land, and, like ancient *Canaan*, full of hills and valleys, and springs of water. In which we have become a multitude and terrible to our enemies, who have been round about us.

2. The Lord hath granted us civil liberty.

When we multiplied and grew, the *British* nation, like the *Egyptians* of old, began to set task-masters over us, and to lay burdens upon us. When we complained and groaned under their burdens, they increased

the number of task-masters, and laid on burdens still more grievous to be borne; and assured the right of imposing whatever burdens they pleased, at their own discretion. We cried to the Lord in our distress, and put in operation the means with which he had furnished us; and after a long and arduous struggle, we obtained our independence, and an acknowledged right of self-government. Since which time we have enjoyed those civil rights and immunities which, but seldom, are enjoyed long; and which many, Absalom like, would now gladly wrest from us with a kiss.

In obtaining this liberty, the Lord wrought marvellously for us, in giving union, courage, and means of defence, in subduing our enemies under us; in giving large armies into our hands; in raising up a powerful ally; and in giving us perseverance till the object was secured. But,

3. The Lord hath wrought still more marvellously in bringing about our religious liberty.

For notwithstanding it was the religious tyranny of the mother of harlots, or of one of her eldest daughters, which drove the first English settlers into this good land; yet they soon manifested, that it was not from religious tyranny they were averse, but from suffering the lash of it. Too soon did they show their affinity with Babylon, by wielding the civil sword to compel men to practice, for religious rites, the inventions of men. The same principle which they could not endure to have practised upon themselves in Europe; they put in operation against their brethren in America. It was not so much the principle of religious liberty which the first settlers of our country so highly prized, as it was the privilege of having it extended to themselves. This was apparent in the religious tyranny which they set up, and in the persecutions which they instituted and cruelly practised for many years; the relics of which, and a degree of the same spirit, are still visible in our day.

In these anti-christian Babylonish persecutions, for which New-England has been famous, many were imprisoned, more were fined, and a still greater number were arrested, and in many ways vexed by the civil power. In the same Babylonish proceedings, a Holmes,

a baptist minister, was publicly whipped in Boston for preaching the gospel to his brethren in Lynn, without first obtaining leave of the ruling Clergyman of that place. A Williams, with his companions, were banished from the then colony of Massachusetts, upon pain of death if they returned, for having spoken against, and refusing to practice the Babylonish rite of *infant sprinkling* for gospel baptism.

Very many enormities, too numerous to be here mentioned, were then inflicted by the civil authority, under the influence of the ruling Clergy, upon those who were then signing for religious liberty, and dared to practice the scriptures of truth to the neglect of the commandments of men. From those seasons of the cruel opposition of our forefathers against religious liberty, even down to the glorious revolution, a degree of the same spirit of intolerance prevailed. The bodies of many were committed to prison, and the goods of more forcibly wrested from them, because they refused to deliver up their money to support the Clergy: who then did, and do still, either teach for doctrine the commandments of men, or pervert the right ways of the Lord.

During the revolutionary struggle for independence, the Clergy were a very useful class of citizens. They greatly animated the people to vigilance, vigor, and perseverance. But the struggle being happily terminated, and our independence secured, their desire for religious consolation soon appeared, but their wishes being in divers ways checked and disappointed, they became, at times, uneasy, restless, and chafed in their spirits. At this time, the securing of religious liberty was an object no less dear to many, than the obtaining of civil liberty had previously been to all.

When the Constitutions of the different States were framed, the Clergy wished for more religious shackles to be incorporated in some, or in all of those instruments, than were obtained, and they obtained the insertion of more than were compatible with equal religious liberty; and have made a more extensively oppressive use of what they did obtain, than was hoped for by the friends of liberty at the time.

When the Constitution of the United States was

framed, it was upon the most liberal principles. It embraced no article, giving power to the civil authority to interfere in the government of Christ, or in any religious matters. This of course was not pleasing to all, if to any of the Clergy. But General Washington, a man of pre-eminent influence, being at the head of it, it went down. It has, however, increased the fears of the Clergy. From that time to this, there has been, at times, if not continually, an increasing cry of, Alas, alas! religion is in danger.

When it was contemplated to elect Thomas Jefferson into the Presidential chair, there was, as many of us perfectly remember, an hue and cry through New-England, Religion is in danger, our meeting houses will become stables for horses, and our Bibles burnt, should Jefferson be President. Why was all this noise, this bustle, the fear excited? Why every excitement used to inflame the passions of the people, and every prejudice and superstition enlisted against Jefferson's election? For this simple reason, he was known to be hostile to superstition and religious tyranny; those twin furies which have been, for a long time, drunken with the blood of the saints.

But perhaps no man hath been followed with such a continued torrent of abuse, as has the present chief Magistrate of this nation, and for what? For having prevented the flood-gates of law-religion from deluging his native State; for having been uniformly opposed to an established religion, the most fruitful source of superstition and persecution; and for having resisted, steadily, the haughty encroachments of Britain, declaring and vindicated the inestimable rights of our own nation, against the tyranny and cruelty of that government which may, for the present, be styled the bulwark of national religion; that bane of christianity, and principal support of Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth; by whom the nations have been deceived, and the kings of the earth made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

Notwithstanding all this long and strong opposition against religious liberty, and continued hatred towards those who plead for it; yet religious liberty has, for many years,

been on the increase ; and has obtained such strength, and gained such an ascendancy in our nation, that her enemies are aware, that our excellent Constitution must be altered, and the present administration put down, or the dominant, the law-favored religion of New-England will be in danger.

This prevalency of religious liberty, and its present maturity, are the work of God. This work He will continue to perform till he shall have filled all lands with its salutary productions. This liberty, which all have a right to enjoy, whilst but few do, is the bane of the *whore*, of harlots and of *her daughters*, and will increase till it shall strip *them* naked, and the nations shall see *their shame*.

4. God hath given us peace and reconciliation with those who have been our enemies.

We do not propose to make any direct enquiry, whether the war was just, as believed by most, or whether it was wicked, as it has been very boldly asserted by some. We choose to let what God hath wrought in the prosecution and close of it, answer that question.

With whom had we to contend? With a nation, which, for many hundred years, has been almost continually practising in war. With a nation, which had, at the commencement of hostilities, more than two hundred thousands of veteran, well-disciplined soldiers and sailors in her employ, and at her bidding. With a nation, which had made many, if not most of the great nations of the earth to tremble at her power. With a nation, which, during the contest, was disengaged from other wars, and thus at liberty to send her disposable and veteran legions to inflict wounds and death on us. With a nation, which had a thousand ships of war, and claimed to be mistress of the seas. With a nation, whose navy had crippled, lumbled and destroyed the most powerful navies in the world. We had to contend with a nation which was filled with pride and flushed with victory, and which threatened, with her armies and navies, to hurl vengeance upon our devoted land, and thus to cripple, maim, and lumble us.

What had we? What preparations with which to contend with such a foe? We had six frigates, a few smaller vessels and a number of gun-boats; perhaps three thou-



and regular troops, and the militia enervated by thirty years of luxuriant peace. With these feeble means, in the outset, we had to contend with our powerful foreign foe, and to see all the embarrassments, which could be thrown in the way by several of the State Legislatures, and by many influential individuals; whose business was to discourage enlistments, to dishearten the people, people the national government, and to prevent their obtaining resources by which to prosecute the war. In addition to these flagrant violations of the national compact and of the duties of citizens, we had to be nearly smothered by an almost continued buzzing of a very large swarm of false prophets, who were perpetually extolling the weakness, inability and excellence of our foe; and, at the same time, reproaching and heaping almost all kinds of the most nefarious abuse upon our own government. These false prophets were very expert in denouncing the war as a wicked, unjust and ruinous. These, with the most effrontery, to mislead the people, kept up an incessant cry, French Influence! French Influence! and, at the same time, they could, without a blush, eulogize British aid, and with the greatest assurance, pronounce, that we would never make peace with Madison, and that the Administration which made war would never make peace.

Besides all this, there were, not a few, of whom we might have expected better things, who were talking out rebellion, and strongly intimating, and sometimes threatening, a separation from the Union. Surely we may say, Had not the Lord been on our side, we had sunk under these mighty waters.

Can it be that, under these mighty discouragements, and whilst contending with such a foe, we have triumphed and obtained an honorable peace! Yes, it can be, and is indeed a fact, our enemies themselves being judges. By whom have we obtained this triumph? by the right hand of Israel's King. How hath the Lord, our Shepherd, wrought this salvation for us? By inspiring our National Government with wisdom, firmness, and perseverance. By giving almost incredible valor and good conduct to most of our commanding officers by both land and water. By making them to be Samsons for courage,

and Solomons for wisdom. By giving the command and strength of lions to the chief officers and to the soldiers and mariners. Thus did the Lord, by the hand of the Lord Croghan and his hundred and fifty invincible warriors, about one hundred and fifty of the British, and a considerable number of their savage allies, to fall down on the ground, and Brock, with the residue of his twelve hundred British and Indians, to be turned back confounded. But the Lord, by the hand of Perry and his gallant companions, give the British fleet, on Lake Erie, into our hands, on the 10th of September, 1813. A few weeks after was the British army, under Brock, captured, and their savage allies routed, by the hand of General Harrison, commanding the veteran militia volunteers of western Canada. Previous to the time in which these events transpired, three first rate British frigates, of forty-five guns each, were cut up, and compelled to strike their colours, the *Guentiere* and *Java* by the *Constitution*, the *Mercedon* by the frigate *United States*. In the mean time, our national and private armed ships were triumphing over their smaller ships of war, and dashing among the merchant vessels, and bringing destruction to our trade in various seas. I take liberty to instance, for example, the gallant *Porter*, in the small frigate *Essex*, after capturing the *Alert*, a sloop of war of two hundred guns, doubled round Cape Horn, took twelve of our whaling ships, containing, it is said, about two millions of dollars in specie, besides a plenty of provisions for the supply of the conquerors, and other valuable articles. Out of these whale-men, *Porter* supplied his own two twenty gun ships, and others of inferior force. At this took place, whilst haughty Britain had lost her flag in not more than one of our ships of considerable force: though she had vainly thought to have had her little navy, as Goliath of Gath, Philistia's Champion, sumptuously boasted he would the stripping D.

However, the proud sons of Albion grew more angry as their disgrace increased; and in their warlike spirit, their sire quarrels, demanded in their eyes, for peace, the most humiliating concessions on our part, and threatened us with conflagrations, and complete destruction upon our continent and empire.

To intimidate us, they encouraged the savages, and their own people, in the most wanton acts of cruelty and inhumanity.

God looked down from heaven and beheld their brutal and barbarous iniquities; and, being displeased, he inspired a Brown, a Scott, a Porter, and a Ripley, with martial fire; who, with their men of valor, slew hundreds upon hundreds of Wellington's veterans. Soon after, gave another of their imposing fleets into the power of the religious, the undaunted Macdonough; and made fourteen thousand of those, who would be thought the conquerors of Europe, to lee, submit, or fall before an handful of our brave, but untried militia. These things brought down the pride of our foreign foe, but not of our domestic one. Thus appeared to increase in wickedness, as their sins grew desperate. Witness their *Hartford Convention* and their *mission to Washington*; the latter of which has met with its *deserved contempt*: The members of the other will be of *lasting ill-fame*.

Now Britain, the scourge of the world, was ready to give us peace upon terms honorable to America; but the displeasure of the Lord was not, as yet, sufficiently manifested. New-Orleans was the place He chose, in which to complete their disgrace. Here, their *watch-words*, *Beauty* and *Booty*, full of savage and brutal import, capped the climax of their enormities, and filled up the measure of their sins. Here were they mowed down, heaps upon heaps, by our death-bearing weapons of war. Here Pakenham, the commander in chief of this grand expedition, major general Gibbs, the second in command, with many other officers, and many hundreds of Britain's bravest troops fell down slain. Major General Keane, with about a hundred more, were said to be wounded, and many of them unto death, on the memorable 8th of January, 1815. On the same day, the prisoners and deserters were many, making the grand total of their loss about three thousand. Whilst the loss on our side, in this desperate conflict, was but six killed and seven wounded.

According to a late statement of our adjutant general, we had, at that time, at New-Orleans and its vicinity, less than five thousand troops, and these mostly militia;

whilst the British confess, that their army consisted of ten or twelve thousand at the least; besides, say five thousand on board their ships. With this vast disparity of force, the disparity of loss was still greater. Says the intrepid Jackson, in his late communication to Governor Blount, "The whole of our loss, from the first landing of the British to their final defeat, did not exceed *fifty-six*; whilst the grand total of the enemy's loss was *six thousand and five hundred.*" Thus hath the Lord wrought for us, and covered the heads of our brave countrymen in the days of battle, as he hath, perhaps, done for no other nation since the days of Gideon.

On the ocean also, hath the Lord given us, in addition to what we have above related, triumph after triumph, to the confusion of the British government, and lasting reproach of their navy; that too, in instances too numerous to be here rehearsed.

Now let every impartial man decide, let every honest man decide, let the world and every individual in it decide, on which side the Lord hath wrought; and what his works testify; whether they coincide with the capriciousness of our government, who have, to deceive the common people and to alienate them from the government of their choice, been continually ringing in their ears, that the war was unjust, wicked, and ruinous: or, whether the works of God have said, and are still saying, that the war was just, righteous, and for the salvation of our invaluable liberties and privileges. Let the present and every future generation decide whose names will deservedly stand highest on the records of fame; those of Madison and his cabinet colleagues; those of Jackson, a Brown, a Scott, a Macomb, a Croghan, and other valiant ones of the land service; those of Hull, a Bainbridge, a Decatur, a Perry, a Macdonough, and other gallant commanders in the navy; or the names of—I forbear to mention them, who, like cursed Meroz of old, came not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty; but withheld the people, encouraged the enemy, and did what they could to withhold the energies, and to break down the spirits, of their own government and nation.

II. We are to mention some of the reasons why, according to this time it shall be said of the United States of America, What hath God wrought!

By those who shall, to the latest generation, become acquainted with the history of our nation to the present time, it shall, with admiration, be exclaimed, *What hath God wrought!*

Some of the reasons why, according to this time it shall be said of the United States, What hath God wrought! are the following.

1. God made the *gross superstitions* of the *British Church*, which produced a severe persecution against her most virtuous citizens, a mean of bringing our forefathers into this *rich, this pleasant, and this large land of ours*.

The heathen nations, which were much greater and more mighty than they, He, by the pestilence, by the sword, and by the famine, drove out and consumed from before them. Surely we have one of the best portions of the dwelling-place allotted for men; and one of the largest which God hath divided among the nations. From an handful, we have, within the space of two hundred years, increased to a multitude; and have become a rich, a great, and a respected nation. *All this occasioned by the overgrown superstition of Britain.*

2. As by British superstition our nation was planted, so by British oppression our nation became free. Like the Israelites in Egypt, we multiplied and grew; and like the Israelites in Egypt, contented we were, and contented should have been, had not the cupidity of Britain, and her insatiable thirst for domination roused our rebellious opposition. Civil oppressions they heaped upon us, and our petitions and remonstrances were answered by threats, menaces, prohibitions, and more severe exactions. As God always brings good out of evil, so it pleased him, by these, to stir up and unite the spirit of the then provinces of Britain, but now the American nation, to value and assert their inestimable and unalienable rights. The same haughty and oppressive spirit of Britain, which excited our fathers to opposition, broke forth into acts the most hostile, outrageous, and cruel; and constrained the heads of our tribes to declare our

nation free, sovereign, and independent ; and to compel the British government to acknowledge the whole. Thus to the lasting regret of our foreign foe, and to the perpetual confusion of our domestic one, then known by the name of Tories, we gained our civil liberties. But what is perhaps still more to be wondered at, we still retain them. Notwithstanding we have greatly misused our civil liberty, and our internal foe has been watchful and active, and the haughty spirit of Britain has entered into many of our great men, who are sighing to bear rule, and lamenting their dependance upon the suffrages of the common people for their power to govern ; yet, our Nobles are of ourselves, and our Governor proceedeth from the midst of us. According to this time it shall be said of the United States of America, *What hath God wrought !*

3. Another reason why it shall be said, according to this time, of our nation, *What hath God wrought,* is, we now enjoy *religious liberty.*

Of all kinds of liberty, this is the last to be expected ; for the *heart* of all natural men is against it ; the superstition of all men is against it ; all false religions are against it ; all established religions are against it ; the established Clergy, wherever found, are against it. The Clergy in our own country have been violently against it ; and are still strongly opposed. More than one hundred years since, they stirred up the Government to arrest, to fine, imprison, fine, whip, and banish, such as were friendly to it. Ever since they have been devising means to keep it down, to prevent its spreading, and to root it out of our country.

By the nations of Europe religious liberty been proscribed, and, if we mistake not, she has, at this time, no legal existence in any of them, save in France, and perhaps out-lawed in her by this time.\*

\* The above was written before it was known, in this country, that Napoleon had re-mounted the Imperial Throne of France. The French Council of State, in their sittings of March 25, 1815, among other things say, "The Emperor is called to guarantee anew, by laws, (and he has engaged to do so, in his proclamations to the nation and the army) all the liberal principles, in-

Of all the nations in the world, ours appears to have been the first in which religious liberty has been legalized. Even here she is watched with great jealousy; and some of the State Constitutions, State Legislatures, and other officers, have shown their dislike to her, and hardly crowded her. The Clergy, who have greatly ruled the nation, have been terribly afraid of her, and have, many a time, given the alarm, crying, *Alas! alas! our Churches will be overturned, or this monster must be put down.*

In our country both the civil and ecclesiastic powers were expressly to strangle religious liberty in her infancy, but prevailed not. Like Moses in the ark of bulrushes, she was preserved, and has been so nourished and protected, that she bids fair to lead the true Israel out of Egypt's iron bondage of Ecclesiastical tyranny. But it will be attended with more tremendous plagues in Babylon, than were poured upon Egypt of old.

As religious liberty has prevailed, so has the church of Christ increased in our land. When God will work, none can hinder him.

Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of our nation, **WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!**

4. Another reason why, according to this time it shall be said of the United States of America, **What hath God wrought!** is, that we have had so speedy, and so honorable peace with those who have lately been our enemies.

The British empire is confounded that they have threatened so much, and done so little. Europe is surprised, that the proud tyrant of the seas, with her thousand ships, and thundering legions, should be so quickly beaten. We, and the world are astonished, that our ships have so generally made the British flee, or pull their flag down; that honor has attended upon our little navy, and disgrace covered their great one: that handfuls of our

dividual liberty, and equality of rights; the liberty of the press; *the liberty of religion.*" &c. Thus is religious liberty legalized anew, (or promised to be so) in France.

Republican, and generally untutored, troops, have chased away, captured, or caused to fall down slain, armies of the oppressor's veteran legions.

Well may we exclaim with the Psalmist, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may America 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, when their wrath kindled against us; then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream and the proud waters had gone over our soul. Bless the Lord who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as out of the snare of the fowler's; the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth."

The Lord hath planted and settled us. The Lord hath given us liberty, both civil and religious. He hath given peace in all our borders. Much in the language of his servant Moses, we may now joyfully speak, saying, "We will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. He hath poured contempt on our foes, and blasted their expectations. The Lord is our strength and song, and he is become our salvation: He is our God, and we will prepare him a habitation; our fathers' God, and we will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name. Britannia's ships, with their crews, hath He dashed in pieces: her chosen captains are fallen down slain. The depths of death have covered them. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them who rose up against thee. The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil: my trust shall be justified upon them: I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

Thou wilt blow upon them, they were discomfited: *they sank as lead in the mighty waters.* Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou, in thy mercy, hast led forth the people, which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy commandments. The



diversity of enemies shall hear and be afraid : sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Britannia. The dukes of Babylon shall be amazed : the mighty men of savage tribes, trembling shall take hold upon them ; all the inhabitants of the wilderness shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them : by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone ; till *thy people pass over, which thou hast purchased*. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever."

*Said, there is no enchantment against the Lord's people ; neither is there any divination against MESSIAH'S KINGDOM : according to this time it shall be said of our nation, and of the Church of Christ, WHAT HATH GOD wrought !*

### APPLICATION.

From the subject it may appear,

1. That of all nations, America should sound the highest praises.

For no nation, save Israel of old, hath experienced such great salvations. None possess such a rich abundance of pleasant, fertile, and well watered lands. None understand their civil rights so well, or possess them so fully, or enjoy them so generally, as our nation. Where is the nation, in which the *common people can eat, and drink, and take the good of their labors, as we do?* In what nation have the rich, the superstitious, and the ambitious, exerted themselves so much, and succeeded so little, in wresting these privileges from the commonality ? What nation like ours, where the people may, and can, read, think, and judge for themselves ; and then, if light, truth, and conscience so dictate, worship God in a way which the scribes and *Pharisees call heresy?* In what nation, besides ours, has ecclesiastic tyranny been weakened in proportion to the violent measures which have been employed to strengthen it ? In what nation, except in ours, have the civil and ecclesiastic powers been separating in proportion as the Clergy have labored for their union ? What other national charter, the guarantee of the people's liberties, prohibits the combination of these two powers ? Amongst all the Constitutions

or governments of the European nations, is there one which does not assume the oversight and control of the church of Christ? But, happy America, the framers of thy Constitution thought it enough to frame laws to govern men, and to leave it with Christ to give laws for the government of his own kingdom.

Where these two powers, the civil and the ecclesiastic, are separated, religious liberty will prevail; where they are blended in the hands of superstition, religious tyranny is the natural and sure consequence. By the good providence of God these two powers are separate; and, by the supreme law of the land, forbidden to incorporate. Hence we have opportunity, every one to sit under his own vine, and his own fig tree, and none to make his neighbour afraid. In short, our personal, our domestic, our social, our civil, our religious, and our national, privileges are beyond a parallel. May our praises be proportionate.

2. That superstition has, probably, done its utmost.

It has been under the best advantages. Its circumstances in our country, have been the most promising. It had in this land, when it first claimed supremacy, and set up for complete independence, in a large degree, what it always arrogates to itself, all the Hamans, all the talents and all the pity, in its train. Yes, it had more, it had the Governors, the Captains, the Judges, the Treasurers, the Counsellors, the Sheriffs and all the rulers of the provinces in its train: and, if it had not Nebuchadnezzar's band of music to persuade, it had the drum, the file, the dungeon, the post, and the pillory to compel submission. Under such promising circumstances it began its career in this happy land. But mortifying disappointment soon attended: and, like the proud monarch of Babylon with his haughty lords, the friends of superstition were filled with fury at the Daniels, the Hannanials, the Michaels, and Azariels, who would not submit, nor bow down to the law-religion, which the Governors, the Counsellors, the Clergy, &c. had set up. But when they found, that the lions would not destroy, nor their fire consume those reputed heretics, who would not bow down, nor worship the *image of the beast, protestant establishments*, which the Governors and the Clergy had set up, then they began to be *astonished*; and the fear of the prevalence of the kingdom of

heaven has been upon them ever since. Thus, Haman like, have they begun to fall before the true Israel of God; and like him, will they and their ten sons, the Kings and Governors of the earth, who have agreed together to give their power unto the beast, and to his image, continue to fall, till they shall be consumed and rise no more at all.

But, my friends, notwithstanding this glorious triumph, which reason, truth and righteousness have gained over superstition, the prolific mother of abominations, yet she is to be carefully watched and guarded against; for like famed Anteus of old, she has often revived, after being, apparently, knocked lifeless to the ground. None but the true David can destroy her utterly; **HE CAN, HE WILL.**

3. That the Church, in which the New-England clergy are leaders, is not the Church of Christ, they themselves being judges. Otherwise, why their cry, Alas! alas! the Church is in danger! when nothing appears to threaten them, save the prevalence of religious liberty. Or, to accommodate myself to their views, a Gallio is approaching, or is in, the chair of State. What then? to be sure, when the Jewish high Priest, or the New-England Clergy, drag a Paul, a Holmes, or a Williams, before Cæsar's tribunal, to be condemned for rejecting the traditions of men, that they might follow the commands of God, they may be refused an audience, and driven from the judgment seat. What then? is the church of Christ in danger? Surely not, but their own superstition is.

How often have we heard expressions of the following import falling with mournful accents, from their lips? Religion is in danger. The Church is in danger. The Church will come to nought, if unprotected by the civil power. Aaron and Moses must be united. The Church and State will rise, or fall together, &c. &c.

It is here evident that their church, according to their own notions of her, is not founded or built, on Christ. For against Christ's church the gates of hell shall not prevail; nor any weapon formed against her ultimately prosper; and, as for Gallio, she fears him not. All she asks of Cæsar, is, to be a Gallio, to let her alone, and to drive her

accusers now, from his tribunal with disgrace, as Gallio did in primitive times.

The church of Christ never sought a union with Cæsar, or the civil sword to be drawn in support of the christian religion: she never asked for such a thing. She never wished it. She never needed it. Thus evident is it, that the church comprising the New-England clergy, is as different from the church of Christ, as was the Jewish high priest different from Paul. The one sought Cæsar's aid, the other not, save when compelled by the fury of his persecutors. As then, so now, each is swearing to each, showing one thing clearly; that to the church, to which Paul belonged, the New-England clergy do not.

4. That the church of Christ will flourish, where all others decay.

Religious liberty is her proper element; but it is prolific to every other. She needs but to be *known*, to be admired: the opposite is true of all spurious churches. Her converts are wise ones. She seeks and desires no other. She requires truth in sentiment, truth in the inward part, and truth in practice. These are not produced by Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, by Darius' den of lions, nor by the Pope's Inquisition. Freedom of reading, of thinking and of speaking is productive of the first; the *free spirit* of God produces the *swore*, and both united bring forth the truth in practice. This freedom suits not the darkness, the bigotry and the cunning sophistry of superstition. Such as do evil hate the light, *free enquiry*, neither will come to it, lest their deeds should be reprov'd. Indeed, the superstitious are attended with a conscious and cowardly inferiority, which compels them to court Cæsar, that he may coerce whom they cannot convince. Every species of religious coercion is of the same tribe, whether found in his Holiness, the triple crown'd pontiff, whilst converting nations at the point of the sword, or at the cannon's mouth; or in a New-England legislature fining a town sixty pounds for not supporting a *protestant clergyman*.

All this coercion, all this fear is evidence complete, that they apprehend ruinous effects from the prevalence of religious liberty. Not so with the church of God; she courts freedom of inquiry, freedom of thinking, of speak-

ing and of action. She seeks to be known, and where truly known, the converted heathen, the bigot, and the infidel, gladly join to augment the number of her increasing converts.

5. From the subject it may also appear, why the clergy, in our country, have *generally*, been so bitter and outrageous against the present and preceding administrations; and why they wish for some radical change in the Constitution.

Because, as matters now are, the common people have too much religious liberty. Because the common people have a Constitutional right to search the scriptures and see, if the doctrine, the institutions and the practice inculcated, be from heaven, or of men. Because the common people have a right to hear, when, where and whom they please. Because, they have liberty to withhold their support from such as they do not believe and will not hear. Because neither the Constitution, nor the administration favours law religion, or religious establishments, which have drunk up rivers of blood flowing from those who believed in God and in Jesus Christ, but not in the rituals and commandments of the clergy. Because the clergy cannot govern the nation now, as their ancestors were accustomed to govern, when we were provinces of Britain.

This opposition of the clergy is formidable and presages evil, because it is sentimental. It is incorporated with their religious prejudices. They, doubtless, very sincerely think themselves to be doing God service in *rebuking the rulers of their people; in speaking evil of dignities*, in uttering wily insinuations, which engender suspicious and local jealousies; and in propogating base and unfounded accusations, by which to inflame the minds of the common people against the protection and the protectors of the dearest rights of men. There probably is no question, but what they verily believe, that they ought to do many things contrary from the Constitution and the sacred liberties of the people; and that they ought to resist the powers which be, though by it they resist the ordinance of God, and expose themselves to condemnation. This, their zealous and fixed opposition, being sentimental, may render it less criminal in itself, but not less dangerous to

the community. It therefore becomes us to be circumspect and vigilant, lest their sentimental error dissolve the union, overturn the Constitution, and ruin the nation.

6. That one reason why the church, which is built on Christ, have so generally, approved of the Constitution, is, it favours religious liberty; and, why they have been pleased with the administration, because the government of the church has been left to Jesus Christ.

The religion of Christ strongly impels its possessors to two things, and his church has been famous for the practice of them; one is submission to the powers which he knowing that civil authority is ordained of God; the other is, carefully using justifiable means for the security of religious liberty. This being the spirit of the Christian religion, the reason is obvious, why the members of Christ's church should adhere to such a government and administration as ours; which secures to the whole a copious freedom of investigating, believing, and practising that religion, which is honorable to God, and safe for man.

7. That the fears of our clergy are, probably, well founded.

They probably must overturn the Constitution, or, the religious liberty, incorporated with it, will overturn them; and they must oust the administration, or continue in danger of being ousted themselves.

The *exteriors of their religion, or their peculiarities, are incompatible with free enquiry, directed by the spirit of Immanuel.* If divine grace prevail, and our glorious Constitution be not put down, but continue to be administered by men of liberal minds, the New-England clergy with their churches, in their present organization may disappear: this too, to the joy and admiration of God's people who may be found in the midst of them.

8. Why Governor Strong believed and said, and why the clergy echoed it, that *Great Britain is the bulwark of the religion which we profess.*

The reason is plain; *they profess a religion, which, in its church-form, is taught by the precepts and commandments of men, and is defended by the civil power.* Whereas, it is the spirit of God, who prepares the materials for a church of Christ, and the word of God directs the building

of it; but a law-religion makes pretenders, and the rites and commandments of men incorporate them into a church: and the allurements of superstition prevail with many of the people of God to join them.

Many have considered Governor Strong to have spoken falsely in this matter. I cannot say that I ever did. I consider him to have spoken like an *honest man, shrouded under strong prejudices*. The religion which he and his brethren profess, is, *as to its exteriors, its rites and splendor* defended by the laws of Kings and Emperors, of Popes and Conclaves. This being the fact, nothing can be more true, than, that Great Britain is the bulwark of the religion which they profess. For it was notoriously true at the time he delivered the expression, that the established, the national, the law-religions of nighly all Europe, (Britain's excepted,) were shaking and apparently in danger of sinking into their merited contempt. The religion of the Governor, and of the New-England clergy with their churches, being of the national, the European, complexion, they were indeed apprehensive, and not without cause, that should England fall, their religion would fall with her, and great would be the fall of it. For she is, in fact the strongest hold, of which established religion can now boast. Here is the *foundation of that predilection*, which *our clergy generally*, and more of the laity possess in favor of Britain; and here is the *bottom or source*, of *that strong opposition against our own government, its principles and its measures*. It is true, this is all superstition. But it is no trifling one. Our object should be to eradicate, but not to enrage it. However lightly we may think of this sentimental delusion, we may not think lightly of all who are in it. For in its delusory embraces, we may find not a few of splendid talents, of deep erudition, and of unquestionable piety. Such men are not *easily diverted* from their purpose. This diversion can be effected but in one way, and that is, by exposing the false principles, upon which they have founded their erroneous sentiments. When opposition is sentimental, and that sentiment is founded in superstition, or religious error, it is often combated with much difficulty, and not frequently with success.

9. From the subject it may appear, that Governor Strong, and the New-England clergy, and those who join with them, may not be *so faulty* for *opposing religious liberty*, as they are for *adhering to the traditions and commandments of men*, which can be supported, but by religious tyranny.

We by no means justify them; for their fault is visible, as though written with the point of a diamond: but their fault is not so much in their practice, as in their having admitted such false principles, and imbibed and *willingly retained* such erroneous sentiments as impel their practice. They cannot be honest men, and practice correctly, whilst they believe erroneously. How far they are blamable for having so rejected the commands of God, and so followed their own traditions, as now to be trusting to an arm of flesh for their bulwark, the Judge of all must and will decide. One thing however, is certain, their superstition is great, and their fault considerable. Besides, as matters now are, their sentimental error is tinged deeply with moral evil, for the true light now shineth, and increasingly too, that *they* might correct their sentiments, and reform their practice, had they a liking to it. Some men find it difficult to believe, but what Governor Strong, and the New-England clergy, are, generally, downright hypocrites and enemies to their country. By such it ought to be considered, that great men have, frequently, great prejudices; and learned men have learned prejudices; and pious men may have religious ones. Were we to judge by their political practice, we might fear as to their love either for their God or country. Were we to judge by their political sentiments, our fears might not largely abate; but it is our confirmed opinion, that, could we see their heart, our conclusion would, in numerous instances, be much more favorable.

10. *That our religious liberties are in danger, just in proportion to the clergy's influence upon the civil power.*

The prejudices of the New-England clergy with their Governors and adherents must have been excessive, and nearly allied to infatuation and fatal delusion, or they could never have declared, or joined in the declaration, that Great Britain is the bulwark of their religion. This, their superstitious belief, has compelled them to denounce it



sacrilege to join our own government in the righteous war, which they were compelled to wage against the scourge of nations, but the acknowledged bulwark of their religion. From the same source proceeded, from some of them, those infuriated and mad expressions. "That every man, in the expedition against Canada, was a murderer. Every man there slain would be murdered. Every one who should sicken and die, or any way lose his life by the expedition, would be a murdered man. All who aided or assisted in it, were murderers. All who sat in their chimney corners, and wished success to the expedition, though they were not active, *were murderers in their heart.*" Thus, and more abundantly, did some of the priests of Babylon rage and rave, wishing death, or defeat, and denouncing damnation upon such as joined their own country to make inroads upon the British and their savage allies, who were embodied in the bounds of Canada, for the murder and plunder of our frontier settlements; and who had already commenced their nefarious work. These deluded deceivers communicated to many of their parishioners, portions of the same madness, causing them religiously to believe, that to aid and comfort the enemy, to weaken and embarrass our own government, was doing service to God and men.

But God hath triumphed. Truth hath triumphed, and will soon triumph more abundantly. Our government has triumphed. Our armies and navies have triumphed: our ministers at Ghent have triumphed; and praised be the God of hosts, we are free. Free to think, free to speak, free to act. Free from Britain, and many of us, free from the shackles and superstitions of that religion of which she is the bulwark. Free to investigate truth, whether civil, political, or religious. Free to inquire what religion is from heaven, and what of men. Free to search for the doctrine, the ordinances, and practices of the Church of Christ, the kingdom set up by the God of heaven; and full liberty to enter it, if our heart be in love with it. Free to pursue the glory of God, and man's best good, in heaven's prescribed way. Free to seek our own present and future felicity, according as reason and revelation dictate. Having none to make us afraid.

In the possession of such privileges, and under such advantages, how does it become us to vindicate the ways of God to men? and, on such an happy occasion as this, to expose those delusions and that spurious christianity, which teach discord at home, and union with a barbarous and haughty foe, and which, by their deceitful wiles, had well nigh brought us to Egypt again? God broke the snare, we are escaped, the clergy disappointed, but not satisfied. *Nor can they be, whilst religious liberty prevails.* It is essential to the permanency of every false religion, and to every perversion of the true, that religious liberty be restricted. In Athens, Paul's life was in danger for using this liberty, where they had introduced three hundred gods, and by law made it capital to introduce a new one. In Judea, Jesus Christ was crucified for *practising and teaching this liberty.* All the persecutions which have been in the world, have been for the suppression of religious liberty: and have been effected by the influence of the clergy, or priests, upon the civil power. Nothing will save our religious liberty, and us from persecution, but the civil authority maintaining the province which God hath assigned it, and refusing to pollute its sword in aiding the clergy in religious coercion. Wherever the civil authority is with them, they have generally, if not universally, considered it a part of God's service to *persecute primitive christianity.* As religious liberty is congenial with the christian religion, so is religious tyranny necessary to the stability of every other religion, and to every corruption of this. It is surprising, that there is one clergyman for religious liberty, or for a government and administration which foster it, or one baptist minister against either. The secular power must not be at the bidding of the clergy, to control religious matters, or religious liberty must go down. This is what the clergy are now struggling for. *This is manifestly the root of the present controversy, in this our otherwise happy country.*

In support of the above observations, we appeal to the practice of all the generations from the days of Caiaphas and Pontius Pilate to ours.

May God convert the governors, the counsellors, the sheriffs, the clergy, and all, at least in judgment, that they may take up their parable and say, Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of America and the true Israel, What hath God wrought!

Lastly. That the practice of our clergy has been too much like Balaam's, and that of some of our governors and their great men like Balak's and his princes.

They have fasted and prayed, and offered sacrifices without number, that they might curse the administration, and Britain prevail. But God suffered them not to curse with effect; and thus hath he kept them back from honor, and exposed their weakness. If like Balaam they confess their weakness, they may have permission to return, but not with honor or reward.

We would gladly suffer their outrageous superstition and high-handed wickedness to rest in oblivion, but their perseverance compels the recollection, and our duty obliges us to expose them. *Peradventure God will give them repentance*; and if not, the *exposure* may narrow the bounds of their destructive influence; and save Jacob and Israel, our beloved country, and the liberties of the church of Christ, from future jeopardies, similar to those through which we have lately past. They need but be thoroughly exposed, to be deserted by three fourths of their present followers. Amongst whom are honorable men, wise men, good men, some of the best of men; but having their minds somewhat darkened by the ingenious subtlety which varnishes the evil motives, the unjustifiable means, and the Babylonish object of many of their leaders. The Lord will disappoint these erring prophets and their employers, and bring their counsels to nought. Yes, he will cause a dissension among them, as between Balak and Balaam, and the torrent of blessings which God included in Balaam's parables, shall come down upon our country, comprising the church and the government which refuses to oppress her. These very men, who have risen up in the East, and come from the mountains of their high pretensions, may soon be com-

pelled to take up their parables and say, "Rise up, ye governors, and hear, ye nobles of the East. With high expectations have ye brought us forth, saying, Come, curse ye the administration; come, defy the true Israel, which submits not to Britain's bulwark."

How shall we curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall we defy, whom God hath not defied? From the top of the rocks we see America, and from the hills we behold the true Israel: lo, the people shall dwell securely, and the church be preserved from *heathenish*, or *Jewish defilements*. Who can count the multitude of America, and the number of the fourth part of God's people? Let us die the death of the righteous, and let our posterity be like theirs. God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, we have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed, and we cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in America; neither hath he seen perverseness in his people: the Lord their God is with them, and the shout of a king is among them: God brought them out of Egypt: he hath, as it were, the strength of a unicorn. Surely there is no enchantment against America, neither is there any divination against the church of the first-born: according to this time it shall be said of America, and of God's people, What hath God wrought! How goodly are thy dwellings, O America, and thy tabernacles, O Zion! As the vallies are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side; as the trees of lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedars beside the waters. They shall pour their water out of their buckets, and their seed shall be in many waters: and *their President* shall be higher than *Agag*, and their nation shall be exalted. They shall eat up the nations, their enemies, and break their bones, and pierce them through with their weapons of war. They couched, they lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir them up? Blessed is he that blesseth *them*, and cursed is he that curseth them. And may we all say, AMEN.

















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